

Global Food Crisis

“That’s the new face of hunger, people who suddenly can no longer afford the food they see on store shelves because prices have soared beyond their reach”

(World Food Programme, United Nations)

Global food resources are at their lowest in 30 years

Soaring food prices are leading to political instability, food riots are happening all over the world

Wheat has more than doubled in price, rice is 75% more expensive and maize costs 50% more than it did two years ago

WHY HAS THIS HAPPENED?

- Crop land has been taken out of production for bio-fuels. Brazil plans to use 120 million hectares and Africa up to 400 million hectares with bio-fuel crops over the next few years. EU policy, to substitute 10% of all car fuel with bio-fuels will lead to further increases in the demand for such crops.
- Population growth continues in many less developed countries. Countries experiencing the highest population growth rates are also the very poorest, where people already live a hand to mouth existence.
- Growing demand for a more varied diet in emerging economies, such as China where people are eating twice as much meat than they did 20 years ago.
- Soaring oil prices have led to increases in the price of food transport, fertilisers and other farm inputs.
- Extreme weather has crippled harvests in recent years - 57 countries have been hit by catastrophic flooding, tropical revolving storms, and drought and heat-waves.
- Restrictive import regulations, trading practices and agricultural policies, e.g. set-aside in the EU, have resulted in decreased food availability.

