

Abstract

Over the last year, the global food system has been subjected to a dramatic increase in food prices. This widespread food crisis has caused governments and international bodies to develop and pursue actions to counteract this situation in order to restore food security. Whilst the economy of Trinidad and Tobago is continuously booming due to the high price of oil, this has brought about an increase in the rate of inflation by approximately 15 percent over the last year. Accompanying this drastic increase, a substantial increase in retail food prices has also been observed. This project was based on a cross sectional study that focused on the causes and effects of high food prices in the rural community of Point Fortin, Trinidad and possible solutions and policies to address this issue. This project also attempted to provide a statistical analysis of data relating to the effect of high food prices which was collected from households in this community. Data collection was achieved through the use of questionnaires while its statistical analysis was accomplished using Statistical Package for Social Sciences software. Analysis of the domestic food marketing system was carried out and presented in this report; this included the policies regarding the importation and exportation of food. Potential issues surrounding the causes of high food prices were examined, for example, international price changes and government negligence towards the local agriculture sector. It concluded that households belonging to the low income bracket were mostly affected by the increase in food prices. As a result, major food security issues such as obesity and under-nourishment were more prevalent within these groups due to an unbalanced diet. This dilemma was caused by people diverting to cheaper foods and different types of food, for example less purchasing of meat and rice was a major contributor. Other relevant social issues arising from the impact of high food prices included poverty and crime.