

CONSUMERS PERCEPTION GAPS OF FOOD QUALITY

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SUMMARY

63 pages, 31 pictures, 60 references, 4 appendixes.

The *main purpose* of this master's thesis is to find the consumer perception gaps of food quality.

This work consists of 3 (three) main parts: the analysis of literature, the research and its results and the developed model with its conclusion and recommendations.

The literature analysis consists of a review of the theories of quality, definitions of certain terms regarding food product quality, food quality indicators and the factors influencing them, as well as the main laws regulating food quality. This section also analyses the concept of food quality perception and forms a model of the gaps in consumer perception of food quality.

The research was divided into three studies: the pilot study, in which 40 respondents participated, whose main purpose was to determine the main criteria of bread quality perception. After that was an interview with experts, which sought to determine the expert opinion regarding questions of bread quality, because they are more familiar with food quality control and they evaluate food product quality according to more objective criteria. This study will help determine if the opinion of the general public regarding the criteria influencing bread quality matches the experts' opinion, and where there are perception gaps forming. In the final stage of the research - the user survey, there were 392 participants. This survey sought to determine the buying skills of consumers, as well as their perception of

food safety and perceived bread quality. The information collected was then analysed with the help of the computer program, SPSS.

To conclude, the research showed that there differences between consumer and expert perceived bread quality. A model of the gaps in consumer perception of food quality, which consists of 6 gaps, was created based on the differences determined by this research. The research showed that the main gap was the author's discovered knowledge gap.