

What was said:

'We need to feed 9 billion people by 2050'

The evidence:

The above may become true or not, but there is no evidence. And what about 2100 and 2150? This line of thought is pure conjecture and generates fear.

What we do know, however, is that food insecurity is not just a problem of the world in the future but that it is a problem on our very doorstep here and now.

In the UK human beings in residential settings including hospitals die by the thousand each year because they are mal- and under-nourished. They lack food security.<sup>5,6</sup>

The poor in the midst of the developed world suffer death in very large numbers because of lack of food.

The big question is therefore how can we feed 9 billion people by 2050, when we cannot feed our needy neighbours in our own society.

Food security is not a matter of just improving farming; it is a question of humanity, or the lack of it.

We need a quiet revolution in our social and financial systems to be able to sustain our brothers and sisters at home and in the rest of the world. There is plenty of food for years to come, but not the will to share it.

The motto 'Nullius in Verba' leads us to question the many announcements made regarding food security and to see this overwhelming subject in an evidence based context. We need to look at the hub of the problem by identifying and changing the social and political conditions and the financial and profit orientated systems, these being the main levers for present and future food security. Improved farming practices are a very important part of this, but they are only a part within a larger context.

## References

- <sup>1</sup>The Future EU Environmental Policy, Institute for European Environmental Policy, published by the All-Party Parliamentary Environment Group 2009
- <sup>2</sup>This Poisoned Earth by Nigel Dudley, Platkus, 1987
- <sup>3</sup>The Formation of Vegetable Mould Through the Action of Worms, Charles Darwin 1881
- <sup>4</sup>The Insect Pollinators Initiative, Biotechnology and Biology Science Research Council et al, June 2010
- <sup>5</sup>Improving Nutrition – Elderly and Vulnerable Groups, proceedings published by Westminster Food & Nutrition Forum 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009
- <sup>6</sup>Hospital Drips and Risking Lives of Premature Babies, Sam Lister, Health Editor, The Times, 24<sup>th</sup> June 2010 reporting on the National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death, this report being called A Mixed Bag.