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Has the contribution of selected foods to intakes of energy, fat, saturated fat and sugar changed over time?

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Background

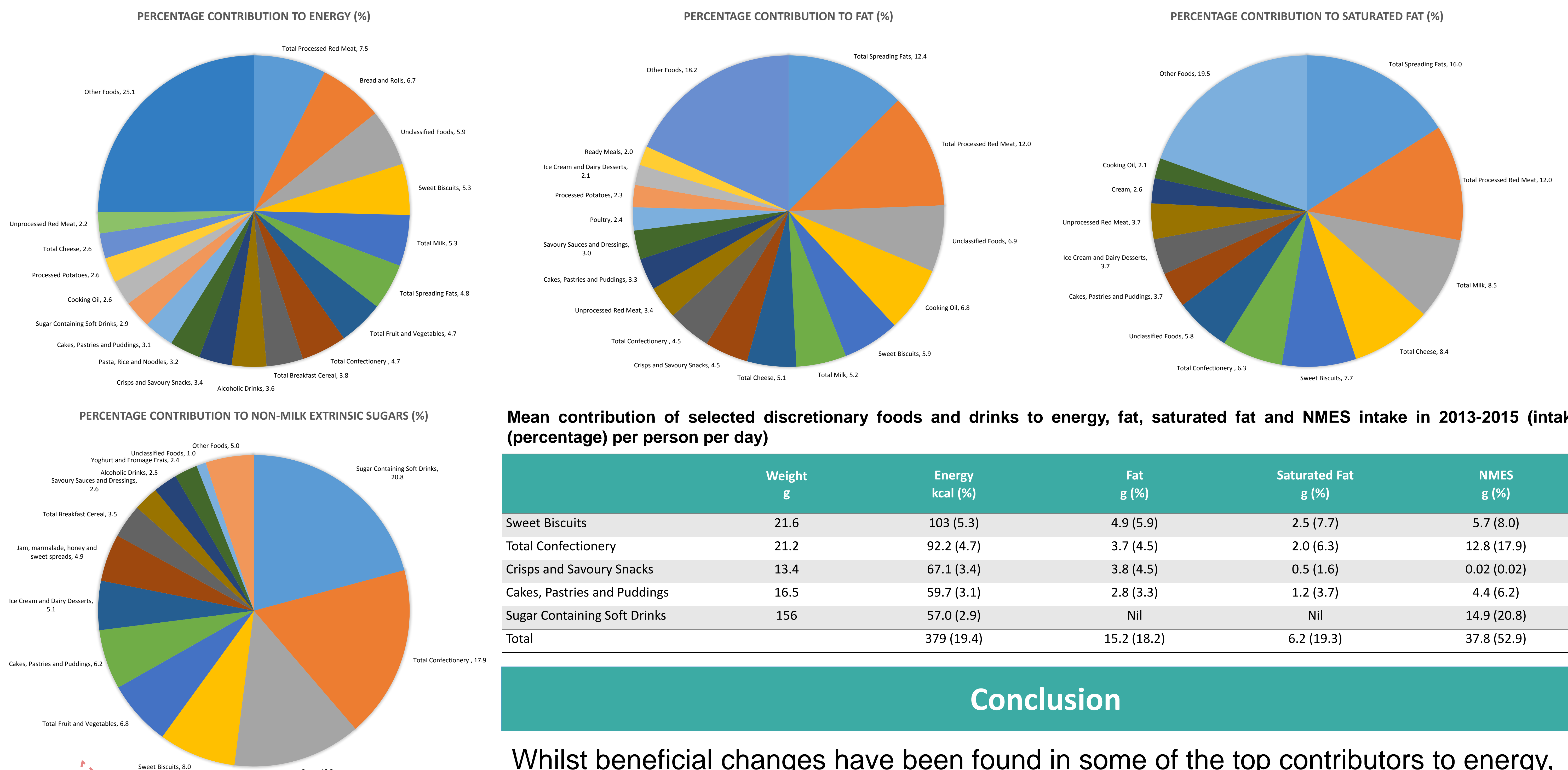
Progress towards the Scottish Dietary Goals⁽¹⁾ has been monitored since 2001, principally using Scottish food purchase data⁽²⁾ collected annually by the Office for National Statistics. Since national and global food supplies are constantly evolving, it is important to verify the contribution different foods and drinks make to nutrient intake to ensure that the most important indicators are included in dietary goals and monitoring. The purpose of this work was to explore any change in the contribution of different food categories to energy, fat, saturated fat and non-milk extrinsic sugars (NMES) intakes over time.

Methods

Annual household food purchase data from 2001 to 2015, for Scotland, from the UK Living Costs and Food Survey were analysed (in 3 year blocks) to estimate the contribution that different food categories made to intakes of energy, fat, saturated fat and NMES in the Scottish population.

Results

The top five contributors of energy, fat, saturated fat and NMES have remained unchanged between 2001/03 and 2013/15. However significant reductions were found in the percentage contribution of some of these top five contributors.



Mean contribution of selected discretionary foods and drinks to energy, fat, saturated fat and NMES intake in 2013-2015 (intake (percentage) per person per day)

| | Weight g | Energy kcal (%) | Fat g (%) | Saturated Fat g (%) | NMES g (%) |
|------------------------------|----------|-----------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Sweet Biscuits | 21.6 | 103 (5.3) | 4.9 (5.9) | 2.5 (7.7) | 5.7 (8.0) |
| Total Confectionery | 21.2 | 92.2 (4.7) | 3.7 (4.5) | 2.0 (6.3) | 12.8 (17.9) |
| Crisps and Savoury Snacks | 13.4 | 67.1 (3.4) | 3.8 (4.5) | 0.5 (1.6) | 0.02 (0.02) |
| Cakes, Pastries and Puddings | 16.5 | 59.7 (3.1) | 2.8 (3.3) | 1.2 (3.7) | 4.4 (6.2) |
| Sugar Containing Soft Drinks | 156 | 57.0 (2.9) | Nil | Nil | 14.9 (20.8) |
| Total | | 379 (19.4) | 15.2 (18.2) | 6.2 (19.3) | 37.8 (52.9) |

Conclusion

Whilst beneficial changes have been found in some of the top contributors to energy, fat, saturated fat and NMES, consumption of processed red meat, sugar containing soft drinks and sweet biscuits should be minimal. These three food categories are in the top five contributors to energy; processed red meat and sweet biscuits in the top five contributors to fat and saturated fat, and sugar containing soft drinks are the main contributor to NMES intake in the diet of the Scottish population. Reducing these three food categories alone has the potential to improve the diet of the Scottish population and offer a significant reduction in excess energy intake.

References

1. Scottish Government (2013) *Revised Dietary Goals for Scotland*. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.
2. Wrieden WL, Armstrong J, Sherriff A et al. (2013) *BJN*, 109, 1892-1902.

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