



Consumers baffled by green jargon

But more than half take environment into account when buying their shopping

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FOOD miles and carbon footprints are going over Irish consumers' heads, but environmental concerns are having an impact on what they buy, a new survey has shown.

Some 56pc of people are more conscious of environmental issues when choosing food, and half said they preferred to buy from companies that are aware of their impact on the environment, a Bord Bia survey of 1,000 consumers found.

Hazy

However, people were hazy on the details as over 62pc had never heard of "food miles" - the distance travelled by food before it reaches our shopping basket - and only 30pc knew that "carbon footprint" was the environmental impact of a product as measured by the

amount of carbon dioxide it emitted.

However, Irish people were very committed to buying local food and nearly three-quarters check the country of origin and for a symbol of quality such as Bord Bia quality assurance.

Convenience is king among Irish shoppers with 75pc picking foods that are quick to cook, half of consumers using ready-to-eat foods and less than three in 10 people cooking from scratch every day.

Healthy eating continues to be a major concern with many consumers claiming to eat less fat and sugar than they used to and more fresh food, but many were unclear about where bread, cereals and dairy prod-

Poor hit hardest by price rises

RISING food costs must be tackled by the government

as prices here are already among the highest in the EU and this hits low-income families hardest, campaigners said yesterday.

A new Healthy Food for All (HFFA) initiative has been set up by groups such as Combat Poverty and the St Vincent de Paul to campaign to make food more affordable in the face of rising prices and inadequate social welfare payments.

ucts fitted into a healthy diet, as the Atkins Diet had led to a lot of confusion, said Bord Bia analyst Helen King.

Although Irish consumers often eat less virtuously in practice than they claim in surveys, organic food continues to soar in popularity with 46pc of people now buying it up from 30pc in 2003.

Consumers now spend €40 a month on organic food, up from €29 four years ago, with vegeta-

bles, fruit, poultry and dairy products the most popular buys.

Pesticides

The main reasons cited for doing so were health, quality and lack of chemicals and pesticides.

Glenisk Organic Yoghurts won the Making a Difference Award in the Bord Bia Food and Drink Industry Awards, presented by Agriculture Minister Mary Coughlan last night.

Glenilen Farm won the Real Thing Award, for their yoghurts and desserts, and Glanbia won the Quest for Health and Wellness Award for Yoplait Essence, while Flahavan's Microwaveable Quick Oats won the Life on the Go Award and Irish Country Meats won the Smart Shopper Award.



Colin Gordon of Glanbia, Eddie Cullen of Ulster Bank, Aidan Cotter of Bord Bia and Mark Sandys of R&A Baileys Diageo at the Bord Bia Food and Drink Industry Awards.