

STUDY REGARDING MEAT CONSUMPTION

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Abstract: Meat consumption is considered to be absolutely essential for human nutrition, meat and meat products being important components for the proper functioning of the human body. Meat is a good source of protein, vitamins and minerals. The meat industry is a strategic sector, which can significantly contribute to the increasing of the local food industry competitiveness and to ensuring food security. Currently, the Romanian meat market is dependent on meat imports, mainly regarding meat processed products. Livestock's or feedstock's resulting from slaughtering with a low added value are used for export, which has led to an imbalance in the trade balance.

Key words: market, enquiry, offer, consumption, meat

INTRODUCTION

Increases of the population's living standards, as well as higher enquiry for meat and meat products has been accompanied by the orientation of the consumers' interest towards the quality of the food, their safety and towards the nutritional qualities controlled by the corresponding legislations [4, 6,11]. Meat is an important food in the diet of a wide range of consumers, therefore, the fulfilment of food safety criteria is mandatory [3,4,13]. Consumers are constantly demanding new products with superior sensorial and functional characteristics. The new directions regarding meat processing are aimed on innovative products, based on increasing the added value by manufacturing products with high nutritional value, superior sensorial characteristics, easy to prepare or to consume and with a low content of sugars, salt or fat, respectively cholesterol [8, 14,15].

Meat consumption per capita has reached its highest level in the year of 2018, reaching a value of almost 77 kg, which means an increased value by 5 kg, compared to the year of 2017 and almost a 10 kg difference compared to the value of the year 2016. The National Institute of Statistics (INS) indicates an increase of meat consumption in Romania by 40% in the time period between 2013-2018. Thus, if in the year of 2013, meat consumption per capita was 54 kilograms, in the year of 2018 it has been calculated at a value of 77 kilograms [12,13,17].

In the year of 2018, pork meat has been the most consumed type of meat, with a share of almost 50% (38,3 kg), while poultry was on the second place with a share of 27 kg per capita. In our country, pork meat is the most consumed type of meat and comes before poultry or beef, however, only 30% of the consumption was satisfied by the domestic production. In 2019, Romania has had a number only 3,95 million head pigs, a number that has decreased with 75% compared to the year of 2006 [18,19].

Romania, which is a country where pork meat is widely consumed, has purchased in the year of 2020, a total of 88333.65 tons of pork meat and pork organs from 24 member states and about 1448 tons from the United Kingdom. The four main suppliers were: Germany, with 20931.354 tons, Hungary: 18479.152, Spain: 13049.667 tons and the Netherlands, with 11709.698 tons [16,20].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Regarding the study case, we have prepared a survey that has included 10 questions. The survey was a non-exhaustive survey type (which means that the survey rate is less than 14.3% and the sample is more than 30 people). In this case, the survey was conducted on a sample of 42 people.

RESEARCH RESULTS

SURVEY – MEAT AND MEAT PRODUCTS CONSUMPTION

1. Do you eat meat and meat products?

a) Yes

b) No

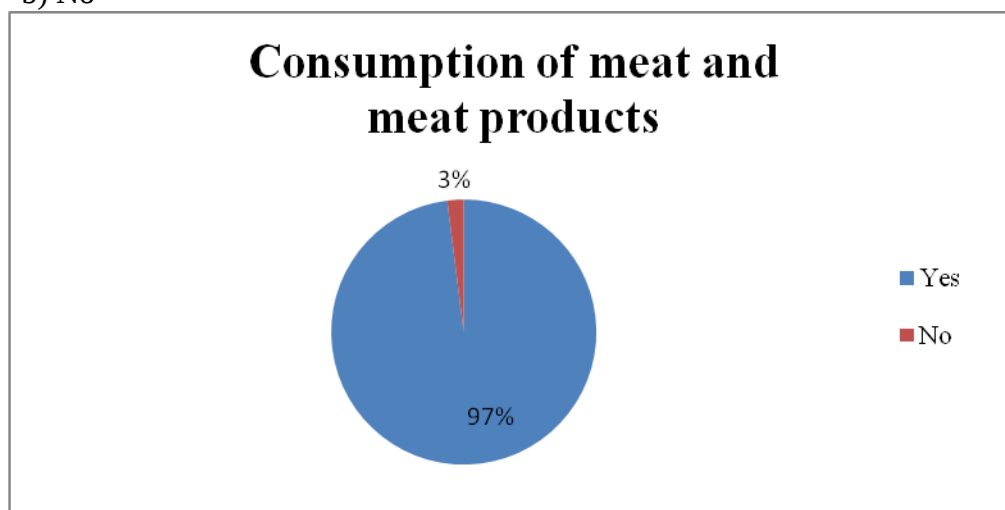


Figure 1. Meat and meat products consumption

Following the analysis of the answers, we noticed that 97% of the respondents are people who eat meat and meat products and 3% are people who do not eat meat and meat products.

2. How often do you eat meat products?

a) Daily

b) Every few days

c) Weekly

d) Monthly

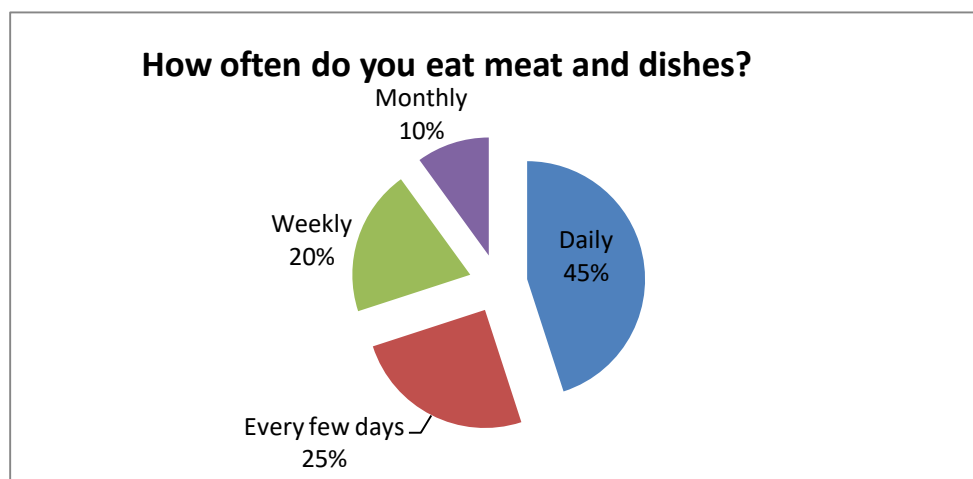


Figure 2. The frequency of meat and meat products consumption

Regarding the frequency of meat and meat products consumption, most respondents mentioned a daily consumption of 45%, while 20% of respondents consume meat and meat products weekly and 10% of respondents consume meat and meat products monthly.

3. The place where you prefer to buy your meat products from:

- a) Specialty stores
- b) Supermarket
- c) Directly from the producer

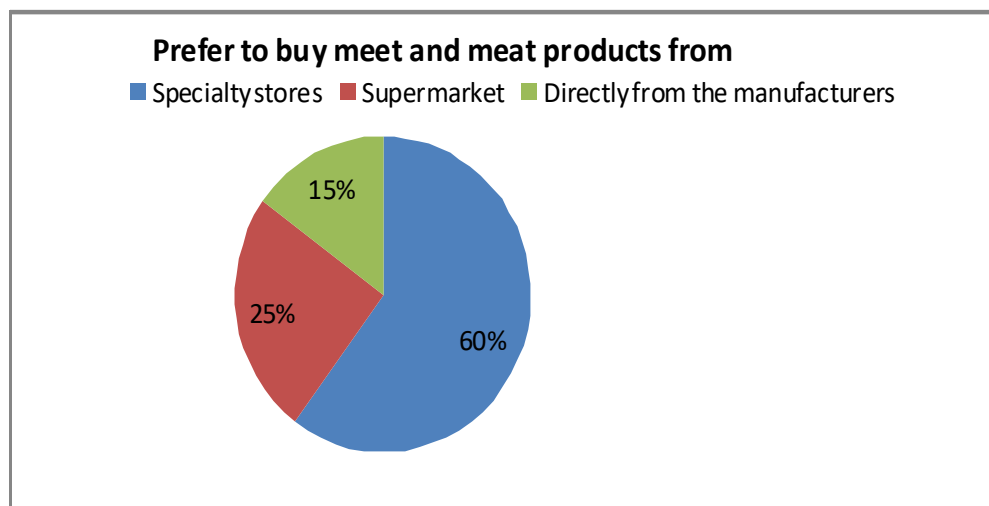


Figure 3. The place where you prefer to buy your meat products

Most respondents, meaning a percentage of 60%, have mentioned that they prefer to buy meat and meat products from specialty stores, while 25% of the respondents prefer the supermarket and 15% of the respondents prefer to buy meat and meat products directly from the producers.

4. What type of meat do you frequently consume?

- a) Beef
- b) Pork
- c) Poultry
- d) Others

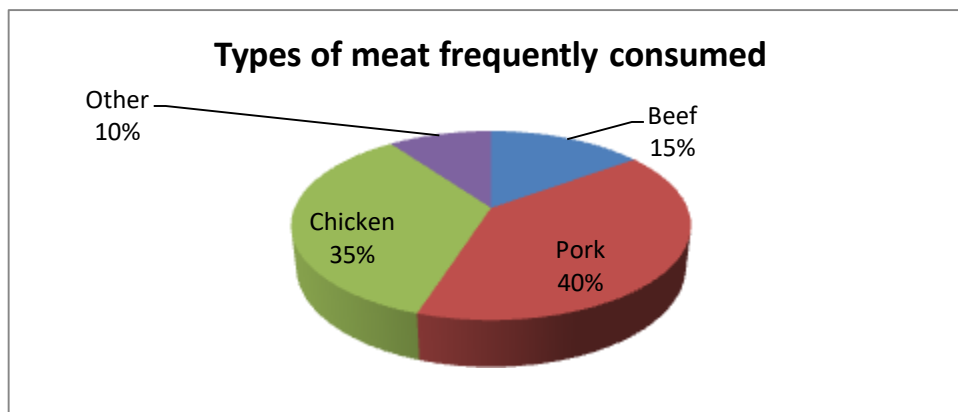


Figure 4. Types of meat frequently consumed

According to the results, it can be observed that most of the respondents, in a percentage of 40%, frequently consume pork meat, while poultry is secondly preferred by 35% of the respondents and beef gets the third place with a percentage of 15%.

5. Do you buy meat products according to the ingredients mentioned on the label?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Sometimes

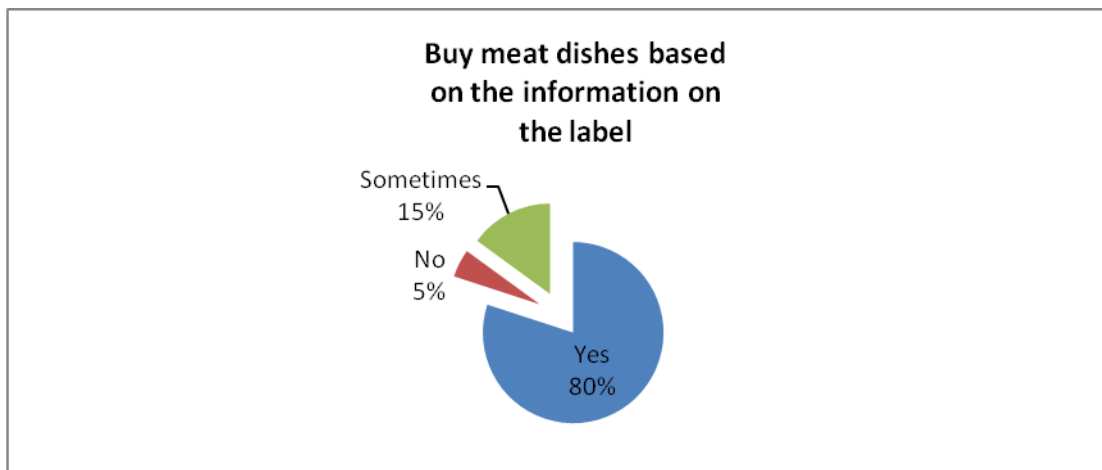


Figure 5. Reading the information on the label

A percentage of 80 % of the respondents have chosen to buy meat products according to the information mentioned on the label, while a percentage of 5% do not take this information into consideration.

6. Do you buy meat products according to the price?

- a) Yes
- b) No

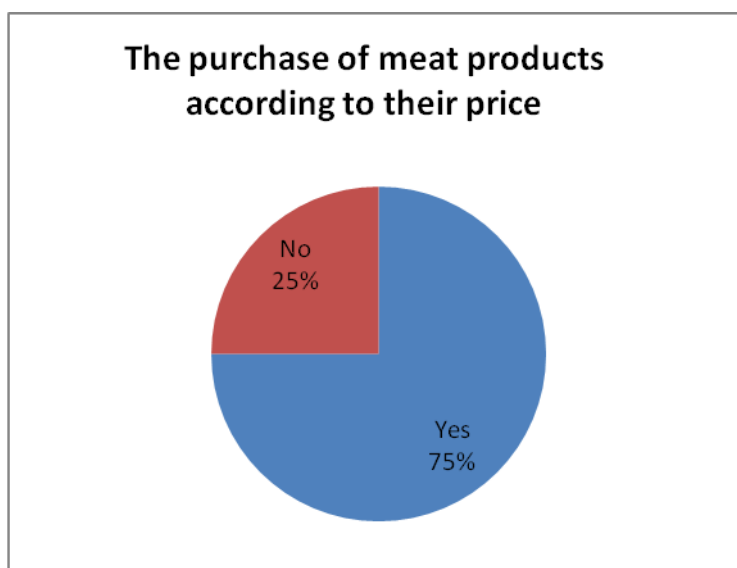


Figure 6. The influence of the price on meat products consumption

According to the results, a percentage of 75% of the interviewed persons take into consideration the prices when purchasing meat products, while 25% of the respondents do not take this aspect into consideration.

The following questions from the survey contain information about the life environment of the consumers, their gender structure, age group and family income.

The centralized data showed that 77% of the interviewed persons come from urban areas and 23% from rural areas. The responses obtained showed that the highest share is held by women in the proportion of 77%, while 23% are males, 16% of those interviewed fall into the age group under 25 years old, 57% are in the age group of 26-49 years old, and 27% in the age group of people over 50 years old.

CONCLUSIONS

Currently, the population has become increasingly aware of the importance of eating good quality meat and meat products to ensure their own health. According to the centralized data, meat consumption in Romania is constantly increasing and, at the same time, meat is consumed daily by individuals, in large proportions, due to its essential properties to the human body.

The people interviewed integrate meat and meat products into their daily and weekly menu. This study shows that consumers prefer to buy fresh meat, mostly because that want to make sure that they buy meat from safe sources and with clear traceability and as a result most respondents are willing to pay up to 30% or more for a good quality product. The origin and traceability of the products are also important factors in the decision of purchasing meat and meat products.

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