DESCRIPTION

*Food Policy* is a multidisciplinary journal publishing original research and novel evidence on issues in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of policies for the food sector in developing, transition, and advanced economies.

Our main focus is on the economic and social aspect of food policy, and we prioritize empirical studies informing international food policy debates. Provided that articles make a clear and explicit contribution to food policy debates of international interest, we consider papers from any of the social sciences. Papers from other disciplines (e.g., law) will be considered only if they provide a key policy contribution, and are written in a style which is accessible to a social science readership.

Policy issues that are relevant to the journal include:
- Food production, trade, marketing, and consumption
- Nutrition and health aspects of food systems
- Food needs, entitlements, security, and aid
- Food safety and quality assurance
- Technological and institutional innovation affecting food systems and access
- Food systems and environmental sustainability

Conceptual and methodological articles should be written so that they are accessible to the journal's diverse international readership. We normally do not publish review papers, although we might make rare exceptions for rigorous and critical reviews on topical issues.

AUDIENCE

Academics and practitioners involved in work related to food policy, in particular agricultural and development economists, nutritionists, political scientists, sociologists, agricultural and food scientists, and public policy analysts.

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To find out more, please visit the Preparation section below.

INTRODUCTION

Food Policy is a multidisciplinary journal publishing original research and novel evidence on issues in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of policies for the food sector in developing, transition, and advanced economies. Authors who submit to Food Policy implicitly agree to the conditions laid out in this Guide for Authors. Lack of compliance with these conditions will result in the Editors rejecting an article for publication, or in rescinding their decision to accept a manuscript.

Our focus is on the economic and social aspect of food policy, and we prioritize empirical studies informing international food policy debates. Provided that articles make a clear and explicit contribution to food policy debates of international interest, we consider papers from any of the social sciences. Papers from other disciplines (e.g., law, food science) will be considered only if they provide a key policy contribution, and are written in a style which is accessible to a social science readership. Articles that are primarily of a technical nature, and wherein the food policy content is merely incidental, will be desk rejected. We do not publish book reviews.

Policy issues that are relevant to the journal include food production, trade, marketing, and consumption; nutrition and health aspects of food systems; food needs, entitlements, security, and aid; food safety and quality assurance; technological and institutional innovations affecting food systems and access; food systems and environmental sustainability; food systems and climate change; empirical evidence on the impact of policies affecting the food sector.

Conceptual and methodological articles should be written so that they are accessible to the journal’s diverse international readership. We normally do not publish review papers, although we might make rare exceptions for rigorous and critical reviews on topical issues. Unsolicited review articles are likely to get desk rejected.

Requirement

Food Policy receives upward of 800 submissions per year. Therefore, all new submissions will be assessed against the following checklist before being sent out for review:

Originality All papers should be fully original. This means that there should be no overlap in text already published in other outlets, even if from the same authors. In most situations, this also excludes situations where papers have been published on the same topic and data, even if a different subset of information is used in the submission. Given that our aim is to look at the policy implications, the whole set of information relevant to the policy should be considered. Authors should note that we run "similarity" checks for each incoming manuscript, and manuscripts deemed to contain plagiarism will be desk rejected, with the editors of Food Policy reserving the right to notify the supervisors of authors whose work is plagiarized. Contribution to the international food policy debate All submitted papers should have a clear focus on one or more food policy, and provide a relevant contribution to the food policy debate at the international level. The introduction should contain adequate information on the food policy background, and the current knowledge about the policy, and both the introduction and the paper should have a specific section dealing with the Policy implications of the research findings. Again, exceptions may be made for highly innovative methodological papers, which could guide future policy-relevant applications. Geographical scope Papers with a limited geographical scope (e.g. local, regional or only one country whose contribution to the application is negligible) are acceptable if their findings (or methods) are very innovative, if the results are generalizable to other situations, and if they are discussed with a broader perspective than the case study itself. These generalizations should be explicitly discussed in the policy implications section.

Types of Contribution

A typical Food Policy article is around 6,000-10,000 words in length, although longer articles may be accepted on an occasional basis if the topic demands this length of treatment. These word lengths are for the complete submission, including abstract, end notes, tables, references and appendices.
Review and Viewpoint articles: Review and Viewpoint articles are published by invitation only. Unsolicited reviews and viewpoints will be desk rejected.

In order to be considered, review articles are expected to address critically important areas, demonstrate rigour in the search and review process, and add substantial value to the literature. Reviews should lead to clear policy implications which need to be addressed in a specific section of the paper. Review article submissions that are not judged to meet all these criteria are likely to be desk-rejected.

For some example guidance on rigorous reviews, please see here.

Food Policy does occasionally publish conceptual articles, thought-pieces and commentaries by leading researchers under the "Viewpoint" article category.

Experimental, simulation and theoretical studies:

A large proportion of submissions we receive is based on experimental data (e.g. choice experiments), on simulations (e.g., CGE models), or are purely theoretical. In order not to get desk rejected, papers that fall in these categories must be highly innovative in the questions they tackle. In order to be considered for publication these studies must rely on realistic or tested assumptions, and produce robust, valid and generalizable findings, which are relevant to the food policy debate. Papers that rely on computable general equilibrium models will typically only be considered for publication in exceptional cases.

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We privilege empirical (quantitative) contributions, which should be based on good quality measurements and representative data (free from obvious biases) and show the validity and robustness of the findings. Econometric methods should be presented in a transparent way, together with a justification of the methodological choice. Empirical analyses should be replicable, and discuss robustness to the model/method assumptions. We do not publish systems dynamics articles.

Null results

Papers can be considered even with null results, provided that the study is innovative, the analysis is well-designed, all data collection and modelling steps are taken in a rigorous scientific manner, the results and findings are discussed with a critical perspective in relation to other studies, and the authors have conducted all relevant robustness checks.

Qualitative research

We consider findings based on qualitative research, to the extent that the method allows one to shed original light on policy issues and relevant aspects of the food system, hence providing novel and useful information to the food policy debate. Qualitative research methods should follow rigorous scientific protocols just as much as quantitative papers.

Submission checklist

You can use this list to carry out a final check of your submission before you send it to the journal for review. Please check the relevant section in this Guide for Authors for more details.

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The editors of Food Policy welcome proposals for special issues on topics that fall within the scope of the journal. Please click here to see the aims and scope of Food Policy.

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As Food Policy is only able to publish one to two special issues per year, the editors will seek to identify the proposals of the highest quality for publication by the following competitive process. There are two deadlines each year for submission of special issue proposals: April 15th and October 15th. As soon as possible after each of these dates, the editors of Food Policy will consider all special issue proposals that conform to the journal’s guidelines and which have been received in the previous six-month period, up to close of business on the deadline date. All potential guest editors who have submitted proposals will be informed by e-mail of the success or otherwise of their proposal. We strongly encourage special issue submissions not to have the same authors on more than one article. Special issue submissions where the same authors appear on multiple articles are likely to get rejected.

For prospective Guest editors please see the guidelines for the process by which the editors will select special issues:

Guidelines for Guest Editors of Food Policy Special Issues.

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State the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature
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measurement issues, validation of measurement instruments (e.g. questionnaire items) if data are collected ad hoc for the study, and an in-depth discussion of sampling and non-sampling measurement errors. Essential descriptive statistics on the data should be provided in this section. Authors may consider the opportunity of having sub-sections (e.g. Data, Sampling strategy, Questionnaire, etc.).

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Results should be clear and concise. Tables and Graphs should be self-explanatory, with appropriate (concise) titles, and all the necessary/detailed information as notes below the table/graph. The size and number of tables should ensure readability and authors should make an effort to separate essential information from additional estimation outputs. The latter can be included as on-line Supplementary Material as pdf or Excel files.

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The discussion of the results does not necessarily require a separate Discussion section, and could be combined within the Results section. However, Food Policy requires an explicit section named Policy Implications, or - as an alternative - a Discussion section with a Policy Implications sub-section. Here authors should discuss the policy implications of the empirical results as they logically follow from the elements of policy relevance covered in the introduction. This should explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. If the same policy issues have been covered in previous research published in Food Policy, the discussion should explicitly refer to these studies and highlight consistencies and conflicts.

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