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# Ranking of Reasons for Choosing Local Foods

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Almost 1,500 consumers were asked to rank their reasons for preferring local food in a survey conducted at a mix of conventional and natural food supermarkets, and at farmers markets in Minnesota, Oregon, and Rhode Island during the summer of 2006. The final survey instrument presented the following list for ranking: "To get better quality & freshness," "to help the local economy," "to support small businesses," "to lower environmental impacts/transportation," "food safety & traceability," "because I get a better price," and "other."

Results will be presented comparing differences by survey site (type of store and state) along with a

multinomial logit analysis of the respondent's first choice. The first choice is analyzed as a function of demographic characteristics such as the respondents' interest in and concerns about the environment, health, and food; and aspects of farm preservation and farm labor, which might determine their most pressing reasons for choosing local. Though freshness and quality is the primary reason that most people prefer local foods, more than 40% of respondents ranked another reason first.

Future researchers can benefit from the information provided in this report when planning projects to analyze the growing interest in local foods.