

Fact Sheet 14 South Sudan food information summary

Country	Meal Pattern	Protein Sources	Main carbohydrate sources	Common vegetables eaten	Drinks	Calcium sources and inhibitors	Iron sources and inhibitors
South Sudan Those dependant on WFP rations will have less food security and may be used to eating only twice daily or less Ref: UNICEF	Cooked breakfast E.g. Thick porridge like asida/gruel perhaps made with milk and honey or beans and lentils or meat if available Sweet drinks and tea or fruit eaten throughout the day Main meal 2-3pm in the afternoon Meat if available Vegetables and rice or asida/kisra Perhaps leftovers will be eaten later in the night if any available	Meats (if available) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beef • Goat • Camel • Sheep • Chicken Eggs (when chickens are kept or available in markets) Pulses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foul beans • Groundnuts • Peas • Cow peas Fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sorghum • Millet • Rice • Cassava • Cereals-maize • Corn Soya blend (CSB from Rations) • Sesame 	Leaves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cassava • Sweet potato • Ground nut • Molokhia Cassava Yams Sweet potato Onion Tomatoes Okra Taro Fruits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mango • Watermelon • Guava 	Teas Hibiscus (Karkadeh)	<u>Sources:</u> Dairy produce if has access to livestock Fish where dried Sesame Tahini <u>Inhibitors:</u> Salt Reduced Vitamin D status	<u>Sources:</u> Meats Eggs Fish Leaves Pulses <u>Inhibitors:</u> Poor vitamin C intake Tea drinking with meals

Cultural Beliefs and Nuances in relation to foods

Although mainly Christian in South Sudan, pork is still rarely eaten and most would avoid pork as a meat.

The volume and variety of tribes and the size of the country itself determines what foods are harvested and available. The crisis situation has displaced millions of people, and many are now reliant on food aid. Women usually perform all the chores around food preparation and for some tribes men may not be permitted to cook.

Food and nutrition situation

A considerable regional variation in food consumption exists in Sudan due to factors such as food availability, climate and regional food habits/traditions.

- Sorghum is the main staple of a major part of the rural region
- Millet, along with sorghum, is especially important in western Sudan
- Wheat (mainly consumed as bread) is of increasing importance in urban areas and in the north
- Cassava, yams and sweet potatoes are the main staples in the southern region
- Milk and maize contribute substantially to the diet in many areas of the south
- In some tribal areas, milk and dairy products contributes to up to 40% of all food consumed

Legumes, which are grown in the north, consist of beans, peas and cow peas. Broad beans are eaten as the main dish (breakfast and dinner) in urban areas. There is limited consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables (especially leafy green varieties), with the exception of dates. Okra is eaten in dried form and tomatoes and onions are eaten in urban areas.

Mutton, beef and goat are favoured over other types of meat. Consumption of fish is low. Sea fish is only consumed along the Red Sea coast, while most of the fish eaten is inland freshwater fish.

Groundnuts and sesame are the main sources of local vegetable oils.

Food Consumption

There has been limited research in regards to food consumption in Sudan. No national surveys have been carried out. The Ministry of Health and the WHO (1997) conducted a study of household's food consumption across six states and found:

- 24% of the total population ate meat daily
- 38% ate meat 2-3 times per week
- 73% consumed milk daily
- 12% consumed leafy green vegetables daily
- 12% consumed other vegetables daily
- 8% consumed fruit daily
- 86% consumed 3 meals per day
- 13% consumed 2 meals per day

This will have been hugely adversely affected by the recent civil unrest in the region, where livestock numbers have been devastated.

Dietary Energy Supply (DES)

<u>Food Group</u>	<u>% DES (2000-2002)</u>
Cereals (excl. beer)	53
Milk and eggs	13
Sweeteners	8
Vegetable oils	7
Pulses, nuts, oilcrops	6
Meat and offals	6
Fruit and vegetables	4
Starchy roots	1
Animal fats	1
Fish, seafood	<1
Others	<1

Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices

A national survey in 2000 revealed that among infants less than 4 months of age, approximately a fifth were exclusively breastfed. This proportion decreased to 16% for infants under 6 months. Between 6 and 9 months, 46.6% of infants received complementary food in addition to breast milk. Approximately 84% of the children continued to be breastfed at age 12-15 months and 40% at 20-23 months.

Celebrations

Birthdays – children celebrating birthdays will drink a red punch called karkadeh which is made from hibiscus flowers.

In Northern Sudan which is primarily Islamic:

- At the *Eid al-Adha*, the Feast of the Great Sacrifice, it is customary to kill a sheep, and to give part of the meat to people who cannot afford it themselves.
- The *Eid al-Fitr*, or Breaking of the Ramadan Fast, is another joyous occasion, and involves a large family meal.
- The birthday of the Prophet Muhammad is primarily a children's holiday, celebrated with special desserts: pink sugar dolls and sticky sweets made from nuts and sesame seeds.