

## Topics in Food Economics 2024-25

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Course title	Topics in food economics
Level / Semester	M1 / Semester 2
Credits	
Teaching Hours CM	15
Teaching Hours TD	12
Teaching Hours TP	
Course Language	English
Language for TD and/or TP	English

### 1. Presentation

Life cannot subsist without food. Civilization started with the domination over the natural environment and food supply. From local food supply, civilization engaged in trade, and nowadays food can only be thought of in its global and international market.

The food industry has experienced many technological changes in its production, storage and distribution. The food chain encompasses complex relationships between farmers, food processors, wholesalers and retailers. All forms of market structure, from monopoly to perfect competition or monopsony can be found in the food chain.

Moreover, regulation occurs in each phase of the food chain. Food markets are among the most regulated markets for consumer to access affordable and safe quality products and because of the potential impact of food on human health and the environment. In the world, about 2 billion people are overweight or obese which significantly affect their health in the long term. Moreover, the food sector is one of the main contributors of greenhouse gases emitted in the world with 25% of emissions.

Food and agricultural markets thus are an excellent laboratory for the application of microeconomic principles with market failures and government interventions. The course applies microeconomic methodologies to food and nutritional problems. Students will thus gain economic knowledge and skills in the analysis of food markets. The course examines both the industrial organization of the food chain and the rationale for public intervention in food market using a specific food economic topic as a case study.

### 2. Faculty instructors

The course is given by Zohra Bouamra-Mechemache (ZB) and Catarina Goulão (CG). They are specialized on the economics of the agri-food sector and have good scientific and professional networks.

For any questions related to the course, students are welcome to contact the instructors by email: [zohra.bouamra@tse-fr.eu](mailto:zohra.bouamra@tse-fr.eu), and [catarina.goulao@tse-fr.eu](mailto:catarina.goulao@tse-fr.eu). Please write the following subject in every e-mail exchange with us: "M1-TOPICS IN FOOD ECONOMICS". Depending on the questions, we will answer by email or propose an appointment. Questions are welcome.

### 3. Objectives of the course and educational goals

You will learn to use your scientific knowledge to advise policy makers :-)

We will cover the basic principles of food economics and discuss how food issues can be addressed by public policies. Afterwards, students will engage in teamwork in view of producing a report. We will work on a case study. Both team and individual contributions are expected under the guidance of the instructors.

The aim of the course is to mobilize the knowledge acquired in the Master program and the economic literature to provide an economic assessment on an important question related to food economics. A number of **skills** will be developed. You will **analyse** a topic and provide a **critical and well-argued analysis**. You will develop your ability to provide **written and oral feedback** on your **personal and**

**group works.** You will also learn how to **synthesize recommendation reports** based on several contributors' work and **present** your main results to an audience.

The topic, common to every group, will be presented in class and the work to be done divided among the groups.

We will brainstorm around how to address the case study, plan together how to answer it, organize and split work. In the end, each group will provide inputs to the case study. Conclusion and critical appraisal to the report are individual contributions.

More topics in food economics will be covered in the M2 program.

#### **4. Requirements**

Basic game theory and intermediate level in microeconomics. Basic knowledge of industrial organization and public economics.

#### **5. Practical arrangements**

The course includes lectures and follow-up sessions. Attendance to lectures is mandatory.

During the semester, students will gather information, quantitative data when needed, read papers, studies. Based on this work, they will have to write and present reports by group. At the end of presentations, the other students are invited to ask questions and discuss the issues raised during the presentation. A priori, this work will be in group of 2-3 students (this will depend on the number of students attending the course). More details will be provided during the first lectures.

Follow-up and feedback sessions will be organised (TDs) to follow and guide each group of students to reach each step of the work that will lead to the final report.

Slides and references will be on the Moodle platform before the corresponding lectures so that students can browse and read recommended materials.

#### **6. Organisation of courses**

**09/01/2025** CM1 (ZB) and CM2 (ZB): Context and motivation, Organisation of the Food Chain

**16/01/2025** TD1 (ZB+CG) + TD2 (ZB+CG): Presentation of the case study and organisation of the work

**23/01/2025** CM3 (ZB) + TD3 (ZB+CG): Horizontal and vertical coordination 1

**30/01/2025** CM4 (ZB): Horizontal and vertical coordination 2

**30/01/2025** TD4 (ZB+CG) on appointment

**06/02/2025** TD5 (CG+ZB) + TD6 (CG+ZB): Work in progress presentation

**13/02/2025** CM5 (CG) + CM6 (CG): Food and Health 1

**27/02/2025** CM7 (CG): Food and Health 2

**27/02/2025** CM8 (CG): Food and Health 3

**06/03/2025** TD7 (CG+ZB): on appointment

**06/03/2025** TD8 (CG+ZB): on appointment

**09/03/2025** Deadline to send the draft of the reports

**13/03/2025** CM9 (ZB+CG) + CM10 (CG+ZB): Presentations and discussions

**20/03/2025** Final report and individual reports deadline.

#### **7. Assessment**

Evaluation is based on continuous assessment. The assessment is based on individual and group contributions as follows:

- Participation during the lectures - individual, **10%**
- Work in progress presentations (case study) - groups, **20%**
- Writing and presentation of final reports and discussions (case study) - groups, **50%**
- Individual report relative to the case study (1 page) -individual, **20%**

The final report and the individual appraisal are due by the end of the semester.

There is no text covering the whole domain. A reading list will be provided during the course and available on Moodle.