

## Foreword

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In 1998 I spoke at the 7th International Congress of Plant Pathology in Edinburgh, UK, in a public forum on the role of plant pathology in food security. My talk addressed the question “Can the world produce the food and fiber needed in the 21st century?”. In the ensuing discussion, the International Society for Plant Pathology (ISPP), sponsor of the Congress, was challenged to take action concerning global food security.

The outcome was the establishment by ISPP of a small Task Force on Global Food Security, which has established programmes, regrettably limited by the small resources of the Society, to address some challenges presented by plant diseases that limit food security, especially in developing countries. These have included, for example, a project in Ghana to show farmers how cassava production is limited by disease, and to help them recognize different diseases and learn how to alleviate them.

I commend plant pathologists for taking a lead, through practical actions, in the battle for food security. But of course the challenge goes far beyond pathology and indeed far beyond plants. ISPP’s Task Force on Global Food Security is to be further commended for taking the matter many steps further in the launch of this journal, *Food Security: the science, sociology and economics of food production and access to food*. It should not forget the importance of politics in moving all these issues forward.

In the 11 years since the Edinburgh Congress, the challenge of global food security has sharpened greatly. I said in 2005 that we will have to double the world food supply by 2050. Meanwhile the term food security has passed into ordinary vocabulary. In recent months, hardly a day

passes without the media focusing on the availability of food, the price of food, food safety and so on, in a global context. It is therefore particularly timely that ISPP and Springer are launching, as a joint venture, this journal with its topical title and with the breadth of coverage indicated by its subtitle.

The strength of *Food Security* is that it encompasses not only plant pathology but also the science of all kinds of biotic and abiotic stresses of plants and animals important for human nutrition. Still better is its parallel coverage of global food needs and food potential, alongside nutrition and food quality, and especially the socio-political and economic factors that impinge on the satisfaction of global food needs.

I wish this new journal well. In the words of its developers, “By focussing on these issues in a single publication, it is intended that the journal will provide a spur for the initiation and promotion of policies which will co-ordinately address the spectre of hunger”.



**Dr. Borlaug** obtained his Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from the University of Minnesota in 1942 and, in 1944, he joined the Rockefeller Foundation’s pioneering programme of technical assistance in Mexico. There, as a research scientist in charge of wheat improvement, he transformed agricultural production during the 1940s and 1950s and later in Asia and Latin America, initiating what has become known as the “Green Revolution”. Because of his lifetime’s work devoted to feeding a hungry world, Dr. Borlaug was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970.

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