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Food Security

The Science, Sociology and Economics of Food Production and Access to Food

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This new journal is the initiative of a distinguished international group of scientists, sociologists and economists who hold a deep concern for the challenge of global food security, together with a vision of the power of shared knowledge as a means of meeting that challenge. The journal has two aims: (1) to define the constraints - physical, biological, socio-economic and political - that prevent around one billion of the world's population from accessing an appropriate diet i.e. one that is sufficiently nutritious to allow full development of physical and mental potential and (2) to address the means by which these constraints may be overcome. Contributions to the journal consist of a mixture of original refereed papers, review articles, case studies, commentaries and letters to the editor. These do not seek to duplicate the coverage of the many publications that focus individually on the multiple disciplines encompassed by food security but rather take a synthetic view of the science, sociology, economics and politics of food production, agricultural development, access to food, and nutrition. The importance of the journal has been recognised by the award of an impact factor of 1.658 within 27 months of first publication.

The journal covers the following areas:

- Global food needs: the mismatch between population and the ability to provide adequate nutrition
- Global food potential
- Natural constraints to satisfying global food needs:
 - Abiotic e.g. Climate, Climate change, Water availability, Soil quality
 - Biotic e.g. Pests, Diseases, Weeds
- Nutrition, food quality and food safety
- Socio-political factors that impinge on the ability to satisfy global food needs:
 - Land, agricultural and food policies
 - International relations and trade
 - Access to food
 - Financial policies

Introductory page of first issue of *Food Security*, March 2009

Nobel Peace Laureate Norman Borlaug writes:



In 1998 I spoke at the 7th International Congress of Plant Pathology in Edinburgh, UK, in a public forum on the role of plant pathology in food security. My talk addressed the question "Can the world produce the food and fiber needed in the 21st century?". In the ensuing discussion, the International Society for Plant Pathology (ISPP), sponsor of the Congress, was challenged to take action concerning global food security.

The outcome was the establishment by ISPP of a small Task Force on Global Food Security, which has established programmes, regrettably restricted by the small resources of the Society, to address some challenges presented by plant diseases that compromise food security, especially in developing countries. These have included, for example, a project in Ghana to show farmers how cassava production is limited by disease, to help them recognize different diseases and to learn how to alleviate them.

I commend plant pathologists for taking a lead, through practical actions, in the battle for food security. But, of course, the challenge goes far beyond pathology and indeed far beyond plants. ISPP's Task Force on Global Food Security is to be further commended for taking the matter many steps further in the launch of this journal, *Food Security - the science, sociology and economics of food production and access to food*. It should not forget the importance of politics in moving all these issues forward.

In the 13 years since the Edinburgh Congress, the challenge of global food security has sharpened greatly. I said in 2005 that we will have to double the world food supply by 2050. Meanwhile the term food security has passed into ordinary vocabulary. In recent months, hardly a day passes without the media focusing on the availability of food, the price of food, food safety and so on, in a global context. It is therefore particularly timely that ISPP and Springer are launching, as a joint venture, this journal with its topical title and with the breadth of coverage indicated by its subtitle.

The strength of *Food Security* is that it encompasses not only plant pathology but also the science of all kinds of biotic and abiotic stresses of plants and animals important for human nutrition. Still better is its parallel coverage of global food needs and food potential, alongside nutrition and food quality, and especially the socio-political and economic factors that impinge on the satisfaction of global food needs.

I wish this new journal well. In the words of its developers, "By focussing on these issues in a single publication, it is intended that the journal will provide a spur for the initiation and promotion of policies which will co-ordinately address the spectre of hunger".

Norman Borlaug
Texas A&M University, July 2008

Call for Papers

The aim of *Food Security* is to publish two types of material:

- analyses of the constraints - physical, biological, socio-economic and political - that deprive around one billion of the world's population from accessing safe and nutritious food
- research into overcoming such constraints.

Contributions will principally be in the form of original, refereed papers, taking a synthetic view of the science, sociology, economics and politics of food production, agricultural development, access to food, and nutrition. Other items will include review articles, reports of conferences, book reviews, case studies, commentaries and letters to the editor.

The Editor-in-Chief welcomes all submissions that are directly relevant to food security. They should be written in clear English and may be illustrated with photographs, diagrams and graphs. Enquiries are welcomed by the Editor-in-Chief:

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