

### **More Rural Research Is Needed 【需要进行更多的农业研究】**

1. Agricultural research funding is vital if the world is to feed itself better than it does now. Dr. Tony Fischer, crop scientist, said demand was growing at 2.5% per year, but with modern technologies and the development of new ones the world should be able to stay ahead.

2. "The global decline in investment in international agricultural research must be reversed if significant progress is to be made towards reducing malnutrition and poverty," he said.

3. Research is needed to solve food production, land degradation and environmental problems. Secure local food supplies led to economic growth which, in turn slowed population growth. Dr. Fischer painted a picture of the world's ability to feed itself in the first 25 years, when the world's population is expected to rise from 5.8 to 8 billion people. He said that things will probably hold or improve but there'll still be a lot of hungry people. The biggest concentration of poor and hungry people would be in sub-Saharan Africa and southern Asia in 2020, similar to the current pattern. If there is any change, a slight improvement will be seen in southern Asia, but not in sub-Saharan Africa. The major improvement will be in east Asia, South America and South-East Asia.

4. The developing world was investing about 0.5%, or \$8 billion a year, of its agricultural gross domestic product (GDP) on research, and the developed world was spending 2.5% of its GDP. Dr Fischer said more was needed from all countries.

5. He said crop research could produce technologies that spread across many countries, such as wheat production research having spin-offs for Mexico, China of India.

6. "Technologies still need to be refined for the local conditions but a lot of the strategic research can have global application, so that money can be used very efficiently," Dr. Fischer said.

7. Yields of rice, wheat and maize have grown impressively in the past 30 years, especially in developing countries. For example, maize production rose from 28 tones per hectare between 1950 and 1995. But technologies driving this growth, such as high-yield varieties, fertilisers and irrigation, were becoming exhausted. "If you want to save the land for non-agricultural activities, for forests and wildlife, you're going to have to increase yield," Dr Fischer said.