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Update for paragraph 12.4.2

WARNING THAT BILLIONS MORE FACE FOOD SHORTAGES BY END OF CENTURY

Scientists at the Universities of Washington and California predict that by the end of the century half of the world's population could face severe food shortages as rising environmental temperatures take their toll on food crops. In a paper entitled 'Historical warnings of future food insecurity with unprecedented seasonal heat', published in the journal 'Science', the authors claim there is a 90% probability that by 2100 growing season temperatures in the tropics and subtropics will exceed the most extreme seasonal temperatures recorded between 1900 and 2006. In consequence, by 2100 yields for rice and maize could fall by 40% in these regions. In temperate regions the hottest seasons on record will represent the norm in many locations.

One of the authors, Rosamund Naylor, who is Director of Food Security and the Environment at Stanford University, said the study emphasised the need to invest in adapting to climate changes. She argues that 'we need to be re-thinking agricultural systems as a whole, not only thinking about new varieties of crops, but also recognising that many people will just move out of agriculture.' In many countries, the resulting combination of poor farming practices and deforestation, exacerbated by global warming, may steadily degrade soil fertility, leaving vast areas unsuitable for either crops or grazing. For such reasons a global food crisis seems highly likely within the next 50 years.

Website reference:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/jan/09/food-climate-change>