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## Blog John (Ioannis) Meletiadis



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## Food security and the role of the young

I have learned from my grandfather who was a farmer that farmer communities are food secure when all of their members can have the right amount and variety of safe foods that they need to lead active and healthy lives. People can buy food that is produced by farmers and can also produce some of their own food at home in their gardens. This food must be nutritious enough to meet the nutrition needs of everyone in the family .I have also learned that agriculture is very important for small countries like Greece where farmers are trying really hard to achieve Food security.

So, what is Food security? According to FAO World Food Summit, 1996, Food security is when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

It is quite obvious that agriculture is the major source of food all over the world.

The agriculture sector is very crucial in improving food security within our homes and communities worldwide.

Nutrition is an essential aspect of food security. If we want to be properly nourished we need to have access to safe, quality food. We must also understand what makes up a good diet and have to be motivated to make good food choices.

Growing their own produce at home can help people save some money on their supermarket bill. An innovative idea can also be to encourage teachers to allow students to start kitchen gardens at school. A school garden can give income from the sale of garden produce and it is in fact a great way



to encourage students to learn about the value of agriculture and good food and even develop a sense of business themselves. Some food crops that can be produced at home and at school are vegetables and fruit.

Engaging youth in agriculture has been a prominent issue recently, as there is growing concern worldwide that young people are not interested in agriculture as a means of occupation. Most young people who live in developing countries, where agriculture is likely to provide the main source of income must be concerned with farming.

Nowadays urbanisation has led to a decline in rural populations and for the first time in the history of humanity most of the world's population lives in a city. It is evident that more and more young people are heading to cities and towns to find work, as a result the ones who are left behind are not enough to work in the fields. The question now is how to make the young to get interested in farming ?

Most pupils in schools lack access to training and education on farming and therefore they are not encouraged to consider agriculture as a future career. Thus, some developing and basically farming countries ,for example in Africa start projects where students are shown how to grow high-value crops, breed animals and how to promote produce in markets around the world. This has helped young people to discover more about agriculture as a profession and aims to motivate more people to follow farming as a career after school.

Although there are not many young people interested in farming as a career there are still young farmers working all over the world. To make others join the sector it is important that they are offered a chance to offer their opinion and experiences. In this way, they can persuade other young people that farming can be a rewarding career as well as pointing out the key role of agriculture in food security globally.

Another way to urge the youth in farming is to authorize young councils to include representation from agriculture at government level. Additionally, a different, way of offering young farmers a voice is to use the media. A good example is a British television programme that demonstrated the role of young people in the farming industry.

Moreover, new technologies are available that can help lessen the effects of climate change and grow more food with less inputs. Unfortunately the unavailability of extension services has made farmers unable to access new innovations. The youth can help introduce new technologies and use them in co-ordination with traditional methods, to face some of the world's biggest challenges in food production. It is a common belief that innovation can play a big role in agriculture..

Young people don't see much prospect in the future of agriculture and a great number of active farmers is old. The reason why young people are not interested in farming is that they don't see it as an active profession in the long run.



Governments must support the youth to get into value chains by training them and giving them incentives to make a difference by growing enough food to feed the world. All the new farmers can take pride in themselves, as they will be the ones who can end the world hunger and help to mitigate malnutrition as well as adapting the sector to climate change.