

# HumanProgress



Over the last century, almost every U.S. household gained access to a refrigerator.

As a result, foodborne illnesses cratered, and Americans gained year-round access to fresh and increasingly affordable produce.

The same story is now unfolding in the developing world, provided ill-advised climate policies don't get in the way.

[Read more.](#)



We are beginning a new series investigating food abundance in England using a dataset going back to the 13th century. The first installment covers dairy products.

The summary: since the 1200s, cheese has become 10.6 times more abundant, milk has become 15.1 times more abundant, and butter has become 15.6 times more abundant.

[Read more.](#)

In 15th-century England, 80 percent of private expenditure was on food. Of that amount, 20 percent was spent on bread alone.

By 2020, in comparison, only 8.6 percent of the U.S. personal disposable income was spent on food, a figure which is itself inflated by the large amounts that Americans spend in restaurants.

For health reasons, many Americans today avoid eating bread altogether.



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