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Meat Consumption Patterns in Vietnam: Effects of Household Characteristics on Pork and Poultry Consumption

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Abstract

This study relates socio-demographic characteristics of Vietnamese households to their consumption of meat. Tobit models are estimated drawing on the latest Vietnamese Household Living Standard Survey in 2010 (VHLSS 2010). Pork and poultry are the most important meat types consumed in Vietnamese households. Increasing pork and poultry consumption has strongly contributed to the total meat consumption growth. The analysis of demand for pork and poultry in Vietnamese households demonstrates that the meat demand in Vietnam is significantly affected by socio-economic and geographic factors. The effect of increased income and urbanisation on pork and poultry consumption is positive, as expected. The study findings also suggest that the per capita meat consumptions with different demographic variables of the household sample show a decreasing trend of meat consumption per capita with respect to household size, being ethnic minority people and female household head. The change in food consumption has occurred for the whole country which has implications for Vietnamese policy makers and traders. Understanding meat consumption patterns will help policy makers to implement measures to ensure food security. The policies may address food redistribution between rural and urban areas, ethnic groups, the poor and the rich. Improvement of infrastructure, especially the transportation system, can support production and exchanges between regions. In addition, food firms who wish to invest in the food market in Vietnam have to understand meat consumption patterns and meat demand to develop appropriate business strategies. The preference of Vietnamese customer for fresh (warm) meat has been an obstacle for frozen, imported meat. The growing shortfall in Vietnam's domestic supply of meat leads to opportunities as well as threats for foreign exporters.

Keywords: Household consumption, meat consumption, tobit model, VHLSS, Vietnam