

## **Effect of Commercialisation on the Dietary Status of Farm Women**

**K. Sheela and Shashikala Puttaraj**

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**ABSTRACT** Dietary status of farm women engaged in commercial farming with irrigation (CG-I) (n = 61) and without irrigation (CG-WI) (n = 42) was determined and compared with that of women engaged in subsistence agriculture only-SG (n = 38). The sample was drawn from a total of 285 households in 17 villages located in Bangalore District in the state of Karnataka, India. The data collected included food and nutrient intake of women by dietary history, frequency of food use and 24 hour diet recall, somatic measurements by anthropometry and energy expended in physical activities. The result indicated that the intake of milk products, nuts oil seeds, fat and oils was significantly higher in CGI than in CG-WI and SG. The energy intake was found to be adequate in all the groups as compared to RDI for Indians. However, they appeared to be at relatively high risk for developing micro nutrient deficiencies viz. iron, Vitamin A, riboflavin and ascorbic acid as they failed to meet even fifty percent of the RDI. Somatic status revealed that > forty-eight percent of the women irrespective of farming groups to be having low BMI (16-18.5), low MUAC, MUAMC and TSF. The energy expended in physical activities was found to be higher than the intake with deficits to the extent of 765 Kcal/day particularly among the employed women. Hence, the low BMI could be attributed to increased energy expenditure and low MUAC and MUAMC indicative of low protein status to the fact that protein is being used as energy. The study is indicative of the fact that commercialization of farming while leading to increased income did not appear to improve the nutrition of the women attributable to increased work output.