

AGEC 410 – Agricultural and Food Policy

13 – Nutrition, Food Safety, Quality

Wide range of concerns and issues, so wide range of potential policy options

Divide into:

Food Safety

Nutrition

Hunger

A. Food Safety:

Number of risks

1. Key questions:

a. What is the risk?

Can we determine an objective risk?

Is science clear?

Europeans argue for precautionary principle

Changes in technology affect measurement.

b. What risk is acceptable?

Varies with:

1. consequences

2. activity

3. natural occurrences

4. cost

2. U.S. food risk criteria:

Delaney clause, 1958, the standard
zero risk

Standard not workable so;

Reasonable certainty of no discernable health
risk

Risk-benefit (pesticides)

c. What policies meet society's acceptable risks?

1. Self regulation

2. Approval process

3. Production, handling, and quality standards

4. Information and labeling

5. *ex post* litigation

B. Nutrition:

Nutrition issues

Policy approaches, tend to be integrated

1. Information and education:

2. Suasion

3. labeling

4. Regulation and taxation

C. Hunger:

Why?

Farm lobby tends to see these as:
demand expansion

bargaining chip for farm programs

Number of private and public programs

Private
often religious tie

Federal

Depression food relief

Surplus disposal of 1950s and 1960s

Food Stamp Program, Nixon

School Lunch Program

Women, Infant, and Children Supplemental Food Program (WIC)

Cash Assistance vs tied food program (cash-out)

Issue is which is better?
for consumer welfare, for nutrition objective,
for farmers