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DETERMINANTS OF CHOICE OF ECOLOGICAL FOOD ACCORDING TO CONSUMERS FROM THE PODKARPACKIE VOIVODESHIP

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Abstract. The aim of this study was to identify the determinants of the choice of organic foods in the opinion of consumers of the Podkarpackie voivodeship. The study was conducted in the second quarter of 2015 by the means of a questionnaire. The subjects of the research were 308 consumers of organic food in the Podkarpackie voivodeship. It was discovered that the consumers perceive organic food as an element of the food category that guarantees health security and excellent taste. Despite the desire to buy such food, the consumers who are supplying themselves with organic products think that the range of products available on the market is insufficient. A very high percentage of the respondents indicated a preference for purchasing food produced in their own country, preferably in their own region, and buying directly from a manufacturer. More than a third of the respondents, especially under 35, is supplying themselves with organic products in specialist stores and supermarkets. The primary barrier in buying organic foods is its too high price.

Key words: organic food, organic products, consumer, purchasing decisions

INTRODUCTION

In the last 20 years, there has been a significant increase in the demand for ecological food, and it can be considered the fastest developing sector in the market of food products. The development of ecological agriculture is noticeable on all continents, but the highest demand for food produced in this system can be noted in North America and Europe (Organic World, 2015). In spite of a 50 year long tradition of environment-friendly agricultural production in Poland, the number and area of ecological farms started to grow as late as 1999, from the moment the financial support for such farms was launched. The introduction of legal regulations in the area of ecological agriculture strengthened the position of ecological farms to some extent, and Polish accession to the European Union and introduction of the so-called agricultural-environmental packages, that is funds granted to farmers for their ecological farms for the period of 5 years, caused a significant increase in the number of farms changing their profile from conventional to ecological (Motowidlak, 2008).

According to the information of the World of Organic Agriculture and the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection (IJHARS), in 2013 the area of ecological farms in Poland was less than 4% in the structure of agricultural areas, and equalled 661956 ha. They were run by approximately 27 thousand producers, subject to control by certification institutions. In comparison to 2012, this meant a growth rate of approx. 1% in the area, and 3% in the number of farms. In 2013, there were also 400 new processors of ecological food noted (Organic World, 2015; IJHARS, 2013).

Dynamic development of the trade of products produced with ecological methods caused a triple increase of sales turnover in the last decade. The most ecological

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food in the world was consumed by Americans (in 2011 at the value of 21 billion Euro), and Germans (at the value of 6.5 billion Euro) (Szymona, 2013). In Poland, the demand for ecological products has been growing; it should however be emphasized that it is still insufficient (Olech and Kuboń, 2015). In 2011 only 120 million PLN was spent on ecological food, which was as little as 3 Euro per capita (in Switzerland and Denmark it was, respectively, 177 and 162 Euro). Another disturbing fact is that products imported from Western countries dominate on the Polish market; while 80% of Polish ecological food is exported to European countries and to the USA (Szymona, 2013). It is predicted that in countries such as Poland, which are at a lower level of economic growth, ecological food is going to be purchased by a greater number of consumers in comparison to the current state, while the most significant factor limiting its consumption will be the price of such products (Runowski, 2009).

Is is worth noting that the development of the ecological products market will depend on the behaviours and choices of consumers, who perceive ecological food as healthier, safer and more tasty. The issues of maintaining biodiversity, protecting the environment, and keeping the well-being of breeding animals also matter to conscious customers. Getting to know the preferences of consumers, and factors determining the choice of ecological food, are elements that influence the development of such products on the market.

The aim of this paper was to attempt to define the determinants of choice of ecological food according to consumers from the Podkarpackie voivodeship.

MATERIAL AND RESEARCH METHODS

The research was conducted in the 2nd quarter of 2015 in the Podkarpackie voivodeship among 308 consumers of ecological food. The research method consisted of the author's own survey questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of single and multiple choice questions concerning socio-demographic data and factors influencing the choice and purchase of organic food. Constructing the author's own questionnaire was based on the available current domestic and foreign research results. The respondents were selected regarding their age, place of residence and financial situation. Sectional charts were used to determine the diversity in consumer preferences regarding the purchase of organic food. The influence of age, place of residence and financial situation over respondents' answers were tested using chi-square test at significance level $\alpha = 0.05$. A descriptive and comparative method was used in the study.

RESEARCH RESULTS

62% of women and 38% of men participated in the research. The most respondents were aged between 26–35 (31.3%) and 36–45 (33.3%), while the other groups were as follows: 16–25 years: 6.7%, 46–55 years: 18.8%, 56 years and more: 10.4%. The surveyed respondents declared: higher education – 66.7%; high education – 24.5% and elementary education – 8.9%. Most respondents lived in cities (59.9%): in a city up to 25 thousand inhabitants: 8.9%; in a city between 25-50 thousand inhabitants: 24.5%, and in a city above 50 thousand inhabitants: 26.6%; 40.1% of respondents lived in rural areas. 88% of respondents were working, and 12% remained inactive.

The main determinants influencing the decisions made by consumers to buy ecological products were: health safety of such food and its taste advantages (Table 1). In a question that included several answers, respondents ranked their reasons from the most (5.0) to the least important (1.0). The factors mentioned above were assigned the following average ratings: 4.6 and 4.1 respectively. Analysis of the data according to the age groups of respondents, their place of residence and financial situation shows that those two factors always received the highest ratings. One exception was the group of respondents living in cities up to 25 thousand inhabitants, where the second place was assigned to reasons related with the applied diet, and the will to discover new food products. In both cases, the average ratings of those factors were 3.8. Also according to the owners of ecological processing plants, consumers usually bought ecological food due to its health safety (maximum assigned rating: 5.0), taste advantages and applied diet (4.7 and 4.3 respectively). Significant reasons for the oldest people, respondents living in cities between 25 and 50 thousand inhabitants and people describing their financial situation as bad, were the reasons related with environmental protection, biodiversity, and the will to support local food producers. Most respondents assigned the lowest rank to the last reason, that is concern with the well-being of animals (average rating 3.3). Owners of ecological food processing plants usually assigned

higher ranks to most of the indicated reasons in comparison with consumers of ecological food, except for reasons related with supporting local production and better storage of products. In the opinion of producers, the will to support local production accounts for purchasing ecological food by consumers to a medium extent. Similar motives for choosing ecological food are suggested by Łuczka-Bakuła and Smoluk (2004). According to those authors, most respondents chose organic food for health reasons (76% of respondents), while factors related with environmental protection (11%) or supporting farmers (9%) were less important.

In further questions, the surveyed consumers and owners of ecological food processing plants evaluated the diversity of ecological food assortment, the origin of usually bought ecological products, and indicated the places where those products were purchased. The data presented in table 2 shows that the available assortment of ecological food was insufficient and that there was a need to extend it. That was the opinion of 48.1% of the surveyed consumers. Different types of responses depended on the respondents' age (χ^2 calculated = 27.9, df = 8, p = 0.001), and on their financial situation (χ^2 calculated = 23.7, df = 6, p = 0.001). However, no relationship was found in case of residence of organic food consumers (χ^2 calculated = 9.4, df = 6, p = 0.152).

The youngest and the oldest respondents living in cities between 25 and 50 thousand inhabitants and people describing their financial situation as average or bad evaluated the assortment of ecological food as narrow but sufficient. This statement was indicated by 28.6% to 39.6% of the surveyed consumers. Insufficient assortment of ecological food products is claimed to be a factor limiting the demand for such products also by other authors. This problem becomes even bigger as consumers would like to buy food products ready to be consumed, while ecological farmers usually deliver unprocessed products (Łuczka-Bakuła, 2004; Miśniakiewicz and Ptasińska, 2009).

The relationship between respondents' age (χ^2 calculated = 18.9, df = 12, p = 0.089), their financial situation (χ^2 calculated = 11.2, df = 9, p = 0.263) and different type of responses concerning the origin of purchased organic products has not been confirmed. A calculated statistics indicated the impact of place of residence on response type ($\chi 2$ calculated = 26.0, df = 9, p = 0.002).

A vast majority of the surveyed consumers (89.6%) indicated that they bought domestic ecological foods, preferably of local origin. 5.2% of respondents claimed to be buying organic food from countries of the European Union, and for 3.9% the place of origin had no significance. The most people in the age group between 46 and 55, living in cities with the greatest number of inhabitants, and describing their financial situation as bad declared that they preferred to buy local ecological food. The percentages were, respectively: 92.6%, 100.0% and 100.0%. The lowest percentage of the surveyed consumers declared buying ecological food produced in non-EU countries. The average percentage in this respect was 1.3%. According to all the surveyed producers of ecological food, consumers preferred domestic food, preferably local. This showed a high commitment of consumers and processors to a local place of origin of ecological products. This was reinforced by the fact that in case of all the surveyed processors, their own capital was of domestic origin. Kowalska (2010) also notices the trust that consumers of ecological food have in local and regional products. *Consumer ethnocentrism* can be observed in this respect, that is choosing and purchasing products produced on local markets.

The most frequent method of buying ecological food by respondents was purchasing directly from ecological producers. Such a method of purchase (53.8%) was indicated by respondents when answering a multiple choice question. Specialist stores with ecological food (41.0% of indications) and large area stores (37.2% of indications) also had a significant share in the sales of ecological products. The least frequent method of buying ecological food was online purchasing. This method was used only by 7.1% of respondents. The preferred places for the youngest people surveyed were super- and hypermarkets, that is over 55% of indications in the age group 16–25 and nearly 48% of indications in the age group 26–35. The most respondents bought ecological food directly from producers, independent of their place of residence or financial situation. Among owners of ecological food processing plants, 100% of answers indicated that consumers bought ecological food in specialist stores, and a little more than 66% indicated that consumers bought directly from ecological producers. It should be emphasized here that distribution chains of ecological products in Poland are still not well organized. Łukasiński (2008) shares this opinion, stating that ecological food is usually bought directly from producers, in a chain of stores specializing in the sales of ecological food, and online. As the above mentioned author

Table 1. Reasons for the purchase of organic food in the opinion of the respondents (1 – definitely no, 5 – definitely yes)
Tabela 1. Powody nabywania żywności ekologicznej w opinii respondentów (1 – zdecydowanie nie, 5 – zdecydowanie tak)

Reason Powód	Total Ogółem	Age (years) Wiek (lata)					Living place Miejsce zamieszkania				Financial situation Sytuacja finansowa	
		16–25	26–35	36–45	46–55	<56	village wieś	city (thous. people) miasto (tys. mieszk.)			very good bardzo dobra	good dobra
								>25	25–50	<50		
Health security of organic food (no pesticides, antibiotics, hormones, etc.) Bezpieczeństwo zdrowotne żywności ekologicznej (brak pestycydów, antybiotyków, hormonów itp.)	4.6	4.6	4.	4.6	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.3	4.6	4.8	4.8	4.6
Taste Walory smakowe	4.1	3.9	4.0	4.3	4.0	4.1	4.1	3.6	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.1
Diet Dieta	3.6	3.9	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.3	3.6	3.4	3.7
Environmental protection and biodiversity Ochrona środowiska i bioróżnorodności	3.6	3.1	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.6	3.3	3.9	3.6	3.9	3.5
Supporting local production Wspieranie lokalnej produkcji	3.8	3.2	3.9	3.9	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.6	4.2	3.8	3.7	3.8
Better food storage Lepsze przechowywanie żywności	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.9	3.7
Searching new food products Poszukiwanie nowych produktów żywnościowych	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.3	3.6	3.8	3.2	3.5	3.7	3.8
Concern for animal welfare Troska o dobrostan zwierząt	3.3	3.0	3.3	3.2	3.5	3.7	3.3	3.1	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.3

Source: own elaboration.
Źródło: opracowanie własne.

notes, and author's own research confirms, the role of super- and hypermarkets in the sales of ecological products is growing. In countries of the European Union, it is in those stores that most ecological products are sold (86% in Denmark, 86% in Finland, 70-80% in Austria and in Great Britain). This is a positive phenomenon, as using traditional distribution channels may result in lower costs of distribution and lower prices of such food, in consequence stimulating the development of the market of ecological products (Łukasiński, 2008).

Among the assortment of organic food that is most frequently purchased it is organic fresh fruit and vegetables (74.0%) and eggs (58.4%) (Table 3) that were indicated in the multiple choice questionnaire. Such results

Table 2. Assessment of the diversification of the range of organic food products, their origins and a place of purchase in the opinion of the respondents (%)
Tabela 2. Ocena zróżnicowania asortymentu żywności ekologicznej, jej pochodzenia oraz miejsca zakupu w opinii respondentów (%)

Opinion Opinia	Total Ogółem	Age (years) Wiek (lata)					Living place Miejsce zamieszkania				Financial situation Sytuacja finansowa		
		16–25	26–35	36–45	46–55	<56	village wieś	city (thous. people) miasto (tys. mieszk.)			very good bardzo dobra	good dobra	average średnia
								>25	25–50	<50			
Diversification of organic food products Zróżnicowanie asortymentu żywności ekologicznej													
Available range of products is large and sufficient Dostępny asortyment jest duży i wystarczający	26.6	22.3	39.6	30.9	3.7	13.3	25.4	31.3	17.9	36.1	30.0	36.6	14.6
Available range of products is small, but sufficient Dostępny asortyment jest nieduży, ale wystarczający	25.3	33.3	18.8	21.8	37.0	33.3	25.4	31.3	30.8	16.7	30.0	19.5	32.7
Available range of products is insufficient and requires expanding Dostępny asortyment jest niewystarczający i wymaga rozszerzenia	48.1	44.4	41.6	47.3	59.3	53.4	49.2	37.4	51.3	47.2	40.0	43.9	52.7
The origin of the most frequently purchased organic products Pochodzenie najczęściej kupowanych produktów ekologicznych													
Food produced in the country, preferably locally Żywność krajowa, lepiej lokalna	89.6	88.8	91.6	87.3	92.6	86.6	90.4	68.8	89.8	100.0	90.0	87.8	87.3
Foods imported from EU countries Żywność pochodząca z krajów UE	5.2	11.2	4.2	5.5	3.7	0.0	3.2	18.8	5.1	0.0	10.0	8.5	3.6
Food from outside the EU Żywność spoza UE	1.3	0.0	2.1	0.0	0.0	6.7	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8
It is of no significance Nie ma to żadnego znaczenia	3.9	0.0	2.1	7.2	3.7	6.7	4.8	12.4	5.1	0.0	0.0	3.7	7.3
Place of the purchase of organic food (multiple choice) Miejsce zakupu żywności ekologicznej (wielokrotny wybór)													
Directly from a manufacturer Bezpośrednio u producenta	53.8	33.3	43.8	62.5	46.4	80.0	55.6	43.8	59.0	52.8	60.0	51.2	60.0
In an organic shop W sklepie z żywnością ekologiczną	41.0	33.3	43.8	46.4	32.1	33.3	33.3	50.0	43.6	50.0	50.0	45.1	34.5
In a discount store W sklepie dyskontowym	19.2	22.2	25.0	19.6	7.1	26.7	23.8	18.8	10.3	22.2	10.0	18.3	23.6
In a large super/hypermarket W dużym super-/hipermarkecie	37.2	55.6	47.9	39.3	25.0	6.7	46.0	37.5	33.3	27.8	40.0	42.7	30.9
I buy on the Internet Kupuję przez internet	7.1	11.1	10.4	5.4	7.1	0.0	3.2	12.5	0.0	19.4	0.0	8.5	7.3

Source: own elaboration.
Źródło: opracowanie własne.

Table 3. Most frequently purchased organic food products and the proposals for their extension in the opinion of the respondents (%)
Tabela 3. Najczęściej kupowany asortyment żywności ekologicznej oraz propozycje jego rozszerzenia w opinii respondentów (%)

Assortment Asortyment	Total Ogółem	Age (years) Wiek (lata)					Living place Miejsce zamieszkania				Financial situation Sytuacja finansowa	
		16–25	26–35	36–45	46–55	<56	village wieś	city (thous. people) miasto (tys. mieszk.)			very good bardzo dobra	good dobra
								>25	25–50	<50		
Most frequently purchased organic food (multiple choice) Najczęściej kupowana żywność ekologiczna (wybór wielokrotny)												
Cereal products Produkty zbożowe	44.2	33.3	47.9	49.1	37.0	33.3	42.9	43.8	43.6	47.2	60.0	42.7
Fresh vegetables and fruits Świeże warzywa i owoce	74.0	77.8	81.3	67.3	74.1	66.7	69.8	75.0	87.2	66.7	80.0	69.5
Herbs and teas Zioła i herbaty	27.9	33.3	27.1	30.9	25.9	13.3	25.4	25.0	25.6	36.1	30.0	23.2
Milk and milk products Mleko i przetwory mleczne	41.6	33.3	45.8	43.6	33.3	40.0	44.4	43.8	35.9	41.7	40.0	41.5
Meat and hams Mięso i wędliny	46.8	55.6	43.8	50.9	51.9	33.3	55.6	37.5	35.9	47.2	70.0	45.1
Eggs Jaja	58.4	88.9	52.1	54.5	59.3	66.7	60.3	68.8	48.7	61.1	50.0	62.2
Alcohol Alkohole	3.9	0.0	8.3	1.8	3.7	0.0	4.8	6.3	2.6	2.8	10.0	3.7
Organic processed food for children Ekologiczne przetwory dla dzieci	10.4	22.2	14.6	10.9	3.7	0.0	12.7	6.3	5.1	13.9	10.0	8.5
Which range of organic food in the market should be extended? (multiple choice) Który asortyment żywności ekologicznej powinien zostać rozszerzony na rynku? (wybór wielokrotny)												
Cereal products Produkty zbożowe	5.8	0.0	6.3	7.3	0.0	13.3	7.9	0.0	5.1	5.6	10.0	4.9
Fresh vegetables and fruits Świeże warzywa i owoce	21.1	44.4	14.6	16.4	37.0	26.7	22.2	31.3	15.4	25.0	30.0	24.4
Herbs and teas Zioła i herbaty	3.8	0.0	4.2	3.6	3.7	6.7	4.8	0.0	2.6	5.6	10.0	1.2
Milk and milk products Mleko i przetwory mleczne	13.6	0.0	12.5	20.0	7.4	6.7	17.5	6.3	7.7	16.7	20.0	4.9
Meat and hams Mięso i wędliny	39.6	33.3	37.5	41.8	40.7	40.0	39.7	37.5	38.5	41.7	40.0	32.9
Eggs Jaja	4.5	11.1	4.2	3.6	7.4	0.0	3.2	6.3	7.7	2.8	10.0	3.7
Alcohols Alkohole	5.2	0.0	4.2	10.9	0.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	10.3	2.8	20.0	4.9
Organic processed food for children Ekologiczne przetwory dla dzieci	13.6	11.1	16.7	14.5	3.7	20.0	12.7	6.3	20.5	11.1	20.0	12.2

Source: own elaboration.
Źródło: opracowanie własne.

of the survey can be related with the fact that a large amount of ecological fruit and vegetables is available on the European ecological market. According to Wasilik (2014), organic fruit and vegetables have the highest share on the European market of ecological products – between 1/5 and 1/3 of all of such products. A similar situation can be observed in case of ecological eggs, which make for 10–20% of all ecological products.

Within the author's own research, 88.9% of the surveyed consumers in the youngest age group declared buying eggs, and in the second place they indicated buying fresh fruit and vegetables (77.8%). In other groups of respondents, independent on their age, place of residence or financial situation, all of the respondents usually bought fresh fruit and vegetables. The percentage of respondents declaring their ecological food basket in such a way was between 66.7% and 87.2%. The least frequently bought product was alcohol, with an average share of buyers at 3.9%. Slightly more than 10% of all the respondents declared buying ecological products for children. The percentage of people who bought ecological products for children decreased with the age of respondents. In the group aged between 16 and 25 this percentage was 22.2%, while in the group aged 56 and above nobody declared buying such products. Surveyed consumers who evaluated their financial situation as bad did not indicate buying ecological products for children. 83.3% of owners of ecological processing

Table 4. Reasons deciding about not purchasing organic foods in the opinion of the respondents (%)
Tabela 4. Powody rezygnacji z zakupu żywności ekologicznej w opinii respondentów (%)

Reason Powód	Total Ogółem	Age (years) Wiek (lata)					Living place Miejsce zamieszkania				Financial situation Sytuacja finansowa		
		16–25	26–35	36-45	46–55	<56	village wieś	city (thous. people) miasto (tys. mieszkańców)			very good bardzo dobra	good dobra	average średnia
								>25	25–50	<50			
High price of organic food Wysoka cena żywności ekologicznej	66.2	66.7	70.8	67.3	66.7	46.7	60.3	56.2	69.2	72.2	60.0	58.5	72.7
Lack of adequate range of products in a place of a purchase Brak odpowiedniego asortymentu w miejscu zakupu	17.6	0.0	10.4	27.3	18.5	13.3	14.3	18.8	23.1	22.2	20.0	24.4	12.7
Difficulty in distinguishing organic food from conventional food Trudność w odróżnieniu żywności ekologicznej od konwencjonalnej	16.2	33.3	18.8	5.4	14.8	40.0	25.4	25.0	7.7	5.6	20.0	17.1	14.6
Lack of knowledge about a place in which such food may be purchased Brak wiedzy na temat miejsca zakupu takiej żywności	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: own elaboration.
Źródło: opracowanie własne.

plants indicated purchases of fresh fruit and vegetables, milk and dairy products, and 50.0% of them indicated that their customers bought eggs.

In the next multiple-choice question addressed to respondents a list of assortment of organic food was shown with a request to indicate which type of food they think should be introduced to the market. The surveyed consumers (39.6%) agreed that it should be an increased share of meat and cold cuts. In the second place, respondents suggested an extension of the sales of fresh fruit and vegetables (21.1%), milk and dairy products, and ecological products for children (13.6%).

In case of other products, only a few votes indicated the need to extend their assortment. As opposed to the question about the most frequently bought ecological food, it was the youngest respondents, as well as those who rated their own financial situation as bad, who suggested that the share of fresh fruit and vegetables in the market should be higher (44.4% and 42.9% respectively). In all of the other groups, people agreed that the assortment of meat products and cold meats should be extended. The percentage of such indications was between 32.9% and 50.9%. Wasilik (2014) notices that in Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Finland there is a relatively large amount of meat and meat products on their ecological markets. In spite of that, problems with meat processing are observed in many European countries. This is mostly related with price differences in comparison with conventional products.

The main obstacle affecting the decision to discontinue purchasing organic food by surveyed customers was its high price (Table 4). There is an influence of the consumers' age (χ^2 calculated = 39.5, df = 8, p <0.000), their place of residence (χ^2 calculated = 19.5, df = 6, p = 0.0032), as well as their financial situation (χ^2 calculated = 14.9, df = 6, p = 0.020) over their response type.

Too high a price was indicated by 66.2% of respondents. The following obstacles were found in next positions: a lack of adequate assortment during purchase (17.6% of responses) and difficulty in distinguishing conventional food from organic food (16.2%). The respondents were aged 35 and over 56, living in the countryside and in cities up to 25.000 inhabitants and with their financial situation as average. The second reason for deciding not to purchase organic food was difficulty in distinguishing it from conventional food. In other groups the surveyed made it difficult to purchase an adequate assortment. A characteristic feature was a lack of responses among respondents regarding places where they can buy organic food.

According to Nowogródzka (2012) the most important factor limiting the purchase of organic food by consumers was 20-30% higher price compared to conventional food. Żakowska-Biemans et al. (2012) states that for 50% of Polish consumers, organic food is too expensive. This fact is also confirmed by own research, which shows that for more than 66% of surveyed respondents this is the main factor that makes them resign from buying ecological food.

SUMMARY

Changes in the lifestyle of Polish society influence the way ecological food is perceived by consumers as food that guarantees health safety and has high taste advantages. Such opinions were represented regardless of the age, place of residence, or financial situation of the respondents.

The only problem faced by consumers who bought ecological food was usually insufficient assortment of the food. This was indicated by 48.1% of respondents. According to them the assortment needed to be extended. A very high percentage of the respondents indicated that they preferred to buy food of domestic origin, preferably local, which was reflected in purchasing ecological food mostly directly from its producers. The fact that more than one-third of the respondents bought ecological products in specialist stores and large-area stores suggested the development of those distribution channels, indicating the development of ecological food market in general. Those places to buy ecological food were preferred by consumers aged 35 and below. Respondents usually bought ecological fresh fruit and vegetables, eggs, milk, and dairy products. The least developed range of ecological products is the group of meat and cold meats. Although fresh fruit and vegetables were most frequently bought by consumers, the need to extend their assortment in the market was also indicated. Additionally, ecological processors claimed that the offer should be extended by ecological milk and dairy products. One important factor that could influence a higher increase in the sales of ecological food is the financial factor. Too high prices of ecological food are still the main obstacle that prevents people from buying ecological food. Non-financial determinants of demand played a secondary role. Subsidizing the production and

processing of ecological raw materials would undoubtedly contribute to lower prices of ecological food.

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DETERMINANTY WYBORU ŻYWNOŚCI EKOLOGICZNEJ W OPINII KONSUMENTÓW Z WOJEWÓDZTWA PODKARPACKIEGO

Streszczenie. Celem pracy była próba określenia determinant wyboru żywności ekologicznej w opinii konsumentów z województwa podkarpackiego. Badania przeprowadzono za pomocą kwestionariusza ankiety w II kwartale 2015 roku wśród 308 konsumentów z terenu województwa podkarpackiego. Stwierdzono, że konsumenci postrzegają żywność ekologiczną w kategorii żywności o wysokich walorach smakowych i gwarantującej bezpieczeństwo zdrowotne. Mimo chęci zakupu takiej żywności konsumenci zaopatrujący się w produkty ekologiczne uważali, że dostępny ich asortyment na rynku jest niewystarczający. Bardzo wysoki odsetek respondentów wskazywał na preferowanie zakupu żywności pochodzenia krajowego, najlepiej lokalnego, bezpośrednio u producenta. Ponad jedna trzecia respondentów, szczególnie do 35 roku życia, zaopatrywała się w produkty ekologiczne w specjalistycznych sklepach oraz sklepach wielkopowierzchniowych. Zbyt wysoka cena była podstawową barierą ograniczającą zakup żywności ekologicznej.

Słowa kluczowe: żywność ekologiczna, produkty ekologiczne, konsument, decyzje nabywcze

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