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Food Purchasing Behaviour and Food Security Status of Agriculture Students in Tertiary Institutions in Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract

In spite of the fact that the educational sector has been existing with a lot of already made policies to increase the food and nutrition security of her students in terms of knowledge of improved dietary habits, food insecurity is still prevalent among students. Hence, this study was conducted to determine the food purchasing behaviour and food security status of agricultural students in tertiary institutions in Enugu state, Nigeria. Primary data were obtained from one hundred and thirty seven (137) agricultural students through the use of questionnaire. Purposive and proportionate sampling technique was used. Descriptive statistics, t-test, ANOVA with post-hoc test and logistic regression were used to analyse the data. Results showed that 57.5 % of the students received an average amount of N₂0,701.00 monthly as their monthly stipend. Also, 41.6 % and 37.9 % of them spent an average of N3024.12 and N11,138.32 on food weekly and monthly, respectively. About 51.0 % of the students spent 15.85 minutes on the average to get to where they mostly purchase their food. A greater proportion (41.6 %) of the respondents purchased legumes while 35.4 % of the respondents purchased their food from on-campus restaurant. Also, 36.2 % of the students spent an average amount of N 241.87 on food daily and 23.1 % spent N84.84 on drinks, daily. Although the most frequently purchased food by the students were sweetened drinks, fast foods, legumes, fats and oil, roots and tubers in its processed form, but they purchased less of fruits, vegetable and beverages. Furthermore, 80.0 % of the students were categorised as food insecure, while 20.0 % of them were food secure. Also, 65.0 % of the students were classified as having high dietary diversity. Also, 44.5 % of the students perceived that food insecurity had a moderate effect on their academic performance. The coping strategies to food insecurity used by the students were; reducing the amount of food consumed (= 2.12), buying food in bulk (= 2.93), among others. The government should establish an educational policy aimed at creating and implementing an enlightenment programme to educate the students on the effects of their food purchasing behaviour on their food security situation.

Keywords: Agriculture, food purchasing behaviour, food security, students,, university