

Why Norman Borlaug is a hero

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

Most people in the U.S. have probably never heard of him, which is unfortunate to say the least. Norman Borlaug (March 25, 1914 – September 12, 2009) was a scientist who has been credited with saving more than a billion lives — that's not a misprint, it's a BILLION with a B!

In the 1950s, there were serious food shortages in India, Pakistan, Mexico and many other countries. A popular book published in 1968 called *The Population Bomb* even predicted that these shortages would lead to mass catastrophes and nuclear war by the 1980s.

Instead of buying in to that, Dr. Borlaug developed ways to increase food production where they were needed most. He and his collaborators developed dwarf varieties of wheat, for example. These plants spent less energy on their stalks and more on the nutritious kernels used to make bread. In addition, many of the dwarf varieties were also resistant to disease. He also encouraged other ways to increase agricultural production, such as the use of fertilizers and irrigation.

[G]rowing more food per acre leaves more land for nature. This point is often missed by today's critics of what they call "industrial agriculture." If we were forced to give up genetically improved plants, fertilizers, and crop-protection products, the lower yields would force us to cultivate lands that are currently home to wildlife.

Read full, original post: [My Hero is Norman Borlaug, and Here's Why](#)