

Food waste and obesity

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Food is a ~~very~~ essential resource and in as much as many across the globe can afford it, a significant number of others can barely feed themselves. Those who can easily acquire the food appear somewhat reckless both in their eating habits and way of life. Most often, people will prefer low-quality, cheap and calorie-dense foods to the healthy ones which are rather expensive. The calorie-dense foods ~~come with body~~ <sup>cause metabolic</sup> complications such as obesity as the body ~~seems to~~ <sup>more fat</sup> store ~~most of the food in form of fat under the skin~~. This coupled to the sedentary lifestyle that ~~most~~ <sup>many</sup> Americans put themselves into only make an obese-friendly environment ~~in the entire~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~American country~~. About one- thirds of ~~all~~ edible parts of food produced globally for human consumption go to waste annually (*Gustavsson et al., 2011*). A study by SIWI noted that food losses and wastage could be as high as 50% from field to ~~fork~~ <sup>fork</sup> (*Lundqvist, 2008*). Thirty - fifty percent of all food produced (1.2 to 2 billion tons) is lost before being consumed by man (*Fox, 2013*).

~~Food in this case is the independent variable whose characteristics stretches from availability in terms of~~ <sup>accessibility is dependent on</sup> cost, nutrient quality and the amount of calories it gives. Obesity on the contrary is the dependent variable. ~~It is a lifestyle disease that only sets in depending on the food one eats and the life one li~~. The entire American population was used as the control experiment as depending on the lifestyles led and food ate, the population will either end up obese or not. In the United States many stores and supermarkets usually dump food which is good enough to be taken by the less fortunate in the society. Many dumpster divers which include the students and the slum dwellers usually try to find their way to the dumpsters to acquire a good amount but this is not allowed by the stores management.

The United States ~~can~~ <sup>could</sup> borrow from other countries which have reforms and legislations <sup>policy</sup> on how food should ~~or should not be disposed~~ <sup>be redistributed</sup>. A typical example is France. In France, the president, Francois Hollande passed a reform that no store should dump away good food that is only past the sell-by date but not the expiration date. In fact, any store that is more than 400 square meters should file a donation contract with the charitable organizations which will be expected to collect any food that has passed its sell-by date. These charity organizations take the mandate to deliver the food to the less fortunate in the society and thus promoting charity. ▾

Similarly, the food producers can be given a specific amount of food to grow and with the measures reduce any surplus food. This will ~~come in handy in the~~ <sup>aid in the</sup> quest to reduce the food disposal from the source and the end consumers too. This can be enhanced by controlled farming which is closely monitored by the government and all the produce is collected from farmers by one collector who will later distribute to the factories for processing instead of the factories directly buying from the farmers. ▾

### **Factors affecting food loss**

#### Methodology

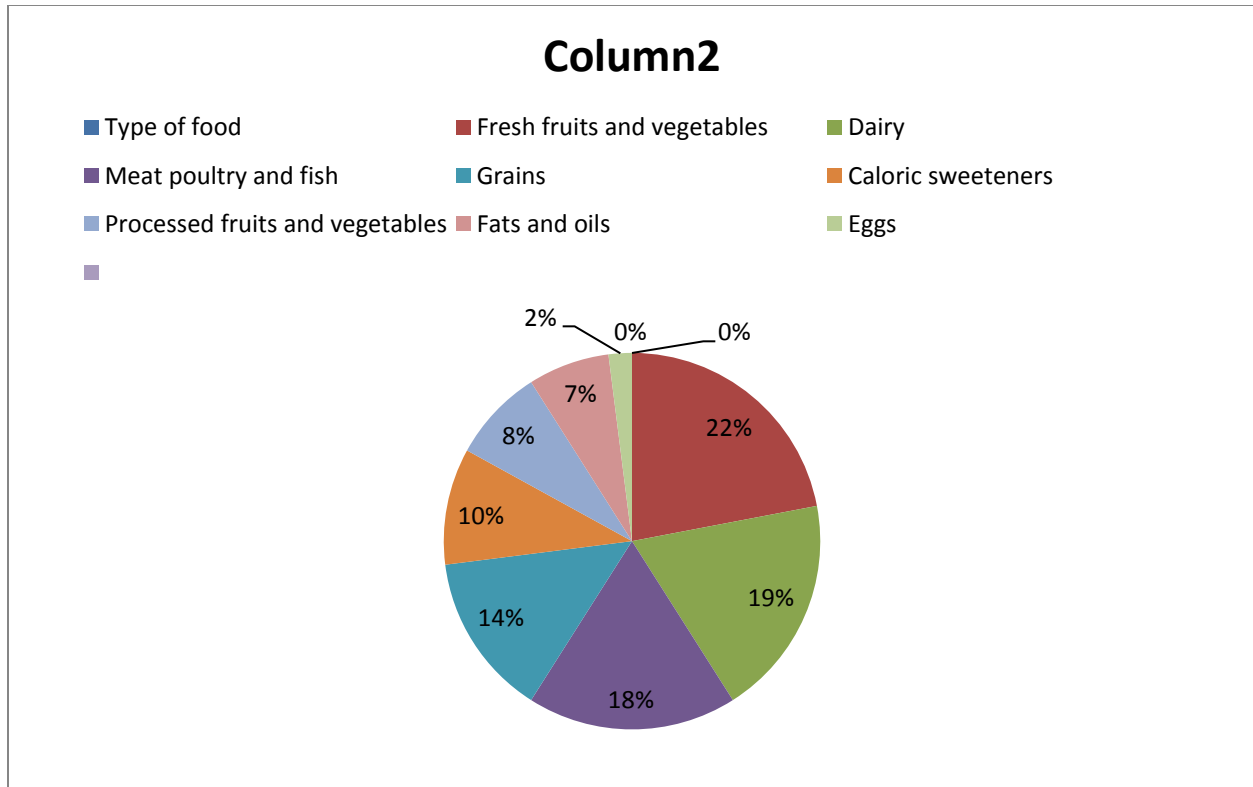
A retrospective study was used. Food loss was the dependent variable.

Study area was in the USA and France

Period: 1960 -2015

Data collection: Literature review (secondary sources) and internet

### **Pie chart showing type of food and percentage waste**



Processing decreases food wastage as seen in fruits and vegetables where waste is lowered from 22% to 8%. Fresh fruits and vegetables are the most wasted type of food by 22%. Below is the list from highest to the lowest.

**Laws gapping** food wastage by preventing throwing away of food by supermarkets, and grocery stores (as it is in France). It was found that the US supermarkets and groceries throw away food amounting to 40 billion LBs worth \$46.7 billion were thrown (NRDC pdf, 2010). Same source indicates that one in seven Americans lacks a reliable access to food. Instead of throwing away food, supermarkets and groceries should be donating to groups that are unfortunate.



A law that allows importation of locally produced food was found to increase wastage. Such laws should be changed to ensure that local foods are fully utilized. Enacting of law to lower tax on exportation, transportation, processing and storage of food to minimize wastage during surplus

Comprehensive studies should be done by the US government to determine food wastage due to dating. This can be accomplished standardization and clarification of food date labels. As a result, consumers will not throw food due to misinterpretation or earlier expiration date. Businesses can adopt means that reduces food waste especially ones dealing with perishable food. Consumers can learn to notice when food goes bad, better ways of cooking and storing food to minimize food waste.

Agricultural revolution has brought food surplus in Mexico and USA (IATP, 2009). Increased food surplus increases food intake and hence calories. Increased calories may cause obesity.

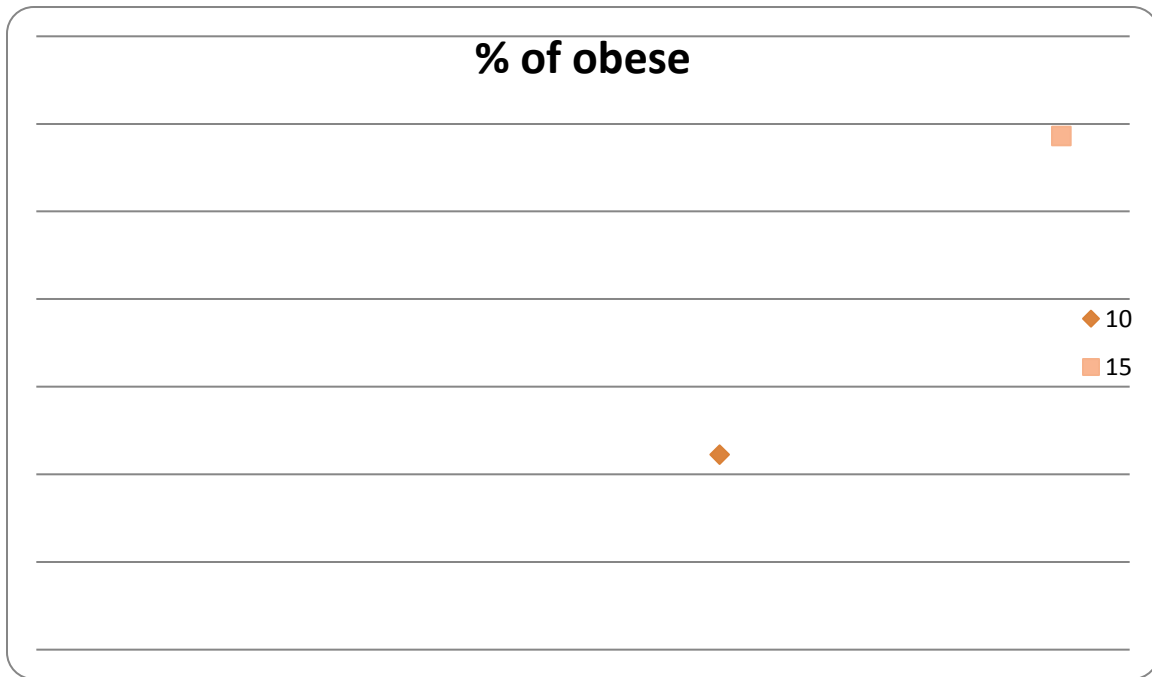
~~My research will be a retrospective study.~~


The data in column % food loss was converted to % by assuming x was 10% (It has no impact on the rate of change) thus 10 % in 1990 and an assumed 15% in 2015

Year	% of obese	% of food loss
1990	11.12	10
2015	29.3	15



**Scatter plot showing % of obese people against % of food loss**



There is a strong and positive correlation between food wastage and obesity. 

An increase in the rate of food loss is correlated to but not necessarily a causation of obesity.

## References

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