



DETERMINING THE NUTRIENT COMPOSITION OF TRADITIONAL ESTONIAN FOODSTUFFS

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Every country has their traditional dishes and foodstuffs which contribute to the overall diet of the local population. From July to November 2010 the National Institute for Health Development in Estonia carried out a project to determine the nutritional values for six traditional Estonian food products. Some of the traditional food products can be considered quite specific to the local food culture and can not be found elsewhere.

■ Methods

The foods included in the analysis project were chosen based on the average amount of foods purchased throughout a year among households in Estonia and the aforementioned significance of the food in Estonian food culture. The selected foods were:

- White bread;
- Kama (a mix of whole grain flours and ground dried peas);
- Kefir / kephir (fermented milk, 2,5% fat);
- Curd cheese (0,1% fat);
- Baltic herring (raw);
- Pork meat (chop, raw).

Samples were collected from five different regions and different purchasing outlets in Estonia, using sampling plans from the Brazilian TACO Project and the USDA's National Food and Nutrient Analysis Program as an example.^{1,2}

Five different regions in Estonia were included in the sampling based on population density. The selected brands and food products were dominantly from local manufacturers.

Purchasing outlets were selected according to relative importance of different places of purchase.

Maximum of five top brands were collected for each product per region. Composite samples of each food item were prepared for analysis.

■ Results

The results of the analysis project will be published in the next version of the Estonian food composition database (NutriData food composition database, version 3, to be released April 2011).

■ Conclusions

The inclusion of traditional Estonian foodstuffs in the NutriData food composition database and ensuring the quality of the nutritional information of these foodstuffs are one of the main priorities in the database management. Therefore, analytical projects of local foodstuff are crucial for maintaining a certain level of quality in the content of a food composition database.

REFERENCES

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