

*Perspective Article***A brief note on people affected by COVID-19****Michele Cassano***

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INTRODUCTION

People's daily life has been affected by COVID-19, which has coincided with major modifications in behavior connected to social isolation and food stockpiling. People's food shopping and consumption habits were affected. Fears of food supply chain disruptions have led to an increase in the quantity and type of food purchased by households. Increased food purchases, on the other hand, may result in food waste, which has significant environmental consequences in terms of greenhouse gas emissions and groundwater pollution. We performed a nationwide survey of home food purchasers in Italy to see if household food waste has altered during the COVID-19 lockout. Despite the fact that food sales increased during the lockdown, our findings demonstrate that food waste decreased since people primarily purchased non-perishable foods. Surprisingly, there are concerns. Concerns about the pandemic's influence on the waste management system, as well as a desire not to put further strain on the system, were important causes of decreased food waste in Italy during the pandemic. Our findings imply that Italian consumers are becoming more mindful of food waste, which could have a good influence on the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and groundwater pollution.

These shifts in behaviour could be fear-driven, resulting from widespread worry and a sense of insecurity as traditional assumptions about job stability, expected earnings, and the value of savings have been called into question.

People who have been exposed to negative shocks may become more risk averse.

ABOUT THE STUDY

In this context, COVID-19 has made a substantial contribution. COVID-19 has had a substantial impact on people's food purchase and consumption behaviours in this

context. Restaurants and bars were closed owing to stay-at-home recommendations in numerous nations around the world during the lockdowns. As a result, restaurant meal sales virtually ceased during the stay-at-home orders, but grocery store and internet retailer food sales soared dramatically. Due to disruptions in food supply systems, some grocery store items have become scarce. The restrictions imposed by the lockdown, as well as the risk of food supply chain interruptions, have resulted in a shift in shopping behaviour, such as an increase in food stockpiles at home or a change in the quantity and type of food purchased.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on how Italians behave, such as consumer, particularly in terms of their purchasing and eating habits. Our data suggest that during the COVID-19 shutdown, when people's movements were severely restricted by the government to avoid the spread of disease, Italian consumers boosted their food purchases. The concern of disruptions in the food supply chain, as well as the risk of infection when leaving the house, influenced this increase. We predicted that increased food purchases would lead to increased food waste, but the results of our study demonstrate that during the pandemic, Italian consumers' food waste actually dropped during COVID-19, at least during the time our survey was done. In other words, during the epidemic, an increase in food purchases did not necessarily translate to an increase in food waste.

Food waste has decreased as a result of the type of meals purchased during the epidemic, which has shifted toward non-perishable items including canned and frozen food, pasta, and rice. Consumers' risk aversion may have resulted in increased attention to food consumption patterns as well as a shift in purchasing habits, resulting in a reduction in household food waste. Our findings also imply that the drop in food waste was fueled by widespread worry about the impact of the pandemic on the waste management system, as well as a desire to avoid putting more strain on the system. If this trend continues in the medium and long term, it could have significant repercussions,

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as lessening waste management system pressure could result in cheaper food bills for consumers and lower disposal costs for restaurants, processors, and farmers. Future research should, however, look at this topic more, as well as in different geographical contexts.

CONCLUSION

Despite a spike in food purchases, the quantity of household food waste in Italy dropped during the COVID-19 lockdown, according to our findings. This finding could imply that the emergency time in Italy during the lockdown raised public awareness of the importance of avoiding or at least reducing

food waste, which has substantial economic and environmental consequences.

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic is having a major impact on people's everyday routines and economic activity. Surprisingly, if there is a silver lining in terms of household food waste from an environmental standpoint, it is that the pandemic has lowered the quantity of food waste for the vast majority of homes, at least in the Italian setting. Our study is one of the first to look at food waste during the COVID-19 pandemic, but further research is needed to completely understand food waste in households during emergency situations.