

SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM. HOW SHOULD AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION RESPOND TO NEW CHALLENGES?

KATI PARTANEN¹

*¹Savonia University of Applied Sciences, Finland
Corresponding author: kati.partanen@savonia.fi*

Food system is under discussion as UN organized Food System Summit process is ongoing. In the discussions many kinds of requirements for agriculture and the whole food system has been raised. Food system's sustainability should be considered from all dimensions: environmental, social, ethical, and economical. If one dimension is missing, the whole sustainability is missing.

The attractiveness of agricultural studies and farming as a career has been declining in many countries. At the same time the global food demand is increasing, consumers are more and more interested on how the food is produced, and conditions of food production are getting more difficult e.g. due to the climate change, lack of fresh water and declining availability of suitable agricultural land. In these circumstances there's rather a huge need for more educated farmers as well as more agricultural experts to support the sustainable food production.

How should agricultural education respond to this challenge? What is needed from the future farmer and agricultural expert? More cooperation is needed among the food chain actors. All the actors should look at their operations through all sustainability dimensions and understand their role in the food system. Also, agricultural education should be at the same time offering solid basis for agricultural understanding and possibility to follow the modern agricultural development. Sustainability should be cross cutting theme throughout the studies.

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