

Sustainability in Food and Agriculture (SFNA)

HEAD OFFICE ADDRESS:

Zibeline International Publishing Sdn Bhd

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Frequency:

Bi-annual (2 issue per year)

ISSN: 2716-6716 (Online)

Price:

Single issue: 50 MYR

Price for abroad

Single issue: 25 USD

Web:

www.sfna.org.my

E-mail:

info@zibelinepub.com

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Editorial

Agriculture production systems are facing unprecedented challenges from an increasing demand for food for a growing population, high competition over dwindling natural resources, loss of biodiversity, emerging pests and diseases, compounded by the adverse effects of climate change. In the coming 35 years, agriculture will face an unprecedented confluence of pressures, including a 30 percent increase in the global population, intensifying competition for increasingly scarce land, water and energy resources, and the existential threat of climate change. To provide for a population projected to reach 9.3 billion in 2050 and support changing dietary patterns, estimates are that food production will need to increase from the current 8.4 billion tonnes to almost 13.5 billion tonnes a year. Achieving that level of production from an already seriously depleted natural resource base will be impossible without profound changes in our food and agriculture systems. We need to expand and accelerate the transition to sustainable food and agriculture which ensures world food security, provides economic and social opportunities, and protects the ecosystem services on which agriculture depends.

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