

BEFORE WE GET STARTED



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ACAD 161

LONE STAR COLLEGE - NORTH HARRIS,
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Fall 2024 LD Debate Topic

Resolved: In the United States, agroecology ought to be prioritized over industrial agriculture.

This UIL Lincoln Douglas Debate topic will be debated September through December 2024.

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Agroecology and Regenerative Agriculture

Gregory Rehmke • EconomicThinking.org



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Gregory Rehmke • economicthinking.org/uil2024/ • grehmke@gmail.com

Exploring the connections between Agroecology and Regenerative Agriculture

Agroecology builds on the ancestral practices, insights, and contributions of Indigenous food systems and studies whole agroecosystems – not only their biology and ecology but social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions as well.

Although agroecology can be traced back to agronomists and zoologists starting in the 1920s, it emerged strongly in Latin America in the 1970s, among both inter-disciplinary academics and NGOs concerned with the ecological and social impacts of industrialized agriculture.

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“NGOs felt the urgent need to combat rural poverty and to conserve and regenerate the deteriorated resource base of small farms, and saw in agroecology a new approach to agricultural research and resource management strategies that lent itself to a more participatory approach for technology development and dissemination.”

The “Green Revolution,” characterized by high-input agriculture – commercial seeds, fertilizers, and fossil fuel-based pesticides deployed on monoculture plantations – has led to massive small farm loss, farmer indebtedness, and shrinking biodiversity.



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The Counter-Agricultural Revolution

Should we abolish farming? Not if we care about human well-being.

SAUL ZIMET — MAR 15, 2024





Explainer
series:

What is agroecology?



<https://youtu.be/ecq87jIItMo>

A critical perspective on agroecology - In conversation with Nassib Mugwanya



the Netherlands - 24 May, 2022

Author: Koen Kusters

"I want to help smallholders like my grandmother to have access to innovations that can help to feed their families and communities," says Nassib Mugwanya. After years of working as an outreach officer with smallholders in Uganda, Mugwanya is now a doctoral student at North Carolina State University. Here he talks with Koen Kusters about the importance of innovations for smallholder farming, and the risks of romanticising traditional farming practices.

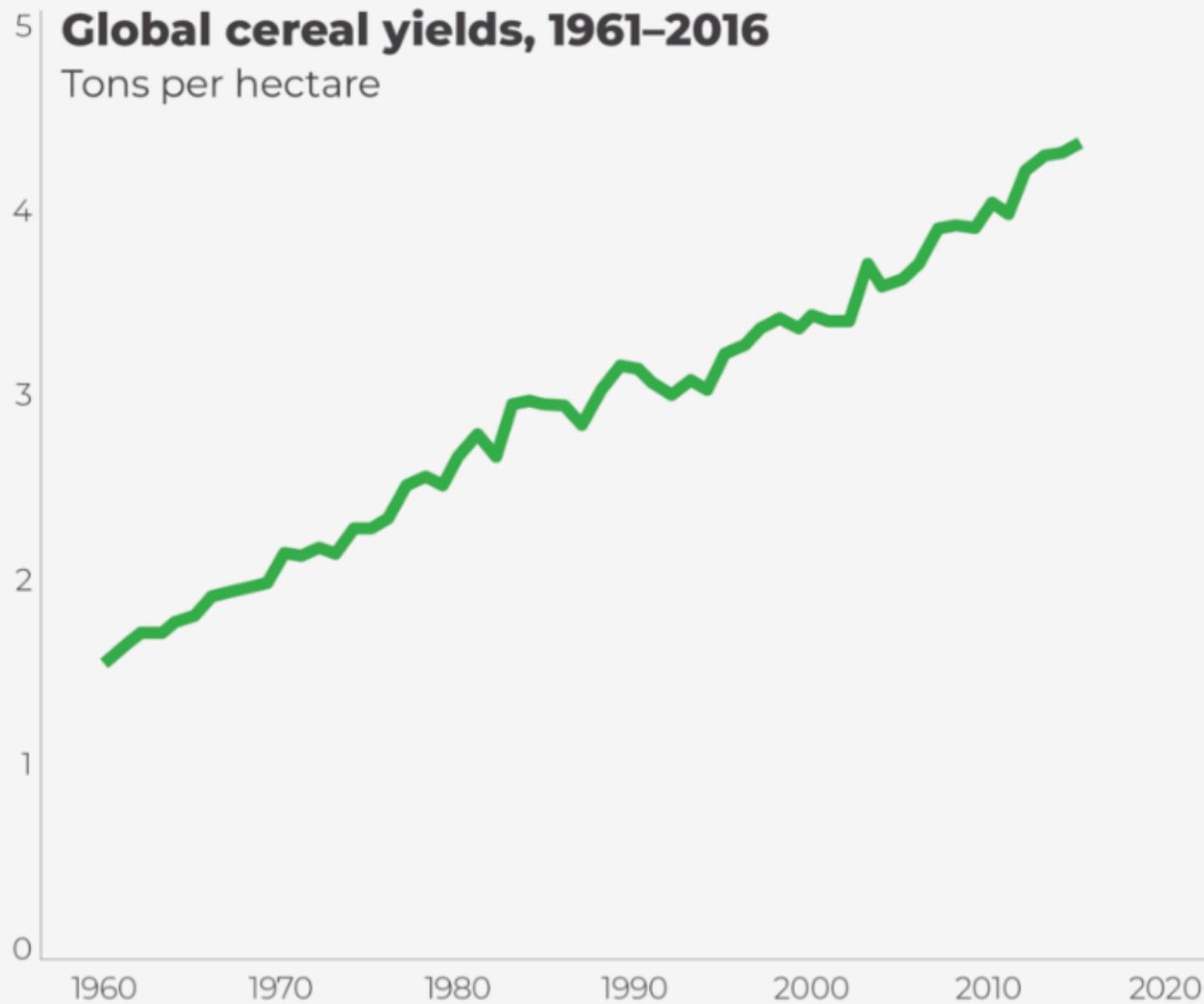
You wrote an article in 'outlook on agriculture' criticizing agroecology. What is the essence of your criticism?

I tried to be open minded. I wanted to understand how agroecology could help to achieve change. But I realized that it is essentially arguing for a status quo. It is presented as a model to achieve transformation, but at the same time it limits access to options. It locks people out from advances in science, such as modern inputs, hybrids and genetically modified seeds. We are confronted with changing circumstances due to climate change, and I don't think that relying on only nature-based approaches gives enough headway to tackle the complex challenges that smallholders face.

Yields Increasing

Since the Green Revolution in the 1960s, global cereal yields have continued to increase, nourishing the growing population.

MARIAN L. TUPY, RONALD BAILEY — MAR 1, 2023



Source: World Bank, "Cereal Yield" chart.

Blog Post | Agriculture

The Counter-Agricultural Revolution

Should we abolish farming? Not if we care about human well-being.

SAUL ZIMET — MAR 15, 2024

Listen to this article

▶ 0:00 / 9:52 1X



Many examples come to mind. Sri Lanka's government banned synthetic fertilizers for about six months in 2021, eventually rolling back the ban due to its exacerbation of mass food shortages and undernourishment across the country. In 2022 the Dutch government pushed unprecedented crackdowns on agriculture to reduce nitrogen emissions. ...

“We have to move away from the low- cost model of food production,” said the Dutch politician MP Tjeerd de Groot. Dutch News .nl reports that, “Dutch agriculture has to become a lot less efficient or the environment will suffer even more, say agro-environmental scientists.”

George Monbiot, award- winning environmental activist and columnist at The Guardian, takes this perspective to its logical conclusion in his Sunday Times (London) bestselling 2022 book *Regenesis: Feeding the World Without Devouring the Planet*, in which he advocates for government abolition of farming. “Campaigners, chef, and food writers rail against ‘intensive farming’ and the harm it does to us and our world,” he writes. “But the problem is not the adjective. It’s the noun.”

humanprogress.org/the-counter-agricultural-revolution

The Counter-Agricultural Revolution

Should we abolish farming? Not if we care about human well-being.

SAUL ZIMET — MAR 15, 2024





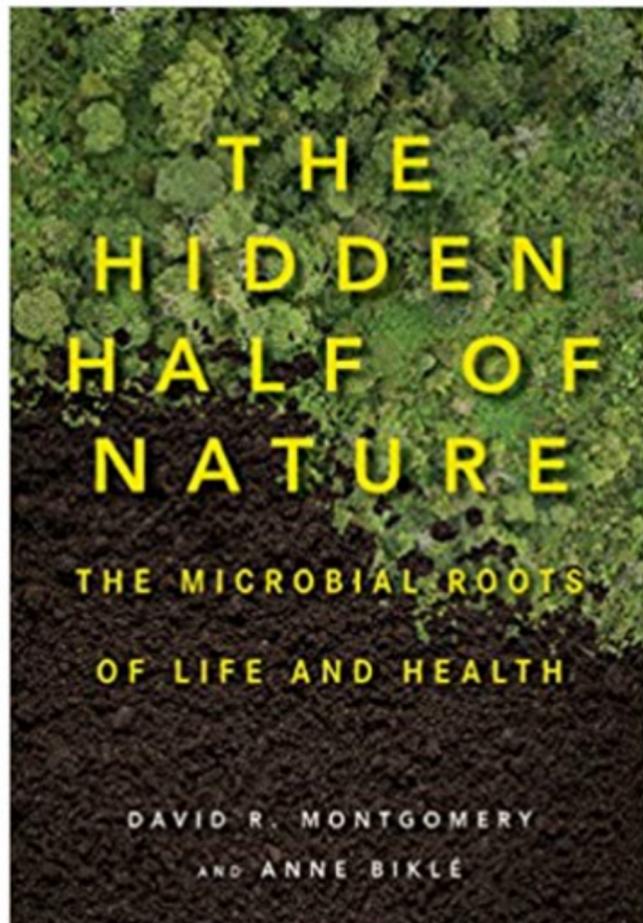
Does healthy soil mean healthy humans?



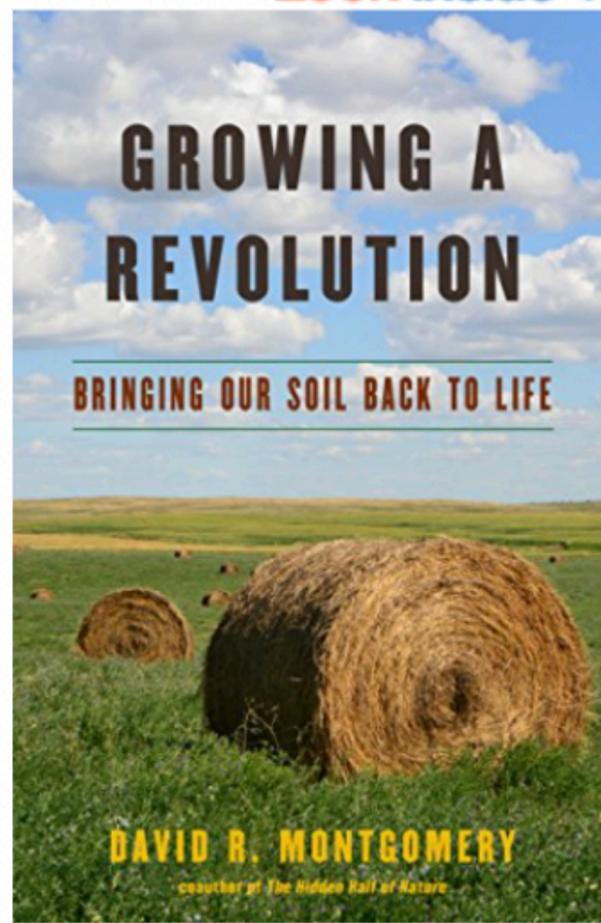
Can improving the health of our soil mean better health for our people? David Montgomery, Anne Biklé, and Stephan Van Vilet discuss the connection between soil health and human health. YouTube · Diet Doctor · 2 weeks ago

<https://youtu.be/YLZnSSglKfg>

Look inside ↓



Look inside ↓



Look inside ↓



DIG2GROW

David R. Montgomery & Anne Biklé

www.dig2grow.com

What is Regenerative Agriculture?

Many farmers and ranchers recognize that regenerative agriculture may be the only long-term solution to these problems. Regenerative agriculture is a management philosophy that seeks to improve soil health.



At its core, regenerative agriculture is the process of restoring degraded soils using practices (e.g., adaptive grazing, no-till planting, no or limited use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizer, etc.) based on ecological principles.



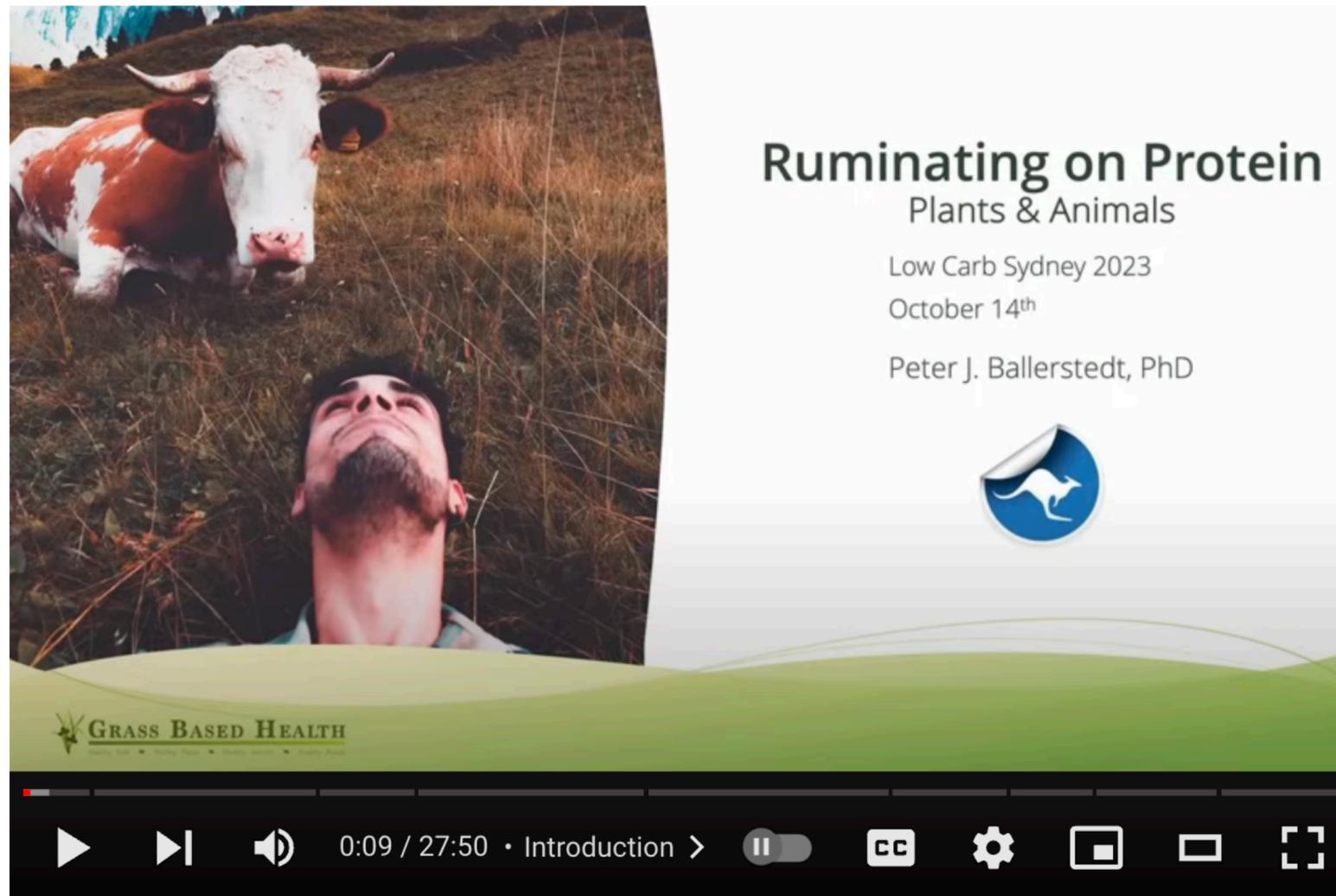
REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

We support initiatives that recognize that the condition of our soil, the practices through which both animal and plant foods are grown, and the diet humans consume are intimately connected to our planet's future.



OUR PARTNERS





Dr. Peter Ballerstedt - 'Ruminating on Protein: Plants & Animals'



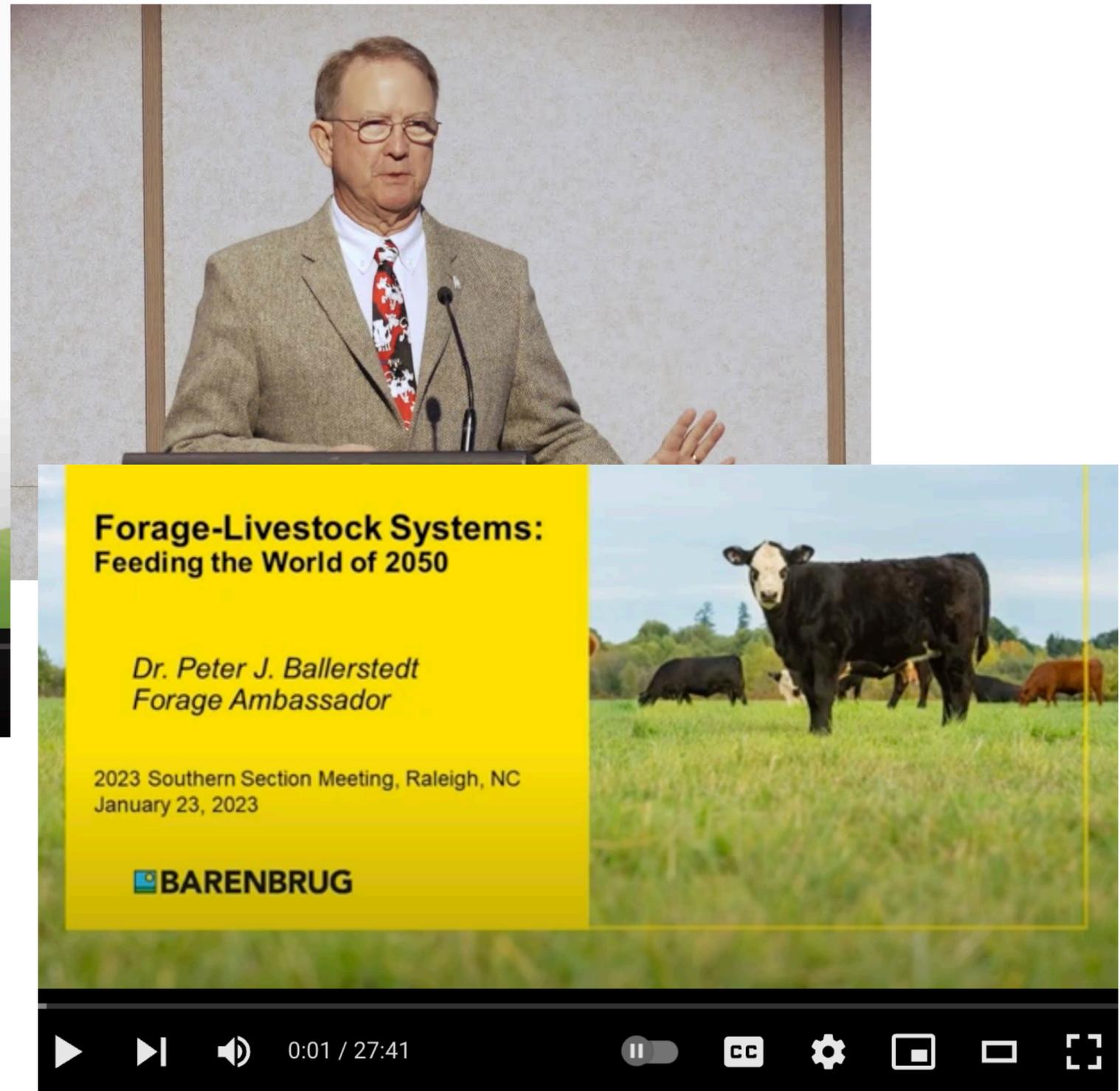
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Forage-Livestock Systems: Feeding the world of 2050



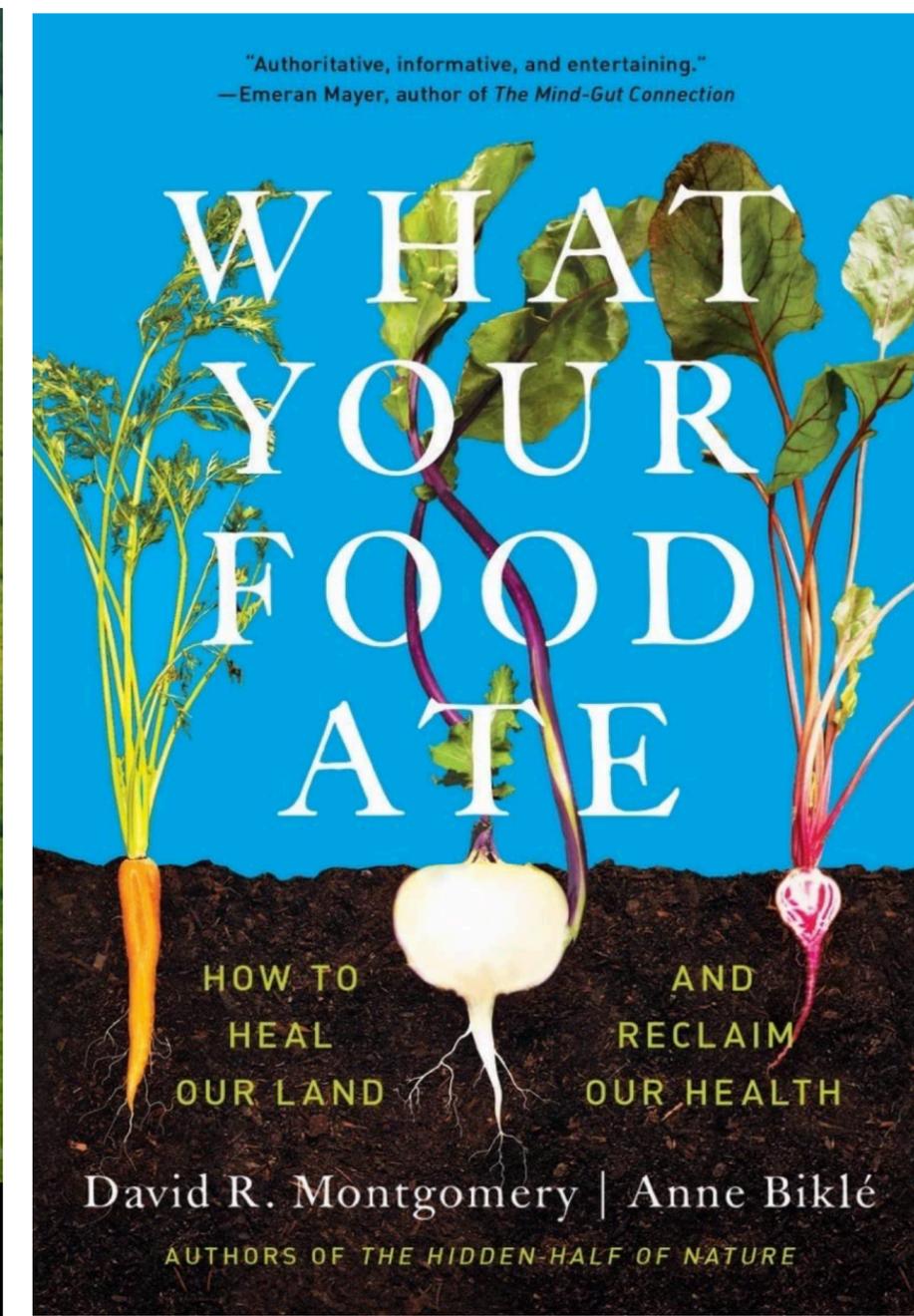
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www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FWFNg89_VA



What your food ate with David R. Montgomery

<https://youtu.be/jDoOv-eRIOg>

Regenerative Agriculture vs Agroecology: What's the Difference & Which is Better?

AUTHOR

Inbound Pursuit

PUBLISHED

July 14, 2023



Two approaches have risen to the forefront: *regenerative agriculture* vs *agroecology*. These paradigms may seem similar in their eco-centric visions, but they are distinct in their methodologies and objectives. So, how are they different? And, which is better - if either?

Regenerative agriculture is a system of farming principles that prioritizes the health and enrichment of the soil. It views farming as a holistic process, where everything from the microorganisms in the soil to the plants and animals above it form a synergistic system...

Agroecology encourages strategies like intercropping, traditional seed use, and natural pest management. It opposes industrial farming and monocultures, and it aims to promote resilience, sustainability, and autonomy in food systems.

carnivoresnax.com/blogs/articles/regenerative-agriculture-vs-agroecology



Vernon L. Smith

Yesterday at 9:37am · LA Times ·

"The truth is that from the 1950s onward, many scientists truly believed that saturated fat and cholesterol were the primary cause of heart disease. Nutritionis...

[See More](#)



Don't scapegoat Big Sugar. Lots of food producers profited from the demonization of fat

The recent revelation that Harvard scientists were paid off to downplay sugar's harms in the 1960s shows how the food industry shockingly manipulated nutrition science...

LATIMES.COM | BY LOS ANGELES TIMES

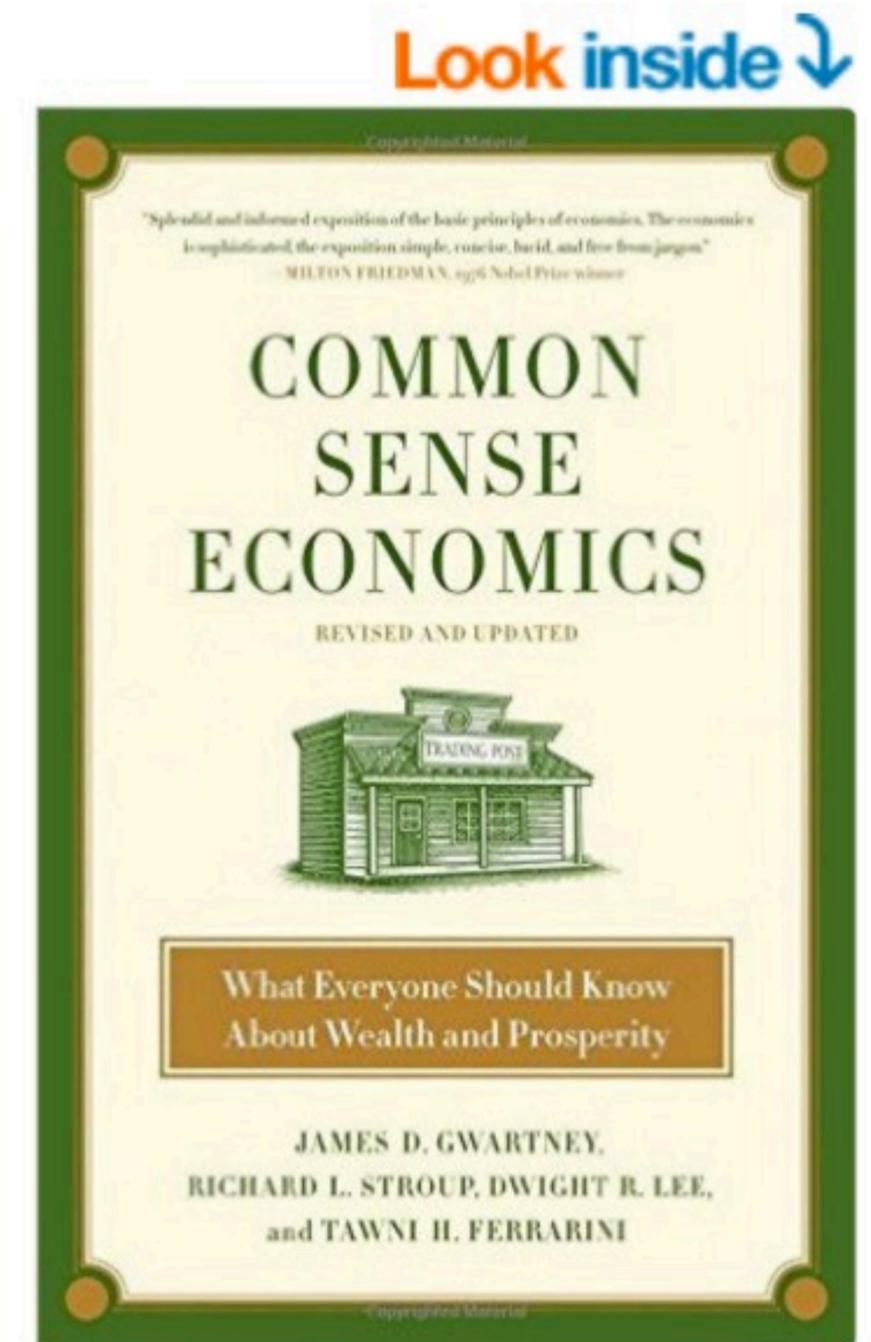
[http://www.latimes.com/
opinion/op-ed/la-oe-
teicholz-big-sugar-saturated-
fats-20160927-snap-
story.html](http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-teicholz-big-sugar-saturated-fats-20160927-snap-story.html)

All the “carbohydrate industries” profited from the demonization of fat, exactly as anticipated. Consumption of flour and cereal products increased by 41%, including a 183% increase in products from corn.

Overall, as [Americans cut their consumption of fat by 25% from 1965 to 2011, they increased carbohydrate intake by more than 30%.](#)

Public Choice and Federal Agriculture Programs

- Public Choice Theory... *how government programs come to life, grow, but rarely die.*
- Federal agriculture and food safety policy. Crisis serve to launch then ratchet up government interventions and subsidies.
- The Great Depression opened door for the *Agricultural Adjustment Act*.
- Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* opened door for the Food & Drug Administration (FDA).



Policy

New Zealand

Farming

Agriculture

Subsidies

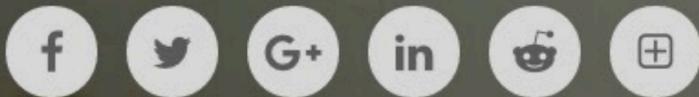
Government Intervention

New Zealand Farmers Break Free of Crippling Subsidies



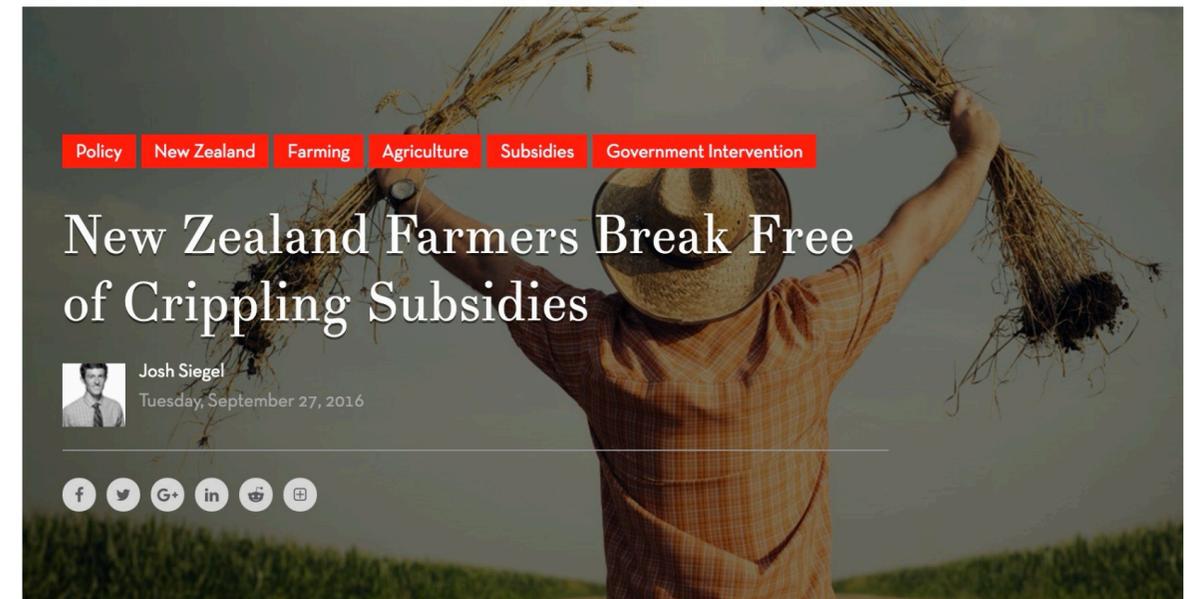
Josh Siegel

Tuesday, September 27, 2016



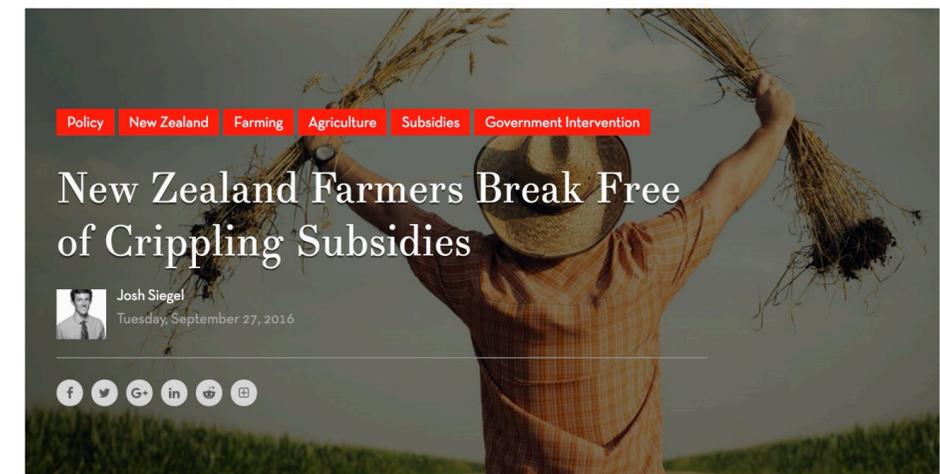
New Zealand

- *“You had a system dictated by government programs that was thrown out the window overnight,”*
- *“But the farmers kind of reinvented themselves and now New Zealand is a powerhouse when it comes to agricultural production on the world stage.”*
- *Facing a budget crisis in 1984, the incoming Labour government took the first step in implementing a long list of market reforms when it eliminated about 30 different agricultural production subsidies and export incentives.*



New Zealand, *continued*

- *Removing government assistance completely, New Zealand officials say, freed farmers to produce what people really want, and to do so in an efficient way that could turn a profit.*
- *Since the reforms, New Zealand farmers have cut costs, diversified their land use, and developed new products, Clark says.*
- *New Zealand's dairy farmers today produce 2,200 products from milk, compared to about 35 before the reforms...including antibody milk and chocolate cheese.*
- *The country also has a thriving wine industry that barely existed prior to the reforms. ...*



Federal Dollars Are Financing the Water Crisis in the West

ProPublica examination shows that the scarcity of water is as much a man-made crisis as a natural one



Wuertz could plant any number of crops that use far less water than cotton and fill grocery store shelves from Maine to Minnesota. But along with hundreds of farmers across Arizona, he has kept planting his fields with cotton instead. He says he has done it out of habit, pride, practicality, and even a self-deprecating sense that he wouldn't be good at anything else. But in truth, one reason outweighs all the others: The federal government has long offered him so many financial incentives to do it that he can't afford not to.

THE CORNER

THE ONE AND ONLY.

Abolish the Department of Agriculture



by [VERONIQUE DE RUGY](#) *December 1, 2015 4:15 PM*

I have been writing for months about the Export-Import Bank being one of the worst crony programs in Washington. However, I think the programs under the Department of Agriculture may take the cake. I have written many times about [the outrageous sugar program](#) — a racket that protects a politically powerful cartel of domestic sugar-processing companies at the expenses of consumers and taxpayers.

COMMODITIES | Mon Nov 23, 2015 2:05pm EST

U.S. taxpayers set to shell out for growing peanut pile

By [Chris Prentice](#) | NEW YORK

A mountain of peanuts is piling up in the U.S. south, threatening to hand American taxpayers a near \$2-billion bailout bill over the next three years, and leaving the government with a big chunk of the crop on its books.

Peanut growers in states including Georgia and Alabama boosted sowing acreage by a fifth this spring and now are wrapping up harvesting their 3.1-million-ton crop, the second-largest ever, even as prices plumb seven-year lows.

There is a debate over why it is happening and how long the supplies and costs will build. Farmers and peanut groups blame the glut on poorer market conditions for alternative crops, such as cotton and corn, and improving yields as a result of crop rotation and new varieties.

Six Reasons to Repeal Farm Subsidies



Agricultural Subsidies 5

by Chris Edwards

1. Farm Subsidies Redistribute Wealth. Farm subsidies transfer the earnings to a small group of fairly well-off farm businesses and landowners. ...The largest percent of recipients have received 72 percent of all subsidy payments in recent years. ... It is landowners, not tenant farmers or farm workers, who benefit from subsidies.

2. Farm Subsidies Damage the Economy. In most industries, market prices balance supply and demand, profit levels signal investment opportunities, market downturns lead to cost cutting, and entrepreneurs innovate to provide better products at lower prices. All of those market mechanisms are blunted or nonexistent in government-controlled agriculture markets.

3. Farm Programs Are Prone to Scandal. The Government Accountability Office found that as much as half a billion dollars in farm subsidies are paid improperly or fraudulently each year.

4. Farm Subsidies Damage U.S. Trade Relations. Global stability and U.S. security are enhanced when less developed countries achieve stronger economic growth.

5. Farm Programs Damage the Environment. Federal farm policies are thought to damage the natural environment. Florida sugar provides a good example. Large areas of wetlands have been converted to cane sugar production because of artificially high domestic sugar prices. population continues to rise.³¹ The solution is to move water into the free market and allow prices to rise to efficient and environmentally sound levels.

6. Agriculture Would Thrive without Subsidies. Producers of most U.S. agricultural