OBJECTIVE: To compare variety and diversity patterns and dietary characteristics in Guatemalan women. MATERIAL AND METHODS: Two non-consecutive 24-h recalls were conducted in convenience samples of 20 rural Mayan women and 20 urban students. Diversity scores were computed using three food-group systems. Variety and diversity scores and dietary origin and characteristics were compared between settings using independent t-test or Mann-Whitney-U-test. RESULTS: Dietary variety and diversity were generally greater in the urban sample when compared to the rural sample, depending on the number of days and food-group system used for evaluation. The diet was predominantly plant-based and composed of non-fortified food items in both areas. The rural diet was predominantly composed of traditional, non-processed foods. The urban diet was mostly based on non-traditional and processed items. CONCLUSION: Considerations of intervention strategies for dietary improvement and health protection for the Guatemalan countryside should still rely on promotion and preservation of traditional food selection.

Keywords
Diet quality, feeding practices, variety, diversity, Guatemala.