A 2019 Summary Analyzing the Potential Market for Connecticut Seaweed

Anoushka Concepcion, John Bovay, Miriah Russo-Kelly, Tessa Getchis

Anoushka Concepcion, Connecticut Sea Grant, 1080 Shennecossett Road, Groton, CT 06340
anoushka.concepcion@uconn.edu, 860-405-9105

*These findings are based on the forthcoming report Connecticut Seafood Survey: Assessing Connecticut Residents’ Seafood Consumption Knowledge, Behaviors, and Preferences

RESULTS

- Out of 1756 CT residents surveyed, 35% said they consume seaweed products
- Respondents who identified as white/non-Hispanic were the largest ethnic/racial group (76%) to consume or purchase seaweed products, followed by Asians (33%)
- More women consume seaweed products than men (60% vs. 40%)
  - Primarily in the form of sushi rolls, pre-made salads, and snack chips
- Approximately half of seaweed consuming respondents consume or purchase seaweed products more than twice a year
  - Respondents with higher incomes ($110-$149k and >$200k) consumed/purchased seaweed products more frequently
  - Respondents with more education (at least some exposure to college) consumed/purchased seaweed products more frequently
- For respondents who don’t usually consume or purchase seaweed products, 78% are interested in trying them
  - They are especially interested in raw/fresh, salads, noodles, seasonings, and snack chips

WILLINGNESS TO PAY

Some respondents were randomly provided with information about either the environmental benefits and health and safety, or the economic benefits of aquaculture in Connecticut (information treatments) prior to asking how much they would pay for seaweed products from either CT, Maine, Korea, China, or none of the provided choices.

- Prices for kelp noodles ranged from $10 to $13 per pound
- Prices for fresh/raw kelp ranged from $5 to $8 per pound
- Respondents who did not receive information about CT aquacultured products were willing to pay an average of $1.08/lb more for CT kelp noodles when compared to Maine
kelp noodles, $7.79/lb more when compared to Korean kelp noodles, and $8.35/lb more when compared to Chinese kelp noodles
  o After receiving an information treatment, willingness to pay for CT kelp noodles increased to about $1.60/lb more when compared to Maine kelp noodles
  ▶ Respondents who did not receive information about CT aquacultured products were willing to pay an average of $1.17/lb more for CT fresh/raw kelp when compared to fresh/raw kelp from Maine
    o After receiving an information treatment, willingness to pay for CT fresh/raw kelp increased to about $2.00/lb more when compared to Maine fresh/raw kelp
    o The average respondent did not want raw/fresh kelp from Korea or China

### WHAT WE DON’T KNOW

- For respondents who stated they had preferences for CT aquacultured products, did the prices given influence their responses?
- If posed with these choices in real-world settings, would respondents follow through on the choices they indicated in this survey?