

## Socio-economic evidences of food consumption pattern and nutritional status of rural households from Rajasthan

■ R. BHAKAR AND I.P. SINGH

Received : 05.01.2012; Revised : 13.02.2013; Accepted : 14.03.2013

### ABSTRACT

An attempt was made in the present study to examine the influence of socio-economic factors on food consumption pattern as well as nutritional status, in order to target groups for prioritizing and focusing efforts for improvement of nutritional status of rural population. Conducted in irrigated and rainfed area of Rajasthan state, the study revealed that the food basket was dominated by cereals with a negligible portion of protein and energy being supplied by food of animal origin. Comparative analysis in irrigated and rainfed areas revealed that consumption of all food-items was estimated higher than RDA except meat, fish and eggs in irrigated area where all food-items were estimated much lower except cereals in rain-fed area of Rajasthan. The per capita consumption of non-vegetarian food-item in the state was found to be much lower than the RDA as well as all India (NSS 55<sup>th</sup> round) for both the irrigated and rain-fed households. The households of irrigated area were having diversified food basket than rain-fed area of state. Diet diversification increased with increase in the monthly per capita expenditure and farm size of rural households. Policies aimed at improving the nutritional status of rural population including intensifying the rural development programmes and promoting agro-based industries to increase purchasing power of rural population. Dairy enterprises need to be promoted on priority in order to diversify food basket and raising nutritional status of rural population, while simultaneously raising income levels.

**KEY WORDS :** Food-items, Consumption, Dietary intake pattern, Nutritional status

**How to cite this paper :** Bhakar, R. and Singh, I.P. (2013). Socio-economic evidences of food consumption pattern and nutritional status of rural households from Rajasthan. *Internat. J. Com. & Bus. Manage.*, 6(1) : 58-65.

Food security is achieved when “all people at all times have physical and economic access to food that is sufficient to meet dietary needs for healthy and productive life”. In this sense, achievement of food security implies producing sufficient food and making it accessible to all individuals throughout the year and on sustainable basis from year to year. Further, fulfilling dietary needs for a productive and healthy life implies physical and economic access of all people to nutritive food, according to each individual’s requirement. Food security thus, connotes

freedom from hunger and malnutrition (Acharya, 2009). India accounts for one-sixth of the global population and it is growing so fast that, probably she will soon become the most populous nation in the world. The pressure on land is increasing day-by-day, while agricultural productivity is not keeping pace with the population growth (Kiresur *et al.*, 2010).

The need of food security arises primarily due to the fluctuation in food production and non-availability of sufficient food from domestic source (Ram, 1996). Although, the introduction of green revolution has enabled India to achieve self-sufficiency in food production and also enhance its capacity to cope with inter year fluctuations in production. Gopalan (1995) and Soe (2002) argued that India’s nutritional problem is not due to non-availability of food grains at the national level, but due to lack of adequate economic access to food. They stated that nearly one-third poor households’ family income in the country is so low that nutritional needs

### MEMBERS OF THE RESEARCH FORUM

#### Correspondence to:

R. BHAKAR, Dena Bank, NOKHA (RAJASTHAN) INDIA

Email: r\_bhakar@rediffmail.com

#### Authors’ affiliations:

I.P. SINGH, Department of Agricultural Economics, S.K. Rajasthan Agricultural University, BIKANER (RAJASTHAN) INDIA