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THE STATUS OF PORK IN INDIA

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Abstract

Both the Indians average per capita consumption of meat and the total amount of meat consumed are rising, driven by increasing average individual incomes and by population growth. The consumption of different types of pork meat products has substantial effects on people's health, and livestock production can have major negative effects on the environment. Here, we explore the evidence base for these assertions and the options policy-makers have should they wish to intervene to affect population meat consumption. We highlight where more research is required and the great importance of integrating insights from the natural and social sciences.

Introduction

“Eating meat is an instinct; not eating meat is a choice” Human beings have come a long way from „food-gatherer“ to “food-hunter” and eventually „food-producer“. Today the world food economy is parallel with the livestock economy. Also, we look up to easy-fixed meals like ready-to-eat and ready-to cook due to our busy routines and the meat industry has a huge role to play as it offers a wide variety of meat products. Talking about the wide variety and giantess of meat industry one cannot neglect the role pig & pork play in shaping up the mega economies like Indian people it is the most accepted meat and for a progressing nation like India whose meat industry has not yet fully explored its potential, pork can be the ultimate meat if its domestic and export potential is fully exploited. India, besides being a home to various cultures, religions and customs of the world, is also one of the most populous countries across the globe. It is projected that by 2050 India would be feeding a population of 1.7 billion people and hence, the meat

Pork consumption in India

The per capita pork consumption in India is negligible with the consumption mainly concentrated in north-eastern states including Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Sikkim, and Tripura. Other Indian states with high pork consumption include Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Goa and Kerala. India's Muslim population comprising 14.2 percent of the total population do not eat pork due to religious reasons. Besides, large sections of Indians consumers are suspicious about cleanliness of domestic pork meat as pigs are natural scavenger; the factors further limiting the growth of pork meat sector. In fact, India's pork consumption can be divided into two segments. First segment being the consumption in the form of fresh pork meat sold through unorganized wet markets and meat vendors. The second segment is the high value imported pork products like sausages, ham, bacon, salami, canned meat products and frozen meat. The hotels and restaurants are the major buyers of the imported pork products, which cater to international travellers and wealthier Indian consumers. There is also retail demand for imported pork products amongst the well travelled Indian consumers and foreigners residing in India. Though imported pork cuts are preferred for its quality, these are three to four times more expensive than the domestically produced pork cuts. The distribution of imported frozen pork products and other meat products is a major challenge due to insufficient cold chain infrastructure across the country.

The future of meat

Meat consumption is rising annually as human populations grow and affluence increases. God fray *et al.* reviews this trend, which has major negative consequences for land and water use and environmental change. Although meat is a concentrated source of nutrients for low-income families, it also enhances the risks of chronic ill health, such as from colorectal cancer and cardiovascular disease. Changing meat consumption habits is a challenge that requires identifying the complex social factors associated with meat eating and developing policies for effective interventions.

Basic facts about pork

Pork is a high-quality protein food. Around 20% of pork is made up of protein, making it an important muscle building meat. High calorific value (242kCal/100g), A 3-ounce serving of pork is a good, source of potassium, riboflavin and zinc, and is an excellent source of vitamin B6, thiamine, phosphorus, niacin and protein. Pork is naturally low in sodium, When people who were obese and overweight switched to a high-protein diet with 25 percent of total calories coming from lean pork and other proteins, they reported an increased feeling of fullness throughout the day.

Advances

Pork Meat is a good source of energy and some essential nutrients—including protein and micronutrients such as iron, zinc, and vitamin B12—although it is possible to obtain a sufficient intake of these nutrients without eating meat if a wide variety of other foods is available and consumed. In high-income Western states large prospective studies and meta-analyses generally show that total mortality rates are modestly higher in participants who have high intakes of red and processed meat. The strongest evidence of a specific adverse effect is the increased risk of colorectal cancer with high intakes of processed meat.

Pork Meat produces more emissions per unit of energy compared with that of plant-based foods because energy is lost at each tropic level. Within types of meat, ruminant production usually leads to more emissions than that of non-ruminant mammals, Meat production is the single most important source of methane, which has a relatively high warming potential but a low half-life in the environment compared with that of CO₂. Careful management of grassland systems can contribute to carbon storage, but the net benefits are likely to be relatively modest. Agriculture uses more freshwater than any other human activity, with nearly a third required for livestock, so meat production in water-stressed areas is a major competitor with other uses of water, including that required to maintain natural ecosystems. Meat production can be an important source of nitrogen, phosphorus, and other pollutants and affects biodiversity—in particular, through land conversion to pasture and arable feed crops.

Conclusions

Future changes in meat consumption will have major effects on the environment and human health as well as on the economics of the food system. It is difficult to envisage how the world could supply India more people with the quantity of meat currently consumed in most high and low-income without substantial negative effects on environmental sustainability. Current evidence suggests that increased consumption of meat, especially red and processed meats, will adversely affect public health. per capita meat consumption is plateauing or beginning to decline and that “peak meat” may have passed. But consumption is increasing in many other countries, including those with large populations, such as India

History suggests that change in dietary behaviours in response to interventions is slow. But social norms can and do change, and this process can be aided by the coordinated efforts of civil society, health organizations, and government. However, it is likely to require a good understanding of the impact of meat consumption on health and the environment and a license from society for a suite of interventions to stimulate change.

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