

We need all our tools to feed world in face of climate change, booming global population

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Growth in world crop yields [has declined](#) and is even stagnating, [perhaps due to](#) climate change . . . Yields [are no longer](#) increasing fast enough to keep pace with projected demand. If current trends continue, [we'll need to](#) expand our crop land by 42% by 2050. . . .

There are basically two options: we can increase yields to meet demand without expanding area, and/or we can reduce demand enough to allow supply to catch up. Increasing supply in a sustainable way is perfectly possible. Some of this is about increasing efficiency through better farming, such as using [precision agriculture](#) to target the right amounts of fertilisers and pesticides to the right places.

Some of it is about changing land management to get the most out of agricultural land while maintaining ecosystem services. . . . And some of it is about developing new animal and plant varieties that are more efficient, more productive or better able to cope with the changing environment.

New varieties can come about from various means. Conventional breeding continues to be important. But modern laboratories have given us more strings to our bow. . . . CRISPR can produce identical plants to those produced conventionally, but much faster. Yet for some people, biotechnological crop or livestock modification conjures up “triffidophobia”.

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. . . . We are unsustainably using the planet’s resources to produce the food we demand, and there will be very negative results if we continue on the same trajectory. New technology can help, . . . as does reducing waste, over-consumption and meat-heavy diets. There is no simple answer but there is a toolbox, and we'll need every tool at our disposal to address the challenge we created.

**Read full, original post:** [Why we won't be able to feed the world without GM](#)