

**ABSTRACT****Food Security in Trinidad and Tobago  
Data Requirements and Policy Implications**

Shamin Ali-Renwick

Food security is the capability to ensure that there is a supply of food of a required nutritional value for the population at all times. This supply must be accessible and sustainable in both the short-term and long-term. Some of the factors affecting food security are - the resource base of the country, domestic food production, economic considerations as well as socio-cultural factors.

The present climate of changing trade practices and markets and an undefined domestic level of food security make the study imperative at this time. Due to the multi-disciplinary and multi-dimensional nature of the subject, this study proposes to examine the trends in the food supply between 1980 - 1990 according to the following variables:- the dependency on imported food; sufficiency; sustainability; stability; and the equity of the supply of food.

Using time series regression, correlation and other indicators as the basis of the analysis, it

was revealed that, although, there was a high level of sufficiency of the food supply there was,

generally, a decreasing trend in the level of food security during the period under review. This was reflected in a critical dependence on foreign food supplies, low levels of local cereal production and a reduced long term potential for food production. Incidences of malnutrition indicated a vulnerability to conditions of chronic food insecurity. The study also showed that the information required for defining and proper monitoring of the food security situation appears to be inadequate at this time.

The possibility of food insecurity manifesting itself must be recognized and steps should be taken, by way of making food security a stated objective of official policy as well as organizing an independent agency to monitor the situation, if there is to be an improvement of the food security level in Trinidad and Tobago.