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Abstract

Food and Nutrition security in South Africa

According to the National Food Consumption Survey (NFCS) of 1999, there is limited food variety in homes. There is access to mainly staple foods like white maize porridge, brown bread, sugar and tea. These households are exposed to energy dense and nutrient poor diets. South Africa is considered to be food secure because the agricultural production is high according to Food Agriculture Organisation Statistics (FAO Stat), 2012. Households that are food secure have increased from 25 % in 1999 and 46% in 2012, according to South African Nutrition and Health Examination Survey (SANHANES), 2012. The risk of hunger has not improved from 23% in 1999 and 28% in 2012, whereas, the experience of hunger has declined from 52% to 26% respectively.

A multiple approach to access to nutritious food is necessary. WHO has recommended that iron, zinc and vitamin A are the essential nutrients that require attention in the developing countries. Dietary diversification, fortification and biofortification are the options to ensuring nutrition security could be achieved. The paper will argue the benefits of including all the options in order to improve the nutritional status in developing countries.