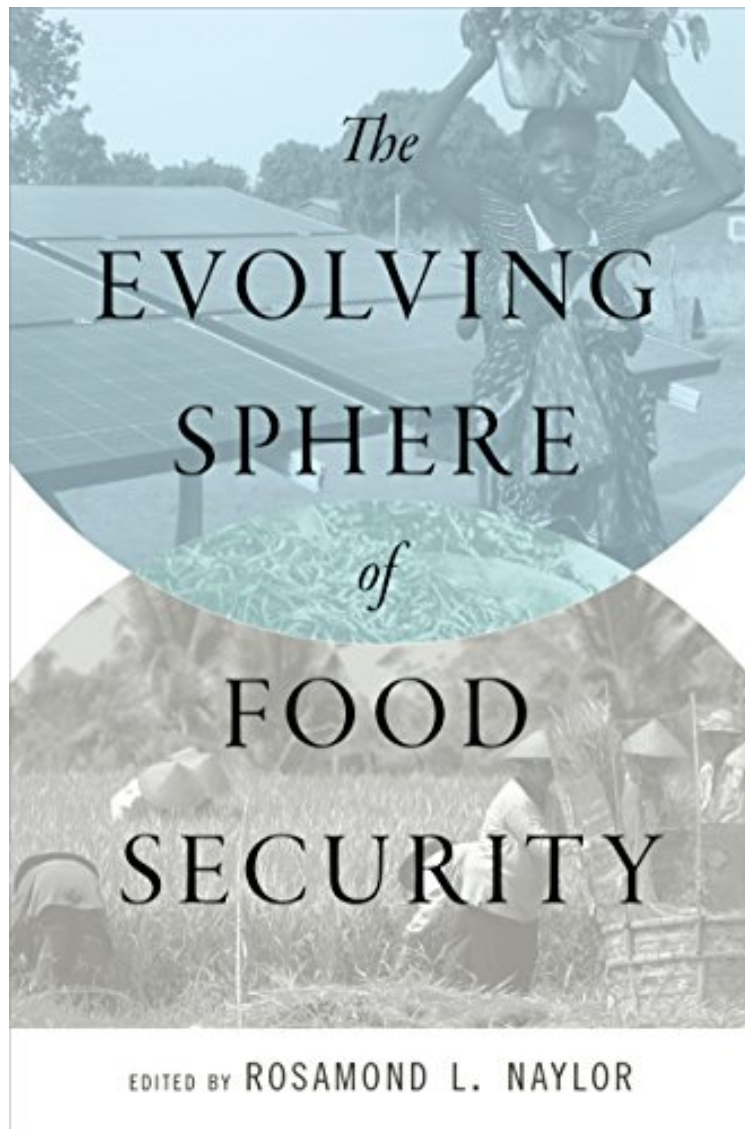


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The Evolving Sphere of Food Security

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From Oxford University Press : *The Evolving Sphere of Food Security* before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The Evolving Sphere of Food Security*:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. as the world needs really smart students to be well trained in these complexities By Peter Timmer Only a decade ago most debates about food security revolved around global food production and population growth. Many still do, but with the perspective of several food price spikes since 2007, and clear evidence that climate change is challenging farmers in many parts of the world, a more complex, sophisticated analysis of food security is welcome. Roz Naylor and her Stanford colleagues have provided it in "The Evolving Sphere of Food Security." Edited books, especially from academia, typically do not inspire. Even world-class

specialists tend to write from their own perspectives, which often diverge (sometimes widely) from the editor's vision of what will make a coherent book. It takes a very tough, and engaged, editor to make the sum of the parts substantially greater than the contents of individual chapters. One way to show this engagement is to work closely with the authors--Roz is either author or co-author of 6 of the 14 chapters in this volume, and she clearly used a heavy red pencil on the other chapters. But this volume also has a unique perspective--what does the Stanford academic community have to offer to the global food security debate? The university has a long and distinguished history in this arena: the Stanford Food Research Institute was founded with Carnegie Foundation funding in 1921 and for almost three-quarters of a century provided policy makers with both high-quality analysis of important world food issues and with extremely well-trained students who populated academic departments, government agencies and donor offices. Roz is a product of that training, and it shows. Turning to her Stanford colleagues for their diverse views on food security was obviously risky--academics can be a nasty bunch and not prone to agree on much. At the same time, there is enormous talent at Stanford with expertise on the broad and complex issues that drive global food security. The problem is to bring that talent to bear in a coherent fashion. At this, Roz has pulled off a tour de force. This book will define high-end analysis of global food security issues for years to come, partly because it is not obvious to me where the competition to top it will come from. That is actually worrisome, as the world needs really smart students to be well trained in these complexities, and the reality of most US academic institutions is that such broad-based, interdisciplinary training that is also based on mastering one of the core disciplines is almost impossible. Best wishes to Stanford to keep up the good work, and push forward with the training. And congratulations to Roz Naylor for pulling this off...C. Peter Timmer, Cabot Professor of Development Studies, emeritus, Harvard University (full disclosure: I started my academic career at Stanford's Food Research Institute and was a Visiting Professor at Stanford in 2007/08. I have remained engaged with the Center for Food Security and Environment at Stanford, but have no active role.)

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A very special and singularly important book

By World Citizen

"The Evolving Sphere of Food Security" is a very special and singularly important book. It provides an in-depth look at the disparate challenges that must be overcome to reduce global food insecurity over the next few decades. Through a collection of well written, engaging essays by preeminent specialists, the volume explores the full pallet of issues that are central to global food security. Essays include a stark examination of the current challenges and opportunities for global food production, an evaluation of the environmental consequences of agriculture, and an examination of the political and economic forces that act today to both catalyze and impede progress on achieving food security on the regional, national and global scale. Essays in the volume examine the traditional, critical issues in food production, such as the constraints on water, energy, and land use. Another essay illuminates the increasing pressure that global warming will have on agricultural production. The volume goes beyond the traditional focus on the production of calories, however. One chapter presents compelling evidence that China, having achieved sufficient calorie production for its population, must now confront persistent micronutrient deficiencies; else increasing nutrition-related problems may present increasing challenges to further economic growth. There are fascinating chapters that review the history and current forces that shape agricultural policies in the US and in the EU, and illuminate some of the profound consequences these policies have for domestic food production and human health; and on food production in developing countries. At the same time, there several chapters that provide examples of wonderful success stories, such as a simple, inexpensive solar-powered drip system that, when installed, created a cascade of improvements that greatly increased food security in a rural community in Benin. On a larger scale, one essay recounts all of the necessary ingredients that conspired to improve the food security of a whole nation (Indonesia) and, in doing so, greatly reduce the rural poverty rates. I cannot overstate the importance and timeliness of this book. To achieve global food security over the next few decades; and to sustain food security over the course of the 21st Century; will require a sustained and informed program that engages people from many disciplines, the involvement and coordination of numerous types of institutions efforts, and the crafting of bold domestic and international policies that are founded on a holistic understanding of the nature of the global food security problem. This book is the first and only book that lays out the full complexity and daunting nature of the challenge of ensuring an enduring global food security. It is a must read for anyone interested in global food production, international development, global food security: from environmental scientists, to agricultural economists; agricultural scientists to biologists, lawyers to politicians; and most importantly, to tomorrow's citizens.

Hundreds of millions of people still suffer from chronic hunger and food insecurity despite sufficient levels of global food production. The poor's inability to afford adequate diets remains the biggest constraint to solving hunger, but the dynamics of global food insecurity are complex and demand analysis that extends beyond the traditional domains of economics and agriculture. How do the policies used to promote food security in one country affect nutrition, food access, natural resources, and national security in other countries? How do the priorities and challenges of achieving food security change over time as countries develop economically? The Evolving Sphere of Food Security seeks to answer these two important questions and others by exploring the interconnections of food security to security of many kinds: energy, water, health, climate, the environment, and national security. Through personal stories of

research in the field and policy advising at local and global scales, a multidisciplinary group of scholars provide readers with a real-world sense of the opportunities and challenges involved in alleviating food insecurity. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, management of HIV/AIDS, the establishment of an equitable system of land property rights, and investment in solar-powered irrigation play an important role in improving food security---particularly in the face of global climate change. Meanwhile, food price spikes associated with the United States' biofuels policy continue to have spillover effects on the world's rural poor with implications for stability and national security. The Evolving Sphere of Food Security traces four key areas of the food security field: 1) the political economy of food and agriculture; 2) challenges for the poorest billion; 3) agriculture's dependence on resources and the environment; and 4) food in a national and international security context. This book connects these areas in a way that tells an integrated story about human lives, resource use, and the policy process.

"The Evolving Sphere of Food Security will be an inspiration to all who want to understand the key importance of food, water, and energy as they link with health, the environment, and the role of women--all so crucial for sustainable development." - Gro Harlem Brundtland, former Prime Minister of Norway

"This book performs a great service by tackling our species' most important issue with sober, insightful analysis from every relevant angle. It shatters the easy assumptions and mythology that all too often cloud our understanding of poverty, food and hunger to deliver news vital to each and every one of the 7 plus billion of us. It is about far more than food security. Read right, it illuminates the human condition and outlines the rules for our continued sustenance on the evolving sphere that is our planet." - Richard Manning, author of *Against the Grain and Food's Frontier*

About the Author

An economist by training, Rosamond (Roz) Naylor directs the Center on Food Security and the Environment at Stanford University and is a Professor in the Department of Environmental Earth System Science. She works with colleagues from several disciplines to study the economic and biophysical dimensions of food security and the environmental impacts of crop and animal production around the world. Roz' work provides her with the opportunity to explore cultures, farming practices, and policies in a wide variety of countries. She has served as an advisor to the McKnight Foundation's Collaborative Crop Research Program and currently serves on Advisory Committees for the Beijer Institute in Stockholm, the Aldo Leopold Leadership Program, and The Nature Conservancy. She is an Aldo Leopold Leadership Fellow and a Pew Marine Fellow. At Stanford, Roz teaches courses on the world food economy, human society and environmental change, and food security.