**Current Status of the Market for Pasta and the Factors Affecting Consumer Preference on Local Made and Imported Pasta: The Case of Gampaha District, Sri Lanka**

## **SADMG Dilshan1\*, HSR Rosairo1**

### 1Department of Agribusiness Management, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka.

\* *minoshdilshan@gmail.com*

Sri Lankan pasta market can be divided into two; consumers who prefer locally-made pasta and consumers who prefer imported pasta. The study focuses on the Gampaha district with a sample of 390 pasta consumers and observes their preference between the two types and the factors affecting their preference was also observed. The sample’s preference has been divided into 71% for locally made pasta and only 29% for imported pasta. Demographic factors like age, gender, employment status, educational level, and the number of family members in the family were surveyed and could see a measurable difference between the pasta preference within those demographic factors. The estimated Local pasta production had an upward trend from 2010 to 2019-time period. The knowledge and awareness of the respondents on the local pasta market were not satisfactory. Factors like price, quality, availability, promotion, packaging, and taste of the product, which affected the consumer preference between locally made pasta and imported pasta were analyzed by binary logistic regression. The results have shown that factors like product price and product availability were in favour of the local pasta preference and the product quality, promotion, packaging, and taste were in favour of the imported pasta preference. Obtaining quality certificates like ISO, HACCP, and GMP for local pasta products, strategically promoting local productions to the market, following attractive and informative packaging methods, and often improvement in product sensory attributes were some suggestions to increase locally-made pasta preference. As the government’s strict import policy due to the ongoing economic crisis in Sri Lanka, local pasta producers have met difficulties to obtain imported raw materials such as durum wheat flour, it was suggested to follow further research on local alternatives to replace durum wheat flour as the main ingredient of pasta.

**Keywords:** *binary logistic regression, consumer preference, durum wheat flour, locally made pasta*