



Thesis Abstract

An Analysis of Fish and Fishery Products Consumption Expenditure of the Thai Households

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The fisheries industry has become one of Thailand's important sectors in recent years as it has contributed to the country's revenues from export income and foreign exchange earnings. The study analyzed consumption patterns of fish and fishery products of Thai households using household survey data of the National Statistics Office. Survey samples of 34,785 households were used in the study. The Ordinary Least Squares technique was used in estimating parameters of the Engel's expenditure model.

Results indicated that household in Northeast Thailand spent the highest share for fish expenditure to food expenditure, followed by households in the country's south, north, and center, and Bangkok, in that order. The study revealed that the share of fish expenditure to food expenditure of rural households is 11%, while that of urban household is 6%. When classifying some fish and fishery products into three groups, namely: freshwater fish, seafood, and fishery products, econometric results indicated that household income has negative effect while household size has positive effect for all three groups of consumption expenditure. Male household heads tend to spend more for freshwater fish and seafood than female household heads. Household heads who are older spend more for those three product groups than the younger household heads. Low-educated household heads tend to spend more for freshwater fish and fishery products.

The income elasticity by country average for freshwater fish, seafood, and fishery products is -0.63, 0.80, and -2.03, respectively. In disaggregate group, it was found that marine fish is inferior good as the income elasticity is negative. The income elasticities of shrimp, squid and crab are positive and elastic, greater than 1 ranging from 2.117 to 3.357, showing that these three kinds of seafood are luxury goods.

The study suggested that freshwater fish is a main source of protein for relative low-income group, thus a policy for promoting freshwater fish culture as well as improving the fish supply from natural water would benefit to the poor. Since seafood, mainly shrimp, crab, and squid are luxury items, and that an increase in purchasing power of the high-income consumer tends to increase the consumption of these items. The brackish water fish culture is needed to be promoted in order to accelerate the supply growth for catching up the rising of consumption demand.