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Agric. Econ. — Czech

**Agboola M. O., Bacilar
M.:**

Can food availability influence economic growth — the case of African countries

Agric. Econ. — Czech, 60 (2014): 232-
245

There is a growing consensus that food security is vital to the general wellbeing of any economy, but a far less consensus on whether food security can spur economic growth in a country. Many economic growth strategies focus on specific interventions (trade openness index, tropical climatic variables, working age population share etc.), but many factors, such as food availability, female education and health outcomes, can potentially have a profound influence on economic growth. To explore this hypothesis more systematically, this paper employs a rich cross-country dataset of 124 countries to examine the impact of food security, using food availability as a proxy on economic growth. This paper examines the impact of food shortages on African economic growth rates. It does so by extending the Barro growth model to include food availability as a right hand-side variable and by distinguishing African countries with food shortages from others. Based on the cross-

country regressions results, the paper concludes that the improved food availability indeed contributes to the improved economic growth in general, as well as in Africa.

Keywords:

African dummy, food crisis, food security, Africa

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