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Covid-19 Pandemic and Food Security – A Comparative Study between the United States (California) and Portugal

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Master in Economics

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To Chai, my dear friend

Acknowledgment

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a few academic mentors on my journey leading up to writing this thesis, starting in Ventura County in Southern California and ending in Lisbon, Portugal.

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Resumo

A pandemia de Covid-19 foi um evento sísmico. O seu efeito sobre os sistemas alimentares e cadeias de abastecimento e como os governos reagiram a estas crises terão um impacto duradouro na política de segurança alimentar. A segurança alimentar está atualmente na vanguarda devido à pressão sobre os recursos naturais e cadeias de abastecimento fomentadas pelas alterações climáticas, fomes, variações populacionais e, recentemente, pandemias e guerras. As políticas agrícolas e o sistema alimentar estão diretamente conectados aos sistemas e às políticas comerciais promulgadas pelos governos. Esta dissertação concentrar-se-á numa análise comparativa sobre políticas de segurança alimentar adotadas a partir de uma perspetiva entre os Estados Unidos e a União Europeia, particularmente em Portugal e na Califórnia, na resposta à Pandemia Covid-19 e ao futuro destas políticas. Estas políticas serão divididas em três períodos: pós-Segunda Guerra Mundial e era da Guerra Fria (1945-1980); pós-Guerra Fria e era unipolar (1980-2015); era multipolar e pandemia (2015-presente). Estas políticas são classificadas como normais ou excecionais, tendo como objetivo alcançar pelo menos um nível da sociedade, seja micro, meso ou macro. Os dados usados terão o objetivo de explicar a lógica destas políticas tomadas. Esses dados consistem em declarações de líderes políticos, pesquisas de opinião, estatísticas sobre desemprego, insegurança alimentar e pobreza, usando diversas fontes governamentais e institucionais, estudos universitários e dados públicos. Como a invasão da Ucrânia começou após o início desta dissertação, esta será tida em consideração porque representa um exemplo direto da resposta do governo a uma crise no mundo pós-Covid-19.

Palavras-chave: Segurança Alimentar; Política Agrícola; Pandemia Covid-19; Política Agrícola Comum; Tarifas Alfandegárias; Comércio Livre

Classificação JEL: P51; Q18

Abstract

The Covid-19 Pandemic has been a seismic event. Its effect on food systems and supply chains and how governments reacted to these crises will have a long-lasting impact on food security policy. Food security is currently at the forefront due to stress on natural resources and supply chains presented by climate change, famines, population fluctuations, and more recently, pandemics and wars. Agricultural and food system policies are directly linked to economic systems and trade policies enacted by governments. This thesis will focus on a comparative analysis of food security policies adopted from an economic perspective between the United States and European Union, with a focus on Portugal and California, in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic and where their policies may be headed moving forward. Policies will be broken down into three time periods: the Post-World War II, Cold War era (1945-1980s); the post-Cold War, unipolar era (1980s-2015); and the multipolar, pandemic era (2015-present). Then, these policies will be classified as either normalist or exceptionalist, with the intended target-level of society being either macro, meso, or micro. Data will be used to explain the rationale behind the actions taken. This data will consist of statements from politicians, public polls, unemployment, food insecurity, and poverty statistics, ranging from governmental and institutional sources, university studies, and public data. Since the invasion of Ukraine started after beginning this thesis, it will be taken into consideration because it provides a direct example of government response to a crisis in the post-Covid-19 world.

Keywords: Food Security; Agricultural Policy; Covid-19 Pandemic; Common Agricultural Policy; Tariffs; Free Trade

JEL Classification: P51; Q18

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The present dissertation has the goal of demonstrating the behavioral shift currently occurring within the United States and European Union regarding food security and agricultural policy by focusing on measures adopted in California and Portugal in response to the instability on agricultural systems presented by the Covid-19 Pandemic and the present Russian invasion of Ukraine. Agriculture has always had a fundamental role in economics. In times of crisis, there seems to be a renewed focus on reverting back to the most basic foundations of society, so food security is an important area to explore in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic, there has been a major societal reckoning with how states interact with our daily lives, what type of measures did they take throughout the pandemic in attempt to secure the livelihood of their citizenry, and how their behaviors will continue to shift moving forward. This master's thesis will analyze the Covid-19 measures by California and Portugal, and by extension the United States and European Union, taken during the Covid-19 Pandemic in order to have a better understanding of what happened, why the governments responded in the way they did by building context of policy measures in place before the pandemic, how they are responding now with the war in Ukraine, and where they might be heading in the future. The Covid-19 Pandemic affected the lives and livelihoods of everybody, and I believe it is important for us to understand different aspects of what exactly happened and how this will affect us in the future. The main concepts that will be used to measure policies will be regarding trade by comparing agricultural exceptionalism and agricultural normalism and whether policies were targeted towards a specific level of society: macro, meso, and micro. Three main periods will be analyzed in order to observe this shift within the context of food security policy: from the end of World War II until the 1980s, from the 1980s until 2015, and from 2015 until the present. These periods of time mark different periods of behavior amongst state actors regarding food security, trade, and agricultural policy. California and Portugal will be used as the case studies by compiling specific policy measures, economic indicators (such as unemployment and food insecurity), opinion polls, and statements from political leaders. This data will be used in order to construct a case that the behavior of California, Portugal, and more broadly the United States and the European Union, has shifted in the aftermath of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The war in Ukraine is a current example of a crisis that has occurred which demonstrates a shift in behavior.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1. Defining Food Security

Food security, as defined by Anderson, is the access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life and includes the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, and the assured ability to acquire foods without having to resort to scavenging or stealing (Core Indicators, 1990:P.1560). This study by Anderson carried out between the American Institute of Nutrition, the Office of Disease Prevention, and Department of Health and Human Services generally stands as the basis for the U.S. government's definition of food security. This study will build upon this definition of food security, using various United Nations definitions, as well as other academic classifications to further construct food security as a concept and link it with current and future challenges faced by governments to guarantee food security, and show the types of measures that the Californian and Portuguese governments are implementing on the matter within the framework of the United States and European Union.

To further build on Anderson's concept, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has defined four dimensions of food security which are organized as follows (The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017, p.39):

Four Dimensions of Food Security			
Availability	Access	Stability	Utilization
This dimension focuses on availability of necessary calories at the individual level, as well as the types of calories available nationally (e.g. cereals versus animal protein).	This dimension contains variables that measure physical infrastructure for bringing food to market, as well as individual level indicators of whether people have access to the necessary number of calories per day.	The dimension in this pillar measures dependence on food imports, domestic price variability, and variation in land equipped with irrigation.	This dimension captures data on primarily anthropometric indicators of whether people are able to use available calories; relevant data includes measures on wasting, stunting, and low weight among children.

FIGURE 1. Four Dimensions of Food Security

These four dimensions cover aspects of food security from both a consumer's perspective and a supplier's perspective. They also show how the overall development of a certain area and corresponding infrastructure can have a great impact on the food system. Environmental factors, such as droughts and soil fertility, have an instrumental impact on the different dimensions of food security, which is becoming one of the largest challenges

moving forward. A deeper analysis into the different consumer and supplier perspectives of food security will be made, as well as adding a third perspective that will be a key focus in this thesis: from a regional or state level.

To further define food security, Simelane and Worth argue that each of the four dimensions of food security should be observed from three different perspectives: individual, household, and national/regional food security. It is possible for individuals and households within a food secure region to be food insecure, and for individuals and households in a relatively food insecure region to be considered food secure, as is common in societies with high inequity (Simelane and Worth, 2020:p.368). This distinction is important when referring to the United States and European Union, as they are considered food secure areas from a national and regional standpoint.

One explanation for this phenomenon is that not only are there macro and micro factors to food security by considering individuals, households, and nations, but there is also a meso or community-based element which measures provinces, towns, or local districts. This explains localized challenges to food security which can defer from the overall national situation of a country (Gerster-Bentaya, Bokeloh, and Weingartner, 2009). To better organize the dynamic nature of food security and different ways that it can impact various levels of communities, here are the three levels of a social and administrative organization as described by Capacity Building International, Germany in Figure 2:

Macro	World	
	Region	
	Nation	
Meso	Community	Province / City
		District / Town
		Village
Micro	Household / Family	
	Individual	

FIGURE 2. Levels of Social and Administrative Organization

This is particularly important when addressing the existence of food deserts, or "places where residents lack nearby supermarkets" (Brinkley, Raj,Subhashani, 2017:p. 328). In California and Portugal this is an issue that is at the meso level of social organization. It is important to point out that in this study the macro-level will refer to the United States and the European Union, while the meso-level will refer to California and Portugal. The occurrence of food deserts tends to be left out when referring to broader macro-level issues. Instead, the tendency seems to be focused more on micro, or household-level issues without considering the nuance or regional, meso-based food security. This meso-level of organization became particularly important during the Covid-19 Pandemic due to supply chain issues and labor shortages that affected food importation, local production,

and distribution to rural areas. With this understanding of different ways that societies and communities can be observed and organized, let's now take a further look at how Simelane and Worth define each of the four pillars of food security previously mentioned: availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability.

From a national (in the case of the United States), or regional (in the case of the European Union) standpoint, food availability consists of production at a commercial and household level, food imports, donations, and domestic food supplies. The term food availability usually refers to food from a household or regional point of view and not necessarily from an individual standpoint, which will be observed below. It is important to point out that households can be food secure while a nation or region is not. The opposite can be true, meaning that just because food is available on a regional level, it does not necessarily mean that it is available for households (World bank data - country classifications. 2016). The Covid-19 Pandemic underscored this phenomena in a drastic way, especially in countries and regions that experienced a rapid shock in unemployment numbers; workers in service industries that depended on tourism or services were hit especially hard if their income was not guaranteed through social security or unemployment benefits, while office workers who could switch to a home-office model were able to continue securing income. Now, a deeper breakdown of the importance of income generation to individual and household level food security will be made.

Continuing with the idea of food accessibility at a micro-level, this refers to individuals and households having the means necessary to get enough nutritious food in their diet. Simelane and Worth refer to two fundamental aspects of having access to food: "physical accessibility" and "financial accessibility". An element of mobility is required and assumed in order for the person to be able to access food, and a capital element is required in order to purchase the food. The ability for a household to be able to generate income is of utmost importance so that the individuals within the household can have the financial means necessary to both commute to markets and purchase food (Simelane and Worth, 2020:p.368-369). This became very critical during the initial outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic, as many service-sector employees lost their ability to generate means to both purchase food and have a route to the grocery store, while office workers who switched to a home-office model were able to both continue earning income and have the means necessary to either commute to grocery stores or pay to have the food delivered to their domiciles. This further underscored inequality between work sectors as office workers were both able to continue securing income and minimize their health risk to the virus since they rarely had to leave their homes.

The previously mentioned existence of food deserts directly affects food accessibility for residents in the meso or localized level of organization. It can also be said that, in absence of food subsidies or other forms of support, income generation is necessary to achieve access to food and to have food security at a household-level. In this thesis, some of the issues that households faced as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic in terms of generating

income will be analyzed along with which measures that the Californian and Portuguese governments took in order to either help supplement the lack of income through the form of unemployment benefits and stimulus checks, guarantee income through using social security funds, or some combination of both.

Food utilization refers to an individual's body's capacity to incorporate and ingest nutrients from food consumed. To optimize food and nutrient intake, factors such as dietary habits, food preparation, selection of nutritious food, and the distribution of food within a household are key. Taking all of this into account, culture and education levels are important factors in utilization, as well as the genetic makeup of each individual which affects nutrient absorption (Simelane and Worth, 2020:p.369). As mentioned before, income generation is an important factor to achieve food security, and this can have a significant effect on the selection of nutritious foods, especially in the high-inflationary environment that is occurring today. Later on in this dissertation, the idea of nutrition will be presented within the framework of food security. A further look into how both California and Portugal are attempting to confront this topic through different means will be made as well; in the context of the reversion to a more localized, regional trade system and strengthening domestic agriculture production due to geopolitical reasons is one way that food utilization is being affected in the current era.

Food stability ensures that an individual or household's ability to have consistent access to food is necessary to achieve food security. Political instability, droughts, famines, unemployment, pandemics, inflation, or increased food prices are all factors that can affect food stability and can simultaneously occur or cause one another, which can lead to food instability. These shocks need to be managed in order to maintain a stable food system, and it will become even more challenging in the coming years with climate change not only affecting crops and water sources but also how this could indirectly lead to political instability and both economic and migrant crises. This presents added stress onto the food system, on top of general population growth issues that are leading to greater demands for food (Simelane and Worth, 2020). Since the outbreak of the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, the destabilization of global grain and fertilizer markets has presented a unique challenge to food security, as the European Union and Portugal have been particularly affected by this. It shows how geopolitical instability presents a tremendous challenge to food security, and how this can be directly related to the shift in behavior away from unfettered globalized neo-liberalism regarding trade in the post unipolar era. Nonetheless, various trade deals, along with economic and agricultural policy, will be a point of focus in regards to how California and Portugal are addressing the topic of food stability and how this is going to affect their future relationship with food security.

2.2. Nutritional factor of Food Insecurity

The World bank states that food insecurity has typically been imagined differently in low-income countries than in high-income countries like the United States and Portugal (World bank data - country classifications, 2016). According to Darmon and Drewnoski,

in high-income countries calories are cheap and accessible. However, quality food and nutrition tend to be more expensive and not as widely available, which leads to both food insecurity and obesity simultaneously (Darmon and Drewnoski, 2015:P.656). This shows how the different aspects of food security are inter-related, with "financial accessibility" via income generation being directly related to a household's ability to access quality food. On the other hand, the availability of high quality food depends on macro economic factors related to government policy, political stability, the absence of droughts and famines, and many other factors.

When referring to low and middle income countries, Berkowitz and Seligman maintain that food insecurity is usually focused on malnourished sections of society and an overall lack of access to calories, as opposed to a lack of access to high-quality food (Berkowitz and Seligman, 2019:p.321). It is important to make this distinction, since both the United States and Portugal are considered high income countries according to the World Bank's country and lending groups (World Bank Data, 2022). Nonetheless, globalization in the agricultural sector has led countries across income ranges to experience food insecurity in a similar way, such that non-nutritious food is becoming more widely available, while nutritious food is not, as argued by Adair, Popkin, and Ng in their study about obesity (2012). This has created a paradox in which high income and middle income countries tend to have higher obesity rates. Nonetheless, this thesis will attempt to prove that due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and war in Ukraine that this has confirmed a shift in tendency away from unchecked globalization towards more regional, meso-based agricultural policies, which could open the door for healthier foods becoming more accessible at the micro level of society and improving food utilization.

Reverting back to Seligman and Berkowitz, they contend that it is important to demonstrate a relationship between health problems like diabetes and obesity to food insecurity, in order to understand which policy actions need to be taken. They state that "viewed through the lens of food insecurity as a pure manifestation of inadequate access to calories, the association between food insecurity and diabetes appears paradoxical. This paradox may be partially understood by attention to a similar relationship observed between food insecurity and obesity." (Berkowitz and Seligman, 2019:p.321). Basiotis and Lino had defined this "obesity hunger paradox" in their 2003 study about obesity in adult women (Basiotis and Lino, 2003:p.57). It is important to recognize the prevalence of so-called bad, or empty calories along with obesity, in order to define food security in the context of middle and higher-income countries such as the United States and Portugal, rather than looking at food security strictly as a lack of access to calories. This brings a nutritional aspect into the definition of food security that states and policy makers must take into considering when addressing the issue of food security.

Seligman and Berkowitz further argue the point that there is a "critical need to understand food insecurity as a predisposing factor for both lack of adequate nutrition and lack of adequate calories, conditions which can exist simultaneously or consecutively. The

alignment between public health and anti-hunger communities on the need to support food security using interventions that can increase access to both nutrition and calories makes sense in this framework” (2019:p.322). So, in this master’s thesis, a critical point of policy analysis will be made to look into which policies are not only addressing access to calories but also access to quality food and nutrition. Some interesting programs that both the Portuguese and Californian governments are implementing within the framework of the European Union and United States that are attempting to address both issues will be observed. Referring back to Simelane and Worth’s paper, they couple nutrition with food security by stating ”Food and nutrition security can only be achieved when all people have, when needed, physical, social, and economic access to adequate, safe (free of contaminants), and nutritious food to satisfy their dietary needs and choices for an active and healthy life” (Simelane and Worth, 2020:p.368).

2.3. Food Loss and Food Waste

Another important factor to consider in food security is food loss and food waste. A widely cited statistic regarding the amount of global food loss is from the FAO’s 2011 study that 1.3 billion tons, or about one-third of the global food supply, is lost each year (Cederberg, Gustavsson, Meybeck, et al, 2011:p.4). However, the FAO has stated in its 2021 Food Waste Index Report that these statistics are estimates that were dealing with gaps in data and estimating methods; the amount of food loss could be even greater (Forbes, O’Connor, Quested, 2021).

Since the terms food loss and food waste are sometimes used interchangeably, it is important to distinguish between the two; Santeramo adds to Schuster and Torero’s distinction between food loss and food waste. Food loss refers to any reduction or accidental loss of quality or quantity of food, while potential food losses are due to pests, diseases, limited technology, or price volatility. On the other hand, food waste is the intentional discard of food that is suitable for human consumption (Santeramo, 2021:p.1). Santeramo further sustains that water and energy usage needs to be factored into the food security debate. He adds that ”focusing on the nexus between water, energy, and food” is key to dealing with a growing population and increasing energy demands (Santeramo, 2021:p.2-3). ”To sum up, it is advisable to wisely orient the future research on understanding the interrelations between food loss and waste and food security. To this aim, scenario analyses would be useful to explore strategic decisions (e.g., policy, investment, technical intervention) planned or adopted to contain food loss and waste” (Santeramo, 2021:p.3). This point is even more important when considering the current global ethos in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

In both Portugal and California, factors such as extreme weather and droughts are becoming increasingly important challenges for farmers and food producers to deal with. This can directly undermine the availability and stability of food systems at both the meso- and macro-levels which can have dire consequences for both individuals and households at the micro-level. As we have observed with the Covid-19 pandemic, challenges on the food

system directly affect the availability and accessibility of food; sudden labor shortages in the agricultural and logistical sectors, such as trucking or supermarkets, can drastically reduce the availability of food and lead to price shocks, affecting micro-level accessibility as a result of macro- and meso-level instability. As climate change continues to create longer and hotter droughts, it is vital for food systems to be secured because the scenarios that the Covid-19 Pandemic presented that have severely impacted food security could become much worse in the event of climate-related disasters or extreme droughts. In order to explain which strategies states can use to combat these types of issues affecting food security, there are two economic schools of thought regarding agricultural policy on addressing food security that will now be presented.

2.4. Schools of Thought Regarding Agricultural Policy

Food security, agricultural policy, and trade policy are intrinsically linked to one another; so, it is important to understand the origins of political and philosophy on these concepts in order to analyze governmental actions.

While technology advanced over time and new political philosophies began to surface regarding trade beyond treating it as a zero-sum game, it is important to understand that some of the first ideas on trade and food security were directly related to food security as the principal concern for the survival of a nation; henceforth, agriculture has served as one of the pillars for modern economic thought. This shows how agriculture has always held a special status within economic philosophy and can help explain why many theories and policies treat it as an 'exceptional' sector, as opposed to a 'normal' sector, which will now be defined and observed.

When breaking down government policy action that is being taken on food security, it is important to have an understanding of different economic approaches to agricultural policy and how these strategies affect food security policy. Farsund and Daugbjerg define differences in food security policy at a national level in their comparative study between Norway and Australia. They sustain that there are two main schools of thought regarding agricultural policy: agricultural exceptionalism and agricultural normalism. Agricultural exceptionalism is the idea that agricultural markets are fundamentally special and in need of regulation because it contributes to national goals; it is a protectionist policy approach. On the other hand, agricultural normalism is a policy guideline based on the idea that agricultural markets function normally like any other sector of the economy and the belief that any disruption in the agricultural sector is due to regulation. This is a *laissez-faire*¹, globalized approach to agricultural economic strategies (Farsund and Daugberg, 2017). The term '*laissez-faire*' is important in describing the United States eventual push towards globalized free trade that will be observed in this dissertation; it is particularly important

¹One of the first instances of the expression '*laissez-faire*', french for 'let us be', being used in English language sources by Benjamin Franklin, a prominent founder of the United States of America whose philosophical views on policy remain prevalent today (Re-published 2017, Originally from 1774). https://books.google.pt/books?id=C2QUAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA401&redir_esc=y&hl=pt-PT#v=onepage&q&f=false

to recognize that this term was used by Benjamin Franklin, a prominent founding father of the United States.

This idea can be further examined in the context of trade in the FAO publication "Trade Reforms and Food Security" in which they define specifically trade's role in domestic agricultural and food policy:

- Food self-sufficiency, or the provision of a level of food supplies from national resources above that implied by free trade, represents a strategy followed by a wide range of countries. While this approach implies the provision of sufficient domestic production to meet a substantial part of consumption requirements, it does not necessarily imply that all households in the country have access to all the food they require. In a number of countries which are net food exporters, substantial numbers of households are suffering from malnutrition.
- A strategy of food self-reliance reflects a set of policies where the sources of food are determined by international trade patterns and the benefits and risks associated with it. This strategy has become more common as global trade has become more liberal. It is even argued that improved food security, as well as efficiency gains, may be achieved more satisfactorily, even in countries where agriculture remains a major contributor to GDP, by shifting resources into the production of non-food export crops and importing staple food requirements."(FAO, Trade Reforms and Food Security, 2003).

These definitions will be used to look into the economic policies that the United States and European Union have put into place in their agricultural systems, and how California and Portugal have dealt with these broader policies in administering their own food systems and attempting to insure all levels of food security. They will serve to create a base in which to frame Portugal and California in how they have historically dealt with food security and how they will moving forward.

2.4.1. Post-World War II Agricultural Exceptionalism and Post-Cold War Agricultural Normalism

In the context of this dissertation, three eras of differing approaches to agricultural policy and food security on both regional and global levels will be observed. The first of which is the era that began with the end of World War II in 1945 and the bipolarity established in the form of the Western Bloc and the Eastern Bloc, whereas globalization and free trade were established in the Western Bloc under the United States and Western Europe while Soviet-dominated communism was established in the Eastern Block that lasted until the 1980s. However, agriculture had a special role in the Western Bloc despite this new era of intertwining economies. As established in the FAO's "Trade Reforms and Food Security" explanation that countries' food sources are primarily based on global trade, Otero and Pechlaner state that "one of the chief features of post World War II agriculture was its

nation-centredness.” (2008:p.351). Nonetheless, Otero and Pechlaner contend that ”agriculture has a strong history in global trade, despite the counter appearances raised by its contentiousness in WTO negotiations at the turn of the twenty-first century. A more novel aspect of agriculture’s position in international trade, however, is its thorough incorporation under supranational trade agreements and national neo-regulation initiatives, spurred by the ideology of neoliberal global-ism” (2008:p.351).

The globalized nature of the economy that has been consistently implemented since the end of World War II has taken hold. Nevertheless, it is important to clarify that both the European Union through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the United States directly subsidize their farming sectors. This thesis will demonstrate how the degree of this intervention has either increased or decreased throughout the eras to either the macro-, meso-, or micro-levels of society. From the 1980s until 2015, neoliberal globalization began to spread agricultural products all over the world despite exceptionalist measures being implemented by various countries. As Ioris states ”the expansion of agro-neoliberalism, after the transition period in the late 1980s and early 1990s, was founded on calls for market competition and promises that economic efficiency and higher productivity could reduce the costs of agri-food goods” (2018:p.10). This thesis will aim to show how the protectionist nature of the post-war period has evolved into a more regional form after the Covid-19 Pandemic and Ukrainian War, as neoliberal globalized agricultural policy is being scaled back to guarantee food systems and food security in the United States and European Union.

2.4.1.1. *Post-War Agricultural Exceptionalism*

Towards the end of World War II in 1944, the Bretton Woods Conference was held in the United States between representatives of all Allied countries in order to set up mechanisms for a new method of regulating the international monetary and financial system for once the war would come to an end (Dominguez, 2006:p.357). With the creation of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) and, by 1947, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), Dominguez states ”the commitment mechanisms that the Bretton Woods institutions provided member countries included rules of cooperation, financial resources to enable them to play by the rules, and a centralized source of information on each others’ commitment to the rules” (2006:p.358). As the host of the Bretton Woods Conference and due to its emerging status as the main power in the Western Bloc of the post-war world, the United States was the main architect behind the post-war monetary, economic, and trade order which was rooted in the Franklin-esque, ’Laissez-faire’ philosophy. The groundwork for the neoliberal order began to be set in the years leading up to the war, as Orford points out: ”Cordell Hull, Secretary of State from 1933 to 1944 in the administration of President Franklin Roosevelt, was the driving force in repositioning U.S. foreign policy toward trade liberalization during the 1930s and in shaping planning for post-war reconstruction during the 1940s” (2015:p.50). Dominguez

goes on to further state that "embedded within the GATT was a particular American vision of a new international economic order premised upon free trade" (2015:p.351).

With the institutions in place and plans to liberalize trade between nation-states with an American, normalist, 'laissez-faire' vision, there was one sector that mostly avoided the neoliberal trade implementation: agriculture. As Orford further points out, "The place of agriculture within that new economic order was highly controversial. States sought to insulate agriculture from market liberalization principles and to treat agriculture differently from other sectors for a number of reasons" (2015:p.51). Orford makes it clear that the exceptionalist food security and agricultural policies put into place during the economic instability of 1930s were set to remain for the post-war period. This was due to the fact, as Orford adds, that "In the aftermath of the war with European states still facing food shortages, representatives of agricultural groups were in a powerful position to argue for more systematic responses to agricultural protection by governments" (2015:p.52).

This instability, combined with the collective trauma in Europe after World War I and World War II and the presence of the Eastern Bloc posing as a threat that could spark a third world war and disrupt food supplies, served as reasons for agricultural exceptionalism regarding food security. As it pertained to setting up more liberalized trade rules and the role of the agricultural sector within the new economic order, "this was the situation facing European states during the negotiation of the GATT and the subsequent negotiation to create a European common market" (Orford, 2015:p.52). It is for this reason that Orford's analysis on the situation of food security and agricultural policy can be summarized as follows: "In relation to the GATT regime as well as to the European Community, agriculture remained the exception for trade liberalization until the 1980s" (2015:p.53).

Many country-specific exceptions were included into the initial GATT framework regarding agricultural subsidies, tariffs, and import quotas that maintained agriculture as an exceptional sector within the neoliberal trade order (Orford, 2015:p.53). However, this began to change in the 1980s due to the stagflation, famine, and drought present during the 1970s. Jarosz states in the study "Defining World Hunger, Food, Culture Society" that "in the 1970s, grain prices skyrocketed and world grain supplies hit new lows. Five years of devastating drought in the West African Sahel and record-breaking U.S. grain sales to the Soviet Union were key proximate triggers to growing concerns about food security" (2011:p.122).

Jarosz points out that in 1986 the World Bank began to refer to food security not as an issue of food supply, production, or self sufficiency, but rather an issue of overall economic growth and trade: "Food security is a matter of achieving economic growth and alleviating poverty. Cost-effective levels of food security are attained through economic growth, by exporting in line with each nation's comparative advantage, and increasing the purchasing power of households and individuals" (Jarosz,2011:p.125). This idea represents the mentality shift in the Bretton Woods Institutions to push countries away from

agricultural exceptionalism and more towards agricultural normalism and to finally fulfill the initial intention for every sector to operate within the post-war, neoliberal, normalist space.

It is my view that there are three main phenomena that led to treating agriculture as a normal sector within neoliberal, globalized economics as was referenced by Jarosz that the World Bank started to define and treat food security differently in 1986. First off, the aforementioned agricultural and economic crises of the 1970s and subsequent recession of the early 1980s was in full effect. Secondly, the Cold War was winding down and the new policies of Perestroika and Glasnost² were opening up the Soviet Union, strengthening the idea that the American-backed Western Bloc and neoliberal policies were soon to prevail, marking a post-Cold War, American-dominated unipolar world. Thirdly, the presence of Ronald Reagan in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom, who focused on privatization, reducing government spending, and neoliberal trade (Deeds, 1986).³ They moved the world further away from the post-World War II, bipolar Cold War and into a new unipolar world over which neoliberalism would not only reign over the Western Bloc, but the world as a whole once the Soviet Union collapsed.

So, Jarosz states that by the late 1980s, "food security is defined in terms of the lack of purchasing power—the inability of states and individuals to purchase the food they need, rather than an issue of food supply, social or economic inequality or land ownership" (2011:p.125). In terms of trade, food security began to be treated within global institutions as an issue regarding opening up one's economy to trade. This paradigm shift towards normalism, as was perhaps originally intended in the Bretton Woods Conference, is further explained by Jarosz: "This is a neoliberal response to hunger: one can eat if one can buy or grow adequate food. Food security is dependent upon adequate personal income, markets and upon the workings of the globalized food system" (2011:p.126). Nonetheless, the United States and European Union continued to subsidize their agricultural sectors in this era from the 1980s until 2015. To sum-up Jarosz's analysis on the matter, "The World Bank's 1986 policy study on food security constructs hunger as a problem of development that is alleviated by economic growth and the ability of countries to address hunger by buying food within the globalized food system" (2011:p.128).

2.4.1.2. *Post-Cold War Agricultural Normalism*

²"Perestroika" (restructuring) and "glasnost" (openness) were Mikhail Gorbachev's watchwords for the renovation of the Soviet body politic and society that he pursued as general secretary of the Communist Party from 1985 until 1991. Retrieved on October 5th, 2022 from <https://soviethistory.msu.edu/1985-2/perestroika-and-glasnost/>

³"It seemed a remarkable coincidence that Britain and the United States should elect within the span of a year leaders who were both strongly anti-government, anti-Keynesian, and advocates of the private market sector and tax reductions. Both President Reagan and Mrs. Thatcher had the distinction of getting their names linked to a special line of thinking." From Christopher Deeds' "Reaganomics and Thatcherism. Origins, Similarities and Differences", Retrieved on October 5th, 2022 from <https://books.openedition.org/pufr/4464?lang=es>

Moving into the 1990s, the international mechanisms and institutions implemented doubled-down on neoliberal trade regarding food security and attempted to reshape agricultural policy to treat it as a normal sector for the rest of the world, while still directing payments to domestic farmers. At this point, the FAO began to re-shape their definition of food security. Referring back to Jarosz, by the 1990s, "The FAO's response to food security issues is now almost indistinguishable from the World Bank's. Both institutions focus upon agriculture as a driver of economic development with the economics of food aid and trade as dominant responses to world hunger. Individuals are now responsible for feeding themselves either through the market or their own labor" (2011:p.128).

Towards the end of the Cold War, there was much discourse on the direction of the world. Francis Fukuyama, in perhaps one of the most famous pieces regarding the direction of the post-Cold War world, opined that liberal globalization had prevailed and a new era of peace would be ushered in after the fall of the Soviet Union in his essay titled "The End of History?" (1989). During this period, Copeland pointed out in his work "Economic Interdependence and War: A Theory of Trade Expectations" that "Liberals argue that economic interdependence lowers the likelihood of war by increasing the value of trading over the alternative of aggression: interdependent states would rather trade than invade" (1996). The idea was that economic interdependence by way of globalization and liberal trade would reduce tensions between nations. It is observed that, for the first few decades in this new unipolar world, the liberal argument held mostly true until the American-led unipolarity was threatened and behavior regarding agricultural policy began to shift away from the completely globalized neoliberal economic order. The irony of this is that the prosperity and wealth created in this unipolar, neoliberal order spurred the creation of emerging powers.

In the United States Department of Agriculture's study "The Global Landscape of Agricultural Trade, 1995-2014" by Beckman, Dyck, and Heerman, it is pointed out that "Global agricultural trade, about 1 trillion dollars in 2014, has been rising about 3.6 percent per year for the last two decades, facilitated by technological change and productivity gains, as well as trade liberalization." (2017). By 1995, various rounds of negotiations on GATT over the years had worked to normalize the agricultural sector and many regional free trade deals were put into place. The time frame between the mid-1980s until the mid-1990s and the agricultural trade agreements formed during this time marked the transition period from the end of the Cold War into the unipolar world, crafted in the image of the Western Bloc. The Uruguay Round of GATT, which took place from 1986-1995, was perhaps one of the most consequential. Beckman, Dyck, and Heerman contend that "The multilateral framework of agricultural trade rules established by the Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture (URAA) in 1995 with the founding of the World Trade Organization (WTO) remains the point of departure for most agricultural trade analyses" (2017:p.1).

The unipolar nature of these institutions overseeing global agriculture trade and attempts to liberalize trade began to quickly show signs that emerging powers would arise. This served as a sign that perhaps the unipolarity of American hegemony would not last, and that state actors could eventually shift their behavior away from completely globalized, neoliberal agricultural normalism, as this thesis will observe in the face of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Nonetheless, over the two decades following 1995, it is clear that agricultural normalism swept all over the world. As Beckman, Dyck, and Heerman further point out in their observation of this time period, "In addition, trade patterns have shifted and trade policy has evolved. The largest importers and exporters of agricultural products are largely unchanged over the last 20 years, but five countries—Brazil, Russia, India, Indonesia, and China—account for much of the increase in trade" (2017).

The emergence of China as a global trade power was welcomed with open arms in the United States amongst the investment community. However, this emergence, made possible by China joining the post-Cold War neoliberal trade order, has led to a shift in America's support for this system it crafted in the Franklin-esque, 'laissez-faire' image; this shift began around 2015 and 2016. In attempt to further expand on neoliberal, global trade, Chow points out that the United States was negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership with 11 other countries in order to solidify its position in the Pacific region over China (2016). Up until 2015, the United States used the neoliberal trade order maintain its position atop the unipolar world; then, the emergence of candidates Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump in the United States political order changed everything. They publicly admonished trade deals in response to general disillusionment among the American population towards the neoliberal political establishment, and the election of Donald Trump tanked the Trans-Pacific Partnership and ushered in a new era in which American political discourse became officially anti-neoliberal. This is due to domestic pressures despite the fact that the United States created the neoliberal order through the Bretton Woods Institutions and trade deals.

As aforementioned, various trade deals were put into place between 1986-1995 in the build-up for the explosion in trade from 1995-2014. These trade deals, despite being in effect for over twenty years, were subject to the same criticism as the Trans-Pacific Partnership. One of such agreements was established in 1994 at the beginning of the trade explosion between 1995-2015, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). This agreement was heavily criticized by Trump during his campaign as being anti-American; Trump's eventual election resulted in the renegotiation and modification of NAFTA, showing a shift away from neoliberal, normalist policy towards economic exceptionalism, especially regarding agriculture.

2.5. Concluding Literature Review

Since the Covid-19 pandemic broke out there has been a sudden preview as to how different countries might react to shocks on the global food system in the future that could be

caused by climate or political crises, among others. Interestingly enough, a shock on the global food system has unfolded while the world was still dealing with Covid-19 Pandemic and after initiating this thesis: the Russian invasion in Ukraine. This has sparked a crisis to global food and agricultural systems and represents a real-time case study as to how the United States and European Union would react with their food security policy. While the Covid-19 Pandemic sparked changes to agricultural and economic policies after following trends leaning towards more regionalized, protectionist policies that began with Trump's arrival to the political scene with his campaign starting in 2015, the Russian invasion of Ukraine seems to have cemented this shift in food security policy. The aim of this dissertation will be to show that these crises have sparked a permanent shift in behavior by state actors towards more local and regional approaches to food security as opposed to the neoliberal approach which dominated the last two decades of the 20th century and the first decade and a half of the 21st century.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

This master's thesis will use a qualitative methodology. The main focus of analysis will be the agricultural and food security policy measures adopted before, during, and in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic in California and Portugal. The three main time periods observed will be the bipolar era, marked by the Cold War from 1945 until the 1980s; the unipolar era, marked by the collapse of the Soviet Union and emergence of globalized neoliberalism from the 1980s until 2015; and the multipolar era, marked by the emergence of new powers, American protectionism, the Covid-19 Pandemic, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The types of measures and policies observed will be based on agriculture and food security, and will be categorized as either agricultural normal policies or agricultural exceptionalist policies. These policies will then be analyzed as to which level of society they are targeting: macro, meso, or micro. It is important to point out that the European Union is a region whereas the United States is a country; Portugal is a country that forms part of the European Union whereas California is an entity within the United States, so the meso-levels of society differ. For the United States, meso refers to California, and for the European Union, meso will mostly refer to Portugal. A country-level comparison of food and crop production data over time will be made, as well as how population growth rates might affect this data. Lastly, in order to understand why these policies were put into place, a mix of data will be used for analysis. The data will range from statements made by political leaders and public opinion polls, whereas numerical data will range from unemployment statistics, food insecurity statistics, and poverty statistics. This methodological framework can be found in FIGURE 1.

The data observed will build upon the concepts analyzed in the literature review and historical background given regarding agricultural and food security policies and the nature of the institutions governing over them to further explain the current state of these policies in California, Portugal, the United States, and European Union and to make sense of the direction that they are heading towards. The aim of this comparative study is to show that a multipolar, regionally-centered, post-neoliberal era has begun regarding agricultural and food security policy and that the Covid-19 Pandemic has solidified this shift; the invasion of Ukraine will be used as a case study to show how the types of policies implemented during the Covid-19 Pandemic are now used in times of crisis in the United States and European Union, and by extension, in California and Portugal.

Methodological Analysis Framework		
Policy Measures Adopted Before, During, and in Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic:		
1. Time Period Observed:		
Post-World War II/Cold War Bipolarity: (1945-1980s)	Post-Cold War, Unipolarity: (1980s-2015)	Multipolarity, Pandemic, and Ukrainian War: (2015-Present)
2. Types of Agricultural / Food Security Policy:		
Agricultural Normalism	Agricultural Exceptionalism	
3. Intended Level of Society Targeted:		
Macro	Meso	Micro
4. Data Motivating Rationale Behind Policy Actions:		
Data Sets Used		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements from political leaders • Public opinion polls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment statistics • Food insecurity statistics • Poverty Statistics 	

FIGURE 1. Methodology Framework

CHAPTER 4

Policies and Measures

A look into the history behind the United States, European Union, Californian, and Portuguese agricultural policies and how they have evolved leading up to current times will be made in this thesis; these policies will be measured within the frameworks established such as agricultural exceptionalism and normalism, the pre-existing neoliberal nature of food policy, and how the Covid-19 Pandemic and war in Ukraine are shaping policy behaviors on the macro-, meso-, and micro-levels of society. A comparison will be made between California and Portugal within the framework of the United States and European Union regarding these policies. As it will be observed, the United States had already begun to shift its food policies regarding trade before the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Nonetheless, how the ensuing crisis has left a lasting mark on food policy in the United States, European Union, Portugal, and California will be showed.

4.1. United States

4.1.1. United States Agricultural Policy

In order to understand the government structure and programs implemented by the Californian state government to guarantee food security in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, it is important to first understand the federalized model that the United States follows. First off, the United States typically passes agricultural legislation in five year cycles, referred to as a 'Farm Bill' (USDA ERS - Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018: Highlights and Implications, 2018). The Farm Bill covers all three are levels of society: macro, meso, and micro. These laws cover a wide range of topics, which includes conservation on agricultural lands, agricultural trade, farm subsidies, rural economic development, agricultural research, state and private forestry, bio-energy, horticulture, organic agriculture, and domestic food assistance.

4.1.2. Macro Policy: U.S.

The United States farm subsidies have continued despite implementing various free trade deals and other neoliberal economic policies. To further examine this paradox on a macro level, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was signed into law in the early 1990s; this created a free trade agreement between the US, Mexico, and Canada (NAFTA, 2020).

On face value, NAFTA appeared to represent a huge shift towards agricultural normalism in the United States as has been defined earlier from the post-Cold War era from the late 1980s until 2015; however, when examining more deeply into the trade deal,

the United States kept most farm subsidies that bolstered its agricultural sector against Mexican and Canadian agriculture which shows an exceptionalist approach within the framework of what could be considered a normalist trade policy (Lefebvre, Weisbrot, and Sammut, 2014). This can be related back to the initial hesitance of countries to treat agriculture during GATT negotiations in the 1940s as an economically normal sector. Despite 1986-1995 being a period of great transformation, many underlying exceptionalist agricultural policies remained under the surface, especially for the Allied countries involved in setting the rules of trade after World War II beginning with the Bretton Woods Institutions and continuing with GATT negotiations and the establishment of the WTO. NAFTA was designed to boost the U.S. agricultural industry against other nations by pouring subsidies into farms while opening up new tariff free markets. Generally, one might expect subsidies to disappear in the existence of a free trade agreement as it will be observed with Europe's Common Agricultural Policy but this was not the case with NAFTA. Henceforth, the idea that the United States is moving in a more exceptionalist direction with regards to food security and agricultural policy is not a very far-fetched concept. While the U.S. continued to push tariff-free zones in the post-Cold War era, the difference now, beginning in 2015, is that the U.S. began to use tariffs in an attempt to secure its domestic production capacity regarding agriculture with the emergence of the multipolar world. Instead of simply maintaining farm subsidies while pushing for tariff-free trade with other nations as the United States had done since the end of World War II, in 2015, the U.S. shifted its behavior to stop advocating for tariff-free policies and instead started including tariffs into its strategy of securing domestic industries. While NAFTA re-negotiations did not change the agreement much, as it will now be examined, the U.S. began to impose tariffs in other areas.

Having established the existence of U.S. farm subsidies which are designed to strengthen domestic agricultural production on a national, macro level, the election of Donald Trump resulted in increasing farm subsidies by billions of dollars in an attempt to make up for lost trade due to tariffs. Regarding NAFTA, Trump took the existing trade agreement and ended up renegotiating it with Canada and Mexico to replace it with the USMCA trade agreement. The USMCA maintained the basic NAFTA framework and provided some marginal changes to the original policy, according to Georgetown Law's International Trade Law Research Guide:

"Highlights of the revised trade agreement include modest enhancements to the environmental and labor provisions, updated intellectual property protections, changes to the rules of origin for automobiles, greater access to the Canadian market for U.S. dairy farmers, and a sunset provision." (Georgetown Law Library, 2020).

This renegotiation put into effect by the Trump Administration fits in line with the trend towards more exceptionalist agricultural policies, as well as represents a seismic, anti-neoliberal shift in rhetoric from Washington that had not been present since the end of World War II and the implementation of the Bretton Woods Institutions.

So, it must be noted that the shift away from globalization in favor of a more regional, nationalistic approach to agricultural policy is not uniquely related to the Covid-19 Pandemic. On a macro-level, this trend began in 2015 with the emergence of Trump on the political scene and his election in 2016. On a meso- and micro-level, however, the Covid-19 pandemic has aligned policies with macro-level exceptionalism, as evidenced by the laws and measures adopted by California that will be observed.

To put a bit of context behind the exceptionalist agricultural policies implemented by the Trump Administration that went quite a bit further than the renegotiation of NAFTA and subsequent USMCA, they first began with tariffs being placed on various materials and products. In particular, aluminum and steel had import tariffs placed on them. This was a direct response to the multipolarity created after the 20 year period between 1995-2015 in which American-crafted neoliberalism was the global norm for trade; any country could join the globalized trade network and observe tremendous levels of GDP growth. The biggest power that emerged as a threat to the U.S. unipolarity was China. The general intention of the Trump policies were not initially designed to be related to agricultural policy, with U.S. Ambassador to China Robert Lighthizer stating in 2019 “We must take strong defensive actions to protect America’s leadership in technology and innovation against the unprecedented threat posed by China’s theft of our intellectual property, the forced transfer of American technology, and its cyber attacks on our computer networks,” (2018). Nonetheless, these tariffs were not only placed on China, but other countries as well, such as Canada, Mexico, and the European Union, who have been long considered close allies to the United States for geopolitical, historical, cultural, and geographical reasons (Gertz, 2020). The Trump Administration invoked Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 in the presidential declaration on Adjusting Imports of Steel Into the United States:

”6. Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, as amended, authorizes the President to adjust the imports of an article and its derivatives that are being imported into the United States in such quantities or under such circumstances as to threaten to impair the national security” (March 8th, 2018).¹

It is fitting that the law used by the Trump Administration to start aggressively treating American sectors as exceptional comes from 1962, which clearly falls in the post-World War II period between 1945 until the 1980s that predates the massive push towards neoliberal globalization from the 1980s until about 2015. This is similar to how a policy that will be looked at in this dissertation, the National School Lunch Program, adopted in 1946 as an exceptionalist era policy, was also expanded upon to feed children in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. While globalization has entrenched itself into global trade and economics, this shift in behavior by the United States is showing how the initial GATT

¹Executive Office of the President, Proclamation 9705 of March 8, 2018. Available at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/03/15/2018-05478/adjusting-imports-of-steel-into-the-united-states>

negotiations at the end of World War II not including agriculture into the global trade scheme has left the door open for the current state of exceptionalist policies in the United States.

Despite these trade tariffs being centered around manufacturing products such as steel and aluminum, intellectual property, and technology, they resulted in the U.S. agricultural sector being targeted in particular by China. This forced the U.S. government to react in some form in order to maintain food security and protect its domestic agricultural producers. Henceforth, the Trump administration increased subsidies to farmers in a drastic way, handing out billions of U.S. dollars in an attempt to support farmers that were hit particularly hard by tariffs imposed by China onto the United States in response the U.S. tariffs. This can be seen in the chart below tracking farm subsidies in the years leading up to the trade tensions with China in 2019 and 2020.

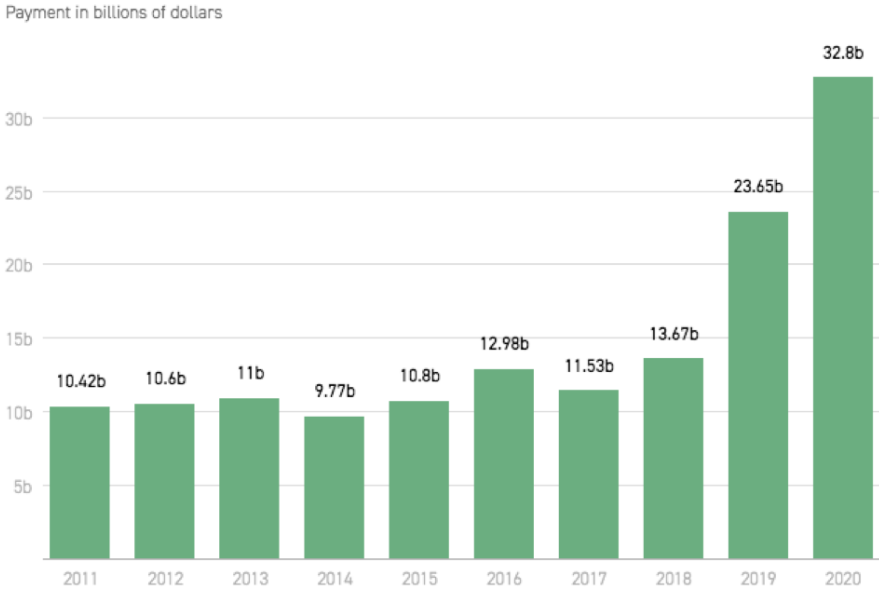


FIGURE 1. 2020 estimate of U.S. farm subsidies in billions of dollars by the University of Missouri’s Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute

Although the U.S. government had been subsidizing farmers for decades and ramping up direct payments to farmers on the macroeconomic level in the years leading up to the pandemic with the election of Trump, the difference now is that instead of only offering subsidies for farmers on a large scale, the government felt forced into a position to provide and expand on subsidies to an individual and household level, representing a remarkable shift considering the overall ethos of American politics and attitudes regarding individualism and government intervention, as it will be observed. This shift is a monumental change, dating back to Benjamin Franklin’s idea of having a "laissez-faire" government. Much like how earlier crises in United States history had caused drastic policy reversals, such as the Great Depression and subsequent creation of the Social Security Administration and federally mandated minimum wage, it appears that the Covid-19 crisis has also provoked a shift in policy towards meso-level local food supply chains and micro-level

direct household subsidies in an attempt to avoid mass instability and food insecurity and it will be observed when looking at meso- and micro-level policies in the U.S. and California.

The groundwork for a shift away from globalized trade policy and economic normalism in the agricultural sector had already been laid in the years leading up to the pandemic until the shock on global trade and supply chains further pushed governments in the direction towards agricultural exceptionalism. This could be seen as a general rejection of globalization and making it a scapegoat now that the collective memory of the Cold War era and dynamic of capitalism versus communism has faded from collective memory; this phenomenon, especially in the context of a crisis like the Covid-19 Pandemic, signifies a reversion back to focusing on the most basic tenants of economies like agriculture and food security.

As mentioned before, there has always been underlying agricultural exceptionalism built into the global trade system on a macro-level with GATT which dates back to the initial negotiations in the 1940s and European countries hesitating to implement neoliberal, agricultural normalism. Perhaps the biggest shift that has happened since 2015 is that the United States is no longer publicly pushing for agricultural normalism and neoliberalism while still maintaining subsidies for its farmers. Now, not only is the United States increasing its own protectionism since the Covid-19 Pandemic, but it is now also being publicly skeptical of liberal markets as a whole.

It must be noted that the drastic discourse change regarding neoliberal trade policy, which was initiated with Trump running a campaign centered on being against free trade deals like the Trans-Pacific Partnership, occurred before the Covid-19 Pandemic. Since the Trump Administration's exceptionalist trade policies, remarks, and increase of agricultural subsidies all were set in motion before the outbreak of the pandemic, it served as a transitional period which somewhat strengthened anti-neoliberalism and free trade amongst the American public as a legitimate ideology. Once the Covid-19 Pandemic had begun and supply chain issues began to effect the availability of many products, economic exceptionalism became a predominant force in American politics.

To demonstrate how Trump-era protectionism and discourse was maintained under the Biden Administration, here are some remarks made to the U.S. Department of Commerce by President Biden's United States Trade Representative (USTR) Katherine Tai: "I think we have pursued a really unfettered liberalization policy for the past many years and decades, and it is part of what has brought us to this current reality of very, very fragile supply chains" (2021). ².

Regarding Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, the Tax Foundation noted, that although Biden negotiated new deals with the European Union and United Kingdom to swap tariffs for quotas on various materials prompting U.S. exports to no longer be

²United States Trade Representative's (USTR) remarks to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in "How Transatlantic Cooperation Can Help Solve Global Trade Challenges"

<https://www.uschamber.com/on-demand/economy/how-transatlantic-cooperation-can-help-solve-global-trade-challenges>

subject to tariffs, "No other major changes have been announced since" (Durante, September 2022). Henceforth, all other exceptionalist policies were maintained, meaning that the agricultural sector under the Biden Administration, and food security, is continuing to be treated as an exceptional sector and not a normal sector. Further evidence will be shown in this dissertation through dissecting the Biden Administration's Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement.

Another way in which Biden began to support domestic agriculture production is through a provision in the Inflation Reduction Act, which was passed during the process of writing this thesis. According to Science Insider's Erik Stokstad, the bill includes 25 billion dollars in incentives to protect forests and for farmers to attempt to develop more sustainable farming practices, but it is difficult to quantify if these initiatives will truly reduce carbon admissions, and that instead a 300 million dollar inclusion "for USDA and partners to collect field data on carbon sequestered and emissions reduced—data could help target future climate efforts more effectively" (Stokstad, 2022). While it remains to be seen how this bill will affect sustainable agricultural practices, it does represent the willingness of the U.S. government to implement exceptional policies as a way to begin to deal with the climate crisis and how it could have a drastic effect on food security.

4.1.3. Micro and Meso Policy: From Bipolar Era to Globalized Neoliberalism in the U.S.

Having established the overall macroeconomic situation of the U.S. agricultural policy, the focus will now shift towards meso and micro policy.

On a meso-level, California, in conjunction with the United States federal government, is also adopting more exceptionalist policies through the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement (LFPA). This program is worth 400 million dollars and was included in the Biden Administration's American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, signed into law on March 11th, 2021. The LFPA has the intent to support states to strengthen farmers and growers, as well as to get a hold of and distribute local foods around the state. The intent is to support foods that are unique to each region and target food banks, schools, and organizations that reach disadvantaged populations (2022). This program is designed to address the problems presented by food deserts that exist within modern, developed economies, as described by Simelane and Worth that micro- and meso-level food insecurity can exist within a macro environment that is considered to be food secure. The LFPA was included as part of the Biden administration's main effort to combat the economic fallout from the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The state of California signed an agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture to take part in the LFPA Program. The California Department of Social Service will purchase "locally grown, produced, and processed food from undeserved producers" (2022). This program is a prime example of California adopting an exceptional policy towards agriculture and food security to target household and regional level food security, as opposed to a normal approach to the food market. As it will be observed in

this thesis, this program fits in line with the Biden Administration's critique of neoliberal trade policies and continuation of Trump-era protectionism that has been in place since 2015, marking the multipolar era. In this way, the Biden Administration is building on macro-level exceptionalism by encouraging states to expand meso- and micro-level programs via policies targeting food security. This policy falls in-line with Berkowitz and Seligman's idea mentioned in the literature review that there is a "critical need to understand food insecurity as a predisposing factor for both lack of adequate nutrition and lack of adequate calories, conditions which can exist simultaneously or consecutively. The alignment between public health and anti-hunger communities on the need to support food security using interventions that can increase access to both nutrition and calories makes sense in this framework" (Berkowitz and Seligman, 2019:p.322).

An interesting observation is the cross-agency partnership that the California state government has put into effect; "the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will partner with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), California Department of Public Health (CDPH), California Association of Food Banks (CAFB) and California Food Banks to purchase food from local and under-served farmers throughout the state serving approximately 250,000 families and provide outreach and education to the farms" (2022). This represents a multi-faceted approach in order to guarantee food security which shows that the California state government clearly views food security as a social issue as well as an agricultural issue. This is an approach that clearly contrasts the neoliberal model of simply attempting to increase individuals' incomes and expanding trade. California has been adopting policies that target the meso- and micro-levels of society: food producers, suppliers, and individual households. Through using many different government agencies, this represents a direct intervention into agricultural markets aimed at strengthening food security. This approach by the Californian state government on a meso-level is fundamentally exceptional, as defined by Farsund and Daugbjerg (2017).

In terms of 'Access' to food and nutrition for individuals and households on a micro-level, the main food assistance programs in the United States are known as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP. The National School Lunch Program offers low-cost or free school lunches to children across the country if they qualify according to their family's income level (Food Assistance:Food Stamps, 2022). The SNAP program operates by supporting no or low-income families with a special debit card that can be used to purchase items at grocery stores (United States Department of Agriculture, 2022).

In 1946, President Harry Truman signed the National School Lunch Program into law. This program, which ended up being pivotal for California during the Covid-19 Pandemic as it will be observed, shows how the post-World War II era from 1945-1980s was marked by exceptionalism in meso- and micro-economic food policy by providing a direct, individual food subsidy to children. As it pertains to the Covid-19 Pandemic, this program provided the framework for California to eventually institute universal school

breakfasts and lunches. A consistent theme for food and agricultural policy in the United States in the multipolar, pandemic era from 2015 until the present will be a usage and expansion of exceptionalist policies that were adopted during the post-World War II, bipolar era, as was pointed out with the Trump and Biden Administrations' usages of Article 232.

The Snap Program originates from the federal Food Stamp Program which was passed in 1939 in the aftermath of the Great Depression as a way to link undernourished populations in urban centers with food surpluses in the agricultural sector; whereas the destruction, aftermath, and trauma of World War II had marked agricultural policy in Europe, the United States, besides the attack on Pearl Harbor, was completely untouched by the war domestically. This both led to the emergence of the United States as a super power and animated U.S. insistence on global neoliberalism. Nonetheless, the Great Depression was occurring in the years leading up to the war and hence played a big influence on domestic policy, especially regarding agriculture in the aftermath of World War II.

The federalized nutrition program, which had begun in 1939, was suspended in 1943 and did not return until 1961 shortly after President John F. Kennedy took office and began several pilot food stamp programs across the country. The main idea behind Kennedy's food stamp programs was no longer to focus on surplus foods, but rather to increase consumption of perishables. This was an attempt to address the nutritional aspect to food security and it was specifically targeted at individuals on a micro-level and food suppliers on a meso-level. In 1964, the pilot program that Kennedy had initiated was made permanent by congress and President Lyndon B. Johnson. This provided the architecture for the current SNAP program and it is what created the structure that required states to organize and develop operational plans and eligibility standards for individuals.

By 1974, over 15 million Americans were participating in the SNAP program and receiving the supplement provided by the law, which only prohibited the food stamps from being used for alcoholic beverages and imported foods; by barring imported foods, this shows a historic precedent in the United States to support domestic agriculture and food suppliers. This program was developed clearly during the bipolar, agricultural exceptionalist era in the Western Bloc and was specifically targeted at individuals. In 1977, due to the economic crisis and global panorama of the 1970s, some changes leaning towards less exceptionalism in food security policy can be observed regarding the SNAP Program. More regulation was signed into law which limited eligibility for university students and resident aliens. There was also an attempt to streamline eligibility requirements while bringing fraud disqualifications into the law (Food Assistance:Food Stamps, 2022).

In 1981, over 22 million people participated in the program. Despite record participation, the 1980s also marked a decade of scrutiny into social programs with the arrival of the Reagan Administration. As mentioned in the literature review, the arrival of Ronald Reagan put a massive shift into play regarding economic policy away from social spending

especially on a micro-level. The scrutiny into social programs such as SNAP is in line with the shift towards more neoliberal trade policies that began to be implemented in the 1980s. Gross income was added as a requirement for individuals as opposed to net take-home-pay in an attempt to decrease participants in the program. Another addition to SNAP was a framework that allowed states to require citizens to work in order to receive benefits. Also, adjustments to food stamp allotments were changed from semi-annual adjustments to annual adjustments. Retirement savings accounts began to be factored into the eligibility calculation for applicants to the program as well. The Food Stamp Act of 1985 required all states to implement an employment and training program, that which, if food stamp applicants did not participate in the program without cause, they would be disqualified from receiving food stamp benefits. (Food Assistance:Food Stamps, 2022). These changes fell in line with the broader push in the 1980s towards free markets and globalization as the Soviet Union began to decline. The general idea was to minimize the size of the United States government and allow economic liberalization and growth to guarantee food security, as was mentioned earlier by Jarosz that the World Bank and FAO began to shift the definition of food security to be related to income and free trade as the best way to secure food systems in the 1980s (2011). In the context of the Cold War coming to an end and the expansion of global trade, this represented a shift towards normalism by the United States government on a micro-level of society.

The push to lessen subsidies and create barriers for citizens to access them on a micro-level was done with the idea that on a macro-level, removing trade tariffs and opening up the agricultural sector to foreign markets would decrease the cost of food while providing enough jobs and prosperity so that individuals and households could generate the income necessary to have 'accessibility' to food. However, by 2017 and in the aftermath of the unipolar era, the SNAP program had ballooned to over 42 million Americans participants across the United States (Food Assistance:Food Stamps, 2022). This drastic increase in recipients occurred despite a systematic decrease in benefits in conjunction with a systematic increase in barriers to accessing them. Now since there are many factors regarding economic growth and income levels for individuals that span much more than just the agricultural sector, this phenomenon nonetheless revealed a great irony in U.S. food security policy which perhaps can help explain the popularity and rise of Trump era protectionism as a rebuke to neoliberal policy: despite attempting to decrease government assistance on the household level regarding food subsidies while attempting to open up trade to make up for the lack of social welfare, the number of food stamp recipients continued to increase, as it can be observed in the chart showing participation in SNAP across the United States since its inception in 1969 until 2015, as evidenced in FIGURE 2.

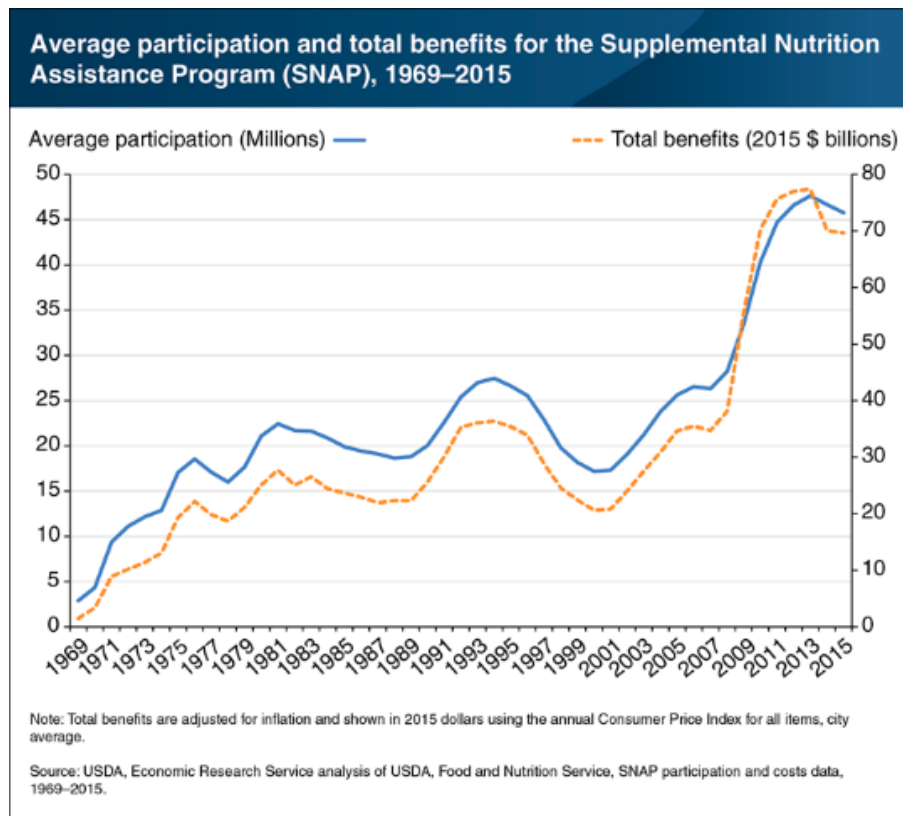


FIGURE 2. SNAP Participation and benefits paid out increased over time, especially during the last 10 years of the unipolar, neoliberal era from the 1980s until 2015 despite increased barriers to qualify for benefits during this time. (Economic Research Service — U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2019).

4.1.4. Micro and Meso Policy: Multipolar Era and Covid-19 Pandemic Food Security Measures in California

Now that we understand the federal apparatus within the United States and how it affects state-level administration of food assistance, the focus will be on California as an autonomous entity within the federal structure of the United States. The effect of Covid-19 in California will now be the main focus.

Due to broader complexities and economic conditions affecting income, this can perhaps explain why the California state government decided to take an approach that directly targeted micro-level households with subsidies in order to assist them in the face of high unemployment rates and income loss due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Since many factors regarding supply chains and global economic conditions were out of the control of individual state governments, providing direct subsidies to households was one of the tools the Californian government did have at its disposal in attempting to avoid food insecurity on a massive scale. These subsidies were expansions of programs established during the post-World War II, bipolar exceptionalist era which featured more meso and micro subsidies. So, the Covid-19 Pandemic represented the biggest test for the SNAP

program and its ability to offer viable assistance to individuals and households since its inception (Food Assistance:Food Stamps, 2022).

Many of the barriers to accessing food stamps and unemployment benefits regarding required employment training that were established in the 1980s and 1990s in the unipolar, neoliberal wave were either tampered down or removed completely during the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic in the United States and California. This shows a micro, household level shift in favor of treating food security with an exceptionalist approach.

Like many federal programs in the United States, each state is allowed to administer the SNAP benefits in different ways as mentioned previously. In the state of California, the SNAP program is called CalFresh. With a population of just under 40 million people, California has both the largest statewide population in the United States and the biggest participation in their state-run SNAP program with around 5 million people currently receiving benefits. California has experienced high levels of food insecurity in the recent decades primarily due to the notorious high costs of living (Cuellar Mejia, Johnson, and McGhee, 2022). In showing motivations behind why California decided to take exceptional, micro-level actions on food security, some statistics regarding food insecurity will be presented.

Having established that food insecurity is a major issue for Californian families and households, the number of Californians considered food insecure fluctuated during the Covid-19 Pandemic. According to a survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau between April 23rd until July 21st, 2020, the average level of food insecurity throughout California according to respondents was 23.1 percent, as it can be seen in Figure 3 (Schanzenbach and Tomeh, 2020).

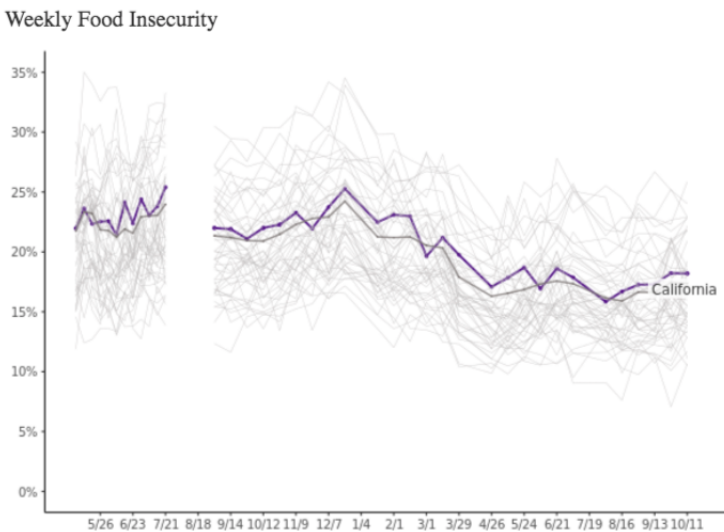


FIGURE 3. Food Insecurity rates in California during the Covid-19 Pandemic, April 2020 until October 2021. Northwestern University’s Institute for Policy Research. (Schanzenbach and Tomeh, 2020).

Unemployment climbed from 4 percent at the beginning of 2020 to just under 17 percent in California by June 2020 (Allegretto and Liedtke, 2020), which placed a significant stress on households in terms of having the means necessary to access food. The jump up to over 16 percent unemployment in California was the fastest jump in history for the state. This sudden rise in unemployment represented instability for households as described under the "financial accessibility" portion of Simelane and Worth's description of the necessary conditions for household-level food security. In an effort to combat the rising level of food insecurity during the Covid-19 crisis, the California state government passed some emergency measures regarding food security that fall clearly within the exceptional model.

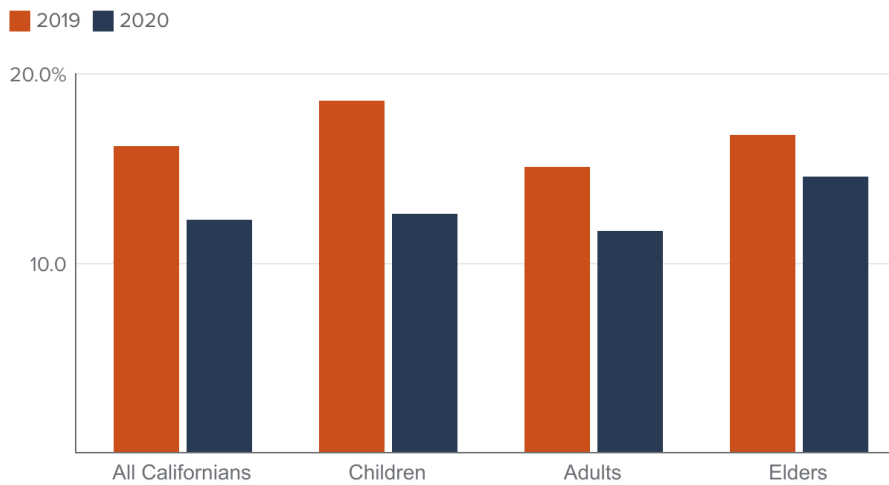
The California state government used waivers provided by the United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service which allowed for flexibility in times that meals could be provided to students via the National School Lunch Program. They also allowed for parents to come pick-up breakfasts and lunches from schools and to bring them home due to stay-at-home orders and remote classes. In a sense, public schools throughout California served as some of the most important food banks during the Covid-19 crisis by providing for one of the most vulnerable segments of the population: children.

California took the extra funding granted by the federal government as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic and decided to offer emergency free breakfast and lunch to all students enrolled in public schools in March 2020 with no applications required; students and parents could simply show up to school parking lots and pick up meals. Going into the 2021-2022 school year, this policy was continued with federal support, and for the 2022-2023 school year, the California state government adopted Assembly Bill (AB) 130 (McGuire) which codified universal breakfast and lunch for all public school students in the state of California. This is a total reversal of the limitations and barriers put in place during the neoliberal push in the 1980s to accessing social benefits under Reaganism on a micro-level. One explanation is that, through findings published by the Public Policy Institute of California, California decreased poverty from 16.2 to 12.3 percent from 2019 to 2020 despite the massive spike in unemployment and economic uncertainty (Danielson, 2021). Children were the group that had the largest drop in poverty rate above any other group of the population. There is perhaps a direct correlation between the free school lunch program as one of the main forces behind the stark drop in child poverty rate, as pointed out in FIGURE 4.

Due to the positive results of the decrease in barriers to accessing social subsidies, this has contributed to a shift in how the California state government has decided to treat food security moving forward by adopting more exceptional micro-level food security policies as a direct result of Covid-19.

The permanent adoption of free school meals represents a new pathway that California is following regarding food security, which touches more on the Cold War era exceptional

California children saw the steepest drop in poverty between 2019 and 2020



SOURCE: Poverty calculated using the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) framework. Author calculations from the California samples of the 2021 and 2020 CPS-ASEC.
NOTES: Children are ages 0–17; adults are 18–64, and elders are 65 and older.
FROM: PPIC Blog, September 2021.

FIGURE 4. Every group in California saw a decrease in poverty rates but children benefited the most from measure designed to deal with the impact of Covid-19

policy framework as opposed to the unipolar, neoliberal limitations on accessing micro-level food programs. This shift fits into the broader, macro-level trend that the United States had begun shifting towards agricultural exceptionalism since 2015 and away from globalized neo-liberalism.

Given what conventional wisdom would be regarding a global pandemic and subsequent sharp rise in unemployment in California, reaching around 17 percent in June 2020, it is quite interesting to see that the poverty rate in California ended up decreasing due to the measures that were implemented in order to combat Covid-19. Along with universal school meals, another measure adopted in response to Covid-19 was the increase in unemployment benefits in the United States and California.

From a federal standpoint, there were two main policies that helped keep American citizens out of poverty during the Covid-19 pandemic, as noted by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and it is important to note their role in California along with the Californian state level policies. The federal government implemented two principle programs in order to cope with the economic insecurity due to the pandemic: stimulus payments, which were checks that were mailed to all American citizens, and increased unemployment funding targeted for people who had lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic. These were also micro-level subsidies targeted at individuals. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities stated that "according to the broader of Census's two main poverty measures, the number of people with yearly family income below the poverty line

declined by 8.5 million from 2019, chiefly due to relief measures and existing programs. Stimulus payments kept the annual incomes of nearly 12 million people above the poverty line in 2020. Unemployment insurance (UI) benefits kept 5.5 million people out of poverty (5.0 million more than in 2019) and monthly nutrition assistance 3.2 million” (Parott, 2021). It cannot be understated that these programs directly contributed to a decline in poverty in the United States despite widespread economic uncertainty and chaos caused by the pandemic.

The unemployment system in the U.S. operates similar to that of the food stamp system; the federal government provides funding to each state and then the states operate their unemployment systems as they see fit. With the additional federal pandemic assistance funding, the federal government supplemented each unemployment payment with an extra 300 dollars on top of the amount of money that each unemployed applicant was awarded and paid by their state; in the case of California, unemployment payments are made in a biweekly fashion, so this amounted to an extra 600 dollars per month as a federal pandemic supplement to the biweekly amount they received from the state of California. This brought unemployment payments up to a living-wage level for recipients to make due throughout the pandemic, with periodic stimulus checks being paid out to recipients on top of their state and federal unemployment payments; the stimulus checks were also paid out to the vast majority of Americans regardless of their employment status. The stimulus payments offered an additional buffer for those whose livelihoods were affected even though they may have been able to maintain employment but perhaps only on a part-time basis. In addition, the state of California also sent out a stimulus check to residents of the state. These payments were policies related to guaranteeing food security on a household level.

Due to an immense number of applicants and given the nature of the deteriorating situation, the state of California loosened requirements to qualify for unemployment benefits in an attempt to get payments out as soon as possible. On top of this, the state government removed the requirement that unemployment recipients must search for work while receiving benefits in an attempt to encourage people to practice social distancing and to remain at home and reduce the rate of new infections. This further represents a monumental shift away from the neoliberal era policies of increasing barriers to micro-level subsidies.

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the manifestation of these policies tend to go hand-in-hand with attempting to supply food locally from meso-level sources. This is a direct rebuke of the neoliberal trade order which began to weaken with the multipolarity that became prevalent in 2015. The intent here is to create a more localized solution to address food security policy which could then avoid potential issues in the future regarding pandemics, trade instability, supply chain issues, or wars. Due to poverty rates decreasing during the pandemic, California could rationalize expanding upon these policies. While this protectionist, exceptionalist reversion began in 2015, the meso-and micro-level shift

comes as a direct response to the Covid-19 Pandemic, and more recently, the war in Ukraine.

4.2. Portugal

4.2.1. Portuguese Agricultural Policy

In terms of agricultural policy, Portugal operates within the European Union's 'Common Agriculture Policy'. So, although the European Union is not a federation like the United States, it operates many shared policies amongst member states and within the Schengen Zone has the same customs union. We can make parallels between Portugal's role within the European Union with California's role in the United States. It is important to understand the overall framework of CAP in order to analyze Portuguese food security policy. CAP was adopted in 1962 by the six founding members of the European Community and has been expanded over time with the establishment of the European Union and new member states (European Commission, 2022). From the end of World War II in 1945, it took European countries nearly twenty years to adopt a common agricultural policy due to the precarious situation faced by Europe in the aftermath of World War II, as mentioned previously in this dissertation (Orford, 2015:p.52,53). The amount of time taken to negotiate a common policy in Europe shows how agriculture remained as an exceptional sector from the 1940s until the 1980s and 1990s with the fall of the Soviet Union, and how, despite liberalization after the fall of the Eastern Bloc, protectionist tendencies and measures could easily be reverted to within the neoliberal system.

4.2.2. Macro Policy: CAP and Portugal

The CAP itself represents localized regionalization. It is interesting to point out how the European Union as a whole can adopt exceptionalist policies towards outside countries, and CAP represents a true form of a free trade deal actually being harmonized for countries within CAP, such as Portugal. This is very distinct from NAFTA or the USMCA having one-sided subsidies which favor the United States. In showing the regional nature of CAP, section 2 of the Consolidated Versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union states:

"2. In working out the common agricultural policy and the special methods for its application, account shall be taken of:

(a) the particular nature of agricultural activity, which results from the social structure of agriculture and from structural and natural disparities between the various agricultural regions;

(b) the need to effect the appropriate adjustments by degrees;

(c) the fact that in the Member States agriculture constitutes a sector closely linked with the economy as a whole." (2016).

This guarantee prevents member states within the European Union from imposing tariffs or subsidies in order to benefit one's domestic agricultural sector over another. In the aftermath of World War II and creation of CAP, this led to regionalization on a European level, with the exceptionalism and protectionism being instituted across Europe as a whole, as opposed to between European countries. The original founding members were France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg and were all clearly within the Western Bloc of influence during the Cold War; henceforth, they were pushed to open up their markets with one another. In organizing CAP, the founding members created a mechanism which would both strengthen their domestic food security by having fair mechanisms governing over each other which would strengthen each country's agricultural sector.

The interesting phenomena with CAP is on one hand, from a domestic agricultural perspective, CAP is very neoliberal and while not necessarily globalized, it is regionalized. On the other hand, however, CAP has become so institutionalized in Europe that the European Union as a whole operates its agricultural sector and food security policy with an exceptionalist approach as an entire European bloc. It is for this reason that it is impossible to speak about macro-level agricultural policy in Portugal without analyzing CAP. Nonetheless, in the current regional, multipolar era, Portugal and the European Union are strategically positioned with decades of norms, regulations, and supports in place via CAP regarding regionalization, whereas other countries that have either heavily depended on globalized neoliberalism or protectionism must re-strategize.

According to the European Commission, CAP's main principles are as follows:

- 1) support farmers and improve agricultural productivity, ensuring a stable supply of affordable food;
- 2) safeguard European Union farmers to make a reasonable living;
- 3) help tackle climate change and the sustainable management of natural resources;
- 4) maintain rural areas and landscapes across the EU;
- 5) keep the rural economy alive by promoting jobs in farming, agri-food industries and associated sectors (2022).

Perhaps one of the starkest differences between the United States Agricultural policy through its Farm Bills and the European Union's CAP policy is the idea that climate change and sustainability lie at the heart of agricultural policy as a method to ensure food security as it is noted as one of CAP's main principles. While certain states within the United States may attempt to legislate agricultural policy with the intention of tackling climate change, the United States federal government has not included climate change as a main priority in its agricultural policy unlike the European Union. As aforementioned, very recently the Biden Administration provided some funding for sustainable agriculture

in the Inflation Reduction Act which regardless does not represent sustainability as a central agricultural concern for the United States.

One of the principle strategies Portugal employs to insure food security is the European Union’s ‘Farm to Fork’ strategy. At the heart of the Farm to Fork strategy is to have sustainable food production, so reducing carbon emissions in order to tackle climate change is a main tenant of this policy (2020). This follows in line with Europe’s general push towards sustainability in the context of securing localized food systems.

Nonetheless, supporting the idea that we are entering into a new, multipolar age that favors regionalism and localism over neoliberal globalization, a 2022 Eurobarometer poll by the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development found that 50 percent of Europeans believe that securing a stable supply of food in the EU at all times should be a main objective of the CAP (2022).

Taking this to gauge the sentiment amongst the Portuguese population regarding food security in 2022, 82 percent of Portuguese correspondents answered the question ”How important or not are the following factors in your decision to buy food products?” that the food products ”are part of a short supply chain” was either ”Very Important” or ”Fairly Important” (2022).

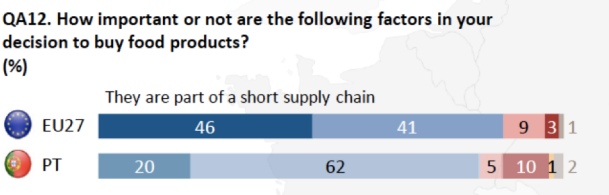


FIGURE 5. From the Eurobarometer 2022. Important factors buying food for Portuguese citizens

This shows that within Portugal there is very high public support to having a localized meso policy and this could be a direct result of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the instability that was brought onto the supply chain. Fortunately, Portugal maintains short supply chains through being a member of the European Union and CAP.

Regarding the general feeling in Portugal on what farming’s role should be in society, the two top answers to the question ”What do you think should be the two main responsibilities of farmers in our society? (MAX. 2 ANSWERS)” were ”Providing safe, healthy and sustainable food of high quality” with 69 percent and ”Securing a stable supply of food in the EU at all times” with 32 percent (2022).

Surveys like these are important to gain a general sense on how the public is feeling regarding certain issues and this reflects that in the aftermath of Covid-19 and teh resulting general instability in all aspects of the economy, including with the outbreak of war in Ukraine, food security has become a priority for the European Union as a whole and Portugal in particular. It also shows public support for policies that reflect treating food security and agriculture as an inherently exceptional sector in the economy, which Europe and the Portuguese government are continuing to adopt policies that protect agriculture

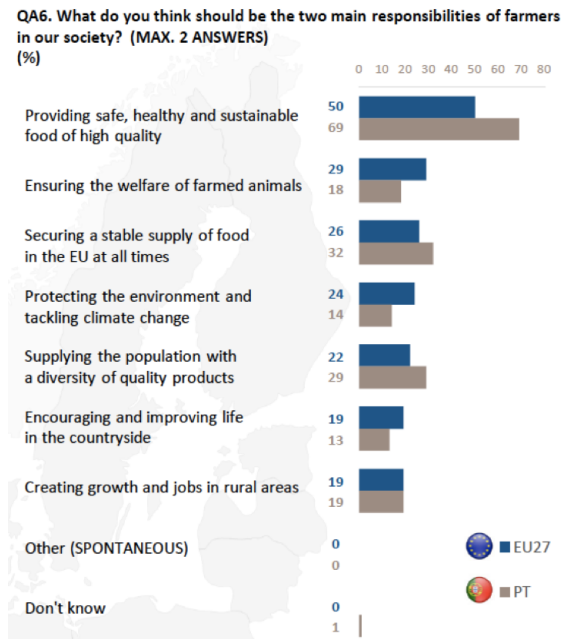


FIGURE 6. From the Eurobarometer 2022. Farming’s role in society according to Portuguese citizens

and are attempting to guarantee food security. One of the ways that CAP is reflecting this sentiment amongst the population is that the New CAP: 2023-2027, which was adopted after the Covid-19 Pandemic, will include a "crisis reserve: to cope with future crises, the reformed CAP includes a new financial reserve amounting to at least €450 million per year" (2022). The European Union is reserving direct, exceptionalist subsidies on a macro-level aimed at protecting food security and dealing with disruptions provoked by crises in this current regionalized, multipolar era.

4.2.3. Meso and Micro Policy: CAP and Portugal Through the Eras

In comparing micro-level subsidies directed towards children between California and Portugal, Portugal offers snacks to school children in the first cycle of education, generally from ages 6 to 10. This subsidy was adopted beginning in the 2017/2018 school year as directed by the European Parliament’s 2016/791 Regulation and the Portuguese government’s Ordinance 113/2018, which includes 6,73 euros per student per day to be allocated for the purchase of bananas along with a list of fruits and vegetables, and an additional 4 euros being allocated to purchase milk and dairy products for the children to consume. Since these products are purchased locally it is also a meso-level subsidy aimed at supporting local agricultural producers. It also includes an educational component in an attempt to teach children about the importance of eating healthy foods and to have a better understand on how agriculture works (2018). Instituted in 2017, this program was adopted as the Trump era began and the attitude towards neoliberal practices started to shift in the face of multipolarity. Since many European countries were also exposed to the Trump era tariffs as previously mentioned, there began to be a renewed focus on

supporting agriculture from within the European Union, and Portugal adopted this policy on the meso- and micro-level within the broader context of this macro-level European Union policy.

While a healthy snack per day for young students most likely is not enough in of itself in terms of improving food security in Portugal, this public health ordinance is related to the idea made by Seligman and Berkowitz that the lack of adequate nutrition and healthy food also falls under food security, showing that the Portuguese government and European Union as a whole is attempting to educate the public at a young age to make healthier choices (Berkowitz and Seligman, 2019:p.322). Since 69 percent of Portuguese citizens had responded stating that "Providing safe, healthy and sustainable food of high quality" was a main responsibility of farmers in the Eurobarometer 2022 poll, it makes sense that the Portuguese government would adopt a program promoting healthy eating for school children (2022). As Simelane and Worth pointed out, culture and education are important factors regarding food utilization (2020:p.369). They also stated that "Food and nutrition security can only be achieved when all people have, when needed, physical, social, and economic access to adequate, safe (free of contaminants), and nutritious food to satisfy their dietary needs and choices for an active and healthy life" (2020:p.368). The Portuguese government has adopted a public health policy aimed at affecting the decisions that the public will make over time regarding food choices, which will improve on food utilization in Portugal, reflecting on the Portuguese societal and cultural ethos that values having access to safe, healthy, and sustainable food.

In terms of subsidies for full meals for students at school, the program that exists in Portugal is similar to what existed in California before the pandemic. All students enrolled in public schools are organized into three groups: Group A, Group B, and Group C. These groups are divided according to the income level that the family of each student earns. So, if a student falls into Group A, the Portuguese government subsidizes 100 percent of their school meals, up to 16 euros per day. If the student falls into Group B, the Portuguese government subsidizes 50 percent of their meals at school, up to 8 euros per day. Students in Group C are not entitled to any sort of meal subsidy (Direção-geral do Património Cultural, 2018). This offers some levels of support to children and families that are most at-need in terms of food insecurity in Portugal.

4.2.4. Micro Policy: Covid Measures in Portugal

While observing food security policy in Portugal during the Covid-19 Pandemic, instead of focusing on economic stimulus, increasing benefits and easing barriers to entry into the unemployment system like in the United States and California, the focus in Portugal was to avoid experiencing high unemployment altogether and offer a state-backed subsidy to guarantee salaries for employees. The subsidy was backed by the Portuguese social security system and would cover up to 70 percent of employees' salaries (Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 10-a/2020, 2020). This measure's intention was to avoid

social upheaval and economic instability; by avoiding widespread unemployment, the Portuguese government attempted to secure one of the most important factors to maintaining food security at a household level according to Simelane and Worth: generating income (2020:p.369). The approach by the Portuguese government in confronting the Covid-19 Pandemic by attempting to maintain employment seems to be related to the fact that unemployment in Portugal had topped out at 18.4 percent January 2013 at the height of the financial crisis (OECD, Retrieved from FRED 2022). The financial crisis could also be a reason that there has been a general global backlash against neoliberalism.

Instead of the approach that California and the United States took, which was to attempt to remove bureaucratic red-tape and to send out money to citizens in order to 'stimulate' the economy and retain income in order to purchase food, the Portuguese government took the approach to simply use the social security system to guarantee large portions of salaries for individuals. This approach offered by the Portuguese government avoided much stress on traditionally understaffed government offices, whereas in California, despite removing many barriers to accessing pandemic assistance through the unemployment system, there were long wait times both in qualifying for benefits and in calling the unemployment offices. While Californians received much help once they managed to qualify for pandemic assistance between state and federal unemployment benefits, there was a lot more uncertainty in their situation because many lost their jobs and were forced to deal with the state bureaucracy in order to receive the benefits. This left many people living off of credit cards for months while waiting to qualify for their benefits. Because the controls were not focused on securing employment, the unemployment number in California jumped up a lot more drastically than it did in Portugal, topping out at 16.1 percent (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Retrieved from FRED 2022) compared to Portugal which topped out at 8.2 percent (OECD, Retrieved from FRED 2022) as can be seen in Figure 6.

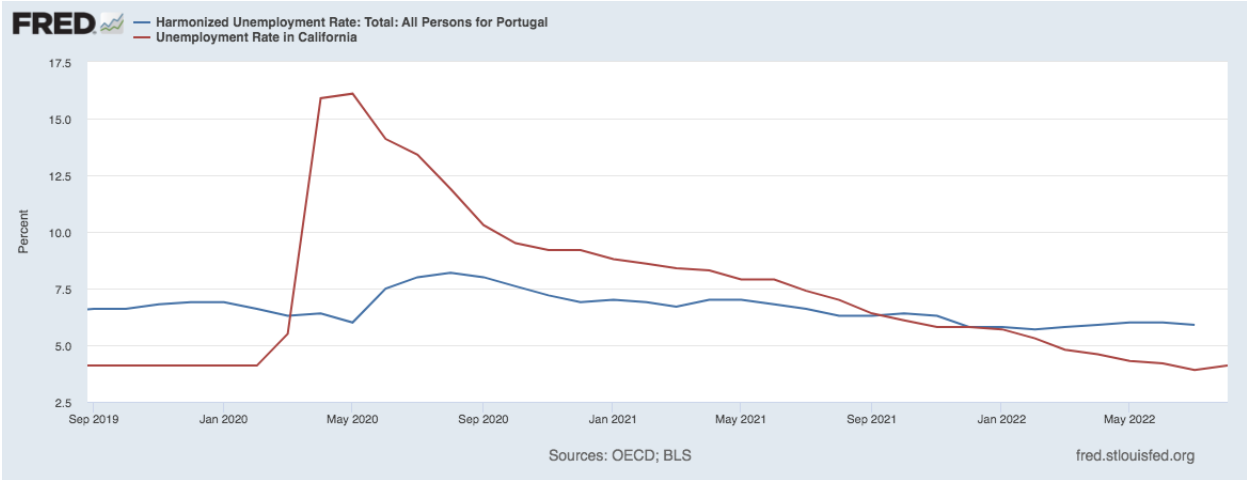


FIGURE 7. Portuguese Harmonized Unemployment Rate Compared to the Unemployment Rate in California from August, 2019 until August, 2022.

While more factors must be considered in observing the difference in unemployment spikes between California and Portugal, both governments instituted programs in an attempt to guarantee income generation and mitigate the economic effects of the Covid-19 crisis. By either insuring income as in Portugal, or decreasing unemployment barriers and increasing benefits as in California, both governments targeted the individual, micro-level of food security. This marks an unprecedented shift in response to Covid-19 that reflects a general push towards more exceptionalist policies in the multipolar era.

4.3. Food Production Comparison

Now that an analysis has been made regarding the macro, meso, and micro food security and agricultural policies in California, Portugal, the U.S., and European Union, data will be observed regarding food production, crop production, and population growth rates in the U.S. and Portugal to make some sense of how these policies have affected overall data indicators.

In comparing domestic food production specifically between the United States and Portugal, it is interesting to see how each country has either increased or decreased food production over time.

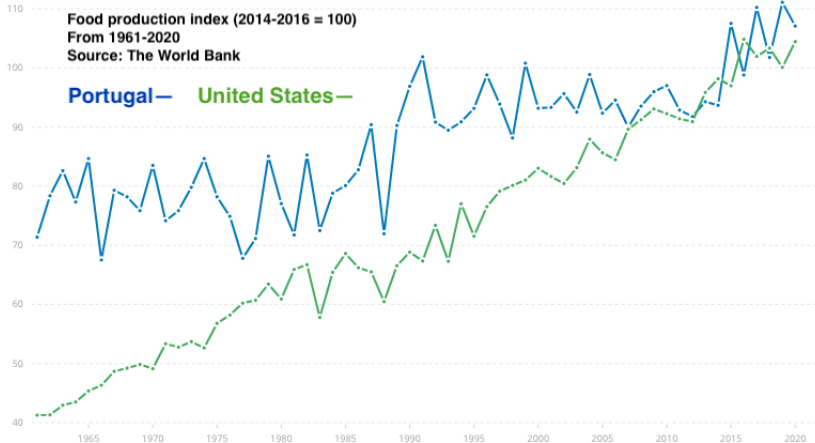


FIGURE 8. World Bank Food Production Index based around 2014-2016; Comparing Portuguese and United States food production over time from 1961-2020.

In the data ranging from 1961 until 2020, it can be pointed out that while the United States has increased food production since the 1960s in a steady way, Portugal’s food production growth, while it has increased, has been a lot more stagnant.

Now, crop production over time will be observed:

Since 1961, the United States crop production has increased similarly to its food production. Portugal, on the other hand, has actually experienced stagnant crop production growth with little to no increase today from 1961. Nonetheless, since 2015, Portugal’s crop production has began to increase, reaching 1961 levels. This increase does happen to coincide with the 2015 era of more protectionism and multi-polarization.

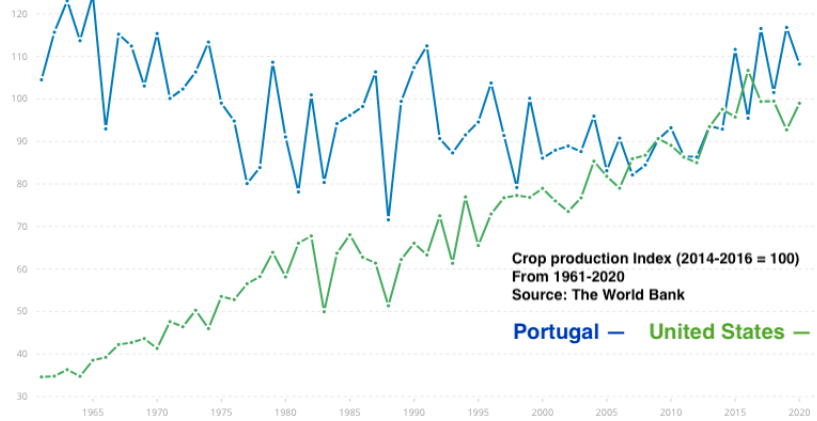


FIGURE 9. World Bank Crop Production Index based around 2014-2016; Comparing Portuguese and United States crop production over time from 1961-2020.

Another indicator to look at when observing food and crop production is population growth over time.

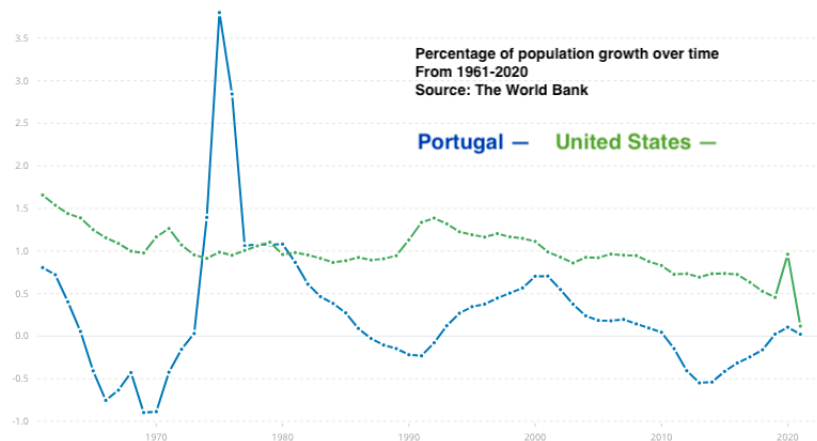


FIGURE 10. World Bank population growth over time; Comparing Portuguese and United States population growth rates over time from 1961-2020.

Apart from the spike in population growth in Portugal around the 1974 Carnation Revolution, population growth in both the United States and Portugal has remained relatively stagnant and decreased slightly. While the U.S. has continued to increase crop production despite decreasing population growth rates, Portugal's stagnant crop production is very similar to its population growth rate.

CHAPTER 5

The Russian Invasion of Ukraine

In February of 2022, with the world beginning to recover from the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Russian Federation, under the leadership of Vladimir Putin, launched an invasion to take over the entire country of Ukraine after annexing Crimea in 2014 and occupying portions of eastern Ukraine (Kirby, 2022). This invasion presented an unprecedented crisis for Europe since Russia was one of the main global exporters fertilizer, natural gas, and the main exporter of wheat. Ukraine, on the other hand, was a prominent exporter of grains being the fifth largest exporter of wheat and maize in 2020 (FAO, 2022). To better visualize the instability presented to grain markets, here is data charting the dip in Ukrainian grain exports over the past two years with a dip in exports since the beginning of the invasion in February 2022:

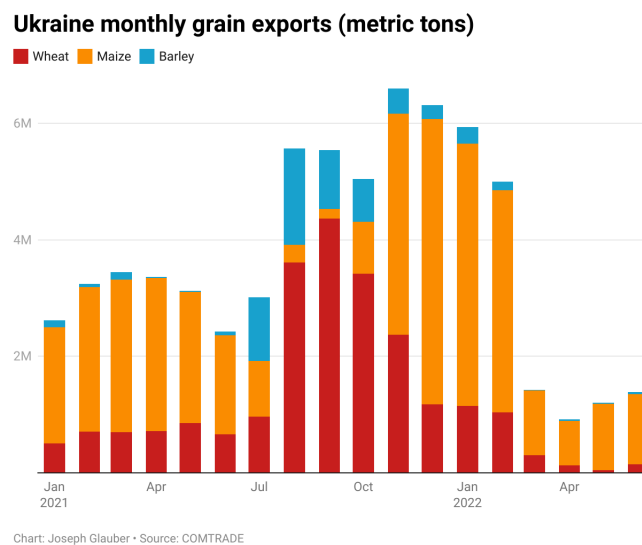


FIGURE 1. Ukrainian grain export trends from January 2021 to the present
From the International Food Policy Research Institute

Now, an analysis will be made on the effect of the disruption of fertilizer and grain markets in the European Union and United States and their food security policies in response.

When tying together Portugal's presence in the broader CAP policies that are pushing towards Europe's ability to provide shorter supply chains that are sustainable, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has presented an immediate crisis. The European Union decided to postpone implementation of its green agricultural initiatives in its response package to the war in March 2022, as noted by the European Parliamentary Research Service's (EPRS)

piece "Russia's war on Ukraine: Impact on food security and EU response" (Caprile, April, 2022).

The EPRS stated that "Food availability is not currently at stake in the EU. The block is largely self-sufficient in key agricultural products, as well as in most animal products." (Caprile, April, 2022). This shows how the CAP focuses on maintaining self-sufficient policies and that exceptionalism was embedded into European agricultural policy from the end of World War II up to today. Nonetheless, the EPRS states that "However, the EU is a considerable net importer of specific products that may be difficult to substitute in the short term, such as sunflower oil and seafood. Moreover, the crisis has exposed the dependency of EU agricultural production on a number of key imported inputs: energy, animal feed and feed additives, and also agricultural fertilisers" (Caprile, April, 2022). In response to dependency on certain areas, the European Union passed the following economic package:

"Safeguarding food security and reinforcing food system resilience: Immediate EU response

- €500 million support package for EU farmers most affected by the crisis (up to €1.5 billion if complemented by Member States' national envelopes);
- Market safety net measures to support specific markets (e.g. the pigmeat sector) and increased levels of direct payment advances, later in 2022;
- New self standing Temporary Crisis Framework for State aid;
- Possibility for Member States to derogate from certain greening obligations in 2022 to bring additional agricultural land into production (i.e. cultivation of fallow land under the ecological focus areas);
- Preservation of the EU single market, avoiding export restrictions and bans;
- Support through the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD): complementing Member States' action to provide those most deprived with food and/or basic material assistance;
- Possibility for Member States to apply reduced rates of value added tax and encourage economic operators to contain retail prices;
- Use the new CAP strategic plans to prioritise investments that reduce dependency on gas and fuel and inputs such as pesticides and fertilisers;
- €330 million EU emergency support programme for Ukraine." ¹(Caprile, April, 2022).

¹European Parliament's "Russia's War on Ukraine: Impact on Food Security and EU Response" (Caprile, April, 2022).

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2022/729367/EPRS_ATA\(2022\)729367_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2022/729367/EPRS_ATA(2022)729367_EN.pdf)

One of the main concerns of the war moving forward is the fact that there is a global fertilizer shortage and large increase in prices, as it is evidenced in the EPRS's report on the war.

According to research conducted by the USDA Foreign Agriculture Service, there were several factors affecting fertilizer prices and food security. It cites that "Numerous factors have worsened existing supply chain disruptions caused by COVID-19. These include export restrictions enacted by Russia and China, plus international sanctions on Belarus and on Russia. Russia and its ally, Belarus, are both major fertilizer suppliers to the global market" commanding "nearly 25 percent of the global export market share of all fertilizers" (Jones and Nti, 2022). While Ukraine is not a large exporter of fertilizer, it is a major exporter of grain; it is no longer importing fertilizer from its main suppliers, Russia and Belarus. Since Ukraine is a major exporter of grain and oil seeds "fertilizer shortages could further decrease Ukrainian production, which would have impacts on global food security" (Jones and Nti, 2022). On top of the decreased availability of fertilizers, rising natural gas costs "especially in Europe, resulted in a reduction in producing ammonia—a key input of nitrogen fertilizer production" (Jones and Nti, 2022). Due to the effect of the Covid-19 Pandemic, war, and rising natural gas prices, the European Union as a whole is attempting to prioritize reducing dependence on natural gas inputs like fertilizer as shown in the EPRS report since it poses a threat to region-wide food security. Just as the European Union is attempting to reduce dependence on fertilizer due to the war through CAP, the United States will be able to lean on and expand policies such as the Local Food Assistance Cooperative Agreement, mentioned previously, to search for internal solutions to grain and fertilizer instability. These programs and efforts can help cope with macro-level instability by attempting to secure meso-level supply chains in order to maintain micro-level prices under control.

As it can be observed, the emerging war in Ukraine has forced the European Union to further implement exceptionalist policies and controls regarding agriculture via CAP in order to mitigate the crisis on a macro-level by attempting to solve the issue internally through reducing dependency on imported fertilizers. Portugal, as a member of the European Union, has been directly affected by the war and supported the European Union sanctions on Russia. The Russian invasion of Ukraine represents the multipolar world; this war has broken the idea that economic inter-dependency would prevent wars. This idea is reflected by Copeland's statement, as referenced previously, that "Liberals argue that economic interdependence lowers the likelihood of war by increasing the value of trading over the alternative of aggression: interdependent states would rather trade than invade" (1996). The Russian invasion of Ukraine has perhaps been the final domino to fall signifying the end of the unipolar, neoliberal age of economic interdependence and globalization, as it has been proved that trade between nations will not prevent wars and that trade ties can and will be severed in the face of war particularly in regards to agricultural policy and food security.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

The aim of this master's thesis is to show that a multipolar era regarding trade, food security, and agricultural policy is now in effect. It began in 2015 but has been confirmed by the Covid-19 Pandemic and war in Ukraine; this has been shown in this work by demonstrating Californian and Portuguese responses to these crises within the context of the United States and European Union. Definitions were given defining the four dimensions of food security: availability, access, stability, and utilization to give a framework as to how each governing entity was confronting food security at the macro-, meso-, and micro-levels of society. A historical background has been provided with the creation of the Western Bloc's neoliberal economic order via the Bretton Woods Institutions after World War II: the World Bank, the IMF, and GATT. This era, which took place during the Cold War, was marked by liberalized markets in most sectors of the economy. Agricultural policy, however, was one of the unique sectors to remain exceptional. The prevailing attitude towards food security was to protect domestic agriculture through subsidies and remain generally closed off to trade. This lasted until the 1980s with the fall of the Eastern Bloc, which ushered in an area of total globalization and further liberalization of the agricultural sector. This American-dominated, unipolar, neoliberal era-lasting from the 1980s until 2015 was marked by the explosion of worldwide trade. By 2015, a new attitude began to take shape in U.S. political discourse in response to the emerging multipolar era in which new powers emerged and the United States no longer vehemently implemented and defended globalization and neoliberalism. The Trump Administration created many new tariffs and subsidies protecting its agricultural sector on a macro-level; perhaps these policies would have been reversed in a future administration. However, the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2020 exposed many flaws in the global supply chain system and pushed California with support of the U.S. federal government to implement exceptionalist policies and measures on a meso- and micro-level as well. The Biden Administration arrived in 2021 and continued with Trump Era agricultural exceptionalism and maintained many protectionist policies on a macro-level, while expanding meso- and micro-level federal support. Portugal, on the other hand, began to implement more exceptionalist policies leading up to the Covid-19 Pandemic in response to U.S. tariffs towards Europe; once the pandemic hit, Portugal also implemented many meso- and micro-level subsidies to strengthen food security amongst its population by guaranteeing income through its social security system. In this new, multipolar, exceptionalist climate, the Russian invasion of Ukraine further cemented this focus on localized food security and protection of domestic agricultural production in both the United States and European Union, and by

extension, Portugal and California, showing that a new multipolar era has begun and been confirmed by the Covid-19 Pandemic and Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Moving forward, I think it would be advisable to study the long-term economic effects of the macro, meso, and micro policies that were put in place in California and Portugal in response to Covid-19 and whether they could be a long-term solution to poverty and food security issues. Since inflation has become prevalent in 2022, it would make sense to bring inflation in as a potential effect of these policies.

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