

Freeganism

We often hear about malnutrition in the world and the global food challenge - on TV, in the papers and on the internet.

The problem can be summarized as follows:

- In 2008, there are 6.7 billion human beings in the world, of which 800 million are undernourished.
- There will be 9 billion of us in 2050.

In order to feed the additional 2.3 billion human beings + reasonably feed the 800 million people who are currently undernourished + enable meat consumption by the poor (which is a food product that requires a high plant production for animal production),

We will need to double our food production levels.



Problems:

-The world population is becoming more and more urbanized as it increases, and many farmlands are being transformed into car parks, supermarkets and houses. Thus, in China, 1 million hectares of farmland vanish every year to make way for cities. Similarly, deserts are advancing in many regions of the world.

Consequences: the surface area of farmlands decreases every year.

-It is hard to increase the surface area of farmlands on a global scale since the majority of lands that are suitable for farming have already been cultivated. The majority of non-cultivated regions are:

- Deserts
- Glacial zones
- Forests
- Cities
- Mountains

So it would be very hard for us to increase the area of farmlands.

We have already reached saturation point in many agricultural regions in the world and agricultural production can hardly be expected to increase any further, unless there are significant technological advances. So much so that this has led to a series of ecological catastrophes, such as the sad example of the drying up of the Aral sea.

Productivity will continue to increase at a slower and slower rate, and might even decrease in the (very) long run.

-Last of all, with the current trend involving biofuels, more and more farmlands are being devoted to the production of crops that will be transformed into biofuels.

From this stems the world issue - how are we going to feed humans better, when their numbers are ever increasing while the area of farmlands is decreasing, and when food production is competing more and more against that of biofuels?

The freegans see a partial solution to the problem in the excesses of our consumer society. For your info: a study has shown that 1/3 of food bought by the English is thrown away without being consumed (the same probably applies to the USA and the rest of Europe). This means that 20 million human beings could be fed with what the English throw away each year.

The freegans also note that you need 3 to 8 kg of grain in order to produce 1 kilo of meat. A consumption of 100 kg of meat a year means that 300 to 800 kilos of grain is necessary just for the production of animal feed alone.

The freegans are against useless consumerism and food wastage. They suggest becoming vegans, or even vegetarians, as well as eating only leftovers, e.g. from supermarkets etc.