

## **Domestic and foreign sources of nutrition in Sri Lankan diet: evidence from food balance sheets**

Sri Lanka has recorded a considerable progress in economic development over the last 50 years. While possessing the option of importing food as the nation's purchasing power increases, national policies since independence continued to promote the goal of food self-sufficiency.

Annual data from food balance sheets from 1961 to 1999 were extracted to form a data series comprising of per-capita daily availability of calories, proteins and fat. Respective contributions for total availability of nutritional components from domestically produced and imported foods were computed using respective shares of domestic production and imports in total supply of each food item. Trends in available total calories, shares of different food groups and domestic and foreign origins as a source of calories and trends in per-capita fat and protein availability were evaluated using averages for different periods.

Per capita daily availability of calories from all sources is stable around a mean value of 2250 calories during the study period. The domestic share of the food calories is lowest in 1961-65 and has continued to increase until 1980-82 in which period the per-capita daily calorie availability is at the highest and domestic share is 75%. Since then, the share of domestic food calories in the diet continues to decline. The trend of decreasing domestic share in calorie

supply, increasing consumer food prices and stagnant total per-capita daily calorie intake indicate that depending more on imported foods is likely to affect the food security in the country in the future.