Australian Government
Department of Industry and Science

Business Cooperative Research Centres Programme

Pork CRC
CRC for High Integrity Australian Pork

3B-109: *Consumption of pork by Australians – a secondary analysis of the 2011-2013 Australian Health Survey*

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Aims and Objectives:

The aim of this study was to explore the nutrition and health benefits of pork consumption in the diets of Australians based on the latest available data from the 2011-2013 Australian Health Survey.

The objectives were as follows:

- Describe the current intake of fresh pork and pork-containing products by Australian adults and children
- Identify target groups for the promotion of fresh pork through an analysis of demographic information relating to both high and low pork consumers.
- Compare the nutritional status of pork consumers to non-pork consumers, using current nutrient reference values (NRVs)
- Explore associations between pork intake and several health characteristics of pork consumers

Key Findings

- Just over a third (37.4%) of Australians reported eating any type of pork on the survey day evaluated, with 7.70% consuming fresh pork and 32.0% consuming processed pork.
- Ham was the pork variety consumed in the greatest amount, followed by bacon. Within the fresh pork category, pork loin was consumed in the greatest amount.
- Males consumed pork in greater quantities than females
- A significantly lower proportion of individuals who consumed total or processed pork were born in Australia than other countries. In comparison, a higher proportion of fresh pork consumers were born in a non-English speaking country
- More pork consumers met their dietary requirements for protein, long chain omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin B6, vitamin B12, phosphorous, zinc, iron, iodine and selenium than non-consumers.
- Pork consumers consumed significantly higher amounts of protein, fibre, thiamin, monounsaturated fat, iodine and selenium than non-consumers. However, intakes of energy, total and saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium were also higher amongst pork consumers.
- Despite the large sample size from the use of weighted survey data suggesting significant differences between pork consumers and non-consumers in terms of body weight, waist circumference and blood pressure, the lack of an absolute difference in these measures between intake groups suggests that these differences are unlikely to be of clinical relevance.

Application to Industry

This research will contribute to the evidence base surrounding the important position of pork as a core food in the Australian diet. The quantification of intakes of processed, fresh and more recently consumed pork varieties in addition to demographic analyses of consumers and non-consumers may provide important insights for the strategic marketing of pork to Australians. This analysis of the contribution of pork to key nutrient requirements will also be invaluable in terms of providing evidence to support marketing efforts seeking to expose the unique nutritional benefits of consuming pork as part of a balanced diet.