

Country : Canada
Committee : Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Agenda : Strengthening Food Security and Sustainable Agricultural Development.
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The importance of food to human health and the economy is well understood and profound. Despite all the scientific and technological advances, hunger and malnutrition are still threatening the health and well being of hundreds of millions of people around the world. Food bank use in Canada doubled in the decade of the 90s. Pesticides and products of modern plant breeding, including biotech crops, help farmers preserve Canada's valuable land: without these technologies, we would need to farm almost 50% more land to grow the same amount of food as we do now.

As part of the federal government's goal of doubling Canadian agriculture exports by 2025, it should focus on increasing exports of Canadian agriculture products, technology and related services as a meaningful way to do this while benefitting the environment. This would also create a brand to improve the competitiveness of Canadian agricultural exports. It takes hundreds of years to create an inch of topsoil and, over a few windy days, it can blow away.

Canadian farmers need to find a balance between keeping the land in good shape and producing as much as possible. The balancing act with the environment is coming increasingly under strain as the amount of food needed to feed the world

continually grows. The only solution for the long term is for the world to keep developing better, more efficient and more sustainable farming techniques.

Sustainable agriculture is one area where Canada can truly lead by example in the fight to reduce GHGs, manage land over generations and help feed the planet. In fact, Canada is particularly well-equipped to contribute here.

During the past 30 years, there has been a fundamental change in how Canadian crop farmers operate. There has been rapid adoption of technologies that have benefited producers, improved our environment, saved and even enhanced the soil, all while helping to feed the world. Canadian crop farmers are using new techniques to produce high yields and be environmentally sustainable. Genetically modified (GM) crops, redesigned equipment and better fertilizer use have enabled a sustainable intensification of production. This generation of Prairie farmers will be the first in history to leave their farmland in better condition than how they received it.

