Will Higher Yields Be Effective in Reducing Poverty? (S08-cantrell214626-Oral)

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Abstract:

Achieving higher yield potential and developing improved crop management technologies have remained key objectives of agricultural researchers worldwide. Continuous increase in the yield of food grains has helped achieve food security in many developing countries and surplus food stocks in the developed world. Although enough food is being produced today at the global level, the unequal access to it due to lack of purchasing capacity of those with low incomes in the poorest countries contributes to the hunger and undernourishment of nearly 800 million people. Nearly two-thirds of them live in Asia where rice is the dominant staple. Meeting the demand-supply gap within the national borders of low-income countries, through further yield increases of staple food crops in the unfavorable production environments where the yield gap is large, may be a sound strategy for addressing food-insecurity and poverty issues. To carry out this strategy, the challenge to cutting-edge science today is whether a new doubly green revolution that is yield-enhancing as well as environmentally sustainable can meet the food needs of the people living in unfavorable environments.

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