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**Topic:** The impact of food systems on nutrition, diet and health

**Title:** Are healthier yogurts more expensive? Evidence from a pilot study in Chile

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Introduction: It has been suggested that healthy foods are more expensive than non-healthy foods. The strength and direction of the association between nutritional quality (NQ) and price depends on food type, and the other indicators used. We studied this association among yogurts, highly consumed in Chile, using different indicators for price and NQ. Methods: In one day, all individually packaged yogurts available from a supermarket (n=230) and their prices were photographed. The nutrition facts panels were used to compute NQ indicators, as a continuous NQ index (NQI= sum of 'healthy' nutrients/portion minus sum of 'non-healthy' nutrients/portion), and as regulated or non-regulated according to the new Chilean regulation (cutoff per 100g: >275 kcal of energy, >4 g of sat fats, >10 g of sugars, 400 mg of sodium). Prices were expressed as: cost/yogurt, cost/gram, and cost/kcal. Associations were assessed with linear regression models, using a NQ indicator as the predictor and a log-transformed price indicator as the outcome. Results: The median NQI was 98.3 (p25-p75: 95.3-100.9); 43% of products were regulated. Regarding NQI, cost/yogurt was inversely associated (-1% per unit of NQI, p<0.05), while cost/kcal was positively associated (+2% per unit of NQI, p<0.05), and there was no association with cost/gram. Regulated products were only associated with cost/kcal (-25% cost/kcal, p<0.05) (reference= non-regulated yogurts). Conclusions: Cost/kcal was the only price indicator positively associated with NQ likely due to mathematical coupling with NQ. Thus, in this sample of yogurts, NQ was not associated with higher price.

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