FRUIT CONSUMPTION EVOLUTION IN ROMANIA

EVOLUȚIA CONSUMULUI DE FRUCTE ÎN ROMÂNIA

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Abstract: *The aim of the present paper is to analyze the evolution of fruits consumption in Romania in the context of increasing obesity and reduction of income. The study is based on public statistics. The results highlight the daily intake evolution.*

Key words: *fruit, daily intake, consumption trend*

INTRODUCTION

W.H.O. recommends by a few years an increase of fruit and vegetables intake to avoid some chronic diseases and obesity. The consumption recommendation is at least 400g fruit and vegetables per day (excluding potatoes and other starchy tubers) [4]. This quantity refers to 5 servings of fruits and vegetables of 80g a day. It is recommended also that the proportion of fruit and vegetables to be equal.

As well a majority of European citizens associate a healthy diet with fruit and vegetable consumption [1].

Nevertheless the recommendation is not achieved in many countries. In EU there are differences among countries too. In the northern countries the income is below and in the Mediterranean countries the intake is higher [2, 4]. Also the consumption trend of fresh produce in EU is stagnant to declining [2].

The aim of the paper is to analyze the evolution of fruit consumption in Romania in the context of increasing obesity and chronic diseases, reduction of income due to economical crisis and downward fresh produce trend.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data for the study was obtained from the Romanian statistical yearbook and from publications of the European Fresh Produce Association.

Data contain information about yearly average consumption, daily intake, and consumption trend for fruit, vegetables and for the sum of two.

In addition it is presented the situation of consumption in Romania by comparison with other EU countries and W.H.O. recommendation.

Data was analyzed using MS Excel.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

According to Romanian National Institute of Statistics (Table 1) the consumption of fruit and vegetables in equivalent of fresh products is about 230 kg per year per capita.

It can be observed that the vegetables consumption is about three times higher than the fruit.

Table 1. Yearly average consumption for fruit and vegetables per inhabitant in Romania

Type of food products	U.M	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Vegetables and vegetable products*	kg	162.6	181.7	164.1	176.0	168.2	174.4
Fruit and fruit products**	kg	75.9	83.2	67.8	66.7	62.3	63.3
Total fruit and vegetables	kg	238.5	264.9	231.9	242.7	230.5	237.7

*equivalent fresh vegetables
**equivalent fresh fruit
Source: [3]

The above data transformed in daily consumption look as in Figure 1. The total fruit and vegetables consumption per capita in Romania in the period 2005-2006 is over 630g. This means that the daily intake in Romania is with 50% higher than the minimum intake recommended by W.H.O. However the regression equation and the trend line show a decline.

The vegetables intake is over 450g per day with a slight increase trend. The daily fruit intake was more than 200g in 2005-2006 and decreased to 180g in 2007-2008 and to 170 in 2009-2010. The trend as can be observed in Figure 1 is decreasing.

Compared with EU countries the total consumption of F&V products in Romania is among the highest (Figure 2). Greece has the highest F&V supply, followed by Belgium, Cyprus and Romania. 11 countries do not meet the recommendations.

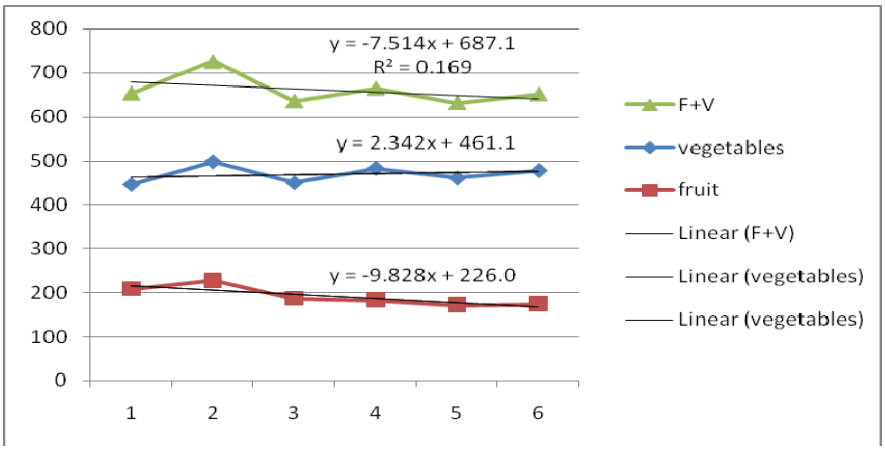


Figure 1. Daily intake per inhabitant and evolution trend in Romania (2005-2010)

Source: [3]

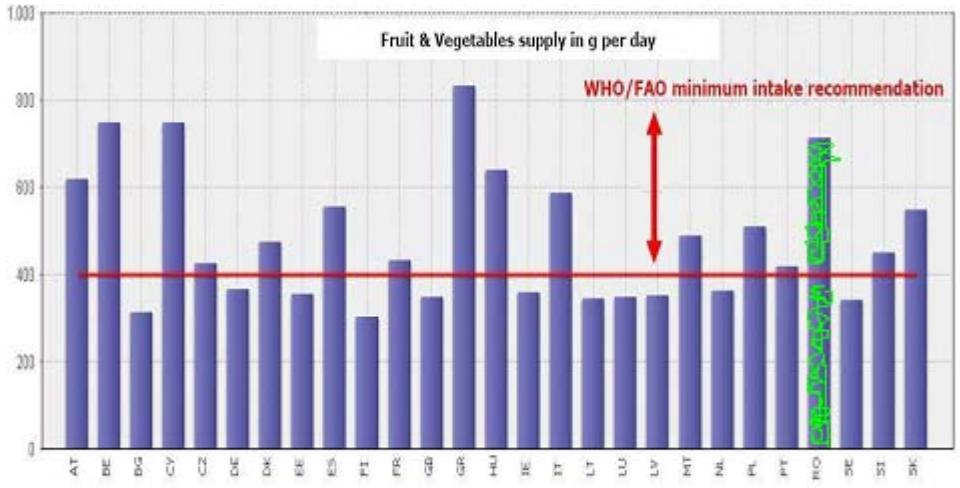


Figure 2. Fruit and vegetables intake per day (g)

Source: [2]

However data above may not be very relevant or entirely true due to the fact that definition of fruit and vegetables also varies between countries. In Romania it is specified that data presented refer to F&V and F&V products equivalent in fresh fruit and vegetables without other explanations.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the statistics Romania meets and exceeds the minimum daily intake for fruits and vegetables. However the trend is decreasing and is similar to the EU. Romanians consume less fruits than vegetables.

Romanian data is presented in equivalent fresh produce and there are no data about the exact quantities of fresh, preserved or juice products.

There is no common definition for fruits and vegetables in EU and data are not standardized leading to erroneous data and comparisons, so standardization is needed.

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