

Perceptions of Beche-de-mer market actors on Sri Lanka standard specification (2018)

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Beche-de-mer (processed sea cucumber) is produced primarily at small-scale processing plants. To get high competitive price at the export market, Sri Lanka Standard Institute has recently developed beche-de-mer processing standard which guides beche-de-mer market actors. Prevailing high diversity of processing methods do not lead Sri Lankan market actors to adhere to better management of infra-structure, reduction of cost and time during processing. Present study aims to explore degree of adherence and determine the perceptions by beche-de-mer market actors for the Sri Lanka standard specification. Therefore, perceptions of beche-de-mer market actors on the proposed standard were evaluated, and the study was conducted with randomly selected 50 fishers and 25 processors including exporters in Northern Province by using interviewer administered questionnaires separately. Data were statistically analysed using SPSS 16.0 and Minitab18. The results show that all processors strongly agreed to all 15 standards regarding cleaning, type of water, cleaning of water, contaminant, evisceration, processing, salting, hygiene, storing, food additives, drying, packaging, physical requirement, appearance and shape. While fishers strongly agreed to latter 10 standards regarding cleaning, type of water, cleaning of water, contaminant, evisceration, processing, salting, hygiene, storing and food additives. Further, all the processors have positive attitudes, while 30% of fishers have negative attitudes towards the standard. Responsible authorities need to conduct strong awareness programmes to create more positive attitudes towards the standards that may uplift sea cucumber industry to international standards.

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