

NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY

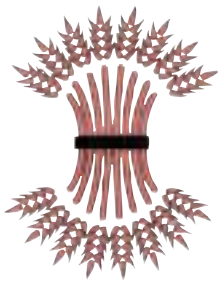
Do You REALLY Believe...

"That National Food Security is neither necessary, nor is it desirable." (Defra 2003)

This has not been retracted.

In the face of:

- Burgeoning global populations.
- Climate change and scarcity of water.
- The danger of food miles aggravating global pollution.
- Environmental degradation in exporting countries.
- Dubious animal welfare regulations in other countries.
- Risk of importing disease – Avian Flu, Salmonella, Foot & Mouth Disease.
- Increasing threat of terrorism.



THE COMMERCIAL FARMERS GROUP

ASK YOURSELF SOME QUESTIONS!

Leading Commercial Farmers whose sole concern is the welfare and development of British Agriculture within the national economy and environment.



UK SELF SUFFICIENCY IN INDIGENOUS FOODS

The Commercial Farmers Group is an association of leading farmers and academics. Its members are concerned that UK and other western Governments are complacent about the capability of overseas farmers to produce endless supplies of cheap food. Supplies are subject to increasing demand pressure and the world's resources cannot be expanded to cope with the change.

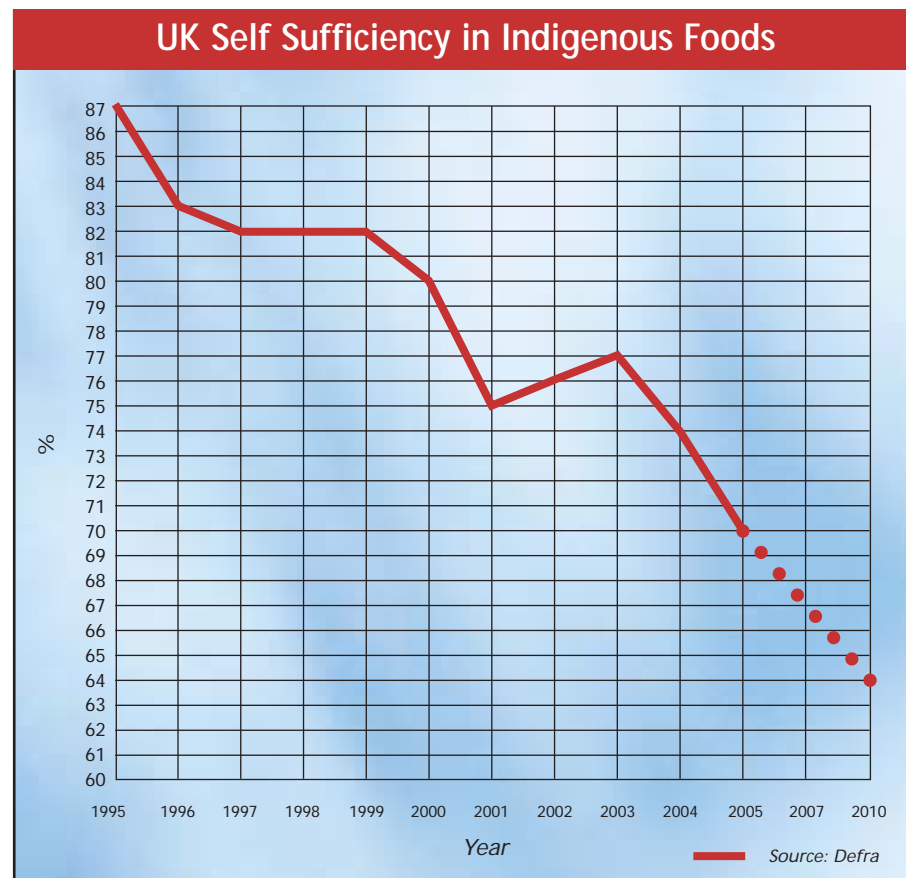
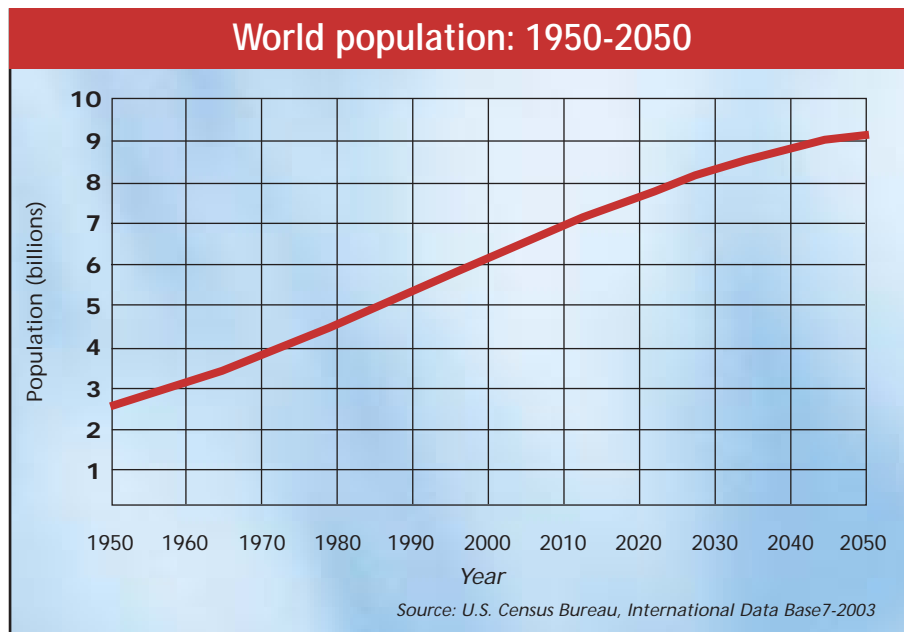
CFG are concerned about long and tenuous supply chains that bring chicken, pork and beef to the UK from Thailand, Brazil and other far flung producers.

Such long supply chains are also more vulnerable to escalating fuel costs and the threat of transport disruption through global terrorism.

The questions asked in this pamphlet are designed to concentrate the minds of opinion formers and policy makers on the new reality of 21st Century food supply and demand.

UK Self Sufficiency in Indigenous Foods

Year	%	Year	%
1995	87	2000	80
1996	83	2001	75
1997	82	2002	76
1998	82	2003	77
1999	82	2004	74



A QUESTION OF FOOD SECURITY FOR THE UK

Do YOU know what is happening to the UK Dairy Industry?

- Rock bottom milk prices, driven down by inter Supermarket competition (17-18p/litre ex.farm) have forced many more dairy farmers out of business over the past two years. Prof. Colman of Manchester University, in a Government funded report, believes that milk production could fall by 1 billion litres a year by 2008 leading to a significant increase in imports. Some of those leaving the industry are amongst the most efficient, but are quitting because the return on capital is inadequate.
- Milk in a supermarket sells at 50p/litre; whereas mineral water sells at 96p/litre.

Do YOU approve of strict animal welfare regulations? And do YOU know what has happened to the UK pig industry?

- A ban on the use of sow stalls and tethers came into force in the UK in 1997.... This despite the fact that there was considerable evidence that they reduced piglet mortality.
- The consequent reduction in efficiency and increased cost has led to a reduction in the UK sow herd from 789,000 to 468,000 over the last 10 years. Imports of pig meat have risen from 362,000 to 738,000 tonnes in the same period.
- Much of this production now comes from other parts of Europe where, for example, sow stalls are permitted. Consequently, we have effectively 'exported' 49% of UK pig production with no benefit to animal welfare.

Do YOU know what is happening to the UK poultry industry?

- Increasing amounts of broiler chicken meat now comes in from Brazil and Thailand at a low price following currency devaluations. Imports have jumped from 1,000 to 70,000 tonnes in the last 10 years. How confident can we be that animal health and welfare overseas would be acceptable under British regulation?
- What are the dangers of importing disease such as Avian Flu?

Do YOU know what is happening to the UK fruit and vegetable industry?

- The intense competition, together with the high levels of red tape in the horticultural industry and consumers lack of concern about the impact of food miles, means that UK production has declined substantially.
- The planted area of all fruit & vegetables in the UK was: **1994** - 476,000 acres;
2004 - 373,000 acres
A decline of 22%
- The value of all imported fruit & vegetables was: **1994** - £ 1,984,251,000
2004 - £ 3,169,034,000.
Source: Defra.



A QUESTION OF FOOD SECURITY FOR THE UK

Do YOU know what is happening to beef production in the UK?

- Beef cattle numbers are falling fast and this trend is accelerating. The National beef industry was 109% self sufficient 10 years ago – in 2004 this had fallen to 71%.

This is due to price competition from Brazil, coupled with new restrictions on the number of cattle each UK farmer can keep under Environmental Scheme rules - all increasing the risk of importing disease.

Do YOU know what is happening in Brazil?

- The Brazilian currency was halved in value 2000 – 2003 but has recovered somewhat since then. That coupled with low wage rates making its exports highly competitive.
- In 2004, 26,000 sq.km of rainforest were burned, the second highest on record and most of it driven by cattle ranching.

Source: NASA web site June 2004.

Lester Brown.

- Cattle ranching threatens two-fifths of the world's remaining rain forest. Rainfall is reduced as the trees come down, soil erosion increases, and a hydrological disaster threatens.

Source: 'Science' May 2004. W.F.Laurance.

- Foot and Mouth Disease broke out again in late 2005 in the Mato Grosso do Sul thus increasing the probability of the UK importing the disease once more. The outbreak in 2001 cost the UK £3.8 billion.

Source: DEFRA website, risk base F&M Report.

Do YOU know what is happening in China?

- Desertification is increasing annually at 360,000 ha., as is the frequency of dust storms. Millions of rural Chinese are being uprooted and forced to move east.
- 94% of the 1.3 billion Chinese live in 46% of the country where, with very fast economic growth, land hunger is taking over huge areas for industry, housing and roads.
- Due to the loss of good land in the east, and desertification in the west, crop production is falling significantly to the point where China is becoming a major purchaser in the global market for cereals and soya.

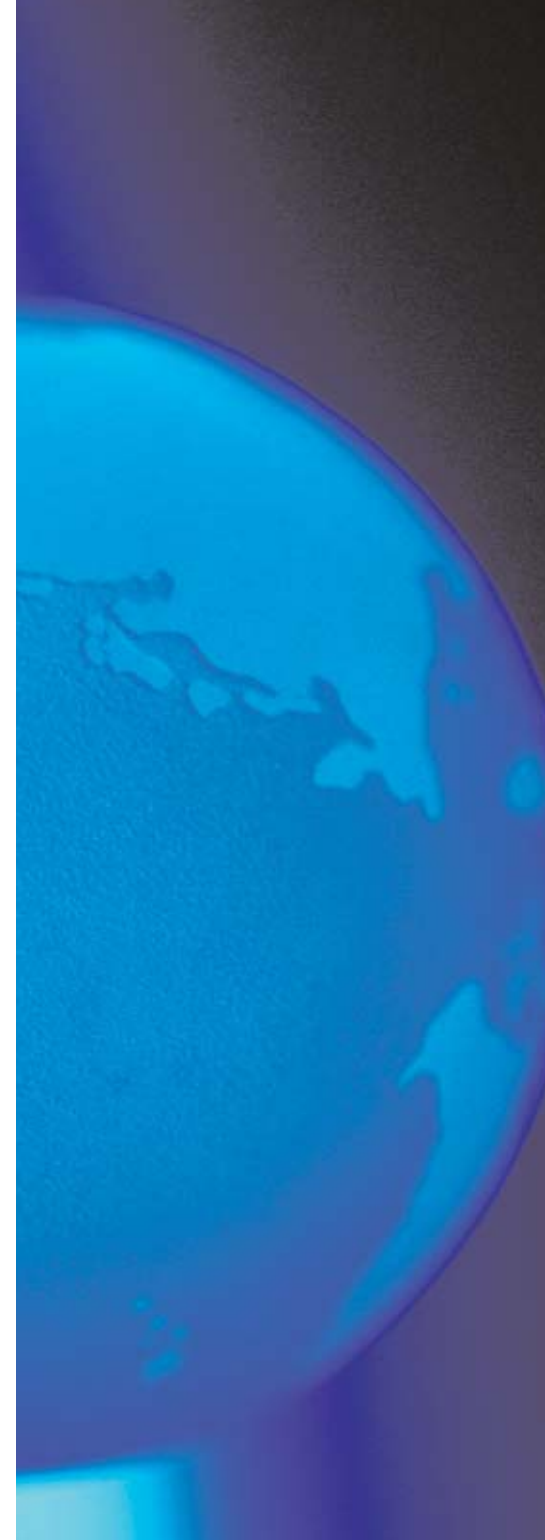
- Water is fast becoming a dangerously scarce resource.

Source: USDA.

Lester Brown.

Do YOU realise the significance of global population increases?

- The global population in 1945 was 2.3 billion. By 2004, it had reached 6.3 billion. The UN median projection for 2030 is 9 billion.
- Not only has the global population tripled in the last 50 years, leading to a tripling in demand for food at what were always inadequate levels - but as Professor Dyson illustrates so clearly, the next 25 years will demand a further doubling in supply.
- And we must be aware that the rate of crop yield improvement is slowing, especially in the developed countries. New land will have to be farmed to keep up with this increased demand.



A QUESTION OF FOOD SECURITY FOR THE UK

- But it is even more than that! As standards of living rise – for example in China and south and east Asia – diets change from all cereal to an increasing dependence on white meat, that, in turn, leading to an increase in cereal consumption. See the following statistics produced by Prof. Tim Dyson.

Global Food Requirement Projections to 2025

Population 2025	Cereal Consumption 1990	Demand in 2025 Population only	Demand in 2025 Population plus income increase
World	1,921	2,679	3,046
8,039 M.	M. Tonnes	M. Tonnes	M. Tonnes
		= + 758 M.Tonnes	= + 1,125 M.Tonnes

Source: Prof. Tim Dyson. LSE.

Do YOU realise the potential impact of Climate Change on global production?

- Dr. David King – Government Chief Scientist – has stated “global warming poses a greater threat to the stability of the world than does international terrorism.”
- Global temperatures may rise 3 – 6°C in the next 100 years requiring new land and food management strategies.
- Water, both for human consumption and crop irrigation, is fast becoming the most potentially dangerous scarce resource causing serious food shortages. Desert conditions are expanding worldwide.

Source: UK Dept. for International Development.

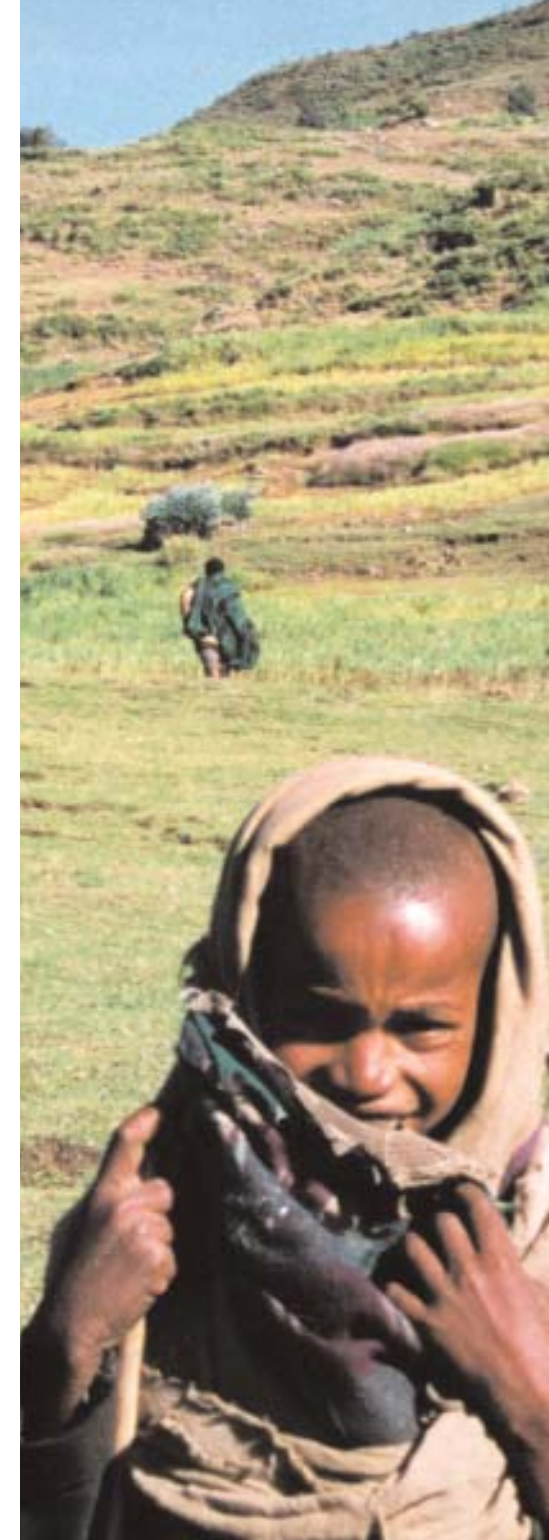
Do you really believe, in the event of a global or national crisis, that it will be possible to “re-start” UK agriculture once self sufficiency has dropped to between 60 and 65%?

We did it in 1939, why not again? For the good reason that the situation today is totally different. In 1939, we had plenty of people on the land, farming had continued albeit in deep depression. Today, young people have left the industry; the average age of those still farming is near 60; support from R&D is at a minimal level; and, most importantly, the industry infrastructure, including the vital processing sector, is withering away. Nothing is impossible but the re-invigoration would need great external investment in both capital and skills.

YOU should reflect on the following statement:

Hunger sows the seeds of conflict Scarce food, water, and land lead to environmental damage, poverty, conflict, and migration. Improved agriculture is a powerful and effective means of promoting peace. When food is plentiful, hunger driven conflicts and civil unrest are less likely.

Source: UK DFID.

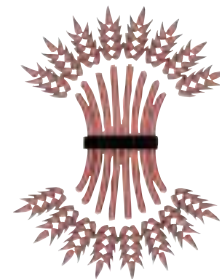


CONCLUSIONS

1. The Government must be urged to base its policies on the strategic need for both food, energy and water security. The accelerating decline in self sufficiency must be halted.
2. We must put similar pressures on politicians, especially Defra, to redefine policies so that the relevance of commercial viability of UK farming to environmental sustainability is fully recognised.
3. The Government must create the framework whereby the imbalance between production and retail can be redressed. Commercially driven cooperative structures must be encouraged and supported, both legally and financially, as in other EU countries.
4. The implementation of the new and reformed CAP should be on a level playing field with other countries within the EU. There is a discrimination against UK farming which does not exist elsewhere in the EU – for example the national funding of modulation.
5. There must be a reversal of the damaging reductions in funding for agricultural R & D which is so essential if UK Agriculture is to adapt to the changes that lie ahead.
6. We must reinforce the national protection against the import of potentially dangerous products; and to expose the hypocrisy inherent in the exporting of environmental problems to those countries with lower standards.
7. The Government must ensure that the heavy load of bureaucratic controls that they have introduced, and which increase the cost of production, are relevant.

A FINAL QUESTION

In view of the factual information contained in this document, can any responsible person believe that the matter of National Food Security should be dismissed as 'neither necessary nor desirable'?



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