

Access and Consumption of Water and Vegetables in Rural Dominican Republic

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INTRODUCTION

- The Dominican Republic has been largely overlooked in terms of public health services in rural areas.
- No national health surveillance system exists for monitoring detailed community health in rural areas.

OBJECTIVE

- To examine the general health status, access and consumption of water and vegetables in rural Dominican villages.

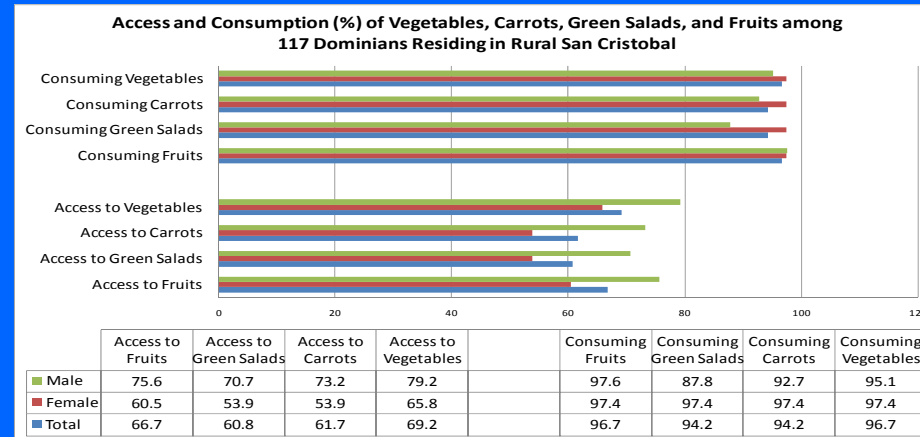
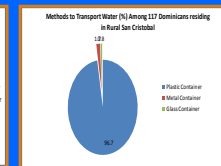
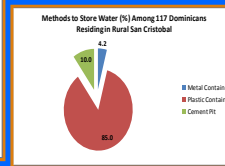
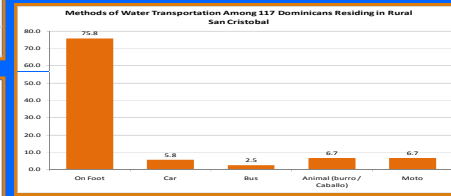
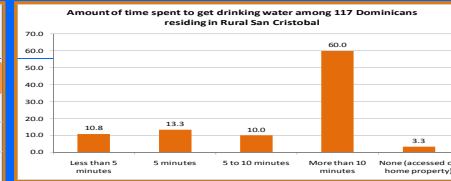
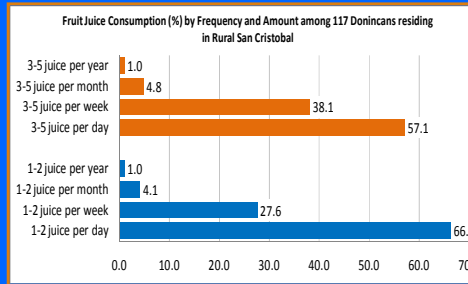
METHODS

- Participants receiving care in an April 2009 medical trip to four rural villages in the Dominican Republic were invited to participate in an anonymous health questionnaire.

- Age, gender, height, weight, general health status, fruit and vegetable consumption, access to and sources of fresh water as well as the most common methods to store, transport and sanitize their water were collected and analyzed.

Table. Demographic Characteristics of 117 Dominicans residing in Rural San Cristobal

Characteristic	Total (±SD)	Female (±SD)	Male (±SD)
Age (years)	34.0±2.1	34.5±2.9	33.3±3.0
Height (inches)	65.2±0.5	63.5±0.4	67.9±0.8
Weight (pounds)	145.7±3.8	141.2±5.0	152.8±5.5
Body Mass Index	24.2±0.7	24.6±0.9	23.5±1.0
Abdominal Girth (inches)	33.6±0.7	34.3±0.9	32.6±0.8



RESULTS

- Overall, 59.2% of the participants rated their general health as Fair and 22.5% as Good.
- While many participants consumed fruits, green salads, carrots and vegetables ($\geq 90\%$) when available, approximately only 60% had access to them.
- Eighty percent had access to more than one source of water, while 44.2% and 58.3% use rain as the most common source of bathing and drinking water respectively.
- Lastly, 85.0% use chlorine to sanitize their drinking water, 75.8% transport it by foot, and 85.0% store it in plastic containers.

DISCUSSION

- Health education programs that foster community garden growth and sustainability as well as enhancement of current water collection, transport, storage and sanitation methods in these rural communities is highly warranted.