

Submission to Senate Enquiry into Food Security

Some Brief Suggestions to Improve the Future Security of Food within Australia

(My apologies for not referencing any of this)

by Simon Emmott

Better Education of the public about the food supply.

One of the ways to do this would be to transmit the ABC's Country Hour into all metropolitan areas that ABC radio is currently broadcast into. Although the listening audience would be small, relative to the rest of the available media within a city, the information would be more accessible.

Water to be allocated to essential staple food crops first

Irrigation water could be allocated to food crops which are essential for human survival and cannot be effectively grown elsewhere. Luxury items such as vineyards, malting barley and cut flowers should be given a much lower priority than food staples. However, these industries may bring labour into a production area, providing a more steady workforce for cultivation of the basic items.

Ban food additives that encourage unnecessary food consumption

Flavour enhancers such as monosodium gluconate make foods taste nicer and therefore more is consumed. If food security is desired, taking out these, may reduce food intake overall. However, any effect depends on other foods or beverages which the consumer substitutes for the previous flavour enhanced item.

Improve the social life of permanent residents of food producing regions

Encourage females, especially single females into rural areas which produce food. Please prioritise this for the Central Wheatbelt of Western Australia. This will improve the health and wellbeing of single males who make up a large proportion of the workforce in rural areas. Long term food security is improved if more people are born and remain in these areas as a result.

How to feed the needy

By bypassing the retail and wholesale sector altogether, the government could go into food production themselves.

A food pellet/biscuit containing all the essential nutrients a human requires could be produced in a

similar way to least cost animal rations in a feed mill. This could then be distributed as a voluntary supplement to welfare payments. A food grade standard would obviously apply.

Biofuels vs food

At the moment there is plenty of talk about biofuels using up the food supply, especially in corn and other grains. A solution would be to produce the biofuel in areas where food is unable to be economically grown. There is work in the pipeline looking at using waste straw and wood for ethanol production.

However, plants that could produce biofuels and be salt tolerant may be grown in parts of farms that are currently less or non productive.