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SHORT FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS AND LOCAL VALUE IN DAIRY PRODUCTION

SUMMARY

This paper examines the potential for enhancing direct sales in small family farms, with a specific focus on the case study farm in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Short food supply chains and direct sales represent an increasingly relevant marketing model in modern agribusiness, offering farmers opportunities to increase profitability, build closer relationships with consumers, and preserve rural traditions. The survey was conducted on a sample of 245 respondents who consumed the farm dairy products. The respondents preferred the intrinsic over the extrinsic factors of the product when purchasing. The results also showed that trust and quality influence purchasing a product. The growing trend of a healthy diet will increase the short food supply chains for milk and dairy products, which opens the possibility to increase the assortment and supply, and the obtained results could have a positive impact on the development of a strategy for improving direct sales on the farm. However, challenges such as limited financial resources and competition from imported goods remain significant barriers. Findings suggest that strengthening direct sales can contribute not only to farm income stability but also to broader rural economic development.

Keywords: direct sales, consumer behavior, local dairy products, familiy farm

INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of consumers are orienting themselves toward local food (Kneafsey *et al*., 2013; Feldmann and Hamm, 2015) and purchasing food through short food supply chains (SFSC) directly from farmers (Aguiar *et al.*, 2018; González-Azcárate *et al*., 2021; Renkema and Hilletofth, 2022; Evola *et al.*, 2022). From this perspective, research interest focused on food distribution through various forms of direct sales has become increasingly relevant (Belletti

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and Marescotti, 2020; Paciarotti and Torregiani, 2021). At the same time, as a consequence of food market development and new market trends, new forms of direct sales channels (Winarno *et al.*, 2020; Lankauskienė *et al.*, 2022) are emerging and developing, to connect consumers directly with the producers of primary and processed agricultural products, predominantly from small family farms. Therefore, it is essential to assess the current state of this segment of the distribution channels by examining consumer attitudes toward food purchased via direct sales, as well as by conducting analyses of consumer satisfaction with the provided services and the quality of the offered products. This also involves identifying the potential advantages and disadvantages of the existing direct sales channels, along with opportunities to overcome the observed shortcomings.

Kneafsey (2013) defines short food supply chains as those in which the number of intermediaries between farmers and consumers is minimal or equal to zero. Renting (2003) argues that shortening food supply chains creates new market relationships, with direct sales representing one of the most important forms of short food supply chains. Compared to indirect sales, direct sales allow producers to achieve significantly higher selling prices (Stojanović *et al.*, 2016). Direct sales are conducted at the farm gate, at farmers' markets, and in some cases via the internet or direct home delivery—door-to-door (Vlahović, 2016), which corresponds to the case examined here.

Kovačić (2005) notes that engaging in direct sales entails a wide range of additional responsibilities. Beyond agricultural production, farms must also take on the role of storage, transportation, processing, and marketing of their products. The most common motives for direct consumer purchases include: traditional production, transparency of the production process, personal contact with the producer, mutual trust, and similar factors. The same author emphasizes that market proximity, the type of product, and the level of farm equipment are key prerequisites for successful direct sales. Farms located near consumers can offer multiple forms of direct sales and market all their products. A key advantage of short supply chains is that they provide family farms with an excellent means of product diversification, allow them to retain a larger share of added value, and secure more stable income streams (Gajdić, 2019).

According to Feher (2007), the essence of direct sales lies in the notion of a "shared advantage." Both producers and consumers are beneficiaries: producers secure work and income, while consumers gain access to healthy food. For consumers, the benefits include access to locally grown, fresh, healthy, and often organic products. By purchasing locally produced food, consumers support local farmers and contribute to the revitalization of rural areas (La Trobe, 2008).

Aguglia *et al.* (2009) highlight that direct sales represent a form of marketing that enables farmers to retain a larger share of the final value of their products. Online purchasing of organic food has emerged as a growing trend within online marketing (Hanpermchai and Dejtanasoontorn, 2011). This sales method is employed by the analyzed farm, which serves as a case study. Rocchi *et al.* (2019) found that for farmers to sell their products directly to consumers,

they must possess additional IT skills, which are not determined by education level but rather by age. For small agricultural holdings producing dairy products, the most effective sales channels are short supply chains based on customer orders placed via phone or online (Horská *et al*., 2020). O'Hara and Low (2020) argue that using the internet as a form of direct sales reduces transportation costs from producers to end consumers. Furthermore, the use of social media in agricultural marketing improves efficiency, reduces costs, and increases farmers' revenues through higher demand for agricultural products (Inegbedion *et al*., 2021).

The primary aim of this study is to analyze the opportunities, challenges, and prospects of SFSC of milk and dairy products on farms of the analyzed type, as well as to identify possibilities for improving the functioning of short food supply chains. Short supply chains with dairy products have already been the subject of scientific considerations in other countries (Sellitto *et al.,* 2018; Prišenk *et al.,* 2018; Mancini *et al.,* 2019; Horská *et al.,* 2020; Brumă *et al.,* 2021), while in BiH, this topic has almost not been considered from a scientific point of view so far. In addition to the primary objective, the secondary aim of the research is to determine the influence of specific factors such as the use of social media, income levels, number of children, and educational attainment on consumer attitudes toward purchasing through SFSCs.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The family farm "Mijatović", which is the subject of this research, has been a registered farm in the Farm Registry of the Republic of Srpska since 2013, but several generations of the family have worked and produced on the farm. Today, the farm is managed by a young couple and is primarily engaged in milk production and processing as its core activity. Both spouses have also graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture and possess formal education and expertise in the field in which they work. The family consists of three adult members, excluding children, who are actively working on the farm. The farm cultivates 10 hectares of agricultural land, producing sufficient quantities of cereals and forage to meet the feed requirements of its 8–10 dairy cows and other livestock. The entire volume of milk and dairy products is marketed through direct sales channels. The most common distribution methods are home delivery and on-farm sales. Promotion is carried out primarily through social media and word-of-mouth recommendations from satisfied customers. Milk and dairy products are marketed exclusively through a short food supply chain, namely by door-to-door delivery or sales at the farm gate, using social media for the promotion of the farm's products. This farm was used as a case study to research the functioning of the short dairy supply chain in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

An analysis of attitudes, motivations, facts, opinions and consumer satisfaction with the products and sales methods of the family farm "Mijatović" was conducted using primary data. The aim of the analysis was to identify

opportunities for improving direct sales. The following research hypothesis was formulated and tested based on the results of the conducted research:

H1: For dairy product consumers, intrinsic attributes of milk and dairy products are more important than extrinsic attributes.

Primary data were collected through an online survey using a structured questionnaire that included sociodemographic characteristics of respondents, as well as questions on purchasing frequency, the farm's product assortment, product quality, delivery services, product promotion, online purchasing, and related topics. The survey was conducted in the cities of Banja Luka and Laktaši, where the consumers of this farm's products are located (within a radius of about 30 km from the farm). In total, 245 survey responses were collected from consumers of the farm's products. The first phase of data collection involved testing the clarity and applicability of the questions on a sample of 20 pilot respondents. The primary data were sorted and coded in Microsoft Excel and subsequently transferred into IBM SPSS Statistics (version 22) for further processing and analysis. The analysis of the collected data initially employed descriptive statistics (frequencies and data distribution). Thereafter, appropriate comparative methods were applied to test the significance of differences between groups of responses, in accordance with the data type (ANOVA and general linear models). The significance level for observed differences was set at $p<0.05$. The research findings are presented in tabular and graphical form, based on the survey responses, accompanied by the authors' interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Among the customers of the analyzed farm's products, women are predominant, which is also reflected in the survey sample, where female respondents accounted for 67.35%, while 32.65% were male. In terms of age structure, the largest group of respondents was between 30 and 40 years old (47.35%), followed by those between 40 and 50 years old (32.65%). The third-largest group consisted of respondents aged 50 to 60 years (10.61%). Thus, 80% of the farm's customers and respondents are between 30 and 50 years of age. Based on this case study, the most common participants in of direct buying of food are middle-aged consumers.

Regarding educational background, the majority of respondents hold a university degree (58.78%), followed by those with secondary education (22.45%), while 13.47% hold a master's degree. This indicates that supporters of direct food purchases are more educated consumers.

The most frequent household size among respondents was four members (37.96%), followed by three-member households (28.98%), two-member households (12.56%), and five-member households (12.24%). Households with six members accounted for 6.67%, while those with one member represented 2.86%, and seven-member households 1.63%. Overall, three and four-member households predominate. The largest share of respondents (40%) reported having two children, followed by those with one child (24.49%). Respondents without

children accounted for 19.18%, while 12.65% had three children, 2.86% had four children, and only 0.82% had five children.

As for income levels, 40.82% of respondents reported monthly incomes between 2,000 and 4,000 BAM , while 39.59% had incomes ranging from 1,000 to 2,000 BAM. A smaller portion (10.20%) reported incomes below 1,000 BAM, whereas 9.39% of respondents had monthly incomes exceeding 4,000 BAM.

Milk consumption depends on the population structure, purchasing power, and dietary habits (as found by Dеže *et al.*, 2021). The results from Chart 1 indicate that respondents most frequently (daily) purchase yogurt, followed by cream and milk. On a weekly basis, milk is purchased most often, followed by cream and yogurt. The least frequently purchased products are flavored sliced cheese, cheese in olive oil, smoked cheese, and semi-hard cheese. Products with a shorter shelf life are purchased more frequently, while longer shelf-life products, such as various categories of cheese, are purchased less often, as they are also the most expensive products.

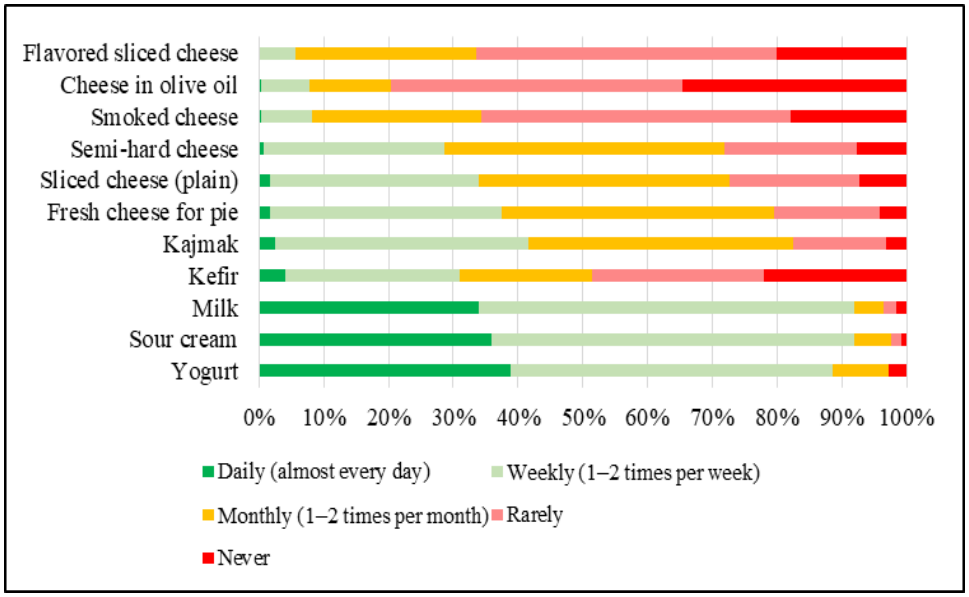

Chart 1. Frequency of purchase of milk and dairy products
**Note: 1€ = 1,95573 BAM*

Heitmann *et al.* (2007) state that a larger assortment should benefit consumers and consequently lead to increased sales. The questions related to the product assortment (Chart 2), consumer satisfaction with the variety of products offered by the analyzed farm, and the possibilities of alternative purchasing options, such as direct on-farm purchase (Chart 3), were analyzed are discussed in this section.

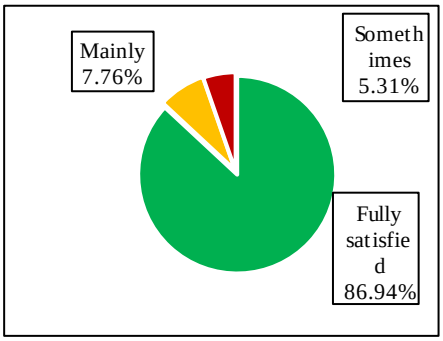

Chart 2. Satisfaction with the product assortment

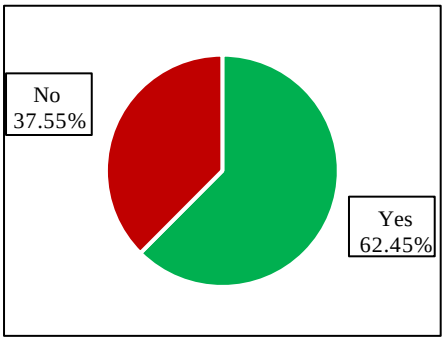

Chart 3. The willingness to purchase products at the farm gate

According to the survey results, 86.94% of respondents are satisfied with the broad assortment of milk products offered by the farm (Chart 2). Additionally, one of the questions concerned the days and times of delivery for milk and dairy products, to which 93.88% of respondents replied that the delivery days were suitable for them, and 96.33% stated that the delivery time was convenient. Thus, in addition to offering high-quality products, it is important to deliver them to customers in a way that is acceptable to them.

The next question concerned the possibility of consumers visiting the farm and buying products directly at the farm, if the delivery to their door were interrupted (Chart 3). If the farm stopped delivering products to the doorstep, 62.45% of respondents indicated that they would be willing to visit the farm to purchase products, while 37.55% stated that they would not, with the most common reason cited being lack of time. The reason for such a large share of consumers willing to purchase domestically produced products, even in a more demanding and expensive way, is supported by the study of Jalić *et al*. (2024), who concluded that homemade products are significantly more desirable compared to industrially produced ones.

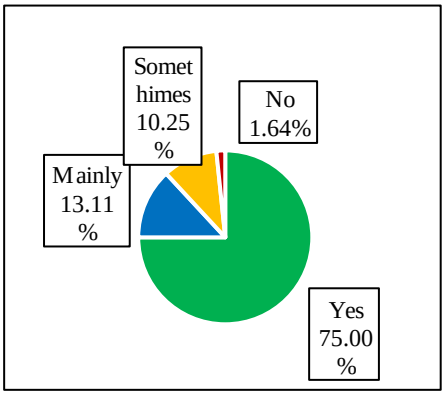

Chart 4. Level of satisfaction with the current packaging

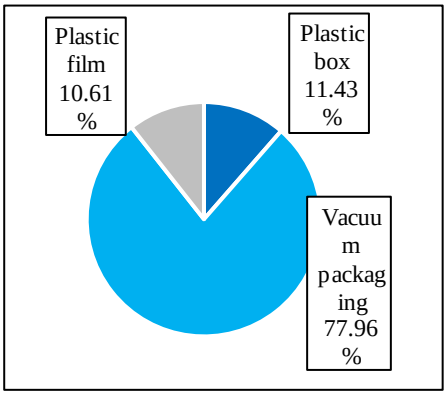

Chart 5. Most preferred types of cheese packaging

Modern packaging is much more than just the product wrapper or a cardboard box for transport (Paraušić *et al.*, 2006). There are two main functions of packaging: protecting the product from spoilage and providing consumers with information about the product (Muhamedbegović *et al.*, 2015). The milk from the household is packaged in 1-liter glass bottles, as are curd, kefir, and yogurt. The results showed that 75% of respondents are satisfied with the farm's products packaging (Chart 4). In total, 77.96% indicated that they prefer cheese vacuum packaging for cheese, 11.43% preferred a single-use plastic boxes, and 10.61% preferred plastic film (Chart 5). Regarding cheese packaging size, 63% of respondents prefer 0.5 kg packages, 33% prefer 1 kg packages, and the remaining 4% prefer other sizes.

Many studies have identified concern for health as the main motivation for food purchase (e.g., Vehapi and Dolićanin, 2016). For this reason, the following analysis highlights the importance of various elements and examines the factors that influence the purchase of products directly from the producer.

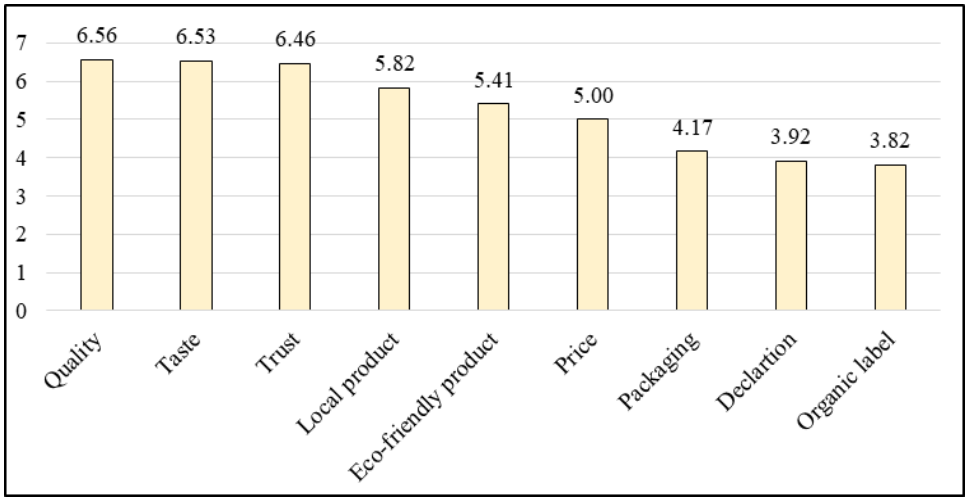

Chart 6. The importance of different elements and factors influencing the purchase of products through SFSC

According to Jalić *et al.* (2022), transitioning from milk production to cheese processing and selling through SFSCs in the market of the Republic of Srpska, as part of BH, is economically justified, as small-scale milk production is financially unsustainable due to the limited production volume and the high share of fixed costs in overall production. Matić (2008) states that when purchasing products, consumers place the greatest emphasis on quality and freshness, while brand and price are less important to them. The results of this study determine that the most significant factors influencing customers to purchase dairy products directly from these farms are product quality, taste, and trust in the producer (Chart 6). Similar to the results of this study, Ostojić *et al.* (2023) found that freshness, quality, aroma and taste, as well as the origin of a product are the most

important factors when purchasing vegetables. The second group of factors, in order of importance, includes the preference for local products and the perception that these products are produced in an eco-friendly manner, followed by the acceptability of the price. The third, least important group of factors for purchasing dairy products through short supply chains from small farms includes packaging, the content of the label, and having an organic certification. This indicates that consumers pay more attention to personal acquaintance with the manufacturer than to specific certificates.

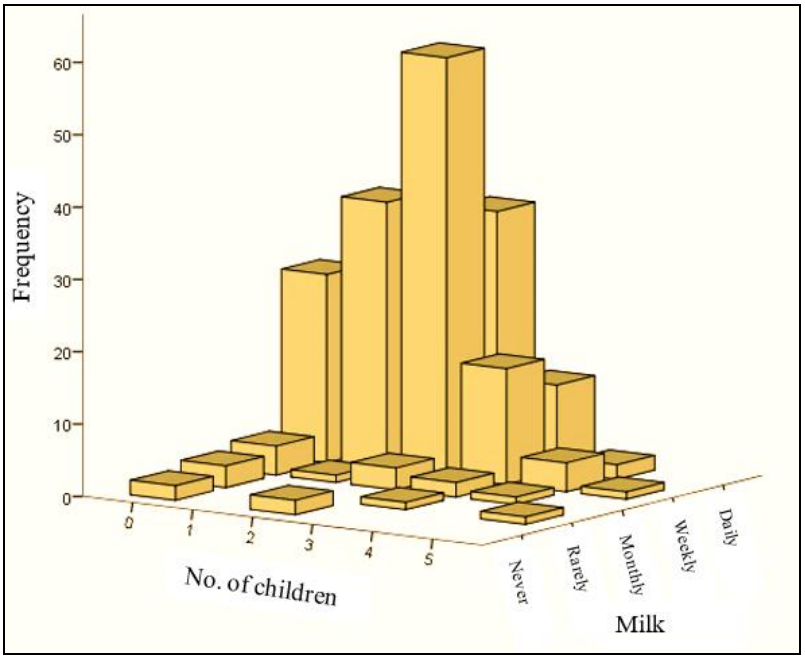

Chart 7. The impact of the number of children on the frequency of milk purchases

According to the survey results it was observed that respondents with two or three children purchase milk most often, both on a weekly and daily basis (Chart 7). Chiciudean *et al.* (2016) note that extrinsic attributes are applied to all types of products, while intrinsic attributes are specific to certain products. Intrinsic attributes define the physical aspects of a product, whereas extrinsic attributes are related to the product itself but are not part of it. Consumers often make purchase decisions based on extrinsic attributes (origin, price, production method, etc.) or intrinsic attributes (taste, texture, color, etc.). According to Veale *et al.* (2006), consumers are often unable to evaluate both intrinsic and extrinsic attributes before making a purchase decision. Grgurić (1996) states that milk is an essential food in a child's diet. The most important properties of milk are its role as a source of calcium and minerals necessary for bone growth. Colić-Barić *et al.* (2000) further note that for children, foods from the group of milk and dairy

products are of personal importance. By cross-tabulating the results on the frequency of milk purchases with the number of children in the household, it was found that respondents with two or three children buy milk daily and weekly much more often than those with fewer children, and for this reason, the hypothesis can be considered confirmed.

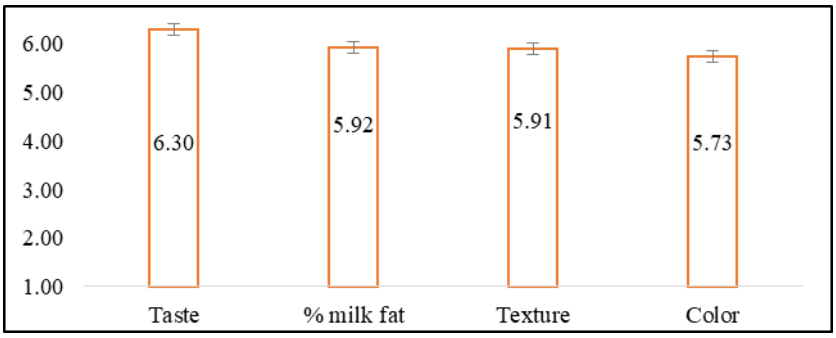

Chart 8. Intrinsic characteristics of milk

When purchasing fresh milk, traditional attributes of milk are highly valued, such as local origin, high nutritional value, and good taste of the product (Merlino *et al*., 2022). The most important intrinsic attribute of milk, according to the research results, is considered to be taste (mean value 6.30), followed by milk fat content (mean value 5.92), then texture (mean value 5.91), and color (mean value 5.73) (Chart 8).

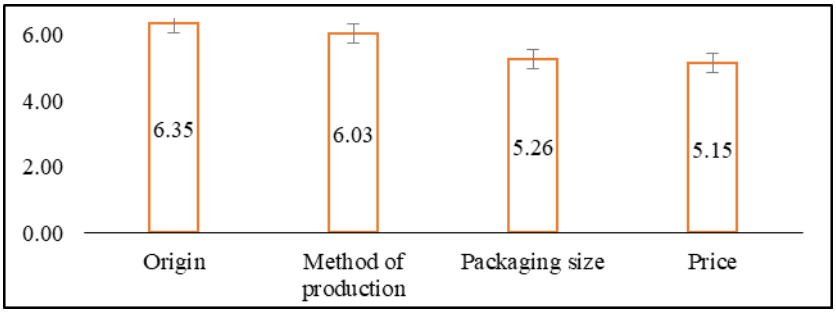

Chart 9. Extrinsic characteristics of milk

Regarding extrinsic characteristics, the origin of the milk was identified as the most important attribute, with a mean value of 6.35, followed by the production method with a mean value of 5.26 (Chart 9). The package size was rated with a mean value of 5.26, and the price with 5.15. Kristić *et al.* (2015) state that extrinsic product attributes increasingly represent an important reference point in the consumer decision-making process. According to Mesić *et al.* (2017), consumers pay particular attention to the origin and price of products when considering extrinsic attributes.

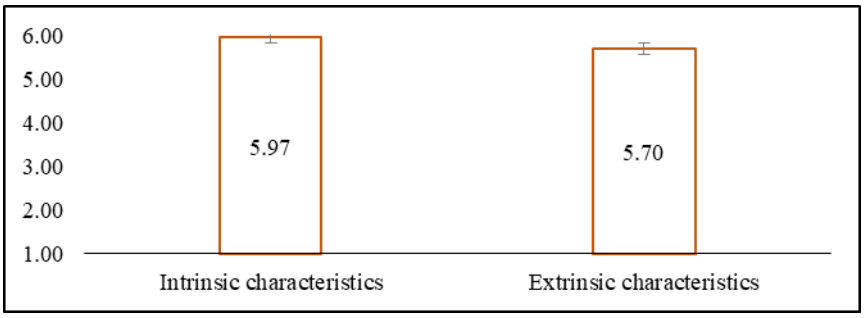

Chart 10. Evaluation of the intrinsic and extrinsic attributes of milk from the farm

Respondents rated the importance of intrinsic attributes with an overall average score of 5.96±1.1, while the importance of extrinsic attributes was rated with an average score of 5.7±1.09 (Chart 10). The difference is small and of little practical significance, but nevertheless statistically highly significant ($F=13.44$, $p<0.001$). This indicates that intrinsic attributes of milk are significantly more important to respondents.

According to Chiciudean *et al.* (2016) and Mesias *et al.*, (2023), taste is the most important intrinsic attribute when purchasing cheese, which was also confirmed by this research (mean value 6.19). Taste is followed by aroma (mean value 5.89), texture (mean value 5.85), and the presence of spices (mean value 5.74). All scores (Chart 11) are generally high, which indicates that respondents are satisfied with the products they purchased from the farm.

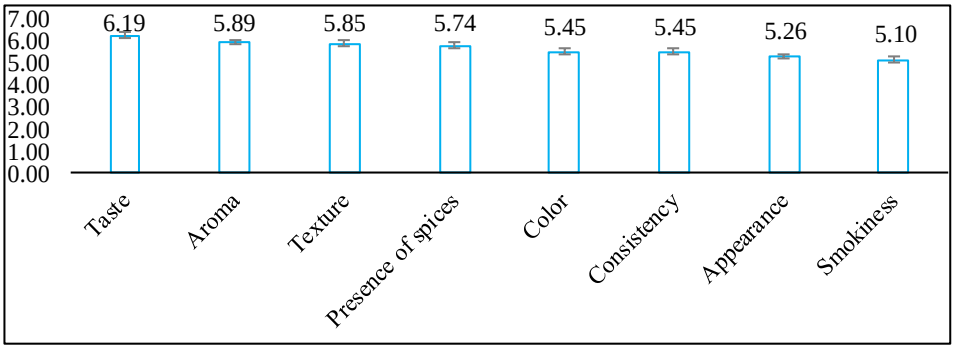

Chart 11. Intrinsic characteristics of cheese

Regarding the extrinsic attributes of cheese, the highest ratings were given to the same attributes as for milk: origin (mean value 6.24), production method (mean value 5.99), packaging method (mean value 5.28), and package size (mean value 5.20) (Chart 12). Some consumers make purchasing decisions based on the extrinsic attributes of the product, while for others, intrinsic attributes are more important. Chiciudean (2016) states that consumers are more interested in intrinsic attributes such as taste and the fact that the cheese is made from natural ingredients.

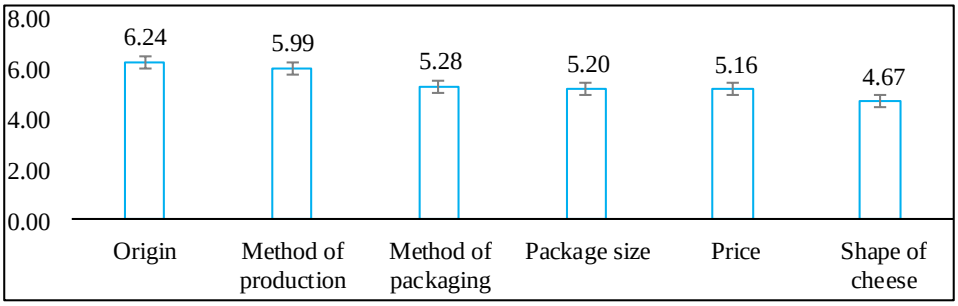

Chart 12. Extrinsic characteristics of cheese of the Farm "Mijatović"

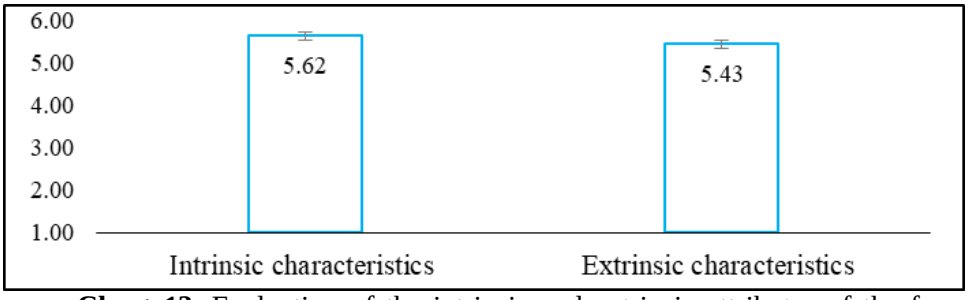

Chart 13. Evaluation of the intrinsic and extrinsic attributes of the farm "Mijatović"

Respondents rated the importance of intrinsic attributes with an overall average score of 5.62±1.21, while the importance of extrinsic attributes was rated with an average score of 5.42±1.12 (Chart 13).

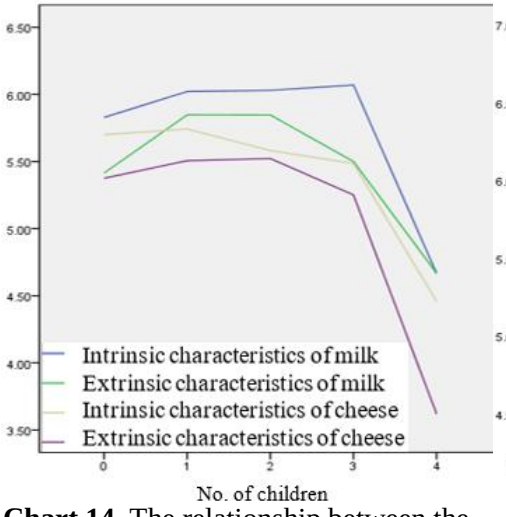

Chart 14. The relationship between the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics of milk and cheese, with the number of children

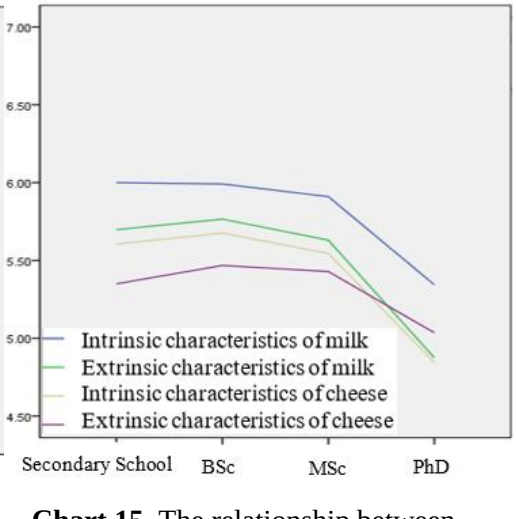

Chart 15. The relationship between the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics of milk and cheese, with the level of education

The difference is small and of little practical significance, but nevertheless statistically highly significant (F=9.67, p=0.002). For cheese as well, it is indicative that respondents considere intrinsic attributes to be significantly more important.

The analysis of the impact of the number of children on the evaluation of intrinsic and extrinsic attributes of milk and cheese shows that, as the number of children per household increases, these evaluated characteristics are considered less important (Chart 14). The only sustained increase was observed in the importance of intrinsic attributes of milk among families with three children. Respondents with four children rated all these attributes lower, meaning they considered them less important compared to respondents with fewer children.

When analyzing the impact of education (Chart 15), intrinsic attributes were rated as more important than extrinsic ones across all categories, except among the most highly educated respondents. In this case, a paradox emerged: they rated the intrinsic attributes of milk higher than extrinsic ones, while the extrinsic attributes of cheese were the only category they rated as more important than intrinsic attributes.

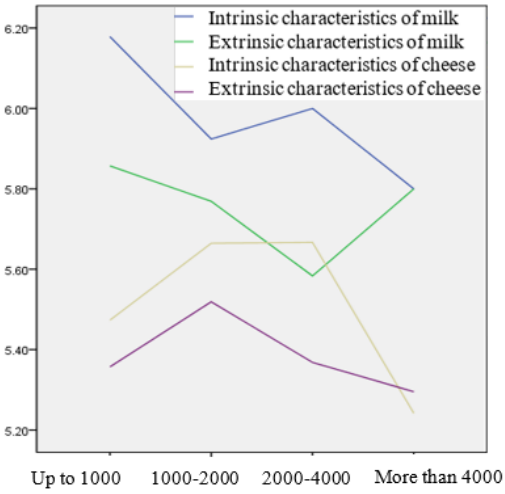

Chart 16. The relationship between the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics of milk and cheese and the monthly income in BAM

According to Užar (2023), respondents' monthly income has a significant impact on the intention to purchase cheese directly from the farm. An analysis of the ratings given by respondents regarding the importance of specific attributes reveals an interesting finding: only respondents with middle-high incomes gave the highest ratings to intrinsic attributes for cheese (Chart 16). Regarding milk, intrinsic factors are rated best by those with the lowest income. When it comes to the extrinsic properties of milk, they are rated best by respondents with the lowest income, while the extrinsic properties of cheese are rated best by those with a middle-income level. It is also noteworthy that respondents with high incomes

above 4,000 BAM gave equal ratings to both intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics, whether for cheese or milk.

The findings confirm that intrinsic product attributes, particularly taste and freshness, play a more significant role than extrinsic attributes in shaping consumer preferences for dairy products purchased directly from farms. Furthermore, the results highlight the importance of trust in producers, product quality, and local origin as key drivers of consumer participation in SFSCs. These findings are consistent with previous studies conducted in other European contexts, but they also provide new insights into consumer behavior in Southeast Europe, where small-scale farms and direct marketing channels are becoming increasingly important for rural economic sustainability.

As part of the research, certain statements were defined concerning the factors influencing purchases through short supply chains and the impact of online posts on product purchases. Respondents rated these statements on a scale from 1 to 7, and they are presented in the following chart. Higher statement values indicate a greater level of agreement with the given assertion.

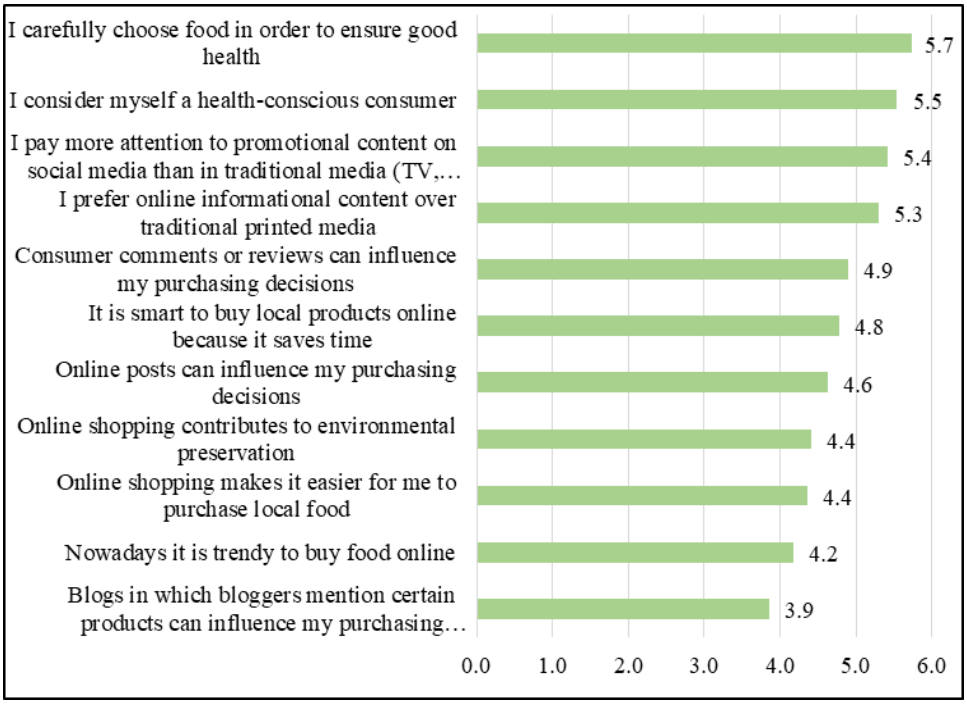

Chart 17. Degree of respondents' agreement with statements on food and the impact of online posts on purchasing behavior

According to Mesić and Šaban (2020), online sales have become the most popular channel for selling food products over the past decade. Ćendić and Zarić (2019) note that there are various motives for purchasing organic food, the most important being concern for one's own health and care for the environment.

Consumers of dairy products from the farm expressed the highest level of agreement with the statement that they choose food to ensure their health, followed by another health-related statement with which they also strongly agreed (Chart 17). After the statements focused on health factors, the third highest-rated statement was that social networks are more important for promotion than traditional media. Moderately high ratings were given to the statements that consumers' attitudes and opinions influence purchasing decisions, that it is wise to buy local products online as this saves time, and that online posts can affect purchase decisions. Somewhat lower ratings were given to the claims that online shopping contributes to environmental protection, facilitates the purchase of domestic products, and that current trends lean toward buying local food. The least accurate statement, according to respondents, was that bloggers can influence purchasing decisions for certain products. The results suggest that consumer loyalty and purchasing decisions are strongly influenced by personal relationships with producers and perceived product quality, which represents an important characteristic of SFSC systems in transitional agricultural markets such as Bosnia and Herzegovina.

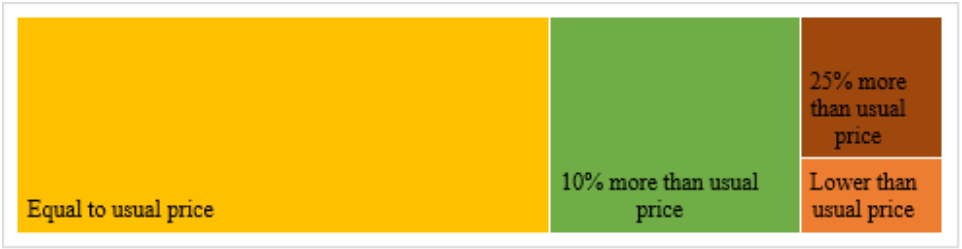

Chart 18. Willing to pay higher milk prices

Out of the total number of respondents, the majority (58%) stated that the prices of milk from the farm under study were identical to those in nearby supermarkets (Chart 18). The second-largest group, 27%, believed that the prices were about 10% higher than in retail shops. In addition, 10% of respondents considered the prices to be significantly higher, even by a quarter higher than the usual price. A very small number of respondents thought the prices were actually lower than usual. Based on the above, it is evident that price is not such a primary factor. A similar conclusion regarding wine as an agricultural product was reached by Jalić *et al.* (2022). Their study demonstrated that price does not have a particularly significant influence on the purchase of agricultural products when compared to other factors such as taste, aroma, color, freshness, and similar attributes of tangible product quality.

Čehić (2020) stated that the intrinsic attributes of products refer to their composition and represent an objective measure of product quality, while the technological production process is a key factor in defining these intrinsic attributes. The research results showed that taste is the most important intrinsic attribute when purchasing milk and cheese, while product origin was the highest-

rated extrinsic attribute. Kristić (2015), in his research, found that more than half of respondents, 52.46%, answered that taste is the most important characteristic when purchasing milk. Based on the research, the set hypothesis „Intrinsic attributes of milk and dairy products are more important than extrinsic attributes" was confirmed. Respondents rated the importance of intrinsic attributes of milk with an overall average score of 5.96±1.1, while extrinsic attributes were rated with an average score of 5.7±1.09. The difference is small, but statistically significant ($F=13.44$, $p<0.001$), indicating that intrinsic attributes of milk are significantly more important to respondents. The intrinsic attributes of cheese were rated with an overall average score of 5.62±1.21, while extrinsic attributes were rated with an average score of 5.42±1.12. The same was observed for cheese as with milk. The difference is small, but statistically highly significant ($F=9.67$, $p=0.002$). The presented results clearly show that intrinsic attributes are more important to respondents than extrinsic ones. These data confirm the stated hypothesis.

CONCLUSIONS

Direct sales for small farmers and processors of agricultural products provide new opportunities for marketing and distributing food products. Direct sales via a short supply chain represent an effective strategy for small farmers. The research results, based on the case study of Farm "Mijatović" show that consumers who use SFSCs are mostly female, belong to the middle age group, are predominantly highly educated, have a medium level of monthly income, and mostly live in families with two or three children. This suggests that women are primarily responsible for purchasing food, including dairy products, for their families, including children. Education plays an important role in purchasing decisions. Highly educated consumers prefer local products produced using traditional methods on small family farms, focusing on quality over price, which aligns with the principles of short food supply chains. The number of children in the household also significantly affects the frequency of milk and dairy product purchases, as families having two or three children buy these products more frequently. When purchasing milk and dairy products from the "Mijatović" farm, consumers rated taste as the most important intrinsic attribute, while origin was rated as the most important extrinsic attribute. Across both milk and cheese, intrinsic attributes were consistently rated higher than extrinsic attributes, indicating that consumers prioritize product quality and health benefits in their purchasing decisions. Consumers rely more on online information than on traditional media content and carefully select food to ensure their health and the health of their children. More than half of the respondents consider the prices of locally produced products comparable to the prices of products of industrial origin in supermarkets. Overall, consumers prefer local products from small family farms, emphasizing product quality and trust in the producer. Trust was rated higher than any other purchase or consumption motive, highlighting the importance of direct contact between consumers and producers in short food

supply chains. These results confirm that consumers value healthy, locally produced food and prioritize intrinsic product attributes when purchasing milk and cheese.

Direct sales through short food supply chains (SFSC) of agricultural products, and in the examined case specifically dairy products, represent a significant opportunity for small farms to strengthen their competitive and market position based on the trust they build with consumers. The results of this research show that consumers prefer locally produced dairy products from small farms, emphasizing trust in product quality, good taste, and the importance of product origin, particularly when it refers to local producers, while paying less attention to the price of the product. These findings suggest that farmers should focus on maintaining high product quality, even at the cost of higher prices, promoting the local origin of their products, and using direct communication channels with consumers.

The limitation of this research is reflected in the sampling procedure itself, as the sample represents a convenience sample based on consumers of a single dairy producer. Furthermore, future research should focus on consumers from a larger number of farms that sell their products through short supply chains.

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