

Peer Review Plan

Preliminary Title: Are Fruits and Vegetables Becoming More Expensive than “Unhealthy” Foods?
 Influential Scientific Information

Agency: Economic Research Service Highly Influential Scientific Assessment
USDA

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Subject of Review: The study used food price data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics: the U.S. city average price data. Researchers used monthly (1980-2006) time series price data, deflated by the Consumer Price Index (for urban consumers) to construct inflation-adjusted price trends for four dessert and snack foods and 11 fresh fruits and vegetables. While BLS reports retail prices for many food items, this study focused only a subset of the available foods. Included foods met two conditions. First, as the study’s concern is with diet quality rather than individual meals, selected foods had to have long, mostly uninterrupted time series retail price data available. A long time series will reveal how relative prices have changed through time and thus how consumers’ ability and incentive to choose a healthy diet has or has not changed. Second, to hold product quality as constant as possible, selected foods were those for which the seasonality problem was solved long ago. To that end, the study eliminated from consideration price series that are so seasonal that there are periods each year with no reported prices. Selected foods were those for which prices are reported throughout each year—foods that always compete for consumers’ dollars.

Purpose of Review: The purpose of the review is to ensure the high-quality of the economic analysis, transparent explanation of methods, objective interpretation of results, and effective communication to the intended audience.

Type of Review: Panel Review Individual Reviewers
 Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):

Timing of Review (Est.): Start: 04/18/07 End: 10/18/07 Completed: 10/18/07

Number of Reviewers: 3 or fewer 4 to 10 More than 10

Primary Disciplines/Types of Expertise Needed for Review: Economists

Reviewers selected by: Agency Designated Outside Organization
Organization’s Name:

Opportunities for Public Comment? Yes No
If yes, briefly state how and when these opportunities will be provided:
How:
When:

Peer Reviewers Provided with Public Comments? Yes No
Public Nominations Requested for Review Panel? Yes No

