Technological innovations continue to debunk predictions that global population growth will lead to mass starvation. Some mental health experts are concerned that widespread internet access is exacerbating the effect of disorders like schizophrenia. Urban farming has attracted a large following of city dwellers committed to sustainability. Unfortunately, growing vegetables on rooftops in major cities probably isn’t a climate-friendly alternative to conventional agriculture.

Podcast:

Join hosts Dr. Liza Dunn and GLP contributor Cameron English on episode 254 of Science Facts and Fallacies as they break down these latest news stories:

- **Analysis: Climate activists issue scare-warnings of impending starvation, but they ignore technology’s future role in scaling productivity**

For more than 50 years, a radical strain of the environmental movement has predicted mass starvation as the global population outstrips the world’s ability to produce enough food to feed billions of people. These predictions have failed spectacularly. Thanks to significant innovations, especially in crop breeding and chemistry, we’re able to grow more food on less land today than anyone could have anticipated half a century ago. Why, then, do so many people continue to believe a hunger-induced doomsday is around the corner?

- **Delusion and technology: How the internet exacerbates schizophrenia and other mental health problems**

Widespread access to information through the internet is both an incredible blessing and sometimes a curse. One oft-overlooked example of the latter involves people battling serious psychological disorders such as schizophrenia. The condition is sometimes characterized by persistent belief in irrational ideas; for instance, the possibility that a patient is receiving coded messages through the radio. Some mental health experts fear that the free exchange of conspiratorial claims online could amplify the symptoms schizophrenics may experience, and they’re trying to devise treatments for their patients that account for the effects of our digitally connected world.

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- **Urban farming sounds great in theory — but releases more CO2 than conventional agriculture. Here’s what needs to change**

Cultivating a small farm on the rooftop of your apartment may seem like a sustainable way to grow food,
but recent research suggests that urban agriculture is anything but earth friendly. Owing to its inefficiency and inability to scale, urban farming is responsible for as much as six times the CO2 emissions of conventional agriculture. Community gardens and rooftop farms may have communal and psychological benefits, though they are unlikely to be significant contributors to sustainable food production.

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