

## Ecomodernist agriculture: Farmers need science and technology to limit environmental footprint

It takes roughly 6 square miles to support one hunting-gathering human. Modern intensive farming, by contrast, can support up to 4,000 people on the same land area. That means we would need another 12 planets to support today's human population in an entirely hunter-gatherer system.

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The organic movement has challenged the whole model of industrialized farming, seeking to move to a less intensive ideal that proponents feel is closer to nature. Debates rage about pesticides, hormones, animal welfare, and so on. Trade-offs are rarely acknowledged. For example, organic's lower yields inevitably mean that more land must be tilled up to feed the same number of people, so the net environmental effect may be negative.

Ecomodernism, a more progressive variant of environmental thinking, seeks to take a pragmatic approach to these challenges, welcoming technology where this can make humans less dependent on nature. As a group of environmental activists and thinkers (of which I was one) wrote in the [Ecomodernist Manifesto in 2015](#).

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The math is simple. Supporting a growing population without increasing farmland requires increasing crop yields. Yield gaps in poorer countries need to be closed with better crop genetics and modern ag techniques.

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Ecomodernists want to see science fully applied in agriculture so that farmers can do their job of growing food in the most sustainable and productive way they can.

**Read full, original post:** [The ecomodernist argument for modern agriculture](#)