

FOOD CONSUMPTION PATTERN IN SRI LANKA.

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Recent changes in food policies are expected to promote food intake especially of the low income groups in Sri Lanka. This paper attempts to examine the food consumption pattern of different income groups in Sri Lanka. Data were collected in three districts using a structured questionnaire. The method of simple tabular analysis was used to examine the data. Further, Chi-Square test of independence was used to examine the differences in food intake between food stamp recipients (FSR) and non-recipients (FSNR).

The results show that the intake of starchy food increases with rise in household income up to Rs.15,000/- per year, and further rises in income lead to decreased intake of starchy food. At higher levels of income, consumer tends to take more of food with higher nutritive value. The FSR group consumed significantly higher amounts of starch, sugar, and fresh milk, while the intake of pulses, meat and fish, powdered milk, shelled coconut, oil and vegetable were significantly higher for the FSNR group. When compared to the food intake in 1985/86, present intake of similar food items was higher except in the case of egg. The present employment generation schemes which are either underway or planned will lead to increased incomes of the people. This in turn will lead to an increased demand for food with higher nutritive values. Hence, it is necessary to increase the supply of the same in order to avoid unfavourable inflationary effects. An increase of supply of food can be done through either imports or increasing local production. The choice would depend on the resources at hand and the macroeconomic policies of the country.