

CALL FOR PAPERS

PHN PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION

Special Issue On: Ultra-processed foods and population diets: measurement, applications and implications

Submission Due Date: 30 October 2016

Guest Editors:

Bridget Kelly, *University of Wollongong*

Others TBA

Introduction

Public Health Nutrition (PHN) seeks original manuscripts for a Special Issue on “ultra-processed foods” scheduled to appear in 2017.

The concept of food ultra-processing was first defined in a commentary published in PHN in 2009¹. Since then it has been developed and applied by many researchers in studies and commentaries published by PHN and other journals²⁻¹² and also used in reports by FAO¹³, PAHO¹⁴ and WHO¹⁵.

Ultra-processed foods are commonly defined within the framework of the NOVA food classification system, which takes into account the extent and purpose of food processing. This classification system categorizes all food and drink items into four food groups¹⁶: unprocessed or minimally processed foods; processed culinary ingredients; processed foods; and ultra-processed foods (UPFs).

UPFs now form a major part of the food supply in higher income countries but also increasingly in lower- and middle-income countries where they are rapidly displacing minimally processed foods and dishes and meals prepared from scratch. Processing transforms raw foods for consumption, increasing storage life and transportability. However, UPFs have been found to be more energy-dense and less nutritious than minimally processed foods and freshly prepared dishes and meals. Their intake has been associated with poor overall dietary nutrient profiles and with several dietary-related non-communicable diseases. Other potential harms of UPFs include its impacts on culture, social life, local economies, and the environment.

Objectives and Recommended Topics

Classifying foods according to the extent and purpose of their processing is slated as an approach for measuring the quality of food supplies and population diets, and for framing public health nutrition policy. This special issue represents an effort to analyse the impact of UPFs on public health nutrition and diet-related outcomes, and to describe efforts in the research and application of a food classification based on the extent and purpose of food processing in nutrition monitoring, epidemiology, interventions and policies. The objective of the issue is to move the field forward with respect to:

1. Methodological studies

- 1.1 Developing and testing tools and approaches for applying food processing classification systems, such as NOVA, to dietary data obtained from food frequency questionnaires (up to now most applications have used 24 hour recalls, household purchase questionnaires or sales data).

- 1.2 Developing and testing indicators of dietary patterns based on food processing classification systems, such as NOVA.

2. Epidemiological studies

- 2.1 Describing disparities in the dietary share of UPFs across different social groups or populations
- 2.2 Exploring contextual, socioeconomic, and behavioural determinants of the dietary share of UPFs
- 2.3 Quantifying associations of the dietary share of UPFs with overall diet quality and diet-related health outcomes.

3. Applications of food processing-based classification systems in public health nutrition practice, programs, or policy

- 3.1 Monitoring the extent of UPF in food supplies and food systems
- 3.2 Characterizing availability, purchase, or consumption of UPF regionally, nationally, or internationally
- 3.3 Assessing the utility of interventions, programs, or public policies applying food processing classification systems with respect to dietary behaviors, food security or other nutrition-related outcomes; efforts can be at local, regional, national, or international level.
- 3.4 Describing and analyzing experiences that incorporate food processing classification systems into monitoring/surveillance or that implement food processing classification systems -related initiatives

Acceptable submissions will include original research papers based on quantitative as well qualitative data, policy analyses, case studies, and reviews of current knowledge and research needs. Commentaries on relevant issues and controversies will also be considered.

Submission Procedure

Researchers and practitioners are invited to submit papers for this special issue by **30 October 2016**.

Manuscripts should be submitted through the online manuscript submission system. Please read Directions to Contributors before submission. Submitted manuscripts must be original and may not be under review by another publication. Cover letter should note that the paper is being submitted in response to the call for papers on Ultra-Processed Foods and Population Diets. The manuscript selection process will follow standard journal procedures, reviewed on a double-blind, peer review basis.

Please direct inquiries to Dr. Bridget Kelly at PHN.edoffice@cambridge.org, specifying 'Ultra-processed foods' in the subject line.

Public Health Nutrition Homepage
cambridge.org/phn

References

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