

## ABSTRACT

### An Assessment of the Household Food Security Status and Local Foods Grown in Rural Bahamas

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The Bahamas has been faced with an increasing food import bill and a declining agricultural sector. A benchmark of the degree of food insecurity within the country may create the challenge for a national effort to reverse these trends. The focus of this study is to determine a reliable assessment of household food security including the levels of local food availability and access within a rural area of the Bahamas. The paper also seeks to determine whether local food systems have the potential to encourage rural development within The Bahamas.

The USDA Household Food Security Survey Module provided a reliable measure for the estimation of the household food security index for rural East Grand Bahama. ANOVA and regression models determined the associations between the food security index and households' socioeconomic and local food factors. High monthly income was the most significant determinant of a food secure household as income was highly and positively correlated with the household food security index.

The results offer evidence that it is plausible that local food systems, such as farmers' market, community supported agriculture, and community gardens, can have a positive impact on the area's economy.

Keywords: Jeri Leah Kelly; estimation of household food security; household food security survey module; local food systems; rural development in the Bahamas.