

**ASSESSMENT OF CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR AND PREFERENCE FOR
VALUE-ADDED SWEET POTATO PRODUCTS IN HOMABAY AND NAIROBI
COUNTIES, KENYA**

By

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Abstract

Orange-fleshed sweet potato (OFSP) is bio-fortified with vitamin A, thus highly promoted for its contribution in the fight against vitamin A deficiency. It is predominantly consumed in rural areas where the roots are boiled or eaten raw. One of the potential mechanisms to promote consumption of OFSP is to enhance its availability through processing into products with a longer shelf life and more desirable to the consumers. In Kenya, several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the Ministry of Agriculture have made considerable support for OFSP value addition to promote and scale-up its consumption. However, very few farmers and agro-processors practice value addition due to market uncertainties. Market availability is one of the determinants of value addition, however there is little information on available markets for OFSP products. This creates the need to investigate OFSP products and product attributes that are preferred by consumers. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to examine consumer purchase behaviour and preference for value-added sweet potato products in HomaBay and Nairobi counties, Kenya. The study is guided by the random utility theory and will employ a choice experiment design. Data will be collected using semi structured questionnaires from a random sample of 450 orange-fleshed sweet potato consumers in HomaBay and Nairobi counties. The analysis will involve a Random Parameter Logit model for the choice experiment and a double bounded logit to assess the consumers' WTP for a sweet potato *chapati*. The output of the study will be disseminated as an MSc. thesis, journal papers and conference papers.

Keywords: Orange-fleshed sweet potato; value-addition; consumption; choice experiment.