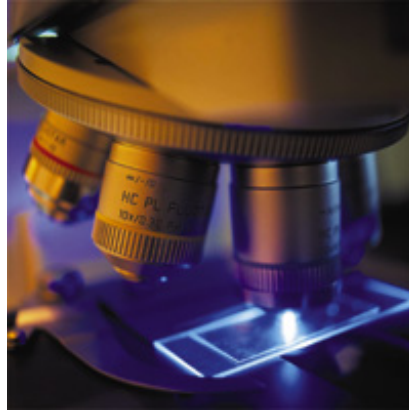


Using research and development to improve agricultural productivity

Introduction



The population of the Earth is growing at a fast pace. In 1950, 2 billion humans lived on the planet. By 2006, this had increased to 6.5 billion and by 2025, the world's population is expected to reach 8 billion people.

This growth in population is expected to be in urban areas, not rural. This leads to a higher calorie demand per person associated with dietary changes. It puts a heavy burden upon the world's limited resources and further increases pressure on rural communities in the struggle to increase agricultural productivity.

Feeding this growing demand requires sustainable solutions for agriculture across the world.

In 1960 one hectare of agricultural land was required to grow food to feed two people. By 1995 one hectare was required to feed four people and by 2025 the same area will need to feed five people.

Feeding this growing demand requires sustainable solutions for agriculture across the world. This involves balancing the need to produce food with concerns for the environment.

What is sustainability?



Sustainability is a 'virtuous circle'. If agriculture uses sustainable solutions it will be able to meet the needs of future generations and become the type of farming which future generations want to inherit. As sustainable businesses grow, they develop better methods and solutions to support farmers and growers around the world. Both communities and businesses benefit and local economies grow.