Linking Human Nutrition to Land Resources in New York State. (A08-fick143225-Poster)

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Abstract:

The US food supply does not match the recommendations of the Food Guide Pyramid (FGP). To meet dietary guidelines, cropland allocation needs to be changed. To determine 1) how land resources would be allocated and 2) how many people would be fed if New York State (NYS) agriculture produced food in proportion to FGP recommendations, we used available data on NYS crop yields, land use, and land capability class for six diet scenarios that varied in amount and source of protein-rich foods. In all scenarios, soil conservation concerns necessitated that 50% of cropland be devoted to perennial forage crops. The remaining cultivable land was devoted to feed grains/dry beans (15-47%), food grains (18-35%), oil crops (16-26%), vegetables (8-11%), fruit (7-10%), and sugar crops (2-3%). The population that could be fed from NYS agricultural lands ranged from 5.8 to 8.4 million persons, depending on the diet. Our findings suggest that the market for food in NYS (18 million people) is large in relation to the state's agricultural capacity. Similar analyses of other regions may help to develop strategies for providing foods in closer proportion to FGP recommendations.

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