

CONTEMPORARY FOOD SECURITY POLICIES

Abstract: The increasing risks to the country's food security require urgent analyses and appropriate measures to increase the flexibility of domestic production, develop targeted strategic reserves and implement effective market adaptation mechanisms, while taking into account fiscal efficiency and protecting access to food for the most vulnerable groups of the population. As a solution, the following operational tasks are proposed: systematization of existing policy instruments and methods for assessing trade-offs in the field of food security, as well as development of an analytical framework for diagnosing food system vulnerabilities. It is proposed to develop policies and connect theoretical constructs with applied systems for monitoring key policy instruments and their effectiveness in the context of climate and trade shocks.

Keywords: food security policy, food risks, food self-sufficiency

Introduction: With the increasing heteronomy and intensity of extreme climatic phenomena such as droughts, floods and temperature amplitudes, as well as the periodic interruptions of global and local economic connections caused by geopolitical factors and pandemics, the risks to national and food security are increasing. These phenomena put multiple pressures on agricultural production, disrupt supply chains and cause price volatility, directly affecting household food access and government fiscal sustainability. Thus, the challenge of moving from fragmented and reactive measures to a systematic, proactive political response capable of guaranteeing the long-term sustainability of the food system becomes increasingly necessary (Spasova, 2022; Kirilov, 2018).

Methods: Analysis of current government food security strategies reveals a systematic mismatch between stated goals of autonomy, pursuit of economic efficiency, and social affordability. Policies aimed at achieving maximum self-sufficiency often lead to high budgetary and resource costs, while fully open market regimes increase vulnerability to price and logistical shocks. Current practice lacks a consistent methodology for assessing these trade-offs and rapidly adjusting priorities, which complicates the development of balanced and adaptive policies.

Results: The aim of this study is to substantiate and develop a practical, integrated policy model aimed at increasing the resilience of the national food system to extreme climate events and external trade shocks in the medium term (3-5 years). This model is designed to combine measures to increase the flexibility of domestic production, develop targeted strategic reserves and implement effective market adaptation mechanisms, while taking into account fiscal efficiency and protecting access to food for the most vulnerable groups of the population.

To achieve this goal, several operational tasks need to be solved. These include systematizing existing policy instruments and methods for assessing trade-offs in the field of

food security, as well as developing an analytical framework for diagnosing food system vulnerabilities. This is followed by the formulation of a prioritized set of measures and monitoring indicators, as well as an assessment of their feasibility and expected budgetary implications. This approach will allow the transformation of theoretical conclusions into concrete, actionable recommendations for policymakers capable of minimizing social risks and maintaining economic viability in the face of contemporary challenges leading to the evolution of the concept of food security: from availability to sustainability.

Historically, the concept of food security has moved from an availability perspective to international doctrines and national strategies that have gradually included dimensions such as accessibility, quality and stability of supply over time in their definitions. Early definitions from the post-war period and within development policies considered aggregate production and stock levels as key. Later frameworks and strategies have broadened the focus of measurements and policy measures to include household access to food and quality standards, along with continuity of supply. The integration of resilience and adaptability into the food security discourse is reflected in three main theoretical approaches: systemic, risk-based and transformative. The systemic approach analyses the interrelationships between production, distribution, consumption and management to identify feedback loops and potential points of failure (FAO, 2020). Risk-based frameworks focus on identifying, assessing, and managing hazards and the impact of shocks (World Bank, 2019). Transformative perspectives emphasize long-term structural changes and the ability to restructure institutions and practices in response to chronic stressors (Schmidt et al., 2021).

Resilience mechanisms typically include supply chain redundancy, ecological and agricultural diversity, flexible market linkages, and institutional learning (Peters et al., 2020). Criteria for assessing adaptability include absorptive capacity, the speed and scale of recovery (transformational capacity), and the ability to anticipate and respond to new stressors (Folke et al., 2010). Practical assessment of these criteria requires multidisciplinary indicators covering environmental, economic and institutional dimensions at multiple temporal and spatial scales (Béné et al., 2016).

The evolution of the concept has a direct impact on measurement and monitoring methodology, requiring a shift away from relying solely on aggregated indicators of inventories and production. Contemporary approaches favor multi-level sets of indicators covering accessibility, physical and economic access, utilization and system stability. Their inclusion in resilience and vulnerability indicators requires longitudinal data, more detailed spatial information and institutional capacity. These methodological changes enable more targeted policy development and link theoretical constructs with applied frameworks for monitoring key policy instruments and their effectiveness in the context of climate and trade shocks.

Price and commodity policy instruments, such as buffer stocks, price subsidies and tariffs, are designed to quickly affect the short-term availability of food on the domestic market. Buffer stocks can smooth out sudden shortages and price spikes, while subsidies and tariffs affect the structure of supply and demand in the short term. However, in the face of cross-border trade shocks and large-scale climate disruptions, the effectiveness of these measures is limited, as external constraints and widespread yield declines rapidly deplete stocks and undermine efficiency mechanisms. Partial strategies, such as prioritizing the

development of key sectors and supporting reserves, should be considered instead of complete market isolation.

Conclusions: Policy decisions need to take into account dynamic effects: short-term preparedness for shocks can entail costs, while long-term efficiency depends on integration into international supply chains. Thus, the optimal policy represents a compromise that preserves critical local production capacity while reaping the benefits of international specialization.

Improving the operational efficiency of supply chains typically reduces costs and prices for most consumers, but can also increase price volatility and the vulnerability of socially vulnerable groups. Just-in-time models and concentrated processing reduce stocks and buffer capacity, increasing the transmission of external shocks to retail prices. Maintaining availability requires compensatory measures, such as targeted support mechanisms and market capacity regulation.

Measures to increase local production and create strategic reserves improve short-term food availability in the face of external shocks, but they also divert resources from other priorities and may lead to inefficient investments in the long term. Allocation of resources to maintain stocks and subsidize production can improve supply stability, but if ineffective, can lead to higher domestic prices and reduced accessibility for the poor. The strategic objective of policy direction is to strike a balance between ensuring short-term security and creating conditions for sustainable development of the food system.

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