

# WONDERFUL WORLD OF TOMORROW

## Sustainable Agriculture: Eliminating The Barriers

by Andrew Bennett

(NAPSA)—Survival is the strongest human instinct. Our inventiveness and our ability to work together to overcome adversity are the reasons why the human race has been so successful. The dire predictions of Thomas Malthus, that our ability to reproduce would eventually outstrip our capacity to produce food, have not proved correct—yet.



Bennett

We have succeeded in meeting the demands of growing populations for food and agricultural commodities through combinations of changes in agricultural practices, new technologies, greater use of water and increasing the area of land under cultivation. We have mechanized, made greater use of fertilizers and crop protection chemicals, enhanced the biological potential of crops and livestock to provide the products society wants.

The success of these actions is that commodity prices are at an all-time low. However, more than 800 million people around the world are still hungry and malnourished, while one in five lives on less than a dollar a day and very large numbers of people rely on food aid for their survival.

So agricultural production has kept pace with demands—but

there have been significant social and environmental costs, which cast doubt on the “sustainability” of our current production systems.

Globalization is both an opportunity and a threat to sustainability. It is here to stay, but we must make it work for the poor, the environment and sustainable natural resource management. The future agenda will require purposeful combinations of: unity of purpose, partnerships, choice, information, technology, trust, ideas and leadership.

Sustainable agriculture cannot be achieved alone by factors or actions within the sector; externalities—trade, economic growth and changing values and standards of society—will determine what types of agriculture can be sustained.

Sustainability is a dynamic process of change to meet the increasing and diversifying demands of markets and society. It will require better access to knowledge, constant negotiation between those with differing views, compromise and an acceptance that there will have to be trade-offs. It is not a theoretical construct but a practical and complex process in which technologies can provide options, solutions and choice.

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