

Agriculture in Sustainable Development

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Abstract

Agriculture plays a crucial role in sustainable development and in hunger and poverty eradication. The challenges faced by agriculture in sustainable development is in working out ways of bringing about a society that is materially sufficient, socially equitable, and ecologically sustainable and one that is not obsessed by growth only, but motivated by satisfying human needs and equity in resource allocation and use. Sustainable agriculture must meet economic, social and ecological challenges. All these challenges are closely related. These features of sustainable agriculture should be considered as a package, and no single feature should predominate over the others. Sustainable agriculture needs to protect the natural resource base, prevent the degradation of soil and water; conserve biodiversity; contribute to the economic and social well-being of all; ensure a safe and high-quality supply of agricultural products; and safeguard the livelihood and well-being of agricultural workers and their families. The main tools towards sustainable agriculture are policy and agrarian reform, participation, income diversification, land conservation and improved management of inputs. This policy document is an effort to identify the strategies, guidelines and practices that constitute the South African concept of sustainable agriculture. This is done in order to clarify the research agenda and priorities thereof, as well as to suggest practical steps that may be appropriate for moving towards sustainable agriculture. Scarce water resources will be increased in many poor countries.

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