



**SRP**



# Emerging Trends in Asia's Sustainable Rice Consumption

Pakistan Edition - August 2023



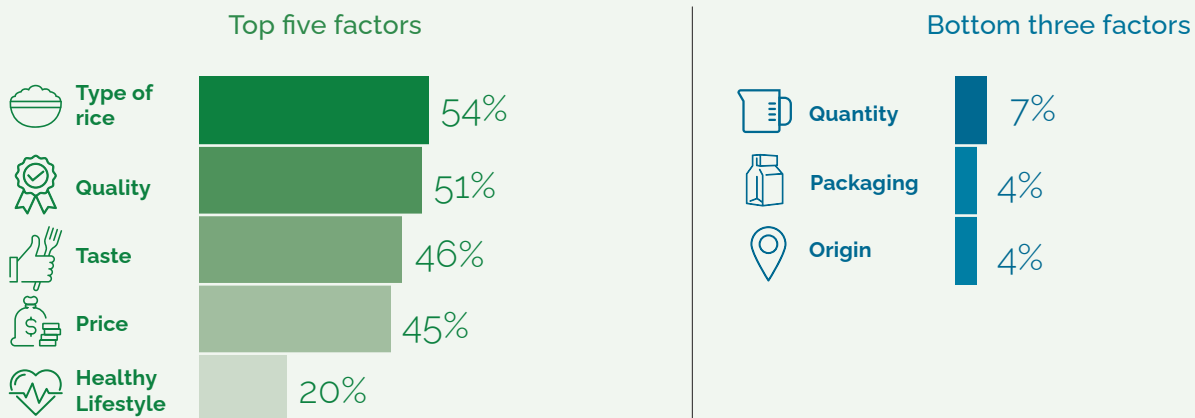
# PAKISTAN

Consumers in Pakistan enjoy rice less frequently than their regional counterparts, with only 14% consuming rice more than five times a week, with a majority of 68% respondents having it only two to three times a week. This is significantly lower than almost 100% of consumers in other countries surveyed. Unlike Indonesians or Vietnamese who mostly buy white rice, 81% of Pakistanis usually purchase basmati rice, followed by white rice at 41%. Pakistanis usually purchase rice in bags of 5kg or more (43%), echoing the findings in other countries like Vietnam.

## Type of rice and quality are determinants in rice purchasing decisions

Reflective of the dominance of Basmati as the variety of choice for Pakistanis, the type of rice is the top decision-making factor when purchasing the staple, followed by quality, taste and price. Origin and packaging are the least important factors.

### Most/least important factors when purchasing rice



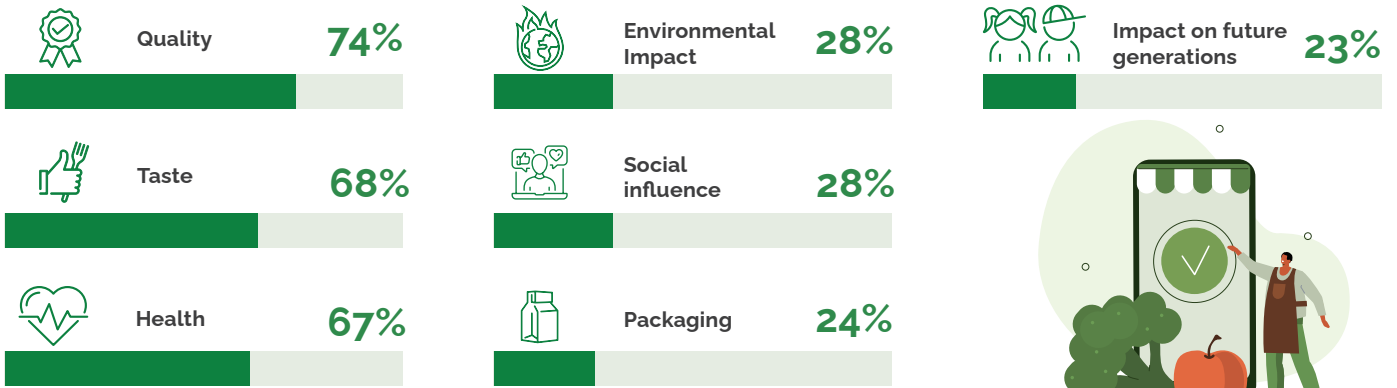
## Environmental considerations feature less in purchasing decisions of sustainable foods

Pakistanis are significantly aware of sustainable produce, with 82% having purchased sustainable food previously. It is worth noting that older generations, particularly those aged between 45-64 years, are the least likely to have done so (76%).

Consumers who purchase sustainable produce are primarily motivated by expectations of better quality, enhanced taste, and health benefits. Only 28% of consumers consider positive environmental impact as one of their top choices, the lowest percentage among the surveyed markets.



## Factors driving purchase of sustainable food produce

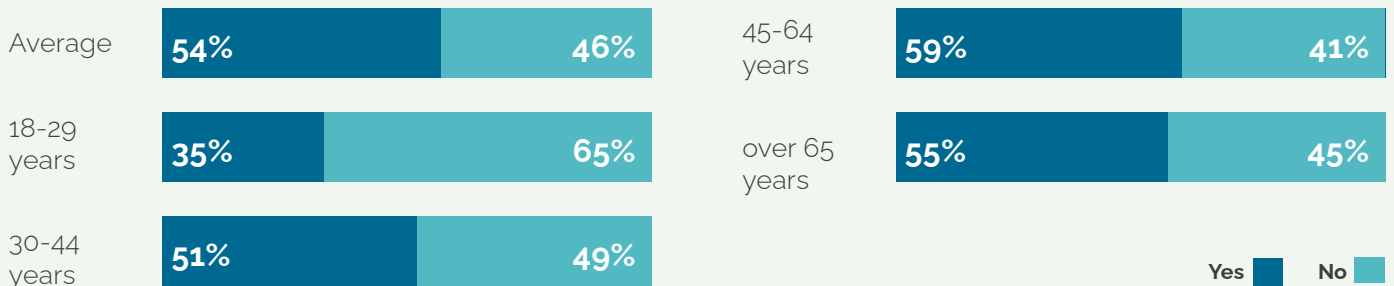


## Knowledge of sustainable rice is generally lower, but younger consumers are more aware

Despite considerable awareness of sustainable food overall, knowledge of sustainable rice is notably less widespread. Just over half (54%) of Pakistani consumers are aware of sustainable rice - the lowest of the markets surveyed. Males and females show equal levels of knowledge.

Younger generations, however, particularly those aged 18-29, express greater awareness, with 65% of this cohort cognizant compared to 41% for those aged 30-44. They are also the most likely to have purchased sustainable rice (60% compared to a 48% average).

### Awareness of sustainable rice – by age group

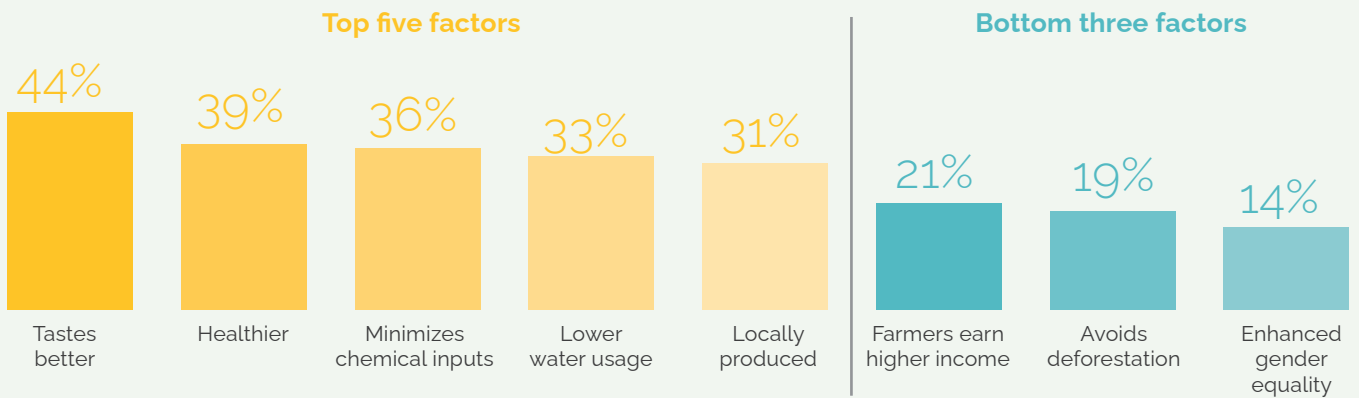


## Taste and health benefits are key factors in purchasing sustainable rice

Consumers in Pakistan believe a key characteristic of sustainable rice is better taste compared to standard rice, with older consumers more likely to feel this way. It is also a key factor when they come to purchase sustainable rice. Many believe sustainable rice is a healthier choice and minimizes the use of chemicals. However, like the findings in other surveyed markets, there is less awareness regarding the broader social impacts associated with sustainable rice production, such as the potential for enhanced gender equality and improved income opportunities for farmers.



## Perceived characteristics of sustainable rice (most/least frequently cited)



## Word of mouth is a key channel for influencing rice purchases

In Pakistan, local markets (53%) and supermarkets or grocery store chains (51%) emerge as the primary points of purchase for rice, with consumers in Karachi and Islamabad favoring these locations. Purchasing from wholesalers holds significant importance for Pakistanis, accounting for 40% of rice purchases.

Although online rice buying is not widespread in Pakistan, there is a notable trend among younger generations, with 18% opting for online purchases, surpassing the average of 9%. This suggests a potential growth opportunity in the online rice market segment, driven by younger consumer preferences.

Word-of-mouth through family and friends plays a significant role in how Pakistanis get information about rice (60%) – the highest proportion from the regions surveyed and is greatest amongst those aged between 45-64 (67%).

Acquiring information in-store or at point of sale is almost equally important (59%), with this source of knowledge particularly influential for consumers in Karachi (64%) and Lahore (63%). Social media is the most popular way consumers obtain information on sustainable rice.

### Top three sources of information on rice



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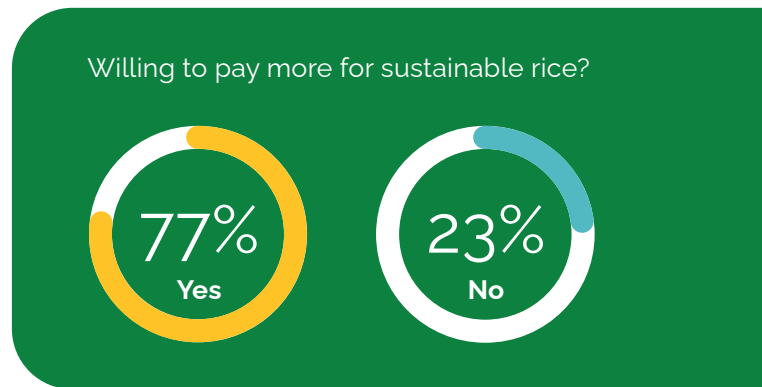


## Younger consumers show greater willingness to pay more

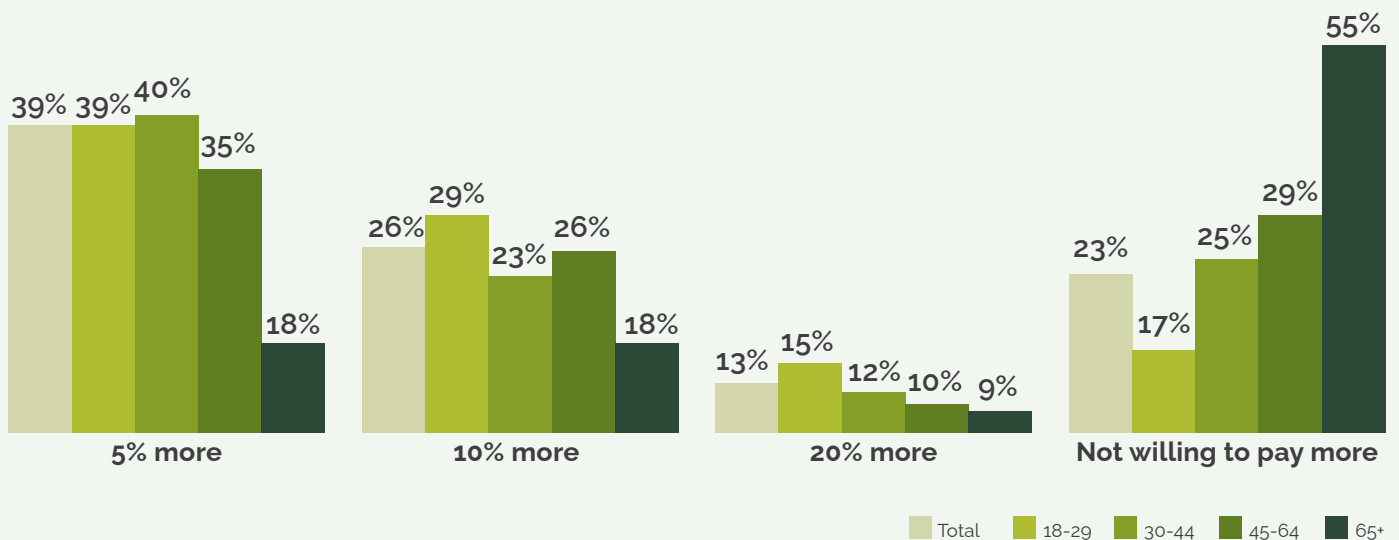
On average, consumers in Pakistan pay 988 PKR (3.16 EUR) per purchase on rice. They are the least willing of our markets surveyed to pay more for sustainable rice, with 23%, on average, expressing reluctance. Notably, this resistance is most pronounced among individuals over the age of 65, with 55% unwilling to pay more. Younger consumers aged 18-29 exhibit the lowest resistance, with only 17% reluctant to buy sustainable rice. This reflects the higher awareness of sustainable produce among younger generations, driving their willingness to pay more for it.

Almost 40% are willing to pay 5% more for sustainable rice, with more females than males willing to do so.

Just over a quarter (26%) are happy to pay 10% more, and 13% are willing to pay 20% more.



### Price sensitivity to paying more for sustainable rice – by age



### Building awareness around favored varieties, while growing word-of-mouth recognition are important in promoting sustainable rice in Pakistan

While Pakistanis demonstrate lower awareness of sustainable food products compared to other markets surveyed, there is a positive trend among younger generations towards greater levels of understanding and a growing desire to purchase sustainable rice. Type of rice features heavily in the decision-making

process and building awareness of sustainable rice practices among the nation's favored varieties is key to growing awareness and increasing consumption in Pakistan. Encouraging in-store or point-of-purchase messaging to promote sustainable rice is a strong opportunity for Pakistan



Findings in this article are based on an online study commissioned by GIZ and conducted by YouGov in March 2022. The study targeted respondents who regularly consume rice and are responsible for household food purchases in India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Thailand, and Vietnam.





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[sustainableice.org](https://sustainableice.org)

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