

CalMed Consortium

Session 2: Food policies, consumption patterns, health concerns and the Mediterranean diet

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Benefits of a Mediterranean diet as expressed by health professionals:

- A Mediterranean diet showed greater improvements in blood pressure, the ratio of total cholesterol to HDL cholesterol, and blood glucose levels – Johns Hopkins Health Alerts, May 2, 2008
- A Mediterranean diet significantly reduces the risk of heart diseases – MayoClinic, June 21, 2006
- A Mediterranean diet in a randomized trial suggests prolonged survival and possible reduced cancer rate – the National Institutes of Health, June 8, 1998
- Scientific evidence shows consuming 5 to 9 daily servings of fruits and vegetables helps protect against heart disease and cancer – GAO, July, 2002

Selected Food assistance programs, Fiscal Year 2001

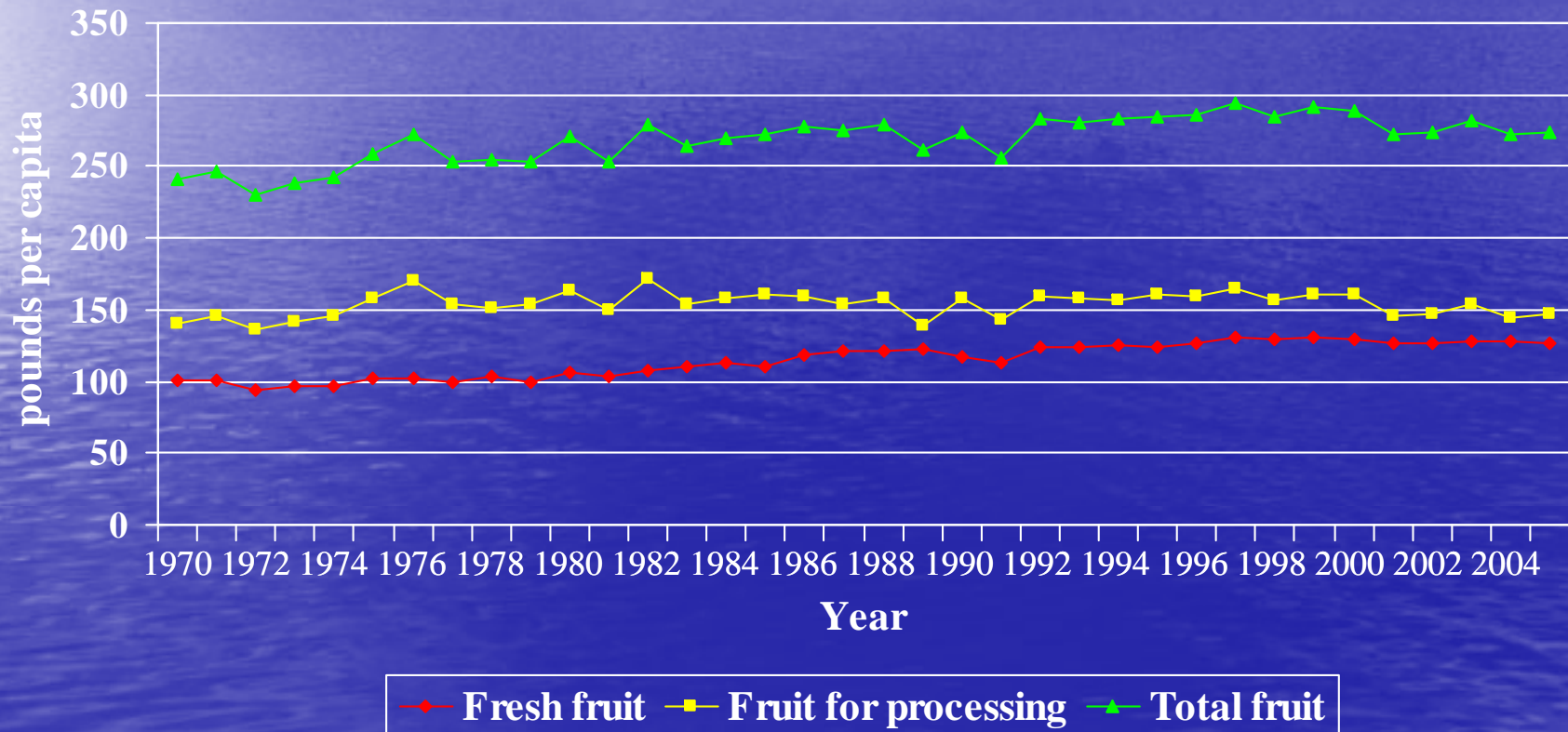
Program	# of participants (in millions)	Program obligations (\$ in millions)
Food Stamp Program	17.3	17,826.9
National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs	27.5 7.8	8,234.7
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	7.3	4,199.1
WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program	2.1	21.0
The Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program	<0.4	15.0

Federal Funding for Activities Related to Diet and Fruit and Vegetable Consumption, Fiscal Years 1997 – 2001 (Constant 2001 dollars in thousands)

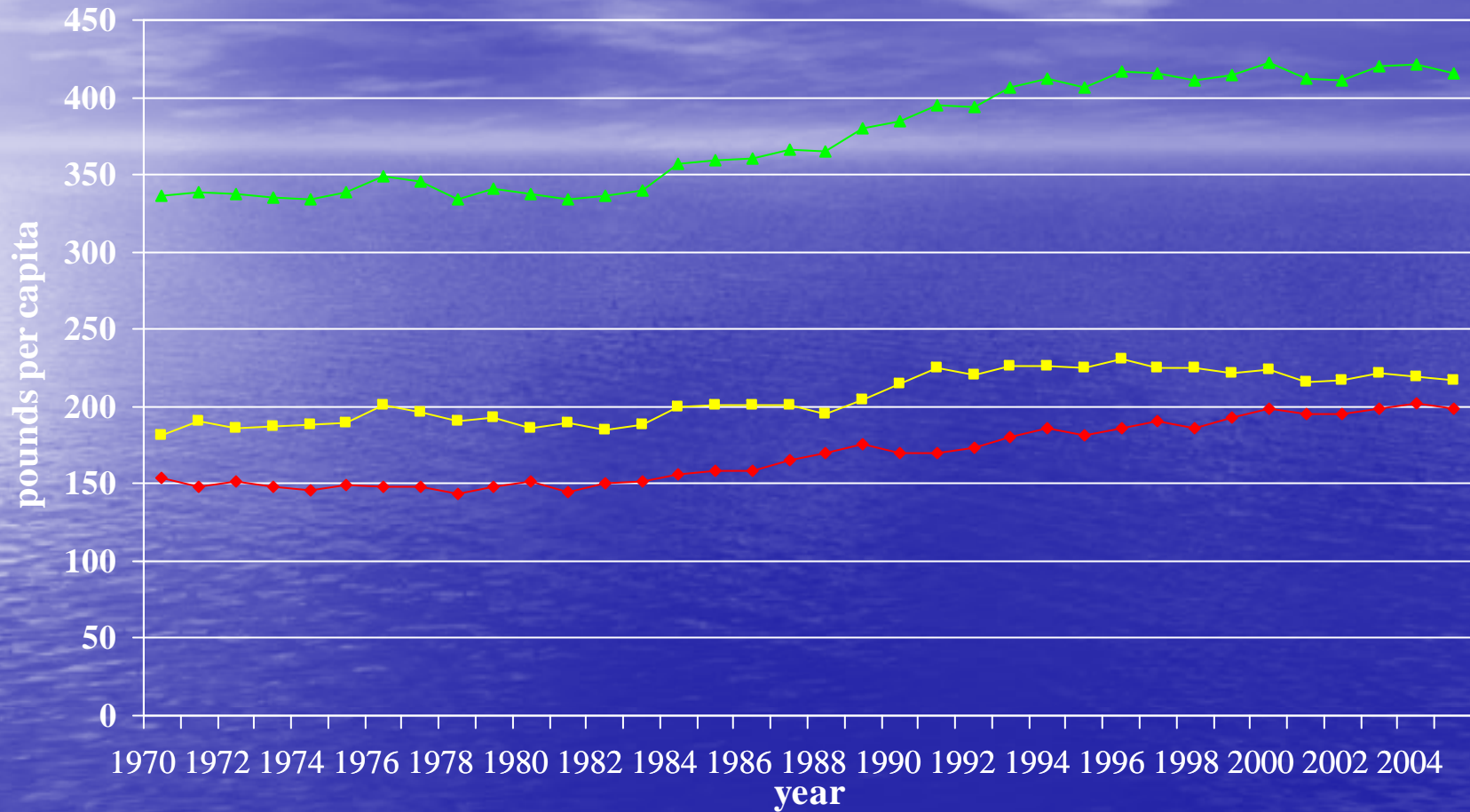
Activity	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
USDA: purchasing fruits and vegetables	7,532,670	6,882,720	6,674,969	6,558,968	6,703,852
USDA: nutrition education/research related to total diet	368,123	386,770	415,954	457,693	490,906
USDA: others	25,389	155,272	153,775	173,174	144,620
NIH: nutrition education/intervention and research related to f&v	3,969	4,972	5,430	5,627	3,600
CDC: prevention research/monitoring, surveillance and others.	1,609	1,587	1,566	6,650	16,200
DOD: purchasing fruits and vegetables and others	47,529	57,412	56,992	64,655	67,154
Total	7,979,289	7,488,733	7,308,686	7,266,767	7,426,332

Take a look at Fruit and Vegetable consumption in the United States

U.S. Consumption of Fruits: 1970 - 2005



U.S. Consumption of Vegetables: 1970 - 2005

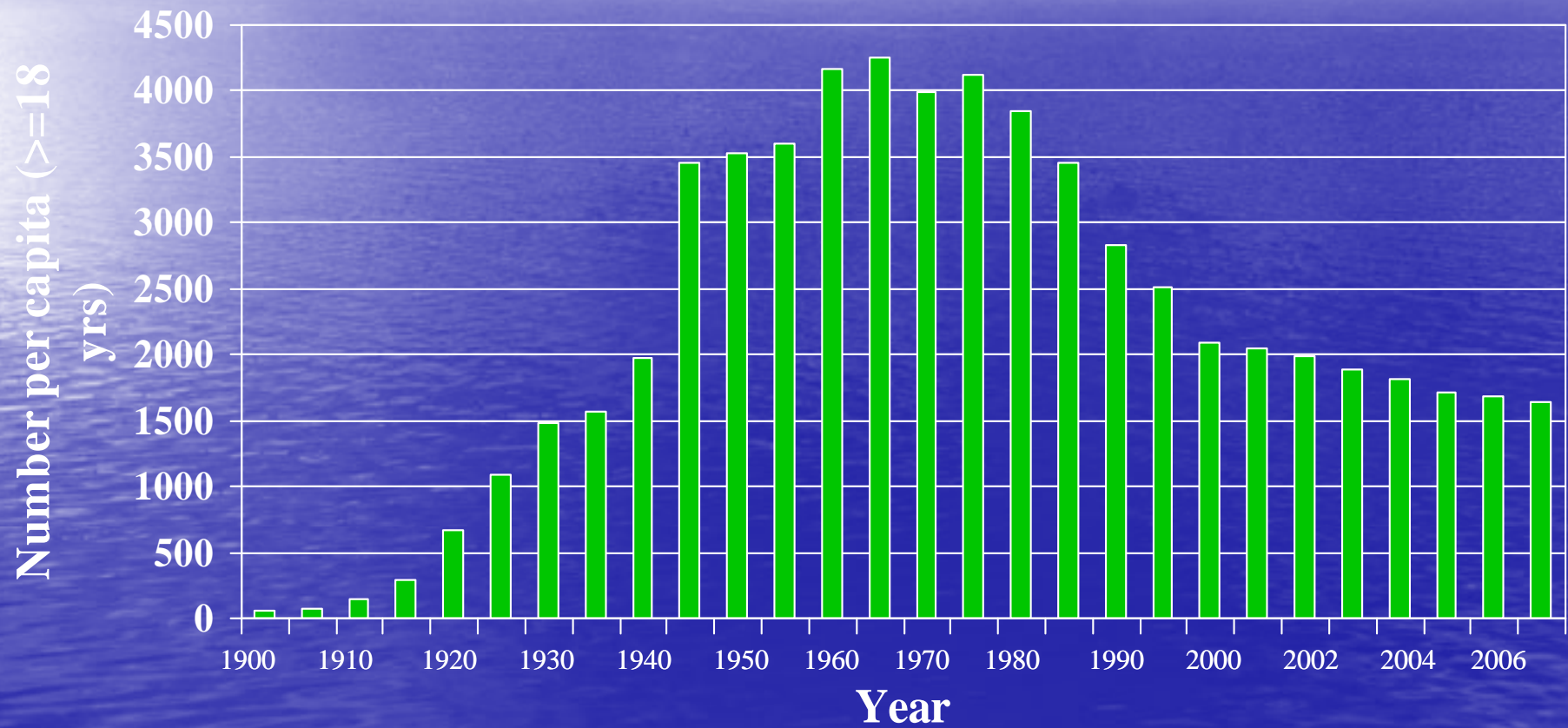


◆ Fresh vegetables ■ Vegetables for processing ▲ Total vegetables

- Despite of efforts to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables, consumption has not increased significantly and rather remains constant in recent years.
- According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the average fruit intake among persons age ≥ 2 years remains the same for 1994-1996 to 1999-2002 (1.6 servings) and that average vegetable consumption declined from 3.4 to 3.2 servings during the same period.
- What has happened to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables?
- What types of policies might be more effective to motivate consumer to consume more fruits and vegetables as well as Mediterranean diet?

- Let's take a look at something opposite, efforts to reduce the consumption, cigarettes.
- According to the CDC, the proportion of the adult population of smokers stopped increasing and began declining shortly after the first Surgeon General's report on the health effects of tobacco in 1964.
- Cigarette packs carry health warnings, advertising bans, and health education, and so forth.
- However,

U.S. Cigarette Consumption: 1990 - 2007



- What did we observe from the cigarette example?
- Do food policies play a significant role in changes in consumption patterns?
- Do health concerns significantly influence one's diet?
- According to the CDC report which tries to assess the level of F&V consumption among adults by analyzing 2005 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), older (≥ 65 years), college graduate with higher income group and not overweight or obese persons consume more fruits and vegetables.
- What are the incentives for consumers to consume healthier food?
- How significant, factors like; taste, convenience, easy access, and social/cultural environment?