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Today, more food is available than ever before in human history, yet never before has the responsibility to feed the world been in the hands of so few. Never before have so many had the luxury of taking food for granted because it is plentiful and cheap. Although some people may idealise the past, a return to small scale farming is not a solution to feed the world.

Nor is exclusively local food production feasible. We will continue to live a globalised world, but probably one with stronger regionalisation.

Food production has to double by 2050. As agricultural labour will become more limited, we need mechanisation on a human scale. The challenge will be to encourage small farmers to become entrepreneurs. For this we need science-based intensification that makes ecological sense.

As societies become more urbanised we must regain an understanding of where our food comes from. Food should not be seen as a functional commodity, easily disposed of or wasted. Food is about respect for nature and for its producers. We also should be aware of how privileged we are as many people still struggle for their daily food. Chronic hunger and obesity co-exist. I plead for moderation, for moral responsibility, for bringing back solidarity in our thoughts and actions. Food is about sharing.

Can we feed the world? The answer is emphatically: Yes, we can. There is no technical reason why we could not feed a world of nine billion people. Hunger is a matter of buying power, not of shortages.

