

Sustainable Agriculture

The nutrient composition of food crops is modulated by the water and nutrient supply used to grow them. In turn, the body composition of livestock reflects the composition of their feed. Ultimately the composition and function of our bodies are determined by the foods we eat and our physical activity. As we attempt to improve human nutrition part of the solution is likely to be production of nutritionally balanced crops and livestock with careful planning of how food plants and animals are grown.

Modern intensive agricultural practices are constructed to grow optimal quantities of crops rather than monitoring the richness of their nutrients. These practices have caused fundamental changes in the composition of food plants and animals in comparison the diets consumed during the evolution of mankind.

The ideal future for agriculture would be to employ sustainable agriculture methods that led to foods that also optimized human health. Given the large populations of malnourished humans in many countries simply looking to obtain adequate calories to survive, this utopian notion seems out of place. To further complicate matters, there is an even larger population in industrialized consuming foods high in fat, sugar, and salt while failing to consume adequate amounts of fruits, vegetables, and grains being recommended by scientists and government agencies for the prevention of age-related chronic diseases.

Agricultural practices should be a vital concern for government policy makers. More nutritious foods could help prevent chronic diseases, reduce government expenditures for health care, increase worker productivity, and so help to stabilize governments around the world. These economic benefits of sustainable ecosystems which consider all the elements of food production and consumption provide reality to the otherwise less tangible idea of sustainability.