

POPULARITY OF PROCESSED FOODSTUFFS FOR INFANTS AND SMALL CHILDREN AMONG PARENTS

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Abstract. The popularity of seven groups of processed foodstuffs (soups, dinners, pulverized fruits and vegetables, desserts, dairy desserts, juices, teas) for infants and small children aged 4 months up to 3 years, available on the market and comprising a total of 154 products, was investigated in this study. A survey was carried out in the group of 100 individuals. They were mothers and fathers bringing their children to crèche as well as buying analysed products. Among 24 soups vegetable soup with rabbit meat, vegetable soup and vegetable soup with chicken turned out to be most popular, as they were bought by 26%, 25% and 24% parents, respectively. In the group of second courses the most popular included vegetable with rabbit meat (19%), vegetables with lamb and goats (17%) and lamb in vegetable stew (16%). The most popular pulverized fruits and vegetables included apple (32%), apple with blueberries (27%), carrot and apple (26%) and carrot, apple and forest berries (23%). In the group of fruit and cereal desserts mango with banana and passion fruit juice turned out to be the most popular (22%), while among dairy desserts it was vanilla dessert (23%). Out of 30 kinds of juices, parents purchased most frequently carrot and apple juice (52%) and apple juice (37%), while in the group of teas it was fennel tea as well as camomile tea and herbal tea for colds. A total of 33% and 29% parents, respectively, bought the above mentioned teas. Most respondents were of the opinion that the taste of these products was slightly inferior to those prepared at home and the price was too high, but they bought them for their convenience.

Key words: foodstuffs, infants, children, consumption frequency

INTRODUCTION

The primary factor ensuring an appropriate development of a child is its rational nutrition. The feeding of a child starting from its first days of life may determine in the future the mental and physical health of this individual as an adult. Children are extremely susceptible to deficiency or excess of certain food components. For this reason

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mistakes committed in the nutrition of children, especially at the early stages of their lives, are very dangerous and difficult to correct [Kibalenko 1977, Szotowa et al. 1996, Weker 2004]. Inappropriate feeding may lead to deficiencies of nutrients and affect the state of nutrition of a child – its delayed growth, susceptibility to infections and diseases [Weker et al. 2000, Weker and Rudzka-Kańtoch 2003, Weker and Więch 2003]. The concept of child development, although very broad, pertains primarily to the physical and mental development. Nutrition of children has to satisfy the requirements of the developing organism. This development does not occur at an identical rate or speed. In the life of a child periods of accelerated and slowed growth may be observed; however, this process is never interrupted at any point [Szotowa et al. 1996]. The life of a child may be divided into the period of fetal development, lasting from conception until delivery, the neonatal period (from parturition until day 28 of life), infancy (from the 1st to the 12th month of life), early childhood (between the age of 1 and 3 years), pre-school period (from the age of 3 to 6), school age period (between the age of 6 to 15) and teenage period lasting from the age of 15 to 18 [Szotowa 2000]. In each of these periods it is essential to supply the child in the offered food with the amounts of both energy and nutrients appropriate for a given age [Socha 1998, Ziemiański 1998, Socha 2002, Piotrowska-Jastrzębska and Socha 2003, Szotowa 2000, Szejewska and Albrecht 2005]. Food industry offers a wide range of supplementary foodstuffs for infants and small children used as diet supplements [Information 2002, Nabrzyski et al. 1998]. This group includes processed foodstuffs based on cereals, meat, fruit and vegetables, as well as different kinds of teas and juices. The market of various baby cereal preparations, mash, soups as well as processed fruits and vegetables and dinner dishes is composed of companies undertaking, in their efforts to win customers, various marketing activities, ranging from leaflets distributed to mothers already at maternity wards to counseling on nutrition of infants and children [Information... 2002, Świącicka et al. 2004].

The aim of this study was to determine the percentage of parents buying different foodstuffs for infants and small children aged from 4 months to 3 years and thus to determine the popularity of these products.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Investigations were conducted in a group of 100 parents of children aged from 4 months to 3 years living in a town of Kalisz. Popularity of 154 different processed foodstuffs, belonging to seven groups of products, i.e. soups, dinners, pulverized fruits and vegetables, desserts, dairy desserts, juices and teas, was determined using a survey. Questionnaires were distributed among mothers and fathers bringing their children to crèches as well as buying analysed products in shops. Polled individuals were to give any number of purchased products for children. Parents were also asked their opinions on the taste, price and availability of information in relation to all analysed processed products. Factors affecting their purchase were also defined, i.e. the price, nutritive value, formulation and convenience. Most polled were individuals with secondary education (42%), while 32% had university education, 6% – vocational secondary education and only a small group (6%) – elementary education. Detailed assortment of analysed foodstuffs for infants and children is presented in Tables 1-7.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Among 24 soups (Table 1) the most popular were vegetable soup with rabbit, vegetable soup and vegetable soup with chicken. They were bought by 25.8%, 24.7% and 23.7% respondents. Only 7.6% parents bought leek soup, cauliflower soup and carrot soup with rice, and even fewer of them (6.6%) tomato soup with beef and rice. Among dinner dishes (Table 2) the most popular included vegetables with rabbit (19.4%), vegetables with lamb and groats (17.2%) and lamb in vegetables (16.2%). Turkey was less popular (14%), the same was true for chicken with vegetables and corn, and vegetables with chicken (12.9%) and chicken, rice and vegetables, as well as a veal fricassee (11.9%). The least popular dishes included cream of carrot and rice with veal, risotto with carrot and turkey, and vegetables with turkey and tomatoes (fewer than 5% parents bought these dishes). Among 25 kinds of fruit and vegetable purées these products (Table 3) the most popular choices included apple (32.3%), apple with blueberries (26.9%), carrot with apple (25.8%), as well as carrot and apple with forest berries (22.7%). The smallest number of parents (below 10%) bought green peas, pumpkin, apricot, peach

Table 1. Popularity of soups
Tabela 1. Popularność zup

Soups – Zupy	Percentage Procent	Soups – Zupy	Percentage Procent
Vegetable soup with rabbit Jarzynowa z królikiem	25.8	Vegetable soup with leek Jarzynowa z porem	10.8
Vegetable soup Jarzynowa	24.7	Cucumber soup Zupa ogórkowa	10.7
Vegetable soup with chicken Jarzynowa z kurczakiem	23.7	Tomato soup with turkey and noodles Pomidorowa z indykiem i kluseczkami	10.7
Vegetable soup with chicken and rice Jarzynowa z kurczakiem i ryżem	18.4	Barley soup Krupnik	9.7
Vegetable soup with turkey and rice Jarzynowa z indykiem i ryżem	18.3	Turkey bouillon with grits Rosół z indyka z kaszką kukurydzianą	8.7
Vegetable soup with veal and noodles Jarzynowa z cielęciną i kluseczkami	16.1	Mild barley soup with veal Krupniczek z cielęciną	8.7
Vegetable soup with cauliflower Jarzynowa z kalafiorem	14.1	Carrot soup with vegetables Marchewkowa z jarzynami	8.6
Carrot soup Marchewkowa	14	Cabbage soup Kapuśniak	8.6
Vegetable soup with veal Jarzynowa z cielęciną	13	Carrot soup with rice Marchewkowa z ryżem	7.6
Chicken soup with rice Rosół z kurczaka z ryżem	12.9	Cauliflower soup Kalafiorowa	7.6
Tomato soup with veal and rice Pomidorowa z cielęciną i ryżem	10.8	Leek soup Porowa	7.6
Carrot soup with broccoli Marchewkowa z brokułami	10.8	Tomato soup with beef and rice Pomidorowa z wołowiną i ryżem	6.6

Table 2. Popularity of main courses
Tabela 2. Popularność dań obiadowych

Main courses Dania obiadowe	Percentage Procent	Main courses Dania obiadowe	Percentage Procent
Vegetables with rabbit Warzywa z królikiem	19.4	Broccoli with veal and apple Brokuły z cielęciną i jabłkami	8.6
Vegetables with lamb and gruel Warzywa z jagnięciną i kaszą	17.2	Vegetables with ham Warzywa z szynką	7.6
Lamb in vegetables Jagnięcina w warzywach	16.2	Potatoes with chicken and grapes Ziemniaki z kurczakiem i winogronami	7.6
Turkey Indyk	14.0	Vegetables with turkey Warzywa z indykiem	7.5
Vegetables with chicken Warzywa z kurczakiem	12.9	Veal in vegetables with noodles Cielęcina w warzywach z kluseczkami	7.5
Chicken with vegetables and corn Kurczak z warzywami i kukurydzą	12.9	Tomatoes and beef with noodles Pomidory i wołowina z kluseczkami	7.5
Chicken, rice, vegetables Kurczak, ryż, warzywa	11.9	Vegetables, chicken, apple Warzywa, kurczak, jabłka	6.5
Veal fricassee Cielęcina w potrawce	11.9	Potatoes with chicken in tomatoes Ziemniaki z kurczakiem w pomidorach	6.5
Chicken Kurczak	10.8	Vegetables, chicken, plums Warzywa, kurczak, śliwki	6.5
Veal fricassee with oatmeal Potrawka z cielęciną i płatkami owsianymi	10.8	Turkey fricassee and gruel Potrawka z indykiem i kaszą	6.4
Vegetables with veal and broccoli Warzywa z cielęciną i brokułami	9.7	Noodles with vegetables and ham Kluseczki z jarzynami i szynką	6.4
Turkey with noodles in tomatoes Indyk z kluseczkami w pomidorach	9.7	Warzywa z szynką i pomidorami Vegetables with ham and tomatoes	6.4
Carrot with ham and prunes Marchewka z szynką i suszonymi śliwkami	9.7	Vegetables with rice and beef Jarzyny z ryżem i wołowiną	5.4
Noodles with tomatoes and veal Kluseczki z pomidorami i cielęciną	9.7	Cream of carrot with rice and veal Krem z marchwi i ryżu z cielęciną	4.4
Carrot with turkey and apricots Marchew z indykiem i morelami	8.7	Risotto with carrot and turkey Risotto z marchewką i indykiem	4.4
Vegetables with turkey and apple Warzywa z indykiem i jabłkami	8.7	Vegetables, turkey, tomatoes Warzywa, indyk, pomidory	4.3
Vegetables with chicken and noodles Jarzynki z kurczakiem i kluseczkami	8.6	Vegetables with veal and corn Warzywa z cielęciną i kukurydzą	4.2
Assortment of vegetables with beef Bukiet jarzyn z wołowiną	8.6	Beef with gruel Wołowina z kaszą	3.3

Table 3. Popularity of fruit and vegetable purées
 Tabela 3. Popularność przecierów owocowych i warzywnych

Fruit and vegetable purées Przeciery owocowe i warzywne	Percentage Procent	Fruit and vegetable purées Przeciery owocowe i warzywne	Percentage Procent
Apple Jabłka	32.3	Tropical fruits Owoce tropikalne	12.9
Apple with blueberries Jabłka z czarnymi jagodami	26.9	Broccoli Brokuły	12.9
Carrot with apple Marchew z jabłkiem	25.8	Apple and pears Jabłka i gruszki	11.9
Apple with forest fruits Jabłka z owocami leśnymi	22.7	Apple with bananas and peaches Jabłka z bananami i brzoskwiniami	11.9
Carrot Marchew	22.7	Peaches Brzoskwinie	10.8
Apple with peaches Jabłka z brzoskwiniami	19.4	Pumpkin Dyńa	8.6
Apple with carrot and grapes Jabłka z marchwią i winogronem	18.4	Peaches with mango Brzoskwinie z mango	8.7
Apple, rosehips Jabłka, owoce dzikiej róży	17.3	Yellow string beans Żółta fasolka	7.5
Apple with apricots Jabłka z morelami	16.2	Apricots Morele	7.5
Williams pears Gruszki Wiliamsa	16.2	Apple with bananas and mango BIO Jabłka z bananami i mango BIO	7.5
Apple, rosehips, grapes, currants Jabłka, owoce dzikiej róży winogrono, porzeczki	16.1	Green peas Zielony groszek	6.4
Apple, apricots, grapes, bananas Jabłka, morele, winogrono, banany	15.1	Apple with bananas BIO Jabłka z bananami BIO	5.4
Apple with prunes Jabłka z suszonymi śliwkami	14.0		

with mango, BIO apple with banana and BIO apple with banana and mango. Another group of foodstuffs consisted of fruit and cereal desserts (Table 4). The biggest number of parents bought a dessert of mango, banana and passion fruit juice (21.5%), fruit dessert (20.5%) and one of apple, pear and berries with the addition of rice (20.4%), while the least often purchased product was BIO wholemeal porridge with fruit (5.4%). In the group of 18 dairy desserts (Table 5) vanilla dessert was the most popular, followed by apple, raspberries with yogurt, purchased by 22.6% and 20.5% parents, respectively. Slightly fewer parents chose chocolate dessert (18%), multifruit dessert with cottage cheese (15%) and muesli with fruit and yogurt (14.1%). Out of 29 kinds of juices (Table 6), carrot and apple juice was the most popular, bought by 52.7% polled parents, followed by apple juice (36.5%), carrot juice (31.3%), then apple, raspberry and grape juice and orange juice (30.1%). Only 8.6% parents purchased BIO apricot drink and 10.8% BIO apple and pineapple drink with carrot and 11.6% bought peach and pineapple

Table 4. Popularity of desserts
Tabela 4. Popularność deserów

Desery – Desserts	Percentage Procent	Desery – Desserts	Percentage Procent
Mango with bananas and juice of passiflora fruits Mango z bananami i sokiem z owoców passiflory	21.5	With parts of grapes taste fruits Z kawałkami owoców o smaku winogronowym	16.2
Fruit dessert Deser owocowy	20.5	Gruel rice with BIO fruits Kleik ryżowy z owocami BIO	11.8
Apples, pears and berry with rice Jabłka, gruszki, jagody z ryżem	20.4	With parts of mango Z kawałkami owoców mango	11.8
Apples, banana with oatmeal Jabłka, banany z płatkami owsianymi	19.4	With parts of pineapple taste fruits Z kawałkami owoców o smaku ananasowym	10.7
With parts of papai taste fruits Z kawałkami owoców o smaku papai	17.2	Muesli of Dr Bircher BIO Musli Doktora Birchera BIO	9.7
With parts of coconut taste fruits Z kawałkami owoców o smaku kokosowym	16.2	Gruel from whole grain with fruits BIO Kleik z pełnego ziarna zbóż z owocami BIO	5.4

Table 5. Popularity of dairy desserts
Tabela 5. Popularność deserów mlecznych

Dairy desserts Desery mleczne	Percentage Procent	Dairy desserts Desery mleczne	Percentage Procent
Vanilla dessert Deser waniliowy	22.6	Yoghurt dessert with fruit Deser jogurtowy z owocami	11.9
Apple, raspberries, yoghurt Jabłka, maliny, jogurt	20.5	Peaches and apricots with cottage cheese Brzoskwinie i morele z twarogiem	10.8
Chocolate dessert Deser czekoladowy	18.4	Apples and apricots with cottage cheese Jabłka i morele z twarogiem	10.8
Mixed fruit with cottage cheese Wielooowocowy z twarogiem	15	Apples and peaches with cottage cheese Jabłka i brzoskwinie z twarogiem	10.8
Muesli with fruit and yoghurt Musli z owocami i jogurtem	14.1	Apples with yoghurt Jabłka z jogurtem	9.7
Apple and banana muesli with yoghurt Musli jabłkowo-bananowe z jogurtem	13.2	Rice gruel with milk and bananas Kaszka ryżowa z mlekiem i bananami	9.7
Semolina with milk and fruit Kaszka manna z mlekiem i owocami	12.9	Apples and mango with cottage cheese Jabłka i mango z twarogiem	8.6
Semolina with milk and chocolate Kaszka manna z mlekiem i czekoladą	12.9	Apples and apricots with yoghurt Jabłka i morele z jogurtem	8.6
Apples and peaches with yoghurt Jabłka i brzoskwinie z jogurtem	11.9	Apples, bananas, pumpkin, tangerines with cottage cheese Jabłka, banany, dynia, mandarynka z twarogiem	8.6

Table 6. Popularity of juices
Tabela 6. Popularność soków

Juices – Soki	Percentage Procent	Juices – Soki	Percentage Procent
Carrot-apple Marchwiowo-jabłkowy	52.7	Apple-apricot-carrot Jabłkowo-morelowo-marchwiowy	19.4
Apple Jabłkowy	36.5	Apple-banana-carrot Jabłkowo-bananowo-marchwiowy	19.4
Carrot Marchwiowy	31.3	Carrot-apple with pineapple Marchwiowo-jabłkowy z ananasami	19.5
Apple, raspberry and grape Z jabłek, malin i winogron	30.1	Peach Brzoskwinowy	17.3
Orange Pomarańczowy	30.1	Apple-apricot with pumpkin Jabłkowo-morelowy z dynią	17.2
Black currant Z czarnych porzeczek	29.1	Pear Gruszkowy	17.2
Carrot-apple with bananas Marchwiowo-jabłkowy z bananami	27.0	Apple-grape Jabłkowo-winogronowy	17.2
Mixed fruit Wielooowocowy	26.9	Exotic fruit Z owoców egzotycznych	16.2
Carrot-apple with pumpkin and grapes Marchwiowo-jabłkowy z dynią i winogronem	25.9	Apple and pineapple with bananas Z jabłek i ananasów z bananami	15.1
Carrot-apple with mango Marchwiowo-jabłkowy z mango	25.8	Apple and red fruit Z jabłek i czerwonych owoców	14.0
Carrot-apple with passion fruit Marchwiowo-jabłkowy z marakują	24.8	Apple and pineapple with peaches Z jabłek i ananasów z brzoskwiniami	13.0
Carrot-apple with lemon Marchwiowo-jabłkowy z cytryną	24.6	Peach and pineapple drink Napój brzoskwinowo-ananasowy	11.6
Apple with pumpkin Jabłkowy z dynią	22.6	Apple and pineapple with carrot BIO Z jabłek i ananasów z marchwią BIO	10.8
Apple, banana and currant Z jabłek, bananów i porzeczeki	22.6	Apricot drink BIO Napój morelowy BIO	8.6
Apple-berry Jabłkowo-jagodowy	19.4		

drink. In the group of teas (Table 7) the most popular one was fennel tea (33%) as well as camomile tea and herbal tea for colds (29%), while the least popular was calming tea and herbal tea (9%). Polled individuals expressed their opinion also on commercially available, analyzed processed products. Only 9% polled parents stated that purchased foodstuffs were much better or slightly better in taste (14%) than traditional dishes prepared at home. Most polled (54%) were of the opinion that the taste of these products was slightly inferior, but they purchase them for their convenience (Fig. 1). The decision to buy these products depended on their price. According to 24% polled the price of food products for infants and small children was very high, 64% stated that it was high,

Table 7. Popularity of teas
Tabela 7. Popularność herbatek

Teas – Herbatki	Percentage Procent	Teas – Herbatki	Percentage Procent
Fennel Z kopru włoskiego	33	Orange Pomarańczowa	19
Chamomile Rumiankowa	29	Facilitating digestion Ułatwiająca trawienie	18
For colds Na przeziębienie	29	Herb Ziołowa	9
Fruit Owocowa	27	Calming Uspokajająca	9
Forest fruits and herbs Z leśnych owoców i ziół	24		

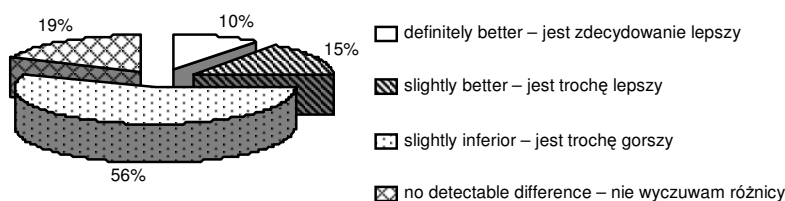


Fig. 1. Taste of ready-to-serve baby foodstuffs according to parents
Rys. 1. Smak odżywek w opinii rodziców

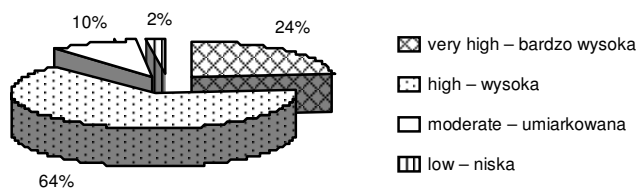


Fig. 2. The price of processed foodstuffs according to parents
Rys. 2. Cena przetworów dla niemowląt i małych dzieci w opinii rodziców

10% said it was moderate and only 2% declared that it was low (Fig. 2). Among the polled a total of 22% parents were of the opinion that the possibility of purchase of baby food was limited due to a lack of detailed and readily available information on these products. A majority of polled (60%) stated that they did not need advice of sales assistants, while 18% willingly used such advice. A vast majority of respondents (88%) were of the opinion that the market currently satisfies their requirements in the selection of

products for this group of children. Most polled (55.9%) when buying this type of processed foodstuffs were motivated by convenience (Table 8). It results from a study by Świącicka et al. [2002] that mothers when purchasing processed products for children made their decision primarily on the basis of taste most preferred by their children. They were also of an opinion that the supply of these products on the Polish market is satisfactory.

Table 8. Factors affecting purchase of baby foods by respondents
Tabela 8. Czynniki wpływające na zakup odżywek przez respondentów

Factors – Czynniki	Percentage – Procent
Nutritive value – Wartość odżywcza	24.6
Formulation – Skład surowcowy	19.5
Convenience – Wygoda	55.9

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Assortment of baby food on the Polish market is very rich. Among dinner dishes the biggest percentage of parents chose vegetables with rabbit, vegetables with lamb and groats, and lamb in vegetables. In the group of pulverized fruit and vegetables, the most popular included primarily pulverized apple and carrot, as well as juices from these Polish staples, possibly with the addition of other fruits (blueberries). In another analyzed group, i.e. fruit and cereal desserts, most willingly purchased products were multicomponent fruit desserts containing exotic fruit (mango, bananas, passion fruit) or those with Polish fruits (apple, pear, bilberries and raspberries). Among dairy desserts the traditional vanilla dessert was selected most often, while among teas it was fennel tea alleviating flatulence, so frequent in infants. Respondents stressed too high prices, inferior taste and a lack of sufficient information on the products.

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POPULARNOŚĆ WŚRÓD RODZICÓW PRZETWORÓW PRZEZNACZONYCH DLA NIEMOWLĄT I MAŁYCH DZIECI

Streszczenie. Badano popularność siedmiu grup przetworów (zupy, dania obiadowe, przetoczenia owocowe i warzywne, desery, desery mleczne, soki, herbatki) przeznaczonych dla niemowląt i małych dzieci w wieku od 4 miesięcy do 3 lat. Obejmowały one łącznie 154 różne przetwory znajdujące się na rynku. Badaniami ankietowymi objęto 100 osób. Były to matki oraz ojcowie odprowadzający dzieci do żłobków i kupujący badane produkty. Spośród 24 zup największym powodzeniem cieszyły się: jarzynowa z królikiem, jarzynowa oraz jarzynowa z kurczakiem. Kupowało je odpowiednio 26%, 25% i 24% rodziców. W grupie dań obiadowych najbardziej popularne były warzywa z królikiem (19%), warzywa z jagnięciną i kaszą (17%) oraz jagnięcina w warzywach (16%). Z grupy przetworów owocowych i warzywnych najczęściej wybierano jabłka (32%), jabłka z czarnymi