

# EuroChoices for Young Researchers

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*Mauro Vigani*  
*EuroChoices Advisory Board*

## Outline

- Aim and Scope
- Facts and figures
- Write for Eurochoices

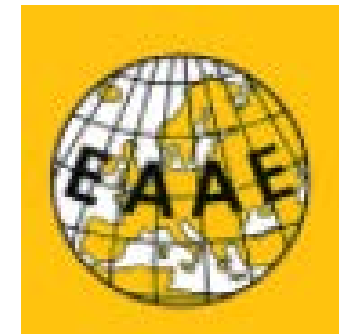
# Aim and scope

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# Aim and Scope



- Launched in 2001 as a vehicle for dissemination of the latest research, ideas and policy deliberations on agri-food and rural resource issues
- Published on behalf of



# Aim and Scope

- It aims to bring careful reasoning with an economic underpinning to agri-food and rural resource issues
- It is a full color, double-blind peer reviewed, journal published three times a year
- Fully referenced and summarised in English, French and German





# Aim and Scope



EU-UK Brexit Negotiations, Covid-19 and Key Roles for Economists

EU-UK-Brexit-Verhandlungen, Covid-19 und Schlüsselrollen für Ökonomen und Ökonomen

Negotiations Union européenne-Royaume-Uni sur le Brexit, Covid-19 et les rôles clés des économistes

John Davis

The Covid-19 pandemic has thrown global economies into turmoil, necessitating hugely expensive economic stabilisation programmes. The crisis has brought into sharp focus the fundamental strategic importance of agri-food sectors in sustaining the health and general well-being of societies across the globe. In more stable and peaceful times it is easy to lose sight of the significance of this key role. It is against this new backdrop that the EU-UK Brexit negotiations will be conducted. The crisis will surely have an impact on the aims and outcomes of the negotiations, perhaps above all the importance of ensuring free and open trading relationships.

“La crise du Covid-19 aura sûrement un impact sur les objectifs et les résultats des négociations sur le Brexit.”

The UK ceased being a member of the EU in January 2020 and in the coming months negotiations on a new partnership model will cover all areas of interest,

including trade and economic co-operation. Agri-food and fisheries will be very prominent and politically sensitive issues in these negotiations. *EuroChoices* has been at the forefront of providing very significant evidence on the economic impacts of Brexit on these sectors since the 2016 referendum.

The gravity model of international trade explains that bi-lateral trade flows take place predominantly between neighbouring countries based on the size of their economies and their proximity. This pattern is indeed observed in the heavily integrated agri-food trade between the EU and the UK. EU Member States supply around 70 per cent of UK imports of food, feed and drink and are the destination for over 60 per cent of UK exports of these categories. If a free trade agreement cannot be reached and the UK 'inherits' the EU's bound tariff rates applying to non-EU countries there is likely to be very significant trade disruption. For example, Peng et al (2017) have shown that this would have severe impacts on UK producers, particularly in the beef and sheep sectors.

On fishing the EU view is that, the objective of the provisions on fisheries should be to uphold Union fishing activities... it should aim to avoid economic dislocation for Union fishermen that have traditionally fished in the United Kingdom waters'. Le Gallie et al (2018) highlight UK fishermen's concerns about the equal access that all Member States have had to all EU waters outside territorial limits, but they also argue that post-Brexit the UK industry will need access to EU markets and EU lobster for fishing to be financially viable. Indeed within the UK, fisheries sector firms see voices of realism on this point.

“Die Covid-19-Krise wird mit Sicherheit Auswirkungen auf die Ziele und Ergebnisse der Brexit-Verhandlungen haben.”

An important contribution that agri-food economists could make to these negotiations would be to advise on the importance of both parties moving towards a workably competitive framework for trade between the EU and the UK as the key overarching outcome. This would recognise that while regulatory alignment between the UK and the EU could not realistically be perfect, it should be workable in respecting the interests and needs of both EU and UK producers and

consumers and is effective and efficient (see the contribution by Wilkinson in this issue). In rising to this key challenge the profession should aim for the Gold Standard in communicating to policy makers and the public, delivering both rigour and relevance (Davis, 2018).

“The Covid-19 crisis will surely have an impact on the aims and outcomes of the Brexit negotiations.”

This challenge does not necessarily require much in the way of new research, indeed there would be insufficient time for much new work. We should be proactive in highlighting the substantial body of rigorous research on Brexit impacts that has been published in *EuroChoices*. To ensure the widest possible stakeholder awareness of this evidence the journal is publishing all relevant Brexit articles in a free-to-read virtual Special Issue on the journal homepage. In addition the Editor is commissioning articles on Covid-19 impacts on agri-food systems with contributions from leading analysts. Further information on this initiative will be available on the journal homepage.

This issue of *EuroChoices* includes a special feature on food topics, particularly on food law and waste, along with other topical articles. As ever, letters commenting on *EuroChoices* articles are always welcome.

## Further Reading

- Davis, J. (2018). Communicating economic concepts and research in a challenging environment. *Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 90(3): 591–605.
- Peng, S., Patten, M., Shephard, J. and Davis, J. (2017). *What or no deal? Impacts of alternative post-Brexit trade agreements on UK agriculture*. *EuroChoices*, 16(3): 27–33.
- Le Gallie, B., Martin, S. and Meis, S. (2018). *Brexit and fisheries: A question of conflicting expectations*. *EuroChoices*, 17(2): 30–37.

John Davis, Chief Editor, *EuroChoices*  
Email: eurochoices@aeae.ac.uk

- Readers have instant, plain-language access to in-depth, evidence-based arguments and research findings
- An accessible format to both a technical and non-technical audience:
  - ✓ Policy-makers, corporate planners, farmers, environmentalists, industrialists, NGOs and students are target readers

# Editorial Board

**EuroChoices**

European agri - food and rural resource periodical

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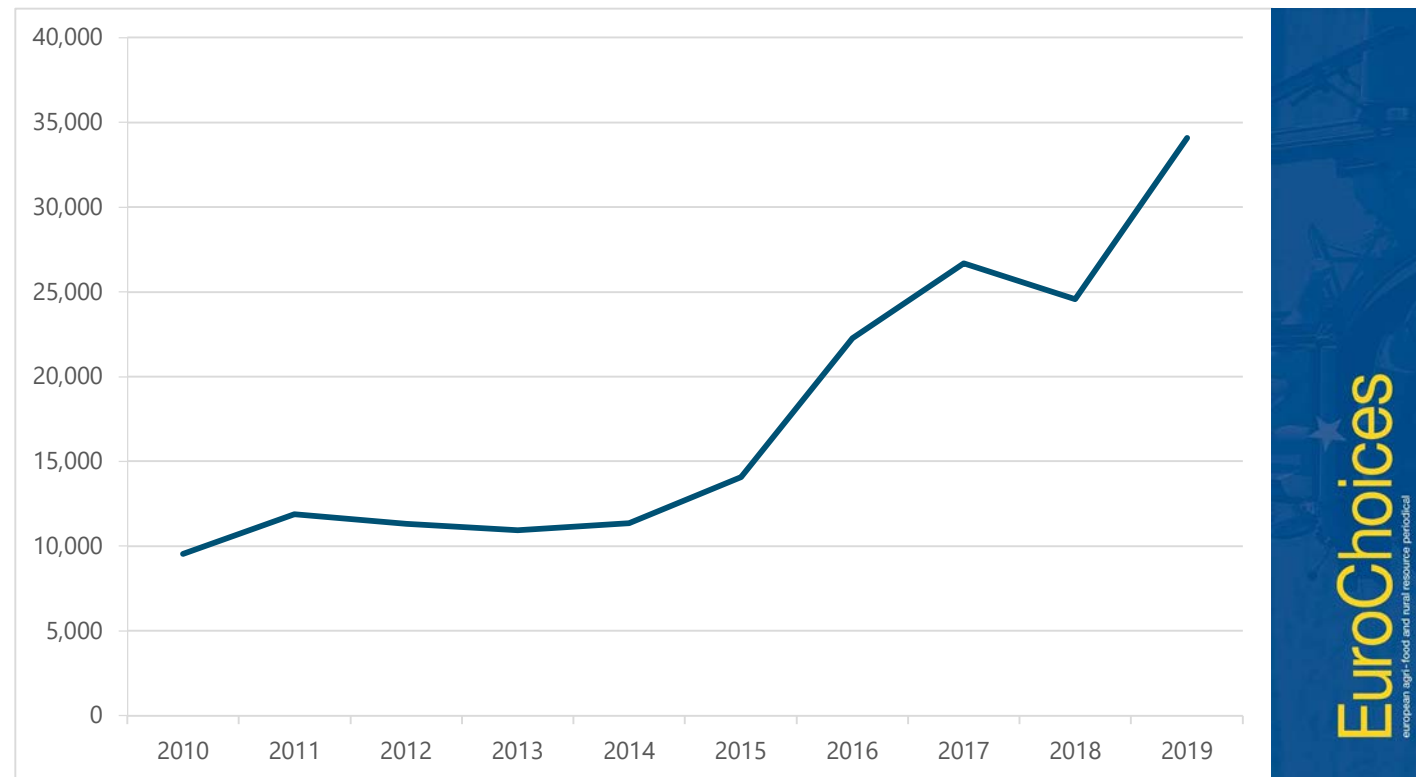
# Facts and figures

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# International readership

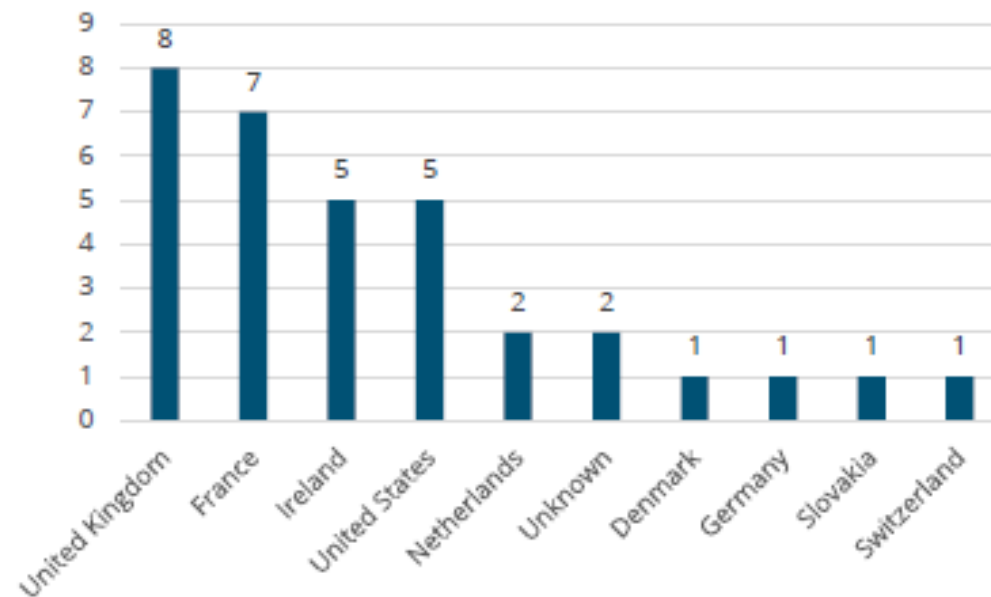
- Readership, as measured by full-text downloads, has a strong growth path with full-text article downloads reaching almost 35,000, a 41% increase on 2018
- Main downloading countries in 2019: UK 20%, USA 17%, China 7% and Germany 7%.



# International contributions

- Contribution comes mainly from authors in EU institutions
- Notable collaborations with US authors
- Among most downloaded authors, 79% from EU

Top 15 Author Contributing Countries



# Turnaround Times

In 2019 the average number of days from receipt at Wiley to Early View for EuroChoices was 51

## Publication Trend

Year	Volume	Number of Issues	Number of pages	Number of articles	Average days from receipt at Wiley to Early View publication	Average days from receipt at Wiley to print publication
2019	18	3	150	30	51	87
2018	17	3	160	29	55	137
2017	16	3	144	27	34	93

# EuroChoices on Brexit

- EuroChoices has been in the forefront in providing evidence on the economic impacts of Brexit:
  - ✓ 4 Brexit special issues (one each year)
  - ✓ One virtual issue on Brexit Impacts on Agri-Food and Rural Economies - The EuroChoices Evidence
  - ✓ About 30 articles



# Write for EuroChoices

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# How to write for EuroChoices

## Five types of articles:

1. *Main articles*
2. *Parlons Graphiques*
3. *Counterpoints*
4. *Point de Vue*
5. *Letters to the Editor*

### How Can West African Rice Compete in Urban Markets? A Demand Perspective for Policymakers

Comment le riz ouest-africain peut-il rivaliser sur les marchés urbains?  
Une perspective de la demande pour les décideurs de l'action publique  
Wie kann westafrikanischer Reis auf städtischen Märkten konkurrieren? Eine Nachfragesperspektive für politische Entscheidungsträger

Rose Flamohe, Matty Demont, Kazuki Saito, Harold Roy-Macauley and Eric Tollens

In West Africa, rice is the third largest source of calories, and its importance is growing rapidly as the result of population growth, urbanization and changing food preferences. While West African consumers increasingly demand more rice, domestic production is growing at a slower rate leading to a huge gap filled by massive imports. Recent estimation from USDA (2017) data shows that the rice self-sufficiency ratio, an indicator that measures the share of domestic production in total consumption, averaged 54 per cent over the period 2010–2015. In 2015, West African countries imported more than

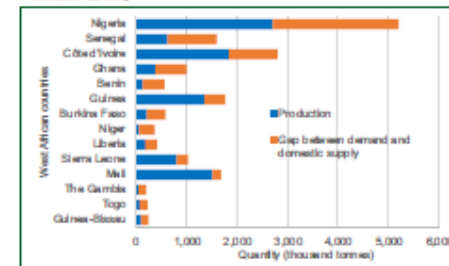
7.6 million tonnes of rice with an import bill amounting to US\$ 4 billion – a substantial outflow of foreign exchange from these relatively developing countries (USDA, 2017). Top importers (Figure 1) are Nigeria (2.5 million tonnes), Senegal (0.97 million tonnes) and Côte d'Ivoire (0.96 million tonnes) (USDA, 2017).

The reliance of West Africa on rice imports is, however, particularly striking as the region has enormous potential to increase domestic rice production. Nearly 90 per cent of the region's rice imports are from Asian countries such as Thailand and India

(Figure 2),<sup>1</sup> many of which have a production environment similar to that of West Africa but are net rice exporters. At the same time, there is little to no intra-regional rice trade to move local rice, within and across countries, from high production hubs to urban consumption zones (Cecow Africa, 2017).

“La protection seule ne suffit pas à accroître de façon spectaculaire l'autosuffisance en riz de l'Afrique de l'Ouest.”

Figure 1: Gap between demand and domestic supply of rice, by country, in West Africa in 2015



Source: USDA (2017).

Recognizing that a heavy reliance on imports is too risky, as painfully shown by the 2007–2008 food crisis, policymakers in West Africa are increasingly interested in conceptualizing and implementing policies and strategies to develop the rice sector and boost domestic production. Thus, since 2008, various national and regional policy and strategic initiatives aiming to support rice farmers have emerged. Notable examples include the Grande Offensive Agricole pour la Nourriture et l'Abondance (GOANA) in Senegal,<sup>2</sup> Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD),<sup>3</sup> the Agricultural Transformation Action Plan (ATAAP) in Nigeria,<sup>4</sup> and the FAO-led Amélioration de la production de riz en Afrique de



# Main articles

## Post-Brexit Policies for a Resilient Arable Farming Sector in England

Politiques d'après Brexit pour un secteur des grandes cultures résilient en Angleterre  
Post-Brexit-Strategien für einen widerstandsfähigen Ackerbausektor in England

Mauro Viganì, Julie Urquhart, Jasmine Elizabeth Black, Robert Berry, Janet Dwyer and David Christian Rose

Arable farming is a highly competitive and strategic sector of English agriculture, but a number of challenges are currently threatening its viability, resilience and the ability of farmers to compete internationally. Challenges include the uncertainties and price volatility of a globalised food system; weather extremes and the effects of climate change; and balancing environmental responsibilities with being economically viable.

Since the 2016 Brexit referendum, the sector has been generally struggling to plan ahead because of uncertain trading relationships and concern around the loss of the single farm payment under the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy. Some believe that Brexit can potentially generate opportunities through the United Kingdom's proposed 'public money for public goods' policy. Despite the clear outcome of the UK elections in December 2019, the shape that Brexit will take is not yet decided; intense negotiations will take place between the UK and the EU and any outcome cannot yet be excluded, including a 'no deal' scenario. Therefore, it is important to understand what enables arable farming to be resilient and to identify what risk management strategies and policies will enable that to happen.

Through the methodology described in Box 1, this article has two main aims:

- firstly, to describe the risk management strategies currently adopted by the sector;

- secondly, to evaluate the impact that current policies and regulations and future post-Brexit policy scenarios might have on the resilience of the English arable sector (see Box 2).

### What can the arable sector do to improve its resilience?

The most frequently adopted strategies for risk management, compiled using survey data (see Box 1) are reported in Figure 2. Among the different strategies, four were considered by the participants of a focus group as the most promising to

develop resilience in the East of England arable farming system.

**Business diversification**, in addition to traditional arable farming, can improve the resilience of a farm by providing an additional income stream. This can improve a farm's bottom line and provide long-term financial stability, acting as a buffer against the environmental risks and market volatility to which the farming side of the business is exposed.

**Increasing the efficiency** of an arable farm can lead to higher productivity and higher profits, and a more robust and resilient core business.

### Box 1: Research Method

This article is based on two sets of data. First, the section outlined below, 'What can the arable sector do to improve its resilience?' is based on a mixed approach. A representative survey of 200 arable farmers in East Anglia was conducted in December 2018. Farmers were presented with a long list of risk management strategies from which to choose. The resulting ten most frequently identified strategies (Figure 2) were presented in a focus group in June 2019, composed of bankers, business advisers and farmers' union representatives. These stakeholders selected and discussed the four strategies they considered the most promising for resilience.

Second, the section *How do policies support the resilience of English arable farming?* and the following sections are based on a multi-stakeholder workshop on Brexit scenarios held in September 2019. Workshop participants were farmers, academics and representatives of farmers' unions and government (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)). Stakeholders were presented with these scenarios, developed by the research team and adapted from Hubbard *et al.* (2016) and AHDB (2017): No deal (ND), Extreme free trade (EFT) and UK-EU Free Trade Agreement (UFTA) (Figure 1). Stakeholders assessed the scenarios in terms of their potential implications for resilience and their relationship to the robustness, adaptability and transformability of the sector. The results presented are solely those discussed by the stakeholders.

- Although economists constitute an important element of the readership, articles should be accessible to non-economists.
- Contributors should avoid articles that focus on methodology (i.e. methodological papers)
- A short explanation of methods is done in a box or sidebar, in an accessible rather than technical way

# Main articles

- Length: 2,500 words, excluding Further Reading and Summary
- Further Reading section with six to ten references and website addresses
- Photographs that help to illustrate the theme of the article

Food



Dairy farmers may dispose of milk deemed unfit for human consumption due to unacceptably high concentrations of antibiotic residues after treatment for animal diseases such as mastitis.

policy, potentially leading to further reductions in the use of antimicrobials in the rearing of food producing animals, with the corresponding safety and waste implications. This could be facilitated by provision of clear information on the effectiveness of alternative disease control options for farmers to help further

improve animal health performance and reduce antibiotic use on farms.

- Investment in technologies for accurate assessment of food edibility at retail and consumption level
- Synchronised monitoring of safety hazards and FLW along the agri-food chain.
- Better provision of information on the safety of mechanisms in place for redistribution of food surpluses, and improved regulation of food redistribution processes to reduce actual and perceived safety risks.

**Acknowledgments**

This research was funded by the Scottish Government Rural Affairs and the Environment Portfolio Strategic Research Programme 2016-2021 Theme Food, Health and Wellbeing' (WP3.1), RD3.1.4 Preventing food waste.

**Further Reading**

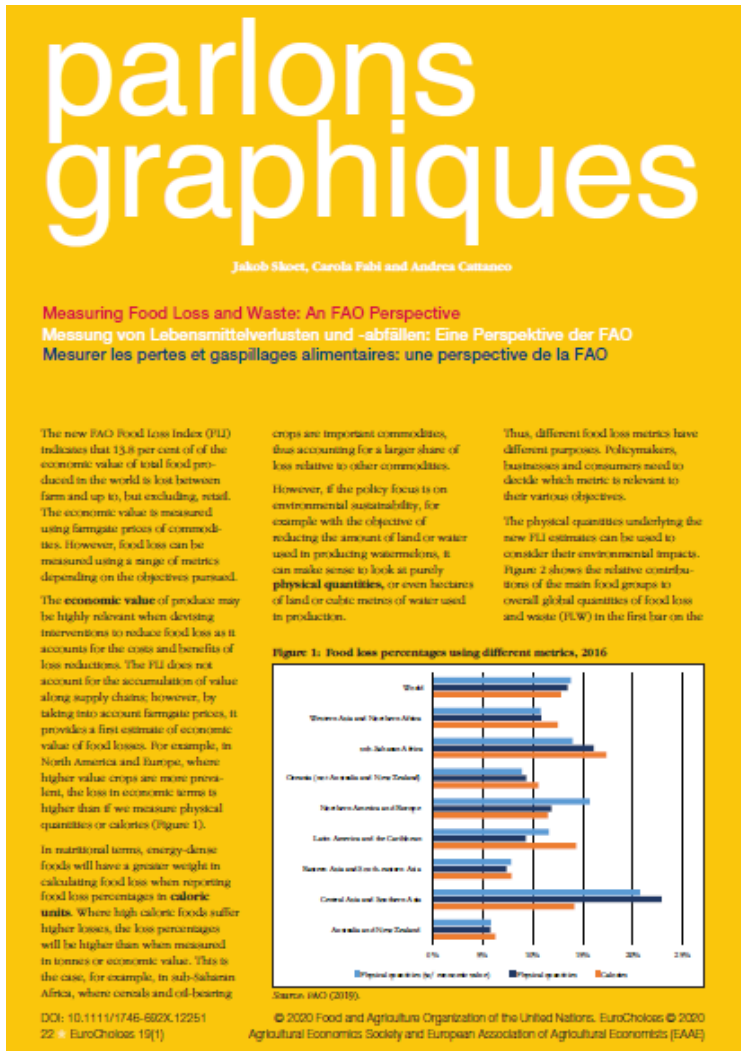
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Luisa Tama, César Revoredo-Giha, Montserrat Costa-Rodríguez and Bethan Thompson, Scotland's Rural College, Aberdeen, UK.  
Emails: [luisa.tama@sruc.ac.uk](mailto:luisa.tama@sruc.ac.uk); [cesar.revoredo-giha@sruc.ac.uk](mailto:cesar.revoredo-giha@sruc.ac.uk); [montserrat.costa-rodriguez@sruc.ac.uk](mailto:montserrat.costa-rodriguez@sruc.ac.uk); [bethan.thompson@sruc.ac.uk](mailto:bethan.thompson@sruc.ac.uk)

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# Parlons Graphiques



- Two-page in the centre of the issue to attract attention, hence quality topics and presentation
- Graphs, charts or maps to tell the main story, with text serving a support role (500 words)
- Parlons Graphiques seldom receives unsolicited submissions, authors are encouraged to submit or bring to the attention of editors

# Point de Vue

The Proof is Not in the EATING  
Der Beweis liegt nicht im Essen  
La preuve n'est pas dans le rapport sur l'alimentation

point de  
vue  
by  
Trine Thorkildsen and  
Dag Hanning Røkenes

Ensuring a sustainable future for global society has become a policy priority, and the need for solutions is urgent. Food production and consumption play important roles both as part of and solutions to this challenge. However, good intentions are not sufficient. Solutions must be evidence based and fit reality if they are to be acceptable.

**Food and sustainability**

Sustainability is a complex issue often covering three pillars: social, economic and environmental. Scientists warn that several of the planet's environmental boundaries are close to being or are already transgressed. The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has warned about the implications of global warming, and the Paris Agreement in 2016 has speeded up work – or at least intentions – on cutting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Several reports addressing agriculture and food production's impact on climate and the environment have been released in recent years – some of which also address diet and health. One of the most widely reported is *Food in the Anthropocene: the EAT–Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems*, published in the *Lancet* (Hereafter EAT–Lancet), launched in January 2019 (Willett *et al.*, 2019). EAT–Lancet is referred to by many as the ultimate solution for food production and

consumption. Unfortunately, there are several uncertainties and flaws throughout the report. Furthermore, its very restrictive dietary recommendations prescribed for the whole world's population are not sustainable – or affordable for many people with low incomes. This article comments on some of the issues forming the basis of the report, its methodology and interpretation of its findings.

**Lack of transparency**

EAT–Lancet's 'Planetary Health Diet' (PH diet) is stated as providing healthy diets within an environmentally safe operating space for a population of 10 billion people by 2050. According to EAT–Lancet they have quantified intake levels for

different food groups for optimal health based on 'best available science'. The authors then assessed the nutritional adequacy of the diet and estimated its effect on premature deaths from non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Unfortunately, the methodology applied in determining the diet is neither sufficiently described, nor in alignment with scientific standards normally required for peer-reviewed publications of this nature. These are the findings of an independent review of EAT–Lancet undertaken by EpiX Analytics funded by MatPrat (Zagmutt *et al.*, 2019a, 2019b, 2020). The authors of EAT–Lancet do not describe the methodology used for selecting



According to the IPCC, a food system should cover nutritional needs, as well as consider differences in people's cultural backgrounds, preferences, knowledge and economies.

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EuroChoices 19(1) 11

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- A shorter piece of between 700 and 1500 words
- It provides authors with an opportunity to express their viewpoints, in a reasoned way, on an issue of interest to readers of EuroChoices
- Point de Vue seldom receives unsolicited submissions, authors are encouraged to submit or bring to the attention of editors

# Counterpoints and Letters to the Editor

- Counterpoints provides an opportunity to comment on articles in a previous issue of EuroChoices
  - ✓ Authors of commented articles in a Counterpoint are encouraged to respond
- Letters to the Editor deal either with issues raised in EuroChoices articles or topics likely to be of interest to readers
  - ✓ Letters should not normally exceed 500 words

**Brexit**



The EU ban on hormone beef has been judged by the WTO to be illegal.

• Reducing environmental pollution;  
• Maintaining and improving animal welfare.

While these non-trade concerns are all legitimate in responding to consumer and citizen demands, they can also be used as cover for protectionist ends, and a core WTO principle is that countries should not discriminate in their treatment of otherwise 'like products'. This raises the issue that WTO rules may not allow countries to impose trade restrictions in support of, for example, animal welfare standards or climate change actions, because, while they affect the way a product is made, they don't affect the product itself.

**WTO rules**

What are the key WTO principles and provisions relating to this problem?

One of the most important parts of the WTO rules is the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which was negotiated in 1947, and adopted by the WTO when it was created in 1995. In connection with all border charges and related import measures, GATT Article I (1), the 'most favoured nation' (MFN) clause, requires that:

*'any advantage, favour, privilege or immunity granted by any contracting party to any product originating in or destined for any other country shall be accorded immediately and unconditionally to the like product originating in or destined for the territories of all other contracting parties.'*

Similarly, with respect to domestic measures, GATT Article III (4), the 'national treatment' clause requires that:

*'The products of the territory of any contracting party imported into the territory of any other contracting party shall be accorded treatment no less favourable than that accorded to like products of national origin in respect of all laws, regulations and requirements affecting their internal sale, offering for sale, purchase, transportation, distribution or use.'*

These MFN and national treatment provisions contain, arguably, the most important principles in the WTO rulebook – non-discrimination between 'like products'. Altogether, the term 'like product' occurs 16 times in the GATT, yet nowhere in the text is the term defined, or any guidance provided about how it should be interpreted.

In part to avoid unjustifiable discrimination and protectionism, the determination of whether or not products are 'like' has normally emphasised their physical characteristics. If there is no detectable difference between the products, they should be treated as 'like', and should not be discriminated between. This has led to the suggestion that discriminating between otherwise 'like' products on the basis of such non-trade concerns is not consistent with WTO rules. This is not quite true. Other provisions of the GATT, along with other WTO agreements, envisage a wider understanding of 'likeness'.

GATT Article XX on General Exceptions lays out a number of specific instances in which WTO members may be exempted from the GATT and other WTO rules. Discriminating between otherwise 'like' products made by prison labour, for example, is permitted under GATT Art XX(e).

Three provisions of Art XX are of particular relevance to trade measures concerned with environmental and animal welfare issues. Provided the application of the measure does not constitute a 'means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination' or a 'disguised restriction on international trade', the GATT allows measures:

- (b) necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health;
- (g) relating to the conservation of exhaustible natural resources if such measures are made effective in conjunction with restrictions on domestic production or consumption.

More recently paragraph (a) was successfully used in the EU Seals (2014) dispute:

- necessary to protect public morals.

The term 'like product' is also important in the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT). Article 2.1 requires that:

*'Members shall ensure that in respect of technical regulations, products imported from the territory of any Member shall be accorded treatment no less favourable than that accorded to like products of national origin and to like products originating in any other country.'*

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## For 2021 contributions from early career researchers are particularly welcome. Some suggested themes:

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1. Brexit impacts and options for post-Brexit policy
2. Labour migration in the agri-food sector
3. Nutrition and sustainable agricultural policy
4. Behaviour change in agri-food
5. Big data and implications for agri-food/rural development
6. Climate change and the agri-food sector
7. Food security and economics of sustainable intensification
8. Food waste and diet issues
9. Implications of blockchain technology
10. Agri-Food chain competition/power relations
11. CAP Reform
12. Market volatility and risk management
13. Innovation and competitiveness in the agri-food sector
14. Bioenergy and links energy-food markets
15. Emerging economies and global markets
16. The future roles of family farming
17. Succession in family farming
18. Economics of animal health and welfare
19. Use of economic evidence in policy making
20. Use of agriculture for non-traditional purposes
21. Agri-food in Eastern Europe/Russia/China



# EuroChoices

european agri-food and rural resource periodical

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Free sample:

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My contact: [mvigani@glos.ac.uk](mailto:mvigani@glos.ac.uk)

## THANKS!

