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THE EPOCH TIMES

TRUTH AND TRADITION

THE COMING FOOD CRISIS

AND HOW
TO PREPARE
FOR IT

AN EPOCH TIMES SPECIAL EDITION

Editor's Note

DEAR READER,

We live in uncertain times.

Around 30 nations have begun to restrict exports as global food supply concerns expand, with grains, sugar, and meat most affected.

The ongoing war in Ukraine has undoubtedly disrupted supply chains for commodities such as wheat.

However, a separate, major international force is increasingly disrupting food production in different regions around the world.

This was on full display most recently in the Netherlands, where a government policy to reduce nitrogen emissions may force the closure of around 30 percent of all farms.

Farmers have responded with months-long protests, blocking food distribution centers, highways, and other key infrastructure.

One Dutch farmer we feature is Martin Neppelenbroek, who faces the prospect of culling 95 percent of his cattle to meet the new rules—rendering it impossible for him to continue dairy farming.

Canadian authorities have announced similar measures aimed at reducing farmers' use of synthetic fertilizer, and in Ireland, plans were introduced to force farms to reduce carbon emissions by between 25 and 30 percent.

In Sri Lanka, a nationwide effort to force farmers to rapidly

transition from synthetic to organic fertilizers has already led to a precipitous drop in production, and the cost of staples such as rice has increased by as much as 50 percent.

Reporter Alex Newman writes how these government policies can be traced back to World Economic Forum and United Nations plans including the 2030 agenda.

No doubt these policies will continue to have a far-reaching impact on farming and the production of food.

Read this special edition to find out more on potential shortages, as well as how to grow your own food, how to methodically stock up on essential items while on a budget, which foods are ideal to store longer-term, and how to extend their shelf life.

JASPER FAKKERT
Editor-in-chief




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A combine harvester gathers wheat in a field near the village of Hrebeni in Ukraine's Kyiv region on July 17, 2020.

COUNTRIES START TO LIMIT FOOD EXPORTS

30 nations restrict exports as global food supply concerns expand; grains, sugar, meat most impacted

BY NAVEEN ATHRAPULLY

Facing potential food supply shortages, some countries have adopted policies limiting food exports, raising concerns globally about food supply and exacerbating food inflation woes.

Since the beginning of Russia's war against Ukraine in late February, about 34 nations have taken steps to restrict certain food exports, according to World Bank data.

Ukraine—known as the breadbasket of the world—shut its ports early in the war and subsequently banned the export of buckwheat, millet, barley, rye, salt, sugar, and meat. It also imposed export licenses on sunflower oil, corn, and wheat. The export ban is to remain in effect until the end of the year.

Meanwhile, Russia has increased the quota for its exports of sunflower oil and sunflower meal, the government said on July 17, citing sufficient domestic supplies.

The export quota for sunflower oil

has been increased by 400,000 metric tons from the previous cap of 1.5 million metric tons while the restriction on exports of sunflower meal was raised by 150,000 metric tons from a previous limit of 700,000.

The restrictions are in place until Aug. 31.

Serbia has restricted the export of flour, wheat, corn, and cooking oil till year-end.

The number of people who are heading toward starvation has increased to 345 million, a 25 percent increase from 276 million at the start of 2022 before Russia invaded Ukraine, David Beasley, executive director for the U.N. World Food Programme, told The Associated Press. "Even more worrying is that when this group is broken down, a staggering 50 million people in 45 countries are just one step away from famine," Beasley said.

Egypt has blocked the export of onions, eggplant, potatoes, and tomatoes for an indefinite period.

Turkey banned exporting several

grain products, as well as butter, goat meat, beef, and mutton until Dec. 31 after inflation spiked 54 percent in February. Meat prices have risen by almost 50 percent in the country.

Argentina has capped the export volume of wheat and corn. The restriction, blamed on domestic inflation, has resulted in reducing exports for the current cycle to 25 million tons in December 2021, from 41.6 million tons during the prior season.

India has restricted the export of wheat, only agreeing to export it to nations that need wheat for meeting food security requirements. The government has also capped sugar exports at 10 million tons for the market year, which runs through September.

Heat waves across South Asia have resulted in agricultural losses and pushed up prices in domestic markets. The sudden governmental restriction shocked international markets as India—the second-biggest wheat producer in the world after China—had previously assured that climatic changes wouldn't affect its export numbers.

Meanwhile, global wheat prices jumped on July 25 after last week's missile attack by Russia on the Ukrainian seaport of Odesa, even as Ukraine indicated that it's pushing ahead with an agreement to begin shipping millions of tons of grain that have been piling up since the invasion.

Chicago wheat futures surged as much as 4.6 percent. Prices had slumped on July 22 following the agreement between Russia and Ukraine.

Malaysia has announced a ban on chicken exports, triggering worries in Singapore, which gets a third of its supplies from Kuala Lumpur. ■

VALENTYN OGIRENKO/REUTERS



A woman shops at a grocery store in New York on May 31.

HIGHER FOOD COSTS IMMINENT

Inflation on food has soared to highest level since 1980, and producers say it's set to get worse

BY TOM OZIMEK

Food prices in the United States shot up in May at their fastest annual pace in 42 years, according to new government data, with some food producers warning American households to brace for more inflationary pain ahead, as some input costs have yet to be reflected in grocery store prices.

The food component of the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index, released on June 30 by the Commerce Department, showed food prices vaulting at an annual 11 percent in May, the highest reading since 1980.

The multi-decade high reading marks the 11th consecutive month that food prices have climbed in the United States. It's

also double the 5.5 percent pace of food price inflation notched just last November.

A number of U.S. farmers interviewed by The Epoch Times have said that soaring fuel and fertilizer costs have yet to fully make their way down the food production chain.

"Usually, what we see on the farm, the consumer doesn't see for another 18 months," said John Chester, a Tennessee farmer of corn, wheat, and soybeans.

"People don't realize what's fixing to hit them," Texas farmer Lynn "Bugsy" Allen said. "They think it's tough right now. You give it until October; food prices are going to double."

The grim forecasts come after

the American Farm Bureau Federation said in a June 27 report that the average cost of a summer cookout for 10 people would total \$69.68, an increase of about \$10 from 2021.

Meanwhile, the so-called core PCE price index, which excludes the volatile categories of food and energy and is the Federal Reserve's preferred gauge for measuring inflation, rose by 4.7 percent in the year through May, Commerce Department data show.

While that's a slight decline from the prior month's 4.9 percent pace of growth and roughly in line with analysts' estimates, it's more than double the 2 percent inflation target that the U.S. central bank aims for when it sets monetary policy, chiefly interest rates.

And while the over-the-year core PCE inflation gauge inched down, the month-over-month reading remained flat at 0.3 percent in May for the fourth month in a row, suggesting that inflationary pressures remain stuck in high gear, and the Fed's fight to lower price growth will be protracted.

"Inflation appears to be cooling, but it may be a mirage, as sequential momentum remains strong," Gregory Daco, chief economist at EY-Parthenon, wrote on Twitter, referring to the elevated monthly inflation readings.

The Fed has pivoted in its view on inflation, initially considering it a temporary spike that would soon pass but now describing it as persistent and problematic.

The central bank has embarked on an aggressive rate-boosting cycle in a bid to tame runaway prices, with some analysts seeing a growing risk that the U.S. economy will tip into recession. ■

Kevin Stocklin contributed to this report.

SAMIRA BOUQUO/THE EPOCH TIMES

49 MILLION PEOPLE FACE FAMINE THREAT

Acute food insecurity is on the rise and a record number of people in 46 nations are at risk of famine, report says

BY KATABELLA ROBERTS

The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) have warned of multiple looming food crises prompted by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, climate shocks, and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a June 7 report titled "Hunger Hotspots: FAO-WFP Early Warnings on Acute Food Insecurity," the agencies say that "acute food insecurity is likely to deteriorate further" in 20 nations this year through September, and they are calling for "urgent humanitarian action."

Additionally, "up to 49 million people in 46 countries" throughout the world may be facing "famine or famine-like conditions unless they receive immediate life and livelihoods-saving assistance," the report says.

That figure includes 750,000 people already in "catastrophe," which is defined as areas that have "extreme critical levels of acute malnutrition and mortality."

The report says that Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Yemen remain on the "highest alert" for acute food insecurity, while Afghanistan and Somalia are new entries to the catastrophe category since the last hotspots report was released by FAO and WFP in January.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, the Sahel region of Africa, Sudan, and Syria remain

countries "of very high concern" due to their deteriorating critical conditions, while Kenya has been added to that list.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka, West African coastal countries (Benin, Cabo Verde, and Guinea), Ukraine, and Zimbabwe have been added to the list of hotspot countries, joining Angola, Lebanon, Madagascar, and Mozambique as nations where parts of the population are likely to face a significant deterioration of acute food security in the coming months.

Along with recurring climate shocks such as droughts, flooding, and hurricanes affecting farming and livestock, and dire macroeconomic conditions in some countries in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the global fallout of the Russia-Ukraine conflict is further exacerbating conditions in some nations, according to the report.

Meanwhile, increasing energy costs—another side effect of the ongoing military conflict in Ukraine—and massive public debt

burdens are further worsening the situation in many nations.

"We are deeply concerned about the combined impacts of overlapping crises jeopardizing people's ability to produce and access foods, pushing millions more into extreme levels of acute food insecurity," FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu said. "We are in a race against time to help farmers in the most affected countries, including by rapidly increasing potential food production and boosting their resilience in the face of challenges."

In April, the World Bank warned of a potential "human catastrophe" from a food crisis due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which could see food prices jump 37 percent, hitting the poorest nations the hardest.

Food prices dropped 0.6 percent month-over-month in May to 157.4 points, just shy of the record-high 159.7 points it hit in March, according to the FAO Food Price Index.

The declines in May were led by decreases in the cost of vegetable oils and dairy prices along with sugar. However, cereal and meat prices rose.

However, given that Ukraine and Russia are major producers of the world's wheat and corn, reduced production in the former could see prices for the key global commodities increase further. ■



Employees prepare bread at a bakery in Istanbul on March 23.

A BANNER FOR THE 2022

annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on May 22. In 2019, the WEF signed a "strategic partnership" with the U.N. to advance Agenda 2030.

PHOTO BY FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

WAR ON FARMERS

UN, World Economic Forum behind global regulatory attacks on farming, experts say

BY ALEX NEWMAN

The escalating regulatory attack on agricultural producers from Holland and the United States to Sri Lanka and beyond is closely tied to the United Nations' "Agenda 2030"

Sustainable Development Goals and the U.N.'s partners at the World Economic Forum (WEF), numerous experts told The Epoch Times.

Indeed, several of the U.N.'s 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

are directly implicated in policies that are squeezing farmers, ranchers, and food supplies around the world.

High-level Chinese Communist Party (CCP) members within the U.N. system helped create the SDGs and are

currently helping lead the organization's implementation of the global plan, The Epoch Times has previously documented.

If left unchecked, multiple experts said, the U.N.-backed sustainability policies on agriculture and food production →

would lead to economic devastation, shortages of critical goods, widespread famine, and a dramatic loss of individual freedoms.

Already, millions of people worldwide are facing dangerous food shortages, and officials around the world say those are set to get worse as the year goes on.

There is an agenda behind it all, experts told The Epoch Times.

Even private land ownership is in the crosshairs, as global food production and the world economy are transformed to meet the global sustainability goals, U.N. documents reviewed by The Epoch Times show.

As explained by the U.N. on its SDG website, the goals adopted in 2015 “build on decades of work by countries and the U.N.”

One of the earliest meetings defining the “sustainability” agenda was the U.N. Conference on Human Settlements known as Habitat I, which adopted the Vancouver Declaration.

The agreement stated that “land cannot be treated as an ordinary asset controlled by individuals” and that private land ownership is “a principal instrument of accumulation and concentration of wealth, therefore contributes to social injustice.”

“Public control of land use is therefore indispensable,” the U.N. declaration said, a prelude to the World Economic Forum’s now infamous “pre-

dition” that by 2030, “you’ll own nothing.”

Numerous U.N. agencies and officials have outlined their vision of “sustainability” since then, including calls for drastic restrictions on energy, meat consumption, travel, living space, and material prosperity.

Experts interviewed by The Epoch Times say that some of the world’s wealthiest and most powerful corporate leaders are working with communists in China and elsewhere in an effort to centralize control over food production and crush independent farmers and ranchers.

The WEF, a network of major multinational businesses that collaborates closely with the CCP, is a “strategic partner” of the U.N. on Agenda 2030.

The increasing regulation of food production and even efforts to shut many farms and ranches come as officials around the world such as U.S. President Joe Biden and U.N. World Food Programme chief David Beasley warn of looming food shortages worldwide.

But instead of easing restrictions and encouraging more production, Western governments and many governments dependent on aid are clamping down even harder.

Dutch farmers, already at the breaking point, have responded this summer with massive nationwide protests. That followed violent unrest in Sri Lanka tied to food shortages caused by government policy.



Governments and international organizations have cited various pretexts for the policies, ranging from increasing “sustainability” and protecting various flora and fauna, to promoting “economic justice” and even returning lands to aboriginal peoples.

According to critics of the policies, though, the goal isn’t to preserve the environment or fight climate change at all. Instead, the experts warn that the “sustainability” narrative and the other justifications are a tool to gain control over food, agriculture, and people.

“The end goal of these efforts is to reduce sovereignty on both individual nations

U.N. headquarters
in New York on
Sept. 19, 2019.

SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

and people,” said Craig Rucker, president of the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow (CFACT), a public policy organization specializing in environmental and development issues.

“The intent for those pushing this agenda is not to save the planet, as they purport, but to increase control over people,” he told The Epoch Times, adding that the goal is to centralize power at the national and even international level.

UN Sustainable Development Goals—Agenda 2030

The U.N. Sustainable Development Goals, often referred to as Agenda 2030, were ad-

opted in 2015 by the organization and its member states as a guide to “transforming our world.” Hailed as a “master plan for humanity” and a global “declaration of interdependence” by top U.N. officials, the 17 goals include 169 targets involving every facet of the economy and life.

“All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan,” declares the preamble to the document, repeatedly noting that “no one will be left behind.”

Among other elements, the U.N. plan calls for national and international wealth redistribution in Goal 10, as well as “fundamental changes in the way that our soci-

eties produce and consume goods and services.”

Using government to transform all economic activity is a critical part of the SDGs, with Goal 12 demanding “sustainable consumption and production patterns.”

Among the specific targets outlined in Goal 12 are several directly linked to agricultural policies that undermine food production. These include “sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.”

Perhaps more importantly, the document demands “environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks.”

As a result, people and especially farmers must “significantly reduce their release to air, water, and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.”

Other SDGs that are directly tied to what critics have called the “war on farmers” include Goal 14, which addresses “marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including... nutrient pollution.” The U.N. regularly describes agriculture and food production as a threat to the ocean.

The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), led by former CCP Vice Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Qu Dongyu, is helping to lead the charge. →



In its 2014 report “Building a Common Vision for Sustainable Food and Agriculture: Principles and Approaches,” the U.N. agency calls for drastic restrictions on the use of fertilizers, pesticides, emissions, and water in the agricultural sector.

As an example of how agriculture must be reformed to be considered sustainable by the U.N., the FAO report declares that “excessive use of nitrogen fertilizer is a major cause of water pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.”

The Rome-based FAO didn’t respond to a request for comment.

Another of the 17 SDGs with a direct impact on agriculture and food production is Goal 2, with its calls for “sustainable

agriculture” and “sustainable food production.”

Goal 6, meanwhile, calls for “sustainable management of water,” which includes various targets involving agricultural water use and runoff.

Because U.N. leaders see agriculture and food production as key contributors to what they call manmade climate change, Goal 13 is important, too. It calls for governments to “integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning.”

Goal 15, which deals with sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, also has multiple targets that affect agriculture and food production.

All over the world, nation-

al and regional governments are working with U.N. agencies to implement these sustainability goals in agriculture and other sectors.

For instance, responding to U.N. biodiversity agreements, the European Union has enacted various U.N.-backed biodiversity programs such as Natura 2000 and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, which have been cited by the Dutch government and others in their agricultural policies.

The U.N. also boasts publicly about its role in imposing the SDGs in Sri Lanka and other nations suffering from food shortages and economic calamities linked to the very same global sustainability programs.

(Left) Dutch farmers gather with their tractors to protest the government’s nitrogen policies, in Bilthoven, Netherlands, on Oct. 16, 2019. (Above) Farmers rally to demand the resignation of Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa over the country’s ongoing economic crisis in Colombo on July 6.

Around the world, almost every national government says it’s incorporating the SDGs into its own laws and regulations.

World Economic Forum ‘Partnership’

Alongside the U.N. are various “stakeholders” that are critical to implementing sustainable development policies through “public-private partnerships.”

At the heart of that effort is the WEF, which since 2020 has been pushing a total transformation of society known as the “Great Reset.” In 2019, the WEF signed a “strategic partnership” with the U.N. to advance Agenda 2030 within the global business community.

The official agreement defined “areas of cooperation to deepen institutional engagement and jointly accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

Many of the key officials behind Agenda 2030, including top U.N. leaders such as current Secretary-General António Guterres—a self-proclaimed socialist—have also been working with the WEF for decades.

Meanwhile, the WEF has been explicit with its goals. It recently launched a “Food Action Alliance” (FAA) that acknowledges on its website that Agenda 2030 “informs the ambition of the FAA to provide an enduring and long-term platform for multi-stakeholder ac-

tion on food systems to meet the SDGs.”

Alongside the U.N.’s “Food Systems Summit” in September 2021, the WEF’s FAA released a report outlining its own “leadership agenda for multi-stakeholder collaboration to transform food systems.”

Among other elements, the document summarizes the FAA’s insights on “supporting transformative food system partnerships, and its value proposition beyond the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.”

The WEF’s public concern with transforming agriculture and the food supply goes back over a decade, at least.

In partnership with various companies, the WEF released a 2010 report outlining a “new vision for agriculture” that included a “roadmap for stakeholders.” Many of the world’s largest food companies that dominate the market and own countless popular brands are involved.

The WEF’s website is packed with information purporting to justify a total transformation of the food supply by “stakeholders.”

“As global food systems become increasingly interconnected, effective coordination among a diverse set of stakeholders will be required,” WEF says on its “Strategic Intelligence” platform, frequently citing the FAO as its source.

“The potential to craft ➔

FROM L: ROBIN VAN LONKHUIJSEN/ANP/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; A: AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

new, systemic approaches to food systems that include a diverse array of stakeholders presents opportunities to help sustainably feed the world well into the future.”

The organization’s frequent references to “stakeholders” refers to governments, companies, and so-called nongovernmental organizations that are often funded by those same companies and governments. They are all working together on the issue.

For instance, the WEF boasts that it has brought corporate giants such as Coca-Cola and Unilever into the fold toward promoting a “more sustainable future.”

The Rockefeller Foundation, which recently released a report on how to “Reset the Table” and “Transform the U.S. Food System,” is also a key player.

The WEF’s “Food Innovation Hubs” around the world are set to be a major part of this global transformation.

Speaking to the World Economic Forum on “transforming food systems and land use” at last year’s Davos Agenda Week, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte announced that the Netherlands would host the “Global Coordinating Secretariat of the World Economic Food Innovation Hubs.”

The secretariat, he said, “will connect all other Food Innovation Hubs” in order to facilitate creating “the partnerships we need.”

Neither the WEF nor the

Rockefeller Foundation responded to requests for comment on their role in Agenda 2030 and on the agricultural policies being pursued around the world.

Other organizations and entities involved in the push include powerful tax-exempt foundations such as the Gates Foundation, the EU-style regional governments proliferating around the world, and various groups funded by them.

“If people are starving, they are much easier to subjugate.”

Tom DeWeese, founder and chief, American Policy Center

Squeezing Farmers— and the Food Supply

All over the globe, U.N. SDG-aligned government policies are squeezing farmers—especially smaller, independent producers unable to absorb the added costs of added regulation and control.

Celebrating U.N. sustainability ideas, recently ousted Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa announced at the U.N. COP26 climate summit in 2021 that his government was banning chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

“Sri Lanka recently restrict-

ed the imports of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and weedicides due to public health concerns, water contamination, soil degradation, and biodiversity impacts,” Rajapaksa told world leaders, to widespread acclaim.

“Although opposed by entrenched lobbies, this has created opportunities for innovation and investment into organic agriculture that will be healthier and more sustainable in future.”

In reality, even though they were promptly rolled back, the policies produced catastrophic food shortages, widespread hunger, and eventually a popular revolt that ousted the president and his government.

In 2019, the socialist Sri Lankan government also partnered with the U.N. Environment Programme to establish the U.N. Global Nitrogen Campaign, which promotes the U.N.-backed policies on nitrogen that are now proliferating worldwide.

In the Netherlands, headquarters for the WEF’s “Food Innovation Hub” secretariat, authorities are imposing nitrogen policies that are expected to decimate the nation’s highly productive agricultural sector. The plans also include widespread expropriation of farms.

“The expropriation plans of the cabinet are a down-right declaration of war on the agricultural sector,” said Dutch Member of Parliament Gideon van Meijeren, of the



Chinese foreign
minister Wang Yi speaks remotely at the opening of a session of the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva on Feb. 28.

Forum for Democracy party, as cited by De Dagelijkse Standaard. “Under false pretenses, farmers are being robbed of their land, centuries-old farms are being demolished and farmers’ families are being totally destroyed.”

Experts warned of dangerous consequences stemming from such sustainability policies including food shortages, skyrocketing prices, social unrest, and more.

“You can glimpse the green, sustainable future by beholding Holland and Sri Lanka now,” Bonner Cohen, a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research, told The Epoch Times.

And yet, the agenda is spread-

ing rapidly. Canadian federal authorities last week announced similar restrictions on fertilizers and nitrogen after restrictions on energy production were put in place, sparking outrage from provincial officials and farmers.

In Ireland, the United Kingdom, and other European nations, various government entities are also working to slash agricultural production under sustainability programs.

Meanwhile, aside from continuing with policies that pay farmers not to grow food, the Biden administration is seeking to impose WEF-backed “Environmental, Social, Governance” metrics and reporting on companies

through the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

Farm associations and more than 100 members of Congress argue that the plan would bankrupt owners of small and medium-size farms unable to comply with climate reporting requirements to do business with public firms, even as the world moves toward widespread food shortages.

In part, experts say the insistence on these sorts of policies is because those imposing them are largely insulated from the damage they are causing.

“Global elites in government, transnational organizations, corporate boardrooms—well represented →

FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

in the WEF—are so caught up in their climate virtue signaling, from which many hope to benefit financially through investments in green energy, that they are slow to notice that they are completely detached from reality,” said National Center for Public Policy Research’s Cohen, who specializes in environmental issues.

“Few of those imposing regulations on farmers have ever set foot on a farm. By virtue of the power and wealth these people already have, they are shielded from the consequences of the misguided policies they impose on the rest of the world. That burden is borne by ordinary people around the world, about whom the Davos crowd and their partners in crime know nothing.”

Small, Independent Farms at Risk: Experts

Sri Lanka’s disaster offers a preview of what will happen to the United States and Europe if policymakers continue to follow the U.N. sustainability agenda, according to Sterling Burnett, who holds a doctorate in environmental ethics and leads the nonprofit Heartland Institute’s Arthur B. Robinson Center on Climate and Environmental Policy.

“It’s not a war on farming; it’s a war on small farming and independent farmers,” he told *The Epoch Times*. “It’s a war in support of elite, large-scale agricultural industries.”

Even though the U.N. SDGs

speak of helping “small-scale food producers,” Burnett argued that independent farms and ranches are in the U.N.’s crosshairs to help consolidate control over the food supply.

Policymakers are “in the pocket” of major corporate interests including Conagra, BlackRock, State Street, Vanguard, and others, he said.

“They would just as soon have all their small competitors put out of business,” he said, echoing concerns expressed by numerous other experts.

BlackRock CEO Larry Fink, whose firm manages more money than any other company in the world, “wants to impose his values on companies using other people’s money,” Burnett said.

Fink, who serves on the board of the powerful Council on Foreign Relations and works closely with the WEF, is a key architect of the push to impose “environmental, social, governance” metrics on U.S. companies.

“This is the super-rich foisting their values on the rest of us,” said Burnett, pointing to those he says are happy to work with communists on the effort.

“As far as the World Economic Forum is concerned, you can’t have a Great Reset if you don’t reset the food supply, because food is necessary to everybody,” he said. “Stalin recognized this: Whoever controls the food controls the people. Same with energy.”

As prices soar and farmers



NATHAN HOWARD/GETTY IMAGES

go bankrupt, major corporations, in league with governments and international organizations, will pick up the pieces.

In the meantime, as seen recently in Sri Lanka, hungry people pushed to the brink are likely to react.

“People were not starving on January 6,” said Burnett, referring to the Jan. 6, 2021, protest and breach at the U.S. Capitol. “The supply chain crisis is happening, shelves are already going empty, and when people are hungry, they will not sit around and do nothing.”

American Policy Center founder and President Tom DeWeese, a leading expert on and critic of U.N. notions of sustainability, warned that

Government policies

aligned with the U.N.’s “sustainable development goals” are squeezing farmers, ranchers, and food supplies around the world.

the war on farmers was part of a broader agenda to strip people of freedom.

“Always in the past, when tyrannical forces wanted to rule the world, they built armies and invaded, broke things, killed people, and forced subjugation,” DeWeese told *The Epoch Times*. “We are now dealing with a diabolical force that has figured out a way to get us to voluntarily surrender our liberties and help them subjugate us.”

“What could be such a powerful tool? The threat of Environmental Armageddon,” he said, pointing to the climate-change narrative as the prime example.

Citing numerous U.N. officials and documents, De-

Weese says the agenda isn’t to save the climate, but to transform the planet and centralize control over the populace.

Aside from the U.N. and the WEF, major companies such as Vanguard and BlackRock are working to take over and control the food supply, he said.

Already, a handful of companies in which those two investment firms are top shareholders dominate the global food and beverage industry. By taking over the farming, they will control it all.

“The goal is to have total control over food production,” he said, noting that they seek to own all seeds and even grow synthetic meat in facilities already being backed financially by Bill

Gates and other billionaires.

Genetically engineered crops are high on the agenda, too.

The U.N., the WEF, and others are also moving forward with promoting insects and weeds as food. Across the Western world, insect protein production facilities are popping up rapidly.

But it gets even darker, DeWeese says.

“If people are starving, they are much easier to subjugate,” he said, adding that depopulation and control over humanity have been on the agenda of global elites for decades.

The “war on farmers” also comes amid what critics have described as a government-backed “war on energy” that’s affecting agriculture and virtually every other sector.

This includes limiting energy exploration, shutting down power plants, charging special fees and taxes, and other policies that have resulted in rapidly rising costs across the Western world, although not in places such as China.

The experts interviewed by *The Epoch Times* urged Americans to resist the war on farmers and the U.N.-backed sustainability policies using a variety of means. These include getting involved politically, adopting different shopping habits, finding alternative sources of food such as local farmers, and other measures.

Officials at the U.N. didn’t respond to requests for comment. ■

169
TARGETS

Agenda 2030 is a set of 17 goals that include 169 targets involving every facet of life and the economy.



FARMERS PROTEST
with their cows against
the government's nitrogen
plans, in the Hague,
Netherlands, on June 28.
PHOTO BY JEFFREY GROENEWEG/
ANP/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

DUTCH DAIRY FARMER FACES END OF FARM

New environmental regulations will require farmer Martin Neppelenbroek to cull 95 percent of his cows, rendering him unable to operate

BY NATHAN WORCESTER

In the Netherlands, dairy farmer Martin Neppelenbroek is near the end of the line.

New environmental regulations will require him to slash his livestock numbers by 95 percent. He thinks he will have to sell his family farm.

"I can't run a farm on 5 percent. For me, it's over and done with," he said in a July 7 interview with The Epoch Times.

"In view of the regulations, I can't sell it to anybody. Nobody wants to buy it. [But] the government wants to buy it. And that's

why they [have] those regulations, I think."

Neppelenbroek made the remarks while speaking with Roman Balmakov, host of "Facts Matter" on EpochTV, during Balmakov's recent trip to the Netherlands.

Neppelenbroek pointed out that not all farmers are required to get rid of so many of their cattle.

People living farther from areas protected under Natura 2000, a European Union agreement for species and habitat preservation, can own more cattle.

That's because the Dutch government's regulations on ni- ➔



“I can’t run a farm on 5 percent. For me, it’s over and done with.”

Martin Neppelenbroek, dairy farmer

trogen oxide and ammonia emissions are tied to sites’ proximity to those protected areas.

Farmers, truckers, and others across the Netherlands have led nationwide protests against that vision, partly spurred by a June 10 national and area-specific plan to curtail nitrogen greenhouse gas emissions.

There’s a sword of Damocles hanging over them: the possibility of compulsory seizure of property by the government.

Media outlet NOS News reported that Christianne van der Wal-Zeggelink, the country’s minister of nature and nitrogen policy, hasn’t ruled out expropriating land from uncooperative farmers.

According to a report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Foreign Agricultural Service, the Dutch government has said its approach means “there is not a future for all [Dutch] farmers.”

For now, Neppelenbroek’s 70-acre-plus property is home to roughly 130 milking cows. It’s been in his family for half a century.

“I’m the second generation,” he said, adding that many farms in the Netherlands have been in families for much longer.

The Netherlands punches well above its weight in agriculture. The small, coastal country is one of the world’s top 10 food exporters.

“When you haven’t a lot of space, you have to use it as effectively as possible,” Neppelenbroek said.

“It’s a delta, and the climate is not too hot, not too cold. It’s an ideal place to grow.”

Cows, Neppelenbroek acknowledged, produce lots of ammonia through their bodily waste.

Yet “you can’t blame just one small group in your country for polluting the environment,” he said, adding that farmers feel they’re being overburdened.

Closing Dutch farms will just necessitate food imports from elsewhere, he argued.

He noted that cow manure can benefit soil health—certainly more so than the synthetic fertilizers that would need to replace it.

Cows can also be fed leftovers that people won’t eat, he said. “They can get rid of a lot of stuff we can’t use as humans and put it into high-quality food.”

Like many others in the Netherlands, Neppelenbroek suspects the government wants to use the land that it takes to build housing. ■

(Top Left) Dutch dairy farmer Martin Neppelenbroek (l) and EpochTV host Roman Balmakov at Neppelenbroek’s farm in Lemelerveld, Netherlands, on July 7. **(Top Right)** Neppelenbroek’s farm has been in his family for half a century. **(Bottom Left)** For now, Neppelenbroek’s 70-acre-plus property is home to roughly 130 milking cows. **(Bottom Right)** Cows, Neppelenbroek acknowledged, produce lots of ammonia through their bodily waste.

ALL PHOTOS BY DAVID VIVES FOR THE EPOCH TIMES

Despite high-profile attention, accidents appear random with negligible impact on supply chains

BY FACTS MATTER

A STRING OF FIRES AT FOOD PROCESSING plants across the country has led to intense speculation on social media as to whether the fires were accidental or the result of an intentional attack on critical food infrastructure.

To investigate whether there was truth to the latter, the team of EpochTV's "Facts Matter" investigated claims of fires deemed suspicious on social media and in media reports.

The "Facts Matter" team found that most incidents cited of facilities allegedly catching fire in 2022 didn't, in fact, happen this year. Many were lumped in from previous years.

In addition, the locations where fires did occur spanned a wide range of industries and the majority aren't what would typically be considered a "high-value target" that in themselves could seriously impact the food supply chain.

For example, some of the facilities that caught fire included mom-and-pop delis, a locally run church food pantry, a potato chip factory, a small-town butcher shop, and a salad packaging facility.

While many of the incidents remain under investigation by authorities, some have already been cleared by local fire departments of any criminal intention.

Among those that were cleared, causes were determined to include faulty equipment, operator errors, or basic negligence.

The following is a partial list of fires that have broken out in 2022 at food processing facilities and what's known about their current status in terms of damage and investigation. →



FOOD COMPANY FIRES:

Accidental *or* Suspicious?



**Van Drunen Farms
Tuthill Facility**
Momence, Illinois

Type of food processing facility: Freeze-dried ingredient production and ingredient blending plant

Extent of damage: Total loss; fire crews battled flames for two days

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown; undamaged equipment moved to other locations

Source of fire: Under investigation



Winston Weaver Company
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Type of food processing facility: Fertilizer plant

Extent of damage: Total loss

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown

Source of fire: Under investigation; fire first discovered at a loading dock then consumed the building

Other information: Forced evacuation of 6,500 residents within a mile radius

TOP ROW FROM L: GOOGLE MAPS; ALISON LEE ISLEY/THE WINSTON-SALEM JOURNAL VIA AP; GABY VEASQUEZ/EL PASO TIMES; ANGELA WESS/APH VIA GETTY IMAGES; GOOGLE MAPS



Percy Farm
Stowe, Vermont

Type of food processing facility: Family-owned dairy cow barn

Extent of damage: Total loss; 130 to 140 cows killed

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown; family says they plan to rebuild

Source of fire: Officials believe the fire was caused by a skid loader parked inside the farm's cattle barn



Bess View Farm
St. Albans, Vermont

Type of food processing facility: Dairy cow milking barn

Extent of damage: Total loss of barn; 800 cows displaced to other local farms

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown

Source of fire: Fire started in the milking parlor around 2 a.m.; fire chief doesn't suspect foul play



**Shadow Brook Farm
and Dutch Girl Creamery**
Lincoln, Nebraska

Type of food processing facility: Organic family farmers market

Extent of damage: Total loss of farm building

Injuries: One injured with minor burns

Expected return to operation: Unknown; will depend on insurance settlement

Source of fire: Unknown; fire started around 4:30 a.m.

2022

JAN 2

JAN 13

JAN 31

FEB 2

FEB 2

FEB 16

FEB 18

FEB 22

FEB 28

Cargill-Nutrena Plant
Lecompte, Louisiana

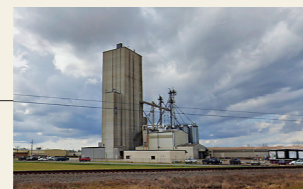
Type of food processing facility: Feed for pet food, aquaculture, beef, equine, poultry, dairy, and wild game markets

Extent of damage: Unclear; exterior of building intact

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown

Source of fire: Under investigation



Wisconsin River Meats
Mauston, Wisconsin

Type of food processing facility: Meat processing facility

Extent of damage: Total loss of old facility; loss of \$1 million in noncovered assets

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Back in partial operation, using borrowed equipment as they rebuild

Source of fire: Contractors brazing refrigeration pipes accidentally started a smoldering cellulose insulation fire that took hours to spread before engulfing the entire building

Other information: Opened a new storefront in April



BOTTOM ROW FROM L: GOOGLE MAPS; GOOGLE MAPS; GOOGLE MAPS; GOOGLE MAPS; COURTESY UMATILLA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Louis Dreyfus Company
Claypool, Indiana

Type of food processing facility: Soybean processing facility

Extent of damage: Minimal damage, as fire was put out shortly after ignition

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Back in operation one week later

Source of fire: Under investigation; smoke had been detected in a baghouse, used for filtering dust

Other information: Largest U.S. soybean processing facility and biodiesel plant



Shearer's Food
Hermiston, Oregon

Type of food processing facility: Potato chip factory

Extent of damage: Extensive damage to entire factory

Injuries: Six people injured; no deaths reported

Expected return to operation: At least one year

Source of fire: Under investigation

Other information: The only Shearer's facility on the West Coast



**FOOD
COMPANY
FIRES:**
Accidental or
Suspicious?



Nutrien Ag Solutions

Sunnyside, Washington

Type of food processing facility: Fertilizer plant

Extent of damage: One building lost to fire, others damaged

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown

Source of fire: Pile of sulfur ignited into a chemical fire that consumed one industrial building



Nestle Food Plant

Jonesboro, Arkansas

Type of food processing facility: Freezer food packaging facility (Hot Pockets, Stouffer's, Lean Cuisine, DiGiorno, Tombstone)

Extent of damage: Significant damage to a cooler at the plant; will remain closed to further evaluate the damage

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown

Source of fire: Under investigation. Fire broke out inside a cooler, making it difficult for firefighters to get to it; Fire Chief Kevin Miller said authorities don't suspect malicious intent.

Other information: Facility remains closed to assess damage



Penobscot McCrum

Belfast, Maine

Type of food processing facility: Potato processing plant

Extent of damage: Total loss

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown

Source of fire: Fire marshal's office suspects the cause to be a large fryolator machine

TOP ROW FROM L: COURTESY SUNNYSIDE FIRE FIGHTERS; COURTESY OF JONESBORO FIRE DEPARTMENT; COURTESY OF CAMDEN FIRE DEPARTMENT; GOOGLE MAPS; COURTESY OF SALINAS POLICE DEPARTMENT



Rio Fresh

San Juan, Texas

Type of food processing facility: Onion warehouse

Extent of damage: Significant damage to warehouse and packing operation

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown; company plans to rebuild

Source of fire: Under investigation

Other information: Rio Fresh Inc. is a third-generation family farming operation in South Texas



Taylor Farm

Salina, California

Type of food processing facility: Bulk salad packaging facility

Extent of damage: 85 to 95 percent of the building destroyed

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: CEO says there is a plan in place to rebuild by April 2023

Source of fire: Under investigation. There are reports of a potential welding accident as the cause; deputy fire chief doesn't suspect foul play.

Other information: Presence of 35,000 lbs. of ammonia kept fire crews back out of explosion fears. Forced evacuation of 2,700 neighborhood residents. Facility provided food service for various local institutions, including hospitals and prisons.

FEB 28

MAR 13

MAR 16

MAR 16

MAR 24

MAR 28

MAR 31

APR 11

APR 13

Wayne Hoover Farm

Reading Eagle, Pennsylvania

Type of food processing facility: Dairy cow barn

Extent of damage: \$150,000 in damage; total loss to barn

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown

Source of fire: An electrical problem with a component of the milking parlor

Other information: 42 dairy cows housed at nearby farm



Walmart Distribution Center

Plainfield, Indiana

Type of food processing facility: Walmart fulfillment center

Extent of damage: Total loss

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Permanently closed

Source of fire: Under investigation by the ATF

Other information: One of the largest Walmart fulfillment centers in the country



Maricopa Food Pantry

Maricopa, Arizona

Type of food processing facility: Food pantry associated with a local church

Extent of damage: Total loss

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown

Source of fire: Under investigation; 100 lb. diesel containers used in coolers fed the flames

Other information: 50,000 lbs. of food were lost to the blaze



East Conway Beef & Pork

Conway, New Hampshire

Type of food processing facility: Butcher shop and slaughterhouse

Extent of damage: Total loss of building

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown

Source of fire: Under investigation

Other information: Same facility burned down 10 years prior



BOTTOM ROW FROM L: GOOGLE MAPS; JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY OF MARICOPA FOOD PANTRY; EAST CONWAY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

FOOD COMPANY FIRES:

Accidental or Suspicious?



Azure Standard

Dufur, Oregon

Type of food processing facility: Independent distributor of organic and health food

Extent of damage: Headquarters building and a few product lines affected (oils, honey, vinegars); majority of operations unaffected

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Impact on companywide operations expected to be limited and temporary

Source of fire: Under investigation



Hormel Foods

Suffolk, Virginia

Type of food processing facility: Manufactures Planter's products

Extent of damage: Minimal damage; fire extinguished within 20 minutes of being detected

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Same day

Source of fire: Under investigation; fire broke out in the cooking ventilation system



Saladino's Food Processing Plant

Fresno, California

Type of food processing facility: Food processing facility

Extent of damage: Unknown

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Back in operation

Source of fire: Under investigation

Other information: Fire crews were called back later that same night for an ammonia leak; it's unclear if the two incidents were related

TOP ROW FROM L: JOSH EDELSON/AP VIA GETTY IMAGES, COURTESY OF CITY OF SUFFOLK DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & RESCUE, GOOGLE MAPS, GOOGLE MAPS, COURTESY OF AMERICAN RED CROSS OF WISCONSIN



JBS Meat Packing Plant

Green Bay, Wisconsin

Type of food processing facility: Meat packing plant

Extent of damage: \$30,000 estimated damage; fire contained in 15 minutes

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Same day

Source of fire: Officials believe that an auger used in the processing area was the likely source of the fire



Festive Foods

Belmont, Wisconsin

Type of food processing facility: Food processing plant that makes frozen pizzas

Extent of damage: Total loss to 60,000 sq. ft. of the facility, enough to suspend operations

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Plan to rebuild and return to operation by the fourth quarter

Source of fire: Fire chief reports that the fire was caused by work being done in the compressor room, where sparks spread to the walls and started the fire

APR 18

APR 19

APR 25

APR 30

MAY 2

MAY 28

JUNE 7

JUNE 7

JUNE 13

Nutrien Ag Solutions

Leoti, Kansas

Type of food processing facility: Fertilizer facility

Extent of damage: Flames were isolated to a forklift and nonhazardous chemicals

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown

Source of fire: Under investigation

Other information: Residents within a half-mile radius were evacuated



Perdue Farms

Chesapeake, Virginia

Type of food processing facility: Soybean processing facility

Extent of damage: Little to none

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Immediate

Source of fire: Under investigation. Soybean tank caught fire; Capt. Steven Bradley, a spokesperson for the Chesapeake Fire Department, attributed it to an equipment malfunction and said the fire was accidental and not suspicious.



Forsman Farms

Howard Lake, Minnesota

Type of food processing facility: Chicken egg farm

Extent of damage: Estimated 200,000 chickens killed; coop building a total loss. Light damage to surrounding buildings.

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown

Source of fire: Under investigation by the state fire marshal; sheriff's office believes it was an accident

Other information: Farm sold 3 million eggs per day to some of the nation's largest retailers



Purina Feed Mill

Arcola, Louisiana

Type of food processing facility: Pet food manufacturing facility

Extent of damage: Minimal damage to facility as fire was contained in under an hour

Injuries: None

Expected return to operation: Unknown

Source of fire: Under investigation; potential grain dust fire



BOTTOM ROW FROM L: GOOGLE MAPS, CHESAPEAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT, COURTESY OF DASSLET FIRE DEPARTMENT, COURTESY OF LANGFAYHQA PARISH FIRE DISTRICT #1

FOOD COMPANY FIRES:

Accidental or Suspicious?



PREPARING FOR HARD TIMES ON A BUDGET

How to methodically stock up on food and essential items while on a budget

BY ALLAN STEIN

Most people don't bother to prepare for uncertain times until it's too late. It's the "ant and the grasshopper" parable written on a human scale.

"The problem is that while fear is a great motivator, it isn't conducive to smart decisions," said Diane Vukovic of PrimalSurvivor.com, an online personal preparedness website.

"No matter how terrified you are about a certain event happening, you still need to go about prepping in a calm, logical way."

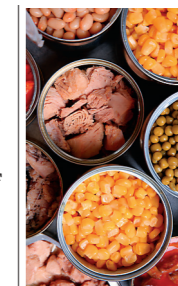
Once considered a fringe

"conspiracy theory," the idea of preparedness has gone mainstream as global events unfold. Many online "preppers" have said that only a small percentage of Americans prepare for potential food shortages and civil unrest.

However, the concern among would-be preppers on a limited income is the cost of preparing in an inflationary environment.

The good news is that prepping is still relatively inexpensive to do, Vukovic said.

"Chances are you don't need an expensive gas mask, bulletproof vest, or other hyped-up survival gear. You'll see



Storing food doesn't have to be difficult or expensive.

that most preparedness supplies are very cheap," she said. Rule No. 1 is don't buy out of fear or panic.

"I suggest writing a list of the most likely disasters for your area," Vukovic said. "For most people in the United States, these will be earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, wildfires, and power outages. Then make a list of what items you would need to be prepared for these disasters."

What's on the Menu?

PrepperWebsite.com host Todd Sepulveda recommends that budget-minded preppers start with a menu of necessary items such as →

ONLY A SMALL percentage of Americans prepare for potential food shortages and civil unrest.

PHOTO BY ZIGZAG MOUNTAIN ART/SHUTTERSTOCK

NEW AFRICA/SHUTTERSTOCK

dry food and canned goods, which are still plentiful at the grocery store.

“People trying to prep their food storage sometimes go to the grocery store and start buying random items. Later, they have to try to figure out how it will all work together and put dinner together,” he told *The Epoch Times*.

“Starting from a menu takes out all the guesswork and ensures that you won’t buy unnecessary items at the grocery store.”

Sepulveda advises making a one-week menu of breakfast, lunch, and dinner of what your family usually eats, making a grocery list, and keeping a clean copy for the following week.

“If you want to stock up a month’s worth of food at one time, just quadruple your list,” he said.

“You can bring more variety to your family food storage if you make a two-week menu and double that. That way, you are not eating the same foods every week.”

Food storage isn’t hard and doesn’t have to be expensive.

“You just need to plan it out,” Sepulveda said.

Other websites that cater to preppers of all experience levels include Graywolf Survival, Apartment Prepper, Bioprepper, Mom With a PREP, The Prepared, and



many others. These sites cover a full range of topics on disaster preparedness—from creating emergency kits and bug-out bags, medical and first-aid supplies, water filtration, cooking without electricity, solar power, and living off-grid.

“Even if you have zero money to spend, you still have a budget—it’s just zero. And, yes, it is possible to prepare with absolutely no money,” Vukovic said.

She said once you have a list of everything you need, prioritize the items: trash bags and buckets, for example, are inexpensive or even free.

“To make sure you don’t forget anything important, divide your list into categories. As you buy supplies, make sure you get items from each category,” she said.

The critical supplies categories include food and water, water purification, health and hygiene, heating,

A customer checks his grocery list at a MOM’s Organic Market in Washington on April 2, 2020.

FROM L: ALEX EDELMAN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES, SHUTTERSTOCK, UNSPLASHED

lighting, electricity, disaster cleanup, personal safety, and emergency radio communications.

Live Within Your Means

Even if you have no money for prepping, you’ll need to know about wilderness survival and how to make supplies even on a shoestring budget.

“For example, you can get free buckets from local stores. In an emergency,

these buckets could then be used for things like collecting rainwater or making an emergency toilet, which is incredibly important but something a lot of people forget about,” Vukovic said.

If you have a small budget, divide your list into expensive items: propane camp stove, propane heater, personal safety, and inexpensive items such as canned food, tarps, tape, and bleach.

“Buy a few inexpensive items every week and set aside a certain amount of money each week or month to go toward pricier items,” Vukovic said. “Consider shopping at thrift stores, flea markets, and yard sales for lower prices on gently used items.”

For those fortunate to have a large budget, she recommends that beginning preppers resist the urge to buy “fancy” or “cool” gear and supplies at the outset.

“Instead, do your research and invest in quality items that have good reviews [or] come highly recommended by those who have used the item,” she said. “Otherwise, you might find the item you bought is unsuitable for your needs and have to buy another.”

It’s also important to back up all essential documents in the event of a significant life-altering event, she said.



CANNED FOOD

“Having backups of your important documents might not be a life-or-death issue, but it will make the aftermath of a disaster much less stressful,” Vukovic said.

“For example, if your entire home is destroyed in a fire,

RULE NO. 1 IS DON’T BUY OUT OF FEAR OR PANIC.



TARPS



BLEACH



TAPE

knowing your insurance policy number and having a list of valuables in the home will make it easier to get a refund.

“Likewise, if your children had to switch schools after a disaster, you’d be grateful you backed up copies of their school records.”

Backing up your documents can be done cheaply or at no cost, she said.

“You can put them on an encrypted USB and keep this in a bank safe or other secure location. There are also some secure cloud storage platforms you can use,” Vukovic said.

“While you are at it, back up all of your family photos. If your home is destroyed, at least you won’t lose all of your children’s baby photos and other memories.” ■

YOU CAN EXTEND THE shelf life of foods by using common seasonings and spices wisely.
PHOTO BY CLAUDIO SCHWARZ/UNSPLASH

FIND OUT WHICH FOODS ARE IDEAL TO STORE LONGER-TERM AND HOW TO EXTEND SHELF LIFE

Best Foods TO STORE

BY HEALTH 1+1

FOOD SCARCITY IS COMING—and soon, says Texas-based food scientist and “Health Ranger” podcaster Mike Adams, who sees dire events unfolding across the United States in the short term.

Because of soaring fertilizer costs, the shortage of agrochemicals, and prolonged drought, farmers have already begun growing smaller quantities of certain crops, which are different from before. After Russian President Vladimir

Putin launched a military invasion of Ukraine, inflated fertilizer prices were pushed even higher, which has also significantly affected food exports. Both Ukraine and Russia are major producers of the world’s wheat and corn.

“The thing to really watch for is the food inflation,” Adams said.

Adams’s advice: People need to get prepared now.

Diane Vukovic of PrimalSurvivor.com, an online personal preparedness website →

says: “I suggest writing a list of the most likely disasters for your area. For most people in the United States, these will be earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, wildfires, and power outages. Then make a list of what items you would need to be prepared for these disasters.”

PrepperWebsite.com host Todd Sepulveda said: “If you want to stock up a month’s worth of food at one time, just quadruple your list. You can bring more variety to your family food storage if you make a two-week menu and double that. That way, you aren’t eating the same foods every week.”

Foods That Are Durable and Nutritious

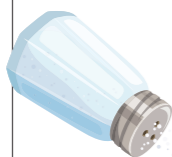
Among the staple foods, dry noodles, flour, and rice are all excellent foods for long-term storage.

Dried seeds such as soybeans, mung beans, red beans, peas, broad beans, and peanuts also can be stored for a long time. When you want to eat vegetables and get a higher nutritional content, you can sprout the beans into soybean sprouts or mung bean sprouts, for example.

There are also a lot of durable vegetables, such as carrots, white radishes, onions, beet roots, sweet potatoes, yams, potatoes, pumpkins, corn, and cabbages. These can be stored in a cool, ventilated place. (We’ll talk about some specific storage tips later in the article.)

The vitamin A in carrots,

METHODS OF FOOD PRESERVATION



SALT



VINEGAR



SUGAR



OIL



corn, and pumpkins can maintain cell membrane stability and increase immunity. White radishes and onions contain quercetin, which recent studies have shown is a powerful antiviral and anti-inflammatory antioxidant that can slow down allergic reactions. The dietary fiber in sweet potatoes and yams can promote the production of beneficial gastrointestinal bacteria and improve intestinal health, which also helps to enhance immunity.

Cabbages and broccoli are cruciferous vegetables containing sulforaphane, which can activate immune cells and

The food you have on hand can be stored for a long time. Salt, vinegar, sugar, and oil are all seasonings that can be used to preserve food.

FROM L: SHUTTERSTOCK, UNSPLASH, SAMIRA BOUAOU / THE EPOCH TIMES, AYSEGUL YAHSI/UNSPLASH

protect the respiratory tract. Dried black fungi (wood ear mushrooms), white fungi, and shiitake mushrooms are also good for long-term storage. Wood ear mushrooms are rich in soluble dietary fiber, and shiitake mushrooms are rich in polysaccharides and vitamin D.

Although tomatoes aren’t durable, there are ways to extend their shelf life. Tomatoes contain nutrients such as lycopene, vitamin A, and vitamin C, which can also strengthen the immune system.

So how do we extend the shelf life of different food items?

Extending Shelf Life

The first thing you can do to extend the shelf life of foods is by using common seasonings and spices wisely.

The food you have on hand can be stored for a long time, if it’s properly preserved. Salt, vinegar, sugar, and oil are all seasonings that can be used to preserve food.

Yipei Li, a retired teacher of cuisine and bakery, recommends vinegar over salt, because too much salt can be detrimental to health. However, not everyone can accept the sour taste of vinegar, so some sugar may also be added for a better taste.

“If you want to stock up a month’s worth of food at one time, just quadruple your list,” a prepping expert says.

Vegetables and fruits can all be preserved by being soaked in vinegar. For example, people pickle cucumbers, radishes, and cabbage in vinegar, and as long as these pickles don’t touch water, they can be preserved for a long time, just like wine.

When pickling vegetables, you can scald the ingredients in boiling water first, let them cool and get dried, and then pickle them with vinegar and sugar. For instance, radishes can be salted first, washed in boiling water, and dried, and then put in a jar. Once you pour vinegar and sugar into the jar, they will last for a long time.

Another method is to “seal” the foods in oil. First, you need to dry ingredients that don’t last long, such as fresh tomatoes and mushrooms. You can slice and dry them, soak them in olive oil, and then put them in the fridge. That will preserve them for a long time.

However, it’s best to use extra virgin olive oil to make the ingredients tasty, but the cost is relatively higher. In contrast, sugar and vinegar are quite inexpensive, and salt is the cheapest preservative seasoning. →

Vegetables and fruits can all be preserved by being soaked in vinegar or sealed in oil.



Furthermore, garlic, chili, and other spices have a bactericidal effect, and some pickling dishes also use them to enhance the preservative effect.

In addition to pickling fruits and vegetables for storage, you can also cook and freeze the ingredients, and then take them out in batches for consumption. However, this method isn't suitable for leafy vegetables.

When people eat frozen vegetables, they find that their taste has deteriorated because defrosting causes water loss. Li shares this tip: After taking frozen vegetables out of the freezer, instead of de-icing them, put them directly into boiling water to preserve their taste.

How to Properly Freeze Meat and Protein

To maintain a healthy and balanced diet, it's important to eat sufficient amounts of fruits and vegetables, and to supplement protein in appropriate amounts.

After you purchase fish or meat, wash it first, then remove the blood, hair, and of-fal, if any. However, instead of cutting it into pieces, put the whole chunk of meat or fish directly into the freezer. Before you cook it, just defrost and cut it into pieces.

Meat that is meant to be stored for a long time shouldn't be cut into small pieces first, Li says, in order to avoid losing moisture when defrosting it. If cut into pieces, the meat's juice and sweetness also become lost, along

with the blood loss, and the taste will become bland.

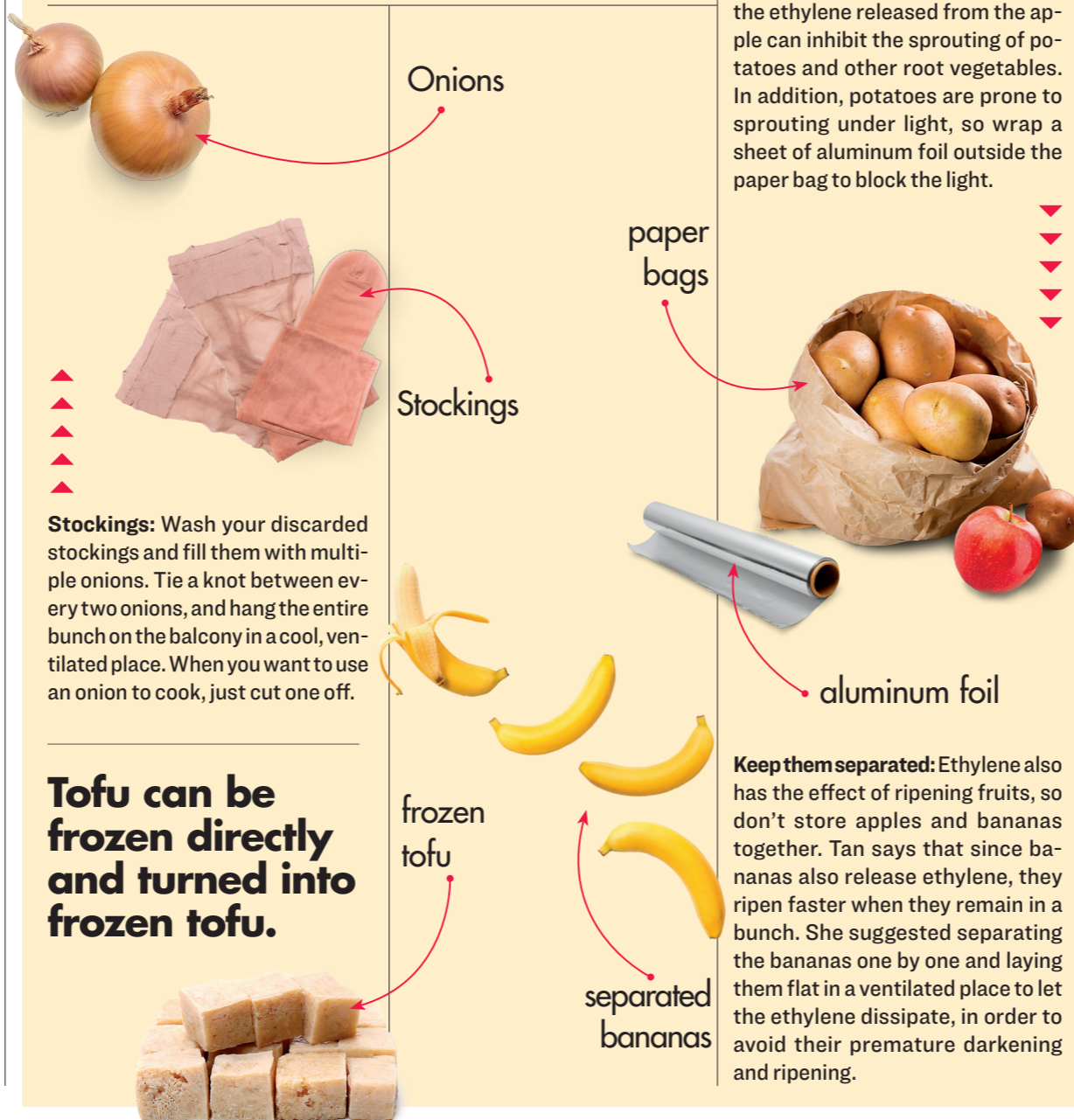
If there isn't enough space in the refrigerator to store whole chickens or ducks, you can mix wine and salt, rub the mixture on their surface and hollowed out bellies, and then hang them up to air dry, or blow dry them with an electric fan. Li says that during her childhood, there was no fridge at home, so her mother used to preserve poultry in this manner during the Chinese New Year holiday period, and they could be consumed within half a month.

A senior nurse practitioner recommended buying vegetables with a relatively dry surface, because water accelerates the vegetables' decay.

Tofu can be frozen directly and turned into frozen tofu. Or, in the case of traditional tofu, it can be soaked in water to insulate it from the air, in order to extend its shelf life. This method can also be used for dried beans. To do this, put a piece of tofu in tap water and refrigerate it, then change the water once a day or once every two days, and the tofu will be good for a week.

Use Common Household Items to Extend Shelf Life

Dunci Tan, a senior nurse practitioner at the Clinical Poison Center at Linkou Chang Gung Memorial Hospital in Taoyuan City, Taiwan, shares her food preservation methods. With the clever use of some small household items, you can easily extend food's shelf life.



Stockings: Wash your discarded stockings and fill them with multiple onions. Tie a knot between every two onions, and hang the entire bunch on the balcony in a cool, ventilated place. When you want to use an onion to cook, just cut one off.

Tofu can be frozen directly and turned into frozen tofu.

Apples + aluminum foil + paper bags: Place potatoes in a paper bag with an apple in the center. Wrap the bag with a sheet of aluminum foil. Then, loosely fold up the bag and place it in a cool place.

Tan explains that potatoes are prone to sprouting. And when sprouted, they become toxic and can no longer be eaten. However, the ethylene released from the apple can inhibit the sprouting of potatoes and other root vegetables. In addition, potatoes are prone to sprouting under light, so wrap a sheet of aluminum foil outside the paper bag to block the light.

Keep them separated: Ethylene also has the effect of ripening fruits, so don't store apples and bananas together. Tan says that since bananas also release ethylene, they ripen faster when they remain in a bunch. She suggested separating the bananas one by one and laying them flat in a ventilated place to let the ethylene dissipate, in order to avoid their premature darkening and ripening.

Wet paper towels: For carrots, cut off their stems, wrap them in a wet paper towel, place them in a bag in an upright manner in the direction of their growth, and store them in the refrigerator.

Tan shares her own method with us: Peel carrots and white radishes, cut them into pieces, then steam them in an electric cooker, and freeze them in portions. Whenever you want to eat these vegetables, take out one portion and cook it with other vegetables or meat, to save the stewing or steaming time.

Paper towels (wet/dry)

Paper towels: After buying leafy vegetables, wrap them in paper towels to avoid getting them wet, and put them directly into a plastic bag with a loose knot. Then place them upright inside a refrigerator crisper drawer in the direction of their growth. If the storage space isn't large, a slight tilt will also work.

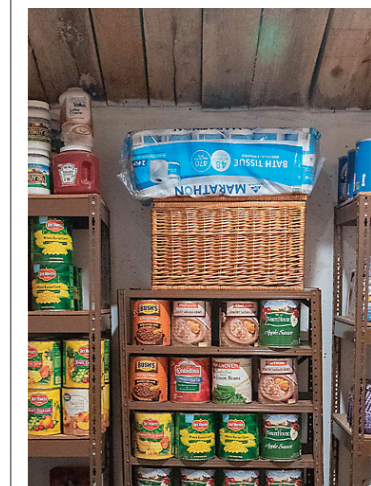
Supermarkets spray water on vegetables to keep them fresh and moist. Tan recommends buying vegetables with a relatively dry surface, because water accelerates their decay. And whether the vegetables you bought have been sprayed or not, it's best to wrap them in paper towels to regulate moisture. Cabbage is durable in general. You can cut and wrap it inside paper towels and then place it inside a plastic bag, which can prolong its shelf life. Don't seal the plastic bag, though, in order to avoid sealing moisture within the bag.

Choose greenish tomatoes for better storage. Tomatoes don't need to be refrigerated. You can just put them in a ventilated place on the balcony.

When buying mushrooms, pick the ones with packaging. For example, vacuum-packed enoki mushrooms can be stored in the refrigerator for a week, as long as their packaging isn't opened. If you buy mushrooms in bulk, don't wash them before storing. Instead, cut off their stem base and wrap the mushrooms in paper towels before putting them inside a sealed container. Use them within two or three days.

As for other vacuum-packed or regularly packaged rice, cereals, and dried goods, you can just put them in a dry, cool place, as long as they remain unopened. However, put them in the fridge after opening. ■

FROM L: SHUTTERSTOCK, UNSPLASH, NICHOLAS KAMM/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



A storage room stacked with food at Fortitude Ranch in Mathias, W. Va., on March 13, 2020.

BEIJING-BACKED GROUPS SEEK US Foothold

A Chinese regime influence group seeks partnership with state agricultural officials after teaming up with Bill Gates for years

BY FRANK FANG

MICROSOFT FOUNDER BILL GATES
speaks during the "Reinvented Toilet Expo"
in Beijing on Nov. 6, 2018.

PHOTO BY NICOLAS ASFOURI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

reinvented
toilet
expo

新世代
厕所
博览会

A NUMBER OF U.S. government officials took part in a virtual agriculture event co-hosted by a Beijing-backed influence association that has ties to Bill Gates.

The U.S. Heartland China Association (USHCA), a 501(c)3 nonprofit founded in 2003, held the 2022 U.S.–China Agriculture Roundtable. The online event was co-hosted by the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC).

The Trump administration warned about CPAFFC. In February 2020, then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called the association “the public face of the Chinese Communist Party’s official foreign influence agency, the United Front Work Department.”

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) uses the United Front Work Department (UFWD) to run its foreign influence operations. In the United States, the CCP has also deployed grass-roots level “united front” groups as part of its effort to infiltrate U.S. civil and political institutions.

CPAFFC is “tasked with co-opting



A farmer plants
corn near Dwight,
Ill., on April 23,
2020.

subnational governments” and “has sought to directly and malignly influence state and local leaders to promote the PRC’s [People’s Republic of China] global agenda,” the U.S. State Department stated in October 2020, when it was designating another group, a Washington-based Chinese organization, as a foreign mission.

The roundtable featured a num-

ber of U.S. lawmakers and state officials, including Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture Blayne Arthur, Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Mike Beam, Missouri Director of Agriculture Chris Chinn, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig, and Rep. Darin LaHood (R-Ill.).

The 2022 roundtable event was initially reported by the National Pulse. The inaugural roundtable

was held in April 2021. The state-run Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS) was one of the partners of the event. Several CASS officials and scholars also took part in the roundtable, including Wang Wei, director-general of the academy’s bureau of international cooperation.

SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

Bob Holden, former Democratic governor of Missouri and current

USHCA chairman and CEO, said during the roundtable’s opening ceremony that U.S.–Sino cooperation was “essential” to overcome global challenges, including “producing enough nutritious food to feed the growing population on the planet” and “preventing future pandemics of human, animal, and plant diseases.”

The online event comes at a time when China has been increasing its purchases of U.S. farmland over the past decade, prompting concerns about U.S. national security. Gates has also been a major buyer of agricultural land in the United States. Land Report reported that Gates was the largest U.S. private farmland owner in January 2021, saying his family had accumulated an estimated 242,000 acres of farmland.

Bill Gates

Microsoft founder Bill Gates has worked with CPAFFC over the years, in particular with the association’s previous president, Li Xiaolin, who held the position from September 2011 to April 2020.

Li is no ordinary Chinese citizen. She was a former member of the Chinese regime’s political advi-

sory body, the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). She’s also the daughter of former Chinese regime leader Li Xiannian, and her husband is Liu Yazhou, a retired general of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army Air Force.

Gates and Li met face to face during the 2013 Global Vaccine Summit in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates. According to CPAFFC’s website, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation invited Li to the summit, during which she took part in a panel speaking about China’s immunization efforts to eradicate polio.

In August 2013, the foundation announced that it would invest \$5 million to “support Chinese investigators to drive research, development, and production of the ‘next generation toilet,’” as part of its global “Reinvent the Toilet Challenge.” According to the University of Science and Technology Beijing, a launch event in China was attended by Li, a China-based representative of the foundation, the university’s party secretary, and Chinese health officials.

Gates visited CPAFFC’s headquarters in China in June 2014, ➔

during which he gave a speech, “Invent for the Poor.” According to a video on CPAFFC’s website, Gates praised the Chinese regime and the association in his speech.

“Here in China, it is fantastic to see the investment in engineering and medical technology, all sorts of things that China is assuming a very, very strong positioning,” he said. “And so our hope for the Friendship Association is that together we can find these great ideas in China and that we can find the right partners in Africa and elsewhere, who can take these new tools and use them on behalf of the people.”

Mark Suzman, the foundation’s CEO, and Li both attended the World Philanthropy Forum held at China’s Tsinghua University in September 2016. According to China’s state-run media, Suzman applauded China for its “potential” in philanthropy works and for its “unique role” in Africa’s development.

Melinda French Gates, co-chair of the foundation, held a meeting with Li in China in July 2017. According to CPAFFC’s website, French Gates praised CPAFFC for its philanthropic works. She also invited Li to



Buildings at the Artux City

Vocational Skills Education Training Service Center, a reeducation camp where mostly Muslim ethnic minorities are detained, north of Kashgar, Xinjiang region, China, on June 2, 2019.

242,000 ACRES

▶ Bill Gates was America’s largest private farmland owner in January 2021, having accumulated an estimated 242,000 acres, Land Report says.

join the End Malaria Council (EMC), which is an initiative launched in part by Gates in 2017.

Li subsequently participated in an EMC meeting held in Beijing in April 2019, according to CPAFFC.

Gates and Li also have connections through another United Front agency, the Hong Kong-based China–U.S. Exchange Foundation (CUSEF), which is managed

by CPAFFC. CUSEF identifies Li as its vice chairman on its website, and its 2013 report names Gates as a member of its steering committee.

CUSEF is headed by Chinese regime official Tung Chee-hwa, a former Hong Kong leader and current vice chairman of the CPPCC.

CPAFFC

CPAFFC, which was established

in 1954, has more than 300 local branches throughout China. Outside the Chinese borders, there are regional-level branches, such as the Chinese–Arab Friendship Association, as well as country-level branches, such as the China–U.S. People’s Friendship Association in the United States.

The current CPAFFC president is Lin Songtian, who began in the role

in April 2020. Before then, he had been China’s ambassador to South Africa since 2017.

When Lin was in South Africa, he was an outspoken critic of the United States on Twitter. In March 2020, he amplified an unfounded conspiracy theory that the COVID-19 pandemic had originated from the U.S. military when he shared a now-notorious Twitter post by Zhao Lijian, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson.

In response to Zhao’s accusations, the U.S. State Department summoned China’s then-Ambassador to the United States Cui Tiankai.

In June 2020, Rep. Michael McCaul (R-Texas) released an interim report on the origins of COVID-19. The report criticized the Chinese

regime, saying that the pandemic “could have been prevented” if Chinese officials had responded to the initial outbreaks in a “transparent and responsible manner.”

A month later, Lin wrote on Twitter that the interim report was intended to “shift blames and cover the delinquency of #Trump

Administration.”

Lin also took to Twitter repeatedly to defend the communist regime’s policies targeting ethnic minorities in the far-western region of Xinjiang. In a December 2019 Twitter post, he wrote that China’s “vocational education and training centers,” which Western officials have described as “concentration camps,” were effective in ending “extremism” in Xinjiang.

China has used “combating extremism” as a pretext to lock up more than 1 million Uyghurs in Xinjiang while subjecting them to forced sterilization, forced labor, and other inhumane treatment. Both the Trump and Biden administrations have determined that China has committed “genocide” and “crimes against hu- ➔

GREG BAKER/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Li Xiaolin, CEO of China Power International Development Ltd., arrives at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on March 7, 2014.

The 2022 roundtable event comes at a time when China has been increasing its purchases of U.S. farmland in the past decade, prompting concerns about U.S. national security.

manity” against the Uyghurs.

At the opening ceremony of the April roundtable, Lin said China and the United States should work together because the two sides “complement each other.” According to Lin, the United States has the advantage of having advanced technology, finances, and talent, while China possesses a large market and high domestic demand.

Representatives for the USHCA and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation didn’t respond to requests for comments by press time.

The activities of Chinese influence groups in Italy, including CPAFFC, were the focus of a 2021 report by researchers at Sinopsis, a project by nonprofit AcaMedia z.u., in collaboration with the Department of Sinology at Charles University in Prague.

The report told government bodies, politicians, and political parties to “avoid interactions” with CPAFFC and other CCP influence agencies.

“The activities of these agencies and their fronts by-pass norms that require accountability of state-to-state relationships, disguising the party-state’s activities through ‘people-to-people,’ ‘cultural,’ ‘non-government’ or other labels,” the report reads. “Legislators should understand the nature of cooption and propaganda events to which they are invited as influence tools, rather than ‘dialogue’ partners.

“Even attending them to express critical views allows the CCP to publicly present its interlocutors as endorsers of its platforms and narratives.” ■



FENG LI/GETTY IMAGES



SECURITY

BY CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON

COMMUNITY GARDENS
are springing up in more
places, and gardeners are
documenting their successes
and failures on social media.
PHOTO BY EZRA BAILEY/GETTY IMAGES

Growing food at home undergoes resurgence as inflation, supply chain worries increase



A

VEGAN FAMILY OF FOUR, without any gardening experience, can grow all of their own food for a year using 1/20th of an acre.

That's 4,400 pounds of food per year, grown in six garden beds using the "predictable" and formulaic Mittleider gardening system, said Lucinda Bailey, co-founder of seed bank company Texas Ready.

"I've taught 40 different methods at the community college level and this is the only system that I could say, 'If I do a half hour of this kind of labor, I put in this many dollars, I will get 70 pounds at the end of the season,'" she told *The Epoch Times*.

"In a down economy, we've got to produce the calories for our family. It's a change in lifestyle—it really is—to get people to be able to grow all their groceries in their backyard, but it's entirely possible."

Bailey said an 8-year-old girl recently produced 4,325 pounds of food in her first year of trying the Mittleider system, which is known for high yields and the ability to thrive in any soil condition and wide climate variations.

"It's not a difficult system.



Vegetable garden beds using the Mittleider growing system.

She followed the checklist," Bailey said.

In the past, Bailey would tell gardening novices to grab some seedlings from Home Depot or Lowes and "just keep them alive for 90 days" in the first year. In the second year, start growing from seed, and in year three, learn how to save your own seeds, she said.

Now, due to socio-political stressors, she's encouraging

people to get started right away and learn it all at once.

"I just think people ought to begin growing their own food because I don't think there are any good answers on the market," she said.

"It takes about three months to even get something that you're really going to be able to chow down on. You don't throw the seeds in and tomorrow, you have salad—that isn't how it works.

It could take 60, 90 days before you're really having that hearty soup."

In 2020, government-imposed lockdowns kept people at home and many turned to growing their own food—either as a hobby or as a way to combat concerns about the food supply chain.

Once the country opened up, soaring food prices and rising inflation added to food security concerns and

again, more people turned to home gardening.

"We've really seen—as far as it relates to the food supply chain, and particularly more recently, the cost of food within the supermarket—people wanting to take more control over that," said Bill Hageman, owner of Peaceful Valley, the largest independent U.S. retailer of organic food production and gardening supplies.

"To be able to grow food within your own home and not have to go through retail chains and other distributors, that's going to have a more pronounced impact going forward."

The demographic of who is growing food at home has also shifted dramatically in recent years, Hageman said.

"For our segment within organic gardening, if you look back three or four →

COURTESY OF TEXAS READY

years, the top demographic would more likely be someone who's either retired or semi-retired," he said, citing trends from the company's online nursery GrowOrganic.com.

"The No. 1 demographic within our website right now is the 22-to-35 [age group]. And it's split half between male and female. It's individuals that are craving knowledge that probably didn't grow up in an environment where they were exposed to their own food production."

Community gardens are springing up in more places, and gardeners are documenting their successes and failures on social media, as well as sharing information on how to solve common issues.

"Where it would have been something that was individualized before, I think people are very proud of their accomplishments and it helps keep them motivated through the hard times when you lose some crop, or you've got a pest that you were able to control," Hageman said.

He has seen a migration in shipping patterns over the past three years from traditional city centers and suburban areas on the West Coast near Los Angeles or San Francisco to areas such as Sacramento, Spokane, and outside of Boise, Idaho.

"It's not just a West Coast



phenomenon. We've seen a lot of people leaving Miami and New York City and moving to suburbs in Atlanta or Nashville," he said.

Growing enough food to cut out reliance on the supermarket can seem daunting, but experts encourage people to just get started.

Hageman encourages people to "just get their hands dirty."

"Spend a little bit of time

online educating yourself on what resources you would need to be successful," he said. "It's really easy to get discouraged. Growing from seed is not always the easiest thing, [and] there are certain varieties that will grow easier than others."

Knowing which USDA hardiness zone you're in can help avoid failures, Hageman said.

He suggests for first-time and casual gardeners to try

A boy harvests
some large carrots with his mother in their home garden.

KLAUS VEDELT/GETTY IMAGES

starting seeds in a tray and then gardening in a raised bed or containers.

"There's a pretty low barrier to entry around that," he said. If you're growing into the ground, "you really need to understand what's in your soil."

Additionally, more and more solutions are hitting the market for people living in urban areas and small spaces.

"Because of the growth of gardening overall, there's

been a lot of new products that have come out over the last two years or so that'll help homeowners in cities," Hageman said. People can now "easily" grow tomatoes in containers on a patio or fire escape, he said.

"Within the home, too, I'd say growing herbs, growing spices, growing things on your windowsill. That's also an attractive way to start."

Matthew Elsey, merchant of

AFTER
25
GENERATIONS

Open-pollinated seeds are the most stable, and after 25 generations, they can be labeled as heirloom.

40
DEGREES F

USDA-certified seeds that are stored at around 40 degrees F will last about five years, with a germination rate of about 85 percent.

fertilizers and seeds for The Home Depot, said the mega-chain has seen an increase in people growing food over the past few years.

"One of the best ways to grow vegetable plants and herb plants in your own yard is in a raised garden bed. Elevated garden beds make it easier to control the soil and protect against pests," he told The Epoch Times via email.

Elsey said the store's top-selling seedlings are tomatoes and hot peppers.

Heirloom Versus Hybrid Seeds

Seeds can be categorized into two general formats—hybrid and open pollinated.

Open-pollinated seeds are the most stable, and those that have been around for at least 25 generations can be labeled as "heirloom," Bailey said.

"The heirloom then is going to be the most stable of the stable. And that's what you want in a down economy, where you have to make sure that you're feeding your family. There's no room for messing up," she said.

To explain a hybrid seed, Bailey likened it to the designer dog Labradoodle in the animal world—an intentional breed between a labrador and a poodle.

"But let's say next year, the dogs get out" and mate, she said. →

“You’re not getting Labs, you’re not getting poodles, and you’re sure as heck not getting Labradoodles. You’re getting mutts. Well, that’s exactly what happens in the garden.”

Bailey said hybrids generally produce great food the first year, but beyond that, one of several poor outcomes are likely, including sterile seeds or “you plant a cucumber, but you get a gourd,” or “you plant a tomato, and it reverts up the genetic chain.”

Neither heirloom nor organic seeds are genetically modified, but organic seeds can be hybrid, she said.

“Just because it’s organic, it just means it was grown in pretty dirt. It doesn’t mean that the genetics are what we want them to be,” she said.

Texas Ready sells seed banks for different-sized families, from the 10,000-seed “Piggy Bank” for two adults to the 200,000-seed “The Treasury” for 30-plus adults. The kits include at least 70 different varieties of produce that, used together with the Mittleider system, are geared to provide the annual caloric and nutritional requirement for the group. All of her seeds will grow in the continental United States, she said.

“Our seed banks are based on nutrition,” Bailey said. “So we have two or three things of every vitamin or

Knowing which USDA hardiness zone you’re in can help you to avoid crop failures.

supplement that is needed.”

Hageman sells organic seeds—sourced locally where possible—as well as plants such as fruit and nut trees. “It’s a higher quality product. We focus on health benefit overall, we focus on nutrition,” he said. The website is packed with gardening products and tips, including how to deal with pests organically.

Seed and Fertilizer Shortages

Seed sales are a litmus test of wider economic and political changes.

Kurt Nauck, co-founder of Texas Ready, said when Barack Obama was president, sales continued to climb. He called Obama “salesman of the year” for several years. The company was selling three or four seed banks a day. However, when President Donald Trump took office, seed sales dropped so low (to two banks per month) that Nauck and Bailey decided in February 2020 to put the company on ice.

Then, the pandemic hit, and government lockdowns followed. The governor of Michigan banned sales of seeds and gardening supplies

from the big box stores that she had allowed to remain open in the state.

“Since that time, we have remained extremely busy,” Nauck said.

“Our customer, I would say, is 95 percent-plus individuals who are pretty new to gardening. That’s always been the case, [and] that really hasn’t changed.”

However, Nauck said, the customer base is much broader than before, and even farmers are calling to find seeds to plant acres of food.

“We didn’t used to have farmers calling us,” he said.

Bailey said she has recently had difficulty sourcing some seeds due to more crop failures and other factors.

“I had never seen that quantity of crop failure. One or two a year, breeds that don’t produce, that makes some sense to me. But 10 or 15 varieties, that makes no sense to me,” she said.

Hageman said he doesn’t foresee a seed shortage to have a “massive impact” on the home gardener.

“I’d say that as it relates to specialty or unique seeds, what we’ve observed is that the price is going up more

than the availability is going down,” he said.

Fertilizers are growing in price and potentially getting more scarce. Bailey suggests stocking up now on what’s needed to guarantee success with the Mittleider system—nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, as well as Epsom salts and trace elements.

“I could store five years’ worth for a family of four under a single card table,” she said.

Storing and Saving Seeds

USDA-certified seeds that are stored at around 40 degrees F will last about five years, with a germination rate of about 85 percent, Bailey said.

“Seeds are living organisms, so you certainly don’t want to vacuum pack or suck all the oxygen out—there has to be a slight amount of oxygen transfer,” she said.

Beyond the first year’s crop, gardeners should start learning how to save their best seeds for next season—a whole science in itself.

“We believe the old ways were best. Everybody in America at one point knew how to save seeds because that was how they were going to feed their families,” Bailey said.

“There are 17 major seed-saving families. By that I mean, watermelon, cucum-

bers, squash—those are all done exactly the same way. These aren’t difficult things, but they’re things that you would never guess to do.”

Bailey recommends the book “Seed to Seed” by Suzanne Ashworth as a how-to guide.

“If just a few of us could get good at saving seeds, and we have in our hearts to benefit our neighbors and train them to do it, this thing can go exponential, and there is food for everybody. There is no need for food shortages, hunger—nothing like that.” ■

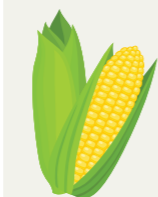


(Above) For those new to gardening, or who live in small spaces, a windowsill garden is a good start. (Below) Learning how to grow from seed is an important step to home gardening.

SEEDS CATEGORIES



OPEN-POLLINATED:
Most stable, labeled as “heirloom”



HYBRID:
Produce great food the first year

CLOCKWISE FROM L: SHUTTERSTOCK, YULIA NAUMENKO/GETTY IMAGES; BUSYBEE/CR/GETTY IMAGES



Shortages and high prices should be used
to hasten environmental transitions,
say officials and activists

AGRICULTURE
FERTILIZER CRISIS

AN ANALYSIS SHOWS
that fertilizer prices have rapidly
climbed since mid-2021, spiking
first in late 2021 and again around
the time of the invasion of Ukraine.

PHOTO BY SINDY SÜSSENGUT/UNSPASH

FERTILIZER CRISIS



BY NATHAN WORCESTER

“ FERTILIZER SHORTAGES ARE REAL NOW.”

UTTERED BY USAID'S SAMANTHA POWER IN a May 1 ABC interview with former Democratic adviser George Stephanopoulos, the words briefly drowned out the din of the news cycle.

They weren't unexpected to some.

Power, who served as U.N. ambassador under former President Barack Obama, mentioned fertilizer shortages after weeks of hints from the Biden administration.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki repeatedly alluded to challenges obtaining fertilizer in recent press briefings. So did President Joe Biden himself in a joint statement with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

“We are deeply concerned by how Putin's war in Ukraine has caused major disruptions to international food and agriculture supply chains, and the threat it poses to global food security. We recognize that many countries around the world have relied on import-

ed food staples and fertilizer inputs from Ukraine and Russia, with Putin's aggression disrupting that trade,” the leaders said.

In an April report, “The Ukraine Conflict and Other Factors Contributing to High Commodity Prices and Food Insecurity,” the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Foreign Agriculture Service noted that “for agricultural producers around the world, high fertilizer and fuel prices are a major concern.”

While political rhetoric has often focused on Russia, the rise in fertilizer prices didn't begin with its invasion of Ukraine.

An analysis from the Peterson Institute for International Economics shows that fertilizer prices have rapidly climbed since mid-2021, spiking first in late 2021 and again around the time of the invasion.

Industry observers have pointed out that commodity prices aren't solely affected by the actions of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Max Gagliardi, an Oklahoma City oil →

EMPLOYEES PACKAGE

bread at a bakery in Khartoum, Sudan, on March 17, as food prices rise across the country.

ASHRAF SHAZLY/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



and gas industry commentator who co-founded the energy marketing firm Ancova Energy, told Insight that the war and sanctions have helped drive the upward climb of natural gas prices in Europe.

Natural gas is used in the Haber-Bosch process, which generates the ammonia in nitrogen fertilizers. Those fertilizers feed half the planet.

Gagliardi thinks the picture is more complicated at home, where environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) has become a controversial tool of stakeholder capitalism, often used to force divestment from fossil fuels or other industries disfavored by the left.

“It’s a combination of record demand domestically and from LNG [liquid natural gas] exports combined with less than expected supply, in part due to the starving of capital for the O&G industry due to the ESG/green movement pressures on capital providers, plus pressure from Wall Street to spend less capital and return value to shareholders,” he said.

Language from Power Echoes Green Activists, EU, WEF

In the case of increasing costs for oil, natural gas, and coal, some politicians and green activists have argued that those fast-rising prices mark an opportunity to accelerate a move from hydrocarbons to wind, solar, and electrification.

“Big Oil is price gouging American drivers. These liars do nothing to make the United States energy independent or stabilize gas prices. It’s time we break up with Big Oil and ignite a clean energy revolution,” Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) wrote on Twitter in March.

“I say we take this opportunity to double down on our renewable energy investments and wean ourselves off of planet-destroying fossil fuels[.] Never let a crisis go to waste,” former Joe Biden delegate and political

commentator Lindy Li wrote in a Twitter post about ExxonMobil’s exit from Russia’s Far East.

Mandy Gunasekara, an environmental lawyer who served as the Environmental Protection Agency’s chief of staff under President Donald Trump, told Insight that “it’s always been part of their plan to make the price of traditional energy sources go up, so then wind and solar could actually compete with them.”

Describing how fertilizer shortages could actually help advance a particular agenda, Power sounded much like Li. She even used an identical phrase: “Never let a crisis go to waste.”

Intentionally or not, this echoed a line from another high-profile Obama alum, Rahm Emanuel: “Never let a serious crisis go to waste.” Emanuel was talking about the 2008–09 financial meltdown.

An analysis shows that fertilizer prices have rapidly climbed since mid-2021, spiking first in late 2021 and again around the time of the invasion of Ukraine.

“Less fertilizer is coming out of Russia. As a result, we’re working with countries to think about natural solutions, like manure and compost. And this may hasten transitions that would have been in the interest of farmers to make anyway. So, never let a crisis go to waste,” Power told Stephanopoulos.

Power’s language of setting crisis as opportunity parallels similar statements from environmental groups.

Writing to von der Leyen and other European Union bureaucrats, a group of European and international environmental orga- ➔

\$200
MILLION

▶ Since 2021, Sri Lanka has had to compensate 1 million of its farmers, to the tune of \$200 million.



A WORKER CHECKS the production of urea lines at fertilizer giant Yara’s plant in Le Havre, France, on April 8.

SAMEER AL-DOUMY/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



[Sri Lanka is] now literally on the verge of famine, because they've had massive crop failures."

*Mandy Gunasekara,
environmental lawyer*

"There are substantial opportunities to reduce energy use by reducing demand for [fertilizers]," the report reads.

It also envisions cuts to energy in the food sector of 60 percent before 2050.

That imagined energy austerity, with its many unforeseeable consequences for human life, apparently won't last forever.

The report states that after 2050, energy for fertilizer and other aspects of food production will "[increase] with zero-emissions electricity."

"A food crisis/famine advances the long-term goal of more centralized control of energy, food, transportation, etc., as advanced by the Davos crowd of the WEF. Governments must expand their powers to 'handle' crises, and that is what progressives love more than anything," Marc Morano, proprietor of the website Climate Depot, told Insight.

Sri Lanka's Organic Experiment a Stark Warning

Although Power's remarks were consistent with talking points from Democrats, the WEF, the EU, and similar factions, they came at a particularly inconvenient moment for advocates of organic fertilizer—Sri Lanka's recent experiment with abandoning chemical fertilizer has plunged the island nation into a chaos that shows no signs of letting up.

According to a 2021 report from the USDA Foreign Agriculture Service, Sri Lankan agricultural economists said a rapid shift from chemical to organic fertilizers "will result in significant drops in crop yields."

The country has since had to compensate 1 million of its farmers to the tune of \$200 million, as reported by Al Jazeera.

With food shortages now a reality, anti-government protests prompted Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to declare a state of emergency on May 6—the second such declaration in two months.

"[Sri Lanka is] now literally on the verge of →

nizations urged the EU to stay the course on environmental policy.

"The crisis in Ukraine is yet another reminder of how essential it is to implement the Green Deal and its Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies," the letter reads.

The Farm to Fork Strategy confidently states that its actions to curb the overuse of chemical fertilizers "will reduce the use of [fertilizers] by at least 20 percent by 2030."

"Ploughing more farmland, as is currently being put forward, to grow crops for biofuels and intensive animal farming by using even more synthetic pesticides and [fertilizers] would be absurd and dangerously increase ecosystem collapses, the most severe threat to social-ecological stability and food security," the letter reads.

"The European Union must tackle the current challenges by accelerating the implementation of its strategies to reduce the use of synthetic pesticides and [fertilizers], to preserve its natural environment and the health of its citizens."

Numerous publications from the World

Economic Forum (WEF), known for its role in orchestrating the global response to COVID-19, have made similar arguments.

A 2020 white paper from the WEF and consulting firm McKinsey & Company warns of greenhouse gas emissions and potential runoff from fertilizers, advocating for an end to fertilizer subsidies in developing countries and praising China for its efforts to reduce fertilizer use.

A 2018 WEF white paper co-authored with the consulting firm Accenture claims that "a 21st century approach to organic farming" should strive to close the gap in yields between organic and conventional farming.

The WEF's vision of 21st-century agriculture comes into greater focus in another 2018 report, "Bio-Innovation in the Food System." It advocates for the bioengineering of new microbes to fix nitrogen more efficiently in plants.

"This offers the prospect of lowering and more optimally applying nitrogen fertilizer," the 2018 report reads.

The WEF has also pushed the use of "bio-

PROTESTERS RALLY AGAINST

rising living costs, at the entrance of the president's office in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on March 15.

ISHARA S. KODIKARA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Manure cannot compete with modern chemical agriculture for the high-yield farming that the world depends on.”



Marc Morano, proprietor, Climate Depot

famine, because they’ve had massive crop failures,” Gunasekara said.

“This administration wants to use this as an opportunity to push their Green New Deal-style farming tactics, which we’ve seen implemented elsewhere, that cause significant problems beyond what we’re currently facing from our farmers’ perspective and what consumers are going to be facing.”

Morano said, “Manure cannot compete with modern chemical agriculture for high-yield farming that the world depends on.”

Rufus Chaney, a retired USDA scientist known for his research on sewage sludge-based fertilizers, echoed Morano’s skepticism about making up for missing chemical fertilizers with organic alternatives.

“There are not enough useful (and not already being used) organic fertilizers to change the balance of any chemical fertilizer shortages,” Rufus told Insight via email.

“Nearly all organic fertilizers are built on livestock manure and can only be shipped short distances before it becomes cost-prohibitive.”

These realities underscore another apparent contradiction in green policy—even as climate activists push for cuts to chemical fertilizer use and a greater reliance on organ-

ic alternatives, they’re working assiduously to cull the livestock populations that provide manure for those fertilizers.

In Northern Ireland, a newly passed climate act will require the region to lose 1 million sheep and cattle.

The EU’s Farm to Fork Strategy even states that work on fertilizers will be focused “in hotspot areas of intensive livestock farming and of recycling of organic waste into renewable fertilizers.”

“For years, we were warned that ‘climate change’ would cause food shortages, but now it appears that climate policy will be one of the biggest factors in causing food shortages,” Morano told Insight.

He cited research suggesting that a move to organic farming in the UK could actually raise carbon dioxide emissions, as the decrease in domestic yields can be expected to boost carbon-intensive imports.

“What the Biden admin is doing is seizing on ‘crises’ to advance their agenda. Greta [Thunberg] famously said, ‘I want you to panic.’ Because when you panic, you don’t think rationally and calmly, and you make poor choices. The only way they can sell these climate-inspired utopian energy and food production fantasies is during times of COVID crisis or wartime crisis,” Morano said.

China’s Role Scrutinized

Still, others see the focus on Russia as a distraction from China’s maneuvering on the world stage.

In 2021, China limited exports of both phosphate and urea fertilizers. The country has also stepped up its fertilizer imports.

China’s export restrictions came after it rapidly emerged as “the most important and most influential country in the fertilizer business,” according to an outlook document from the Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association.

The Peterson Institute’s analysis shows

FROM L: COURTESY OF MARC MORANO, STR/APP VIA GETTY IMAGES



A WORKER transfers bags of chemical fertilizer for export in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, on Jan. 31, 2020.

that as global fertilizer prices shot upward in 2021 and 2022, China’s fertilizer prices mostly leveled off.

Although the USDA’s April report did note the impact of China’s fertilizer export restrictions and heavy fertilizer imports, its executive summary drew greater attention to the Russia–Ukraine conflict.

That summary didn’t mention China by name among the “countries imposing export bans and restrictions.”

Stanford University’s Gordon Chang, a China expert, wrote on Twitter on May 6 that China has been “buying chemical companies whose products are needed for fertilizer and, more generally, food production,” citing comments from onshoring advocate Jonathan Bass.

Chang and Bass didn’t respond to requests for comment by press time.

China has also been buying up U.S. farmland, as well as ports around the world, including ports in the now-food insecure Sri Lanka.

Physicist Michael Sekora, a former project director in the Defense Intelligence Agency, told Insight that worldwide fertilizer shortages could reflect China’s long-range technology strategy.

A key element of that strategy is undercutting the United States whenever and wherever possible, he said.

“Our ability to produce food is very much under attack right now. Some people say, ‘Oh, it’s just a coincidence.’ It’s China,” Sekora said.

Gunasekara said, “China has been very strategic in making sure they shore up what they have and restricting access throughout the rest of the world.

“When you have people come in that →

are very anti-development and anti-growth, China can put its finger on the global market, making it that much harder, and then try to use that as an example to exert more authority and have access to greater power.”

Pain Felt Around the World

“It’s been hectic,” said South African tobacco farmer Herman J. Roos.

Roos told Insight that fertilizer prices near him have jumped since the invasion of Ukraine, on the heels of steep increases over the previous year.

He was able to buy all the fertilizer he needs for this year before the latest price shock. Yet he expects shortages of urea, monoammonium phosphate (MAP), and other fertilizers to strain a population of farmers already under significant stress.

Copper theft, lack of government support, and the ever-present threat of physical violence are all pushing Roos and producers like him to the brink.

Yet for all the challenges in South Africa, Roos anticipates that the fallout will be worse elsewhere in the continent.

“The economy will be hit harder in countries like Mozambique, Zambia, and Zimbabwe—countries where your agricultural system is more focused on subsistence farming,” he said.

They and other sub-Saharan African countries are heavily dependent on South Africa for their food supply.

Roos prays food riots won’t come to South Africa. The country is still recovering from a wave of riots in the summer of 2021, prompted by the arrest of former South African President Jacob Zuma.

He does predict that some farmers in the country will go bankrupt.

Back in the United States, Connecticut landscaper Adam Geriak doesn’t yet face such stark choices.

He told Insight that fertilizer prices near



him are up, in line with estimates that a Connecticut garden store provided to Insight.

“I do primary garden work and use organic fertilizers, which primarily come from poultry manure,” Geriak said, noting that the price of poultry manure fertilizer may have risen, too.

He doesn’t think fertilizer price increases will have much of an effect on him. Yet other facets of the current economic picture are worrisome to him as he tries to manage his small business most effectively.

“I’m having a hard time planning for the future because of the uncertainty, and I think other owners are feeling this, too. In the previous two years, clients seemed to have open coffers. They wanted more projects done and there seemed to be a lot of money going

WORKERS FILL bags with fertilizer in the Elephant Vert factory in the “Agropolis” industrial zone in Meknes, Morocco, on Dec. 9, 2021.

FADEL SENNA/APP VIA GETTY IMAGES

around. Clients seem to be a bit tighter now, asking how they can save money on certain projects and such,” Geriak said.

“Being on the verge of a recession and retirement accounts down may be leading to these issues.”

The USDA report on Sri Lanka’s organic experiment states that the country’s government made impossible promises to different parties.

It informed farmers that it would handle the cost of moving away from chemical fertilizers while telling consumers that rice on their shelves wouldn’t become pricier, all while attempting to realize environmental and public health benefits through a breakneck transition to organic fertilizers.

“If you put too much emphasis on environmental issues and you ignore the very real

impact that can have to people’s daily lives, it can have dire consequences,” Gunasekara told Insight.

“Unfortunately, we’re seeing it in the most dire of circumstances, which is a suppressed food supply. I think that situation is only going to get worse because of the rise in prices for fertilizers and diesel and everything else that’s going to make it harder for farmers in the U.S. to produce, then also globally.”

Josh, a farmer in Texas who raises small livestock, also believes things will get worse before they get better. He didn’t want to share his last name.

“I personally think that we haven’t even begun to feel the effects of inflation in our grocery store bills, because last year, the costs to produce were one-third to half the cost farmers and ranchers are having to pay this year. That cost has to be absorbed by the buyer to make it feasible for them to even continue,” he told Insight.

“My family is preparing now and stocking up our freezers and pantry because we are really concerned how bad it can get this next year.”

Josh estimated that fertilizer prices near him have increased by 200 or even 300 percent, “dependent on what program you are running.”

The rise in diesel prices has hurt him the most.

“Farm equipment runs on diesel,” Josh pointed out.

According to AAA’s gas price website, diesel in Texas is running at an average of \$5.231, up from \$2.82 a year ago.

“I can’t imagine how anyone would profit or sustain raising crops or cattle with all these price increases that affect your overhead,” Josh said, saying he has heard about other ranchers and farmers culling their herds to avoid losses.

Morano told Insight, “Food shortages are a great way to collapse the current system and install a Great Reset.” ■



HIGHER INFLATION PREDICTED

Economist who correctly estimated inflation rates says to brace for more

BY PETR SVAB

While the hundreds of economists employed by the Federal Reserve were apparently blindsided by the current wave of inflation, there were economists who got their predictions right. Not only did they get the overall inflation number right, but they also explained why so many others got it wrong.

Based on their calculation, they expect inflation to con-

tinue, although somewhat diminished, for perhaps two more years.

“At the end of this year, I don’t see how inflation ... can be less than 7 percent,” Steve Hanke, one of the economists, said during a Wealthion interview.

At the end of 2023, he expects inflation to stay elevated at about 6 percent year-over-year.

Hanke, professor of applied economics at Johns Hopkins University, and John Green-

wood, chief economist at Invesco in London, predicted in July 2021 that the U.S. Consumer Price Index (CPI), the most popular measure of inflation, would reach at least 6 percent and as much as 9 percent by the end of 2021. The CPI was up by 7 percent in December year-over-year and hit a four-decade high of 9.1 percent in June.

Many economists and politicians, including Fed Chair Jerome Powell and President Joe Biden, have blamed idio-

People shop for produce at a store in Rosemead, Calif., on June 28.

FROM L. FREDERIC J. BROWN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; NERHUIZ/SHUTTERSTOCK

syncratic phenomena such as supply chain disruptions and the Ukraine war for inflation. These factors are secondary, according to Hanke.

“This is an old game with the White House and the Fed trying to cover their tracks,” he said in a May interview with Larry Kudlow, former economic adviser to President Donald Trump.

It’s true that the COVID-19 pandemic and the related lockdowns have disrupted supply chains. People spent much less on services and much more on tangible goods, which hiked demand for commodities, manufacturing, and shipping. As a result, prices of goods have appreciated much more than those of services.

It’s also true that the Ukraine war and the sanctions imposed on Russia for its invasion have disrupted the oil and grain markets.

But such disruptions should only affect prices in select areas of the economy and only for a limited time. If prices rise across the board, it must be that too much new money has been printed, Hanke argued.

“There is only one cause underlining it all and that’s an excess amount of money that’s been created,” he said.

Hanke and Greenwood have used the analogy of a “monetary bathtub.” The water in the tub is the number of dollars newly printed by the Fed. There are three “drains”: One is the expansion of the economy. If Americans pro-

duce more goods and services and the total amount of money stays the same, prices should go down. A certain amount of new dollars thus offsets such a price decrease.

Another drain is the change in the velocity of money, which means how fast money is changing hands in the economy. In recent decades, there has been a growing trend of holding dollars, which decreases the velocity and thus offsets a certain amount of newly printed dollars. Everything else manifests as inflation.

“At the end of this year, I don’t see how inflation ... can be less than 7 percent.”

Steve Hanke,
professor, Johns Hopkins University

The underlying idea has been encapsulated into the Quantity Theory of Money, articulated by 18th-century economist Henry Thornton based on previous works of John Locke and others and popularized in the mid-20th century by economists Milton Friedman and Anna Schwartz. It states that the quantity of money times its velocity equals the total price level times the number of transactions.

With the money supply

(M2) going up by more than 40 percent in 2020 and 2021, “we’re still left with about a 30 percent cumulative increase that’s excess that will eventually come into the system as inflation,” according to Hanke.

Hanke and Greenwood published their analysis in September 2021 in the *Journal of Applied Corporate Finance*. Yet months later, the Fed and the Biden administration expressed surprise over the persistence of inflation.

If Hanke and Greenwood could figure it out, why wouldn’t the armies of economists at the Fed and the Treasury?

Hanke believes it has to do with ideological blindness.

Nearly all economists at the Fed headquarters in Washington are Democrats, he said, and therefore it’s anathema for them to endorse the views of monetarists such as Friedman, who are generally pro-free market and fiscally conservative.

“The Democrats want to keep Milton and any of his ideas buried, and buried very deep,” Hanke said.

He pointed out that countries that have kept their money printing more in check during the pandemic, such as Japan or Switzerland, are now reaping the benefits of lower overall inflation despite facing similar supply disruption issues as other countries.

“We were right,” Hanke said. “Have the reporters picked up on it? No. They’ve canceled this.” ■



Countries that have kept their money printing more in check during the pandemic are now reaping the benefits of lower overall inflation despite facing similar supply disruption issues as other countries, an economist says.



CANADA, IRELAND FOLLOW NETHERLANDS

Farmers warn new carbon emissions restrictions will affect food production

BY PETR SVAB

Canada and Ireland are rolling out policies to force their farmers to cut carbon emissions to a point that the farmers say would affect food production. Despite the potential negative consequences, the policies would seem to only achieve minute results for the “decarbonization” agenda.

Some Canadian provincial officials recently criticized their federal government for setting a goal of cutting emissions from synthetic fertilizer use by 30 percent by 2030 without first consulting the provinces “on what is achievable or attainable.”

“Provinces pushed the federal government to discuss this important topic, but were disappointed to learn

that the target is already set,” Saskatchewan and Alberta ministers of agriculture said in a July 22 statement.

“This has been the most expensive crop anyone has put in, following a very difficult year on the prairies,” Alberta Minister of Agriculture Nate Horner said in the release.

“The world is looking for Canada to increase production and be a solution to glob-

A cattle farmer in Lifford, Ireland, on Jan. 9, 2015.

FROM L: CHARLES MCCULLAN/GETTY IMAGES, PAUL FAITH/AFH VIA GETTY IMAGES

al food shortages. The Federal government needs to display that they understand this.”

Slashing fertilizer use by 20 percent could cost Canadian farmers more than \$48 billion in lost sales due to lower yields by 2030, according to a 2021 study commissioned by Fertilizer Canada, an industry group.

Synthetic fertilizer use is responsible for less than 2 percent of Canada’s carbon emissions, according to Canadian government data. Canada, in turn, is responsible for about 1.4 percent of global emissions.

Meanwhile, the Canadian fertilizer industry already has a program called 4R Nutrient Stewardship that would, if rolled out across the major farming areas, cut emissions by 15 to 22 percent while also boosting profits by using fertilizers more efficiently. The government’s insistence on the 30 percent figure thus translates to a reduction of about 0.1–0.2 percent of Canada’s 2019 emissions and about 0.002–0.005 percent of world emissions beyond what the industry works to achieve on its own.

Ireland is in a similar situation. Agriculture Minister Charlie McConalogue is reportedly about to agree to a 27 or 28 percent carbon emission reduction goal for his sector.

Agriculture accounts for more than a third of the country’s carbon-equivalent emissions, notably due to its

robust cattle farming that feeds not just its domestic market, but also significant beef and dairy exports.

The Irish government’s climate plan calls for a cut of 22 to 30 percent. At the top end of the range, the plan would cause “significantly reduced production” and potentially “devastate the farming sector in Ireland,” Irish Farmers Association President Tim Cullinan previously said.

Ireland’s agriculture emissions add up to about 21 megatons of CO₂ a year. Cutting it by 28 percent would lead to global emissions dropping by 0.05 percent.

Cullinan has questioned what good it would do if other countries don’t follow suit.

“We have to question what it is for,” he said at a November demonstration, The Irish Times reported.

He pointed out that Ireland already runs “one of the most efficient” farming operations in the world.

Regulations that in effect

downsize farming have recently prompted large protests in the Netherlands and led to the economic collapse of Sri Lanka.

The last round of carbon emission targets was pledged by governments at the COP26 climate summit last year. Many climate scientists predict that growing emissions will cause more severe weather events, such as storms and droughts, though historically the more catastrophic predictions haven’t materialized.

Critics have pointed out the “decarbonization” agenda would undercut living standards without achieving meaningful change in the climate. For one thing, China, the world’s largest carbon emitter by far, and India don’t intend to constrict their economies toward carbon reductions. ■

An oyster farmer at the border between Londonderry in Northern Ireland and Donegal in the Republic of Ireland on April 26, 2017.



30%

Canada’s goal of cutting

emissions from synthetic fertilizer use by 30 percent by 2030 only translates to a reduction of about 0.1 to 0.2 percent of Canada’s 2019 emissions and about 0.002 to 0.005 percent of world emissions.

\$48 BILLION

Slashing fertilizer

use by 20 percent could cost Canadian farmers over \$48 billion in lost sales due to lower yields by 2030, according to a study.

**“WE CAN’T FEED
THE WORLD
STRICTLY ON
ORGANICS.”**

Kelly Walker, former soil scientist,
U.S. Department of Agriculture

SWITCHING IN ONE STEP

to an organic approach on carbon-depleted and almost chemically addicted soils will not succeed, expert Kelly Walker says.

PHOTO BY AVINASH KUMAR/UNSPASH

EXTREME RULES IGNORE SOIL SCIENCE

Former USDA soil scientist says radical new fertilizer regulations not based on science

BY ELLA KIETLINSKA & JOSHUA PHILIPP

Under pressure from environmentalists, some governments have implemented extreme nitrogen fertilizer restrictions that ignore the time needed to restore depleted soil microbiology, resulting in protests from some scientists and farmers who are seeing the concerning effects of such restrictions.

According to organic farming proponent and former U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) soil scientist Kelly Walker, in order to keep the billions of people around the world fed, a paced switch to a hybrid approach is needed over any extreme changes based on an arbitrary number to allow the soil the many years it needs to transition away

from chemical fertilizers to a more organic future.

But unfortunately, there has been an ongoing conflict between some environmentalists and regulators with landowners and producers who make a living raising crops and cattle off the land on the approach and extent to take to move toward the common goal of going organic, Walker told EpochTV’s “Crossroads.”

This battle has been going on for a long time, according to Walker, who has done work with groups on both sides of the conflict. There were some people who were willing to meet in the middle and compromise, who have worked through some issues and found solutions. But lately, there have been some more extremist views →

appearing, “kind of seizing power on this issue.”

“We can’t feed the world strictly on organics,” he said, citing one of the first things he learned in graduate school.

Some environmental groups are portraying chemical fertilizers as toxins or poisons, but that isn’t the case, he said.

“It’s a matter of how you manage them, how you use them,” so there’s no need to switch over 100 percent to organic, according to Walker.

“Nitrogen is nitrogen,” he said. “And the plants recognize it as such.”

It’s a challenge to switch large industrial farms, which operate on small profit margins and have to be very efficient, to organic farming in an instant, Walker said. A largely organic approach can be successful on smaller farms, he noted, but it has to be carefully managed.

Then, to feed billions of people on limited land, the most productivity out of farmland needs to be achieved. Switching in one step to an organic approach on carbon-depleted and almost chemically addicted soils won’t succeed, he said.

“You have to think about things like the residual nitrogen value from the organics,” Walker said. “You can’t just switch over in a year; you have to calculate how much nitrogen is being made available in year one and year two of the organics that you incorporate.”

“You have to have several years of residual value from the organics [to avoid crop failure].”

“I think getting the soil microbiology fixed is a good first step.”

He explained that the healthy communities of microbes are what’s needed to make nutrients available to plants in organic-rich soil.



Healthy communities of microbes are what’s needed to make nutrients available to plants in organic-rich soil.

“So even if you wanted to go organic on these large farms, you can’t just suddenly cut off the flow; you have to transition.”

Maintaining Healthy Soil Microbiology

To restore soil health, microbial communities of bacteria, fungi, algae, and other organisms are needed, with conservation programs managing the restoration, Walker said.

Implementing such programs takes a good amount of planning and professionals with expertise, he said. There are such experts in state and federal agencies, such as the USDA.

Walker pointed to private efforts as well.

“[There are] a lot of farms, who’ve

made a lot of progress in this direction, who are implementing conservation programs, and that’s been part of our government outreach to have conservation reserves.”

Farmers care very much about the land, and those who have the means put a lot of money into conservation, he said.

“They don’t want to live in a dust bowl. They don’t want to live in a contaminated area.”

The first step farmers use to increase the organic content in their depleted soils is to add compost or grow alfalfa, which Walker called “green manure.” They then determine how much extra nitrogen any plants would need, given their current microbial health.

“The organic portion is being broken down and is mineralized by the soil microbes to make it available to the plants,” he said. “And then, if that’s not enough for the plants, then we can put in some more nitrogen, and the plants are happy, but we haven’t killed the soil.”

Agricultural Policies Need Decentralization

Walker said progress is being made in soil conservation. But some groups have now decided to jump “way ahead to the extreme of it—we just can’t jump that fast.”

If this trend continues across more farms, “we could have crop failures; we could have sort of dust-bowl scenarios, like we saw in the ‘30s, in my opinion.”

“You can’t just give a blanket cure for the world or for a nation or even for a region because soils vary in their properties. They vary in their organic matter percentages, the types of soils and silt, clay,” he said. “We don’t need more regulation; we need more education.”

Policies that are based on ideology instead of science are problematic, according to Walker.

“We want to avoid contaminating our water systems; we want to have healthy soils, but you don’t just go off on an ideology without knowing what you’re dealing with,” he said.

Walker advises policymakers to first consult the “very talented, knowledgeable people” at U.S. universities and colleges.

“We need less centralization ... and we need to work with the local colleges of agriculture, USDA, the professionals who know what they’re doing,” he said.

“The more we get centralized, the more we get up into the bureaucracy, the less realistic we’re going to be on the ground. You can’t necessarily set arbitrary amounts or benchmarks.

“A lot of our farmers are stretched really thin right now. They’re facing the costs of petrol and everything else and just hanging on by a thread. So I find it very concerning.”

Walker said it’s rather obvious that “there is a plan unfolding.”

“It’s no coincidence,” he said. “All of these things are linked together. And if we go down this path, I think we could have famine. I think there are people who want that; there are people who would like to significantly reduce the population of the planet. And I think it’s a very cold-hearted way to look at doing it.”

“It just leaves a lot of progress un-

done, and it gives a ‘one size fits all’ approach that’s not even going to be good for the planet.”

Sri Lanka’s Approach

Farming in Sri Lanka has basically been one big case study for what can happen if farmers are forced to switch to organic farming immediately, according to Walker, who spent a year teaching in Sri Lanka.

“This is a canary in the mine-shaft,” he said of the country, which suddenly banned the use of chemical fertilizers in April 2021.

“Doing such a quick switch over—there’s massive, massive problems with that. We all want to help the planet. But if you’re going to make policy decisions based on idealism or some sort of utopia that you’re trying to create, you’re gonna create huge problems.”

Walker said soil specialists could work with farmers to try and help them wean their soils off synthetic fertilizers.

“But again, I really would question if we can feed such a large population just on organics,” he said of the government’s plan.

“If you had most of the people in Sri Lanka owning five to 10 acres, yeah, maybe we could do that. But for the most part, to feed themselves, much less to have some exports to other countries for the sake of their national budget, you probably do need some extra supplemental fertilizer [in addition] to the organics.”

“If we were to cut that off, cold turkey, in the U.S., I think it would be disastrous. I think we would see famine. I think we would see crop shortages.”

It takes a while to build back up the organic matter and necessary microbes in the soils, he said. ■

DIYAN DE JONGE/UNSPASH

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