

<p>At the beginning of the 19th Century marks a significant population growth from around 0.35 million per century, to around 26 million per century, a rate that continues to the present day.</p>	<p>Following the WW2, scientists were inventing new agro-chemicals: pesticides, herbicides and artificial fertilizers which had the effect of multiplying yields several times over.</p>
<p>Since the 1970s, the trend has been towards larger and more corporately-owned farms. Smaller family farms have generally only survived by diversifying into non-agricultural activities, or by supplying the small minority of consumers who prioritize other factors - health, animal welfare, the environment and the local economy - over price for their food.</p>	<p>Food imports dropped from around 50% in from the end of the 1950s to 35% in 1980, a period when population growth added another 11 million people.</p>
<p>Despite the intensification of farming methods, the UK is still not entirely food secure based on what it can grow domestically. Importing food from foreign countries helps to give us greater food security and a wider range of foods.</p>	<p>The development of the British Empire during the 19th Century provided safe access to food from abroad at an affordable price. From around 1800 Britain started to import food. India, Canada and Australia soon became significant sources of wheat.</p>
<p>By 1871, Britain was importing 40% of its food and the population had risen to 27 million and by the height of the Empire in 1914 imports were at 60% with a population of 42 million.</p>	<p>The current UK's population is now 65 million and rising, food imports are at 40% and rising. Housing and industrial developments are eating up greenbelt at the rate of around 4,700 hectares per year.</p>
<p>Climate change and sea level rise are set to become major external influences in the future. A warming climate will have some positive effects on British farming, but sea level rise looks set to further reduce the area of low-lying farmland.</p>	<p>The sustainability of chemical farming has been called into question. It has played a major part in the huge reduction in wildlife which has taken place in the since the 1960s. It is emitting 52 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent annually, which is 9% of the UK's emissions of greenhouse gases. It is exhausting soils. On top of this there is increasing concern about the effects of agro-chemicals on human health.</p>
<p>By the end of the 1950s most farmers had started using chemicals to increase yields. Britain's 6,000 year old farming system was dropped and the great post-war chemical farming experiment - otherwise known as the Green Revolution - began.</p>	<p>Technology is being developed to produce artificial food in factories. Such science is in its infancy, and it will need large quantities of non-polluting energy, which is itself a science that is still developing, therefore it is likely that this is decades away from being a practical solution. Artificial food is likely to come with health risks and would not be a solution for most people!</p>
	<p>As machines began to replace human and animal labour, more food became available. This was partly because people began to need less food as more jobs became non-manual.</p>