Wheat Matters – Today and Tomorrow

Wheat is the grain at the center of (Indo-European) civilization. – Rachel Laudan, renowned author on the history of food.

215 million hectares – the area on which wheat is grown each year, worldwide.
- Equivalent to Greenland.
- Sown from Scandinavia to the Southern Cone of South America – more regions than any other staple crop.

Nearly US $50 billion-worth of wheat is traded globally each year.

Wheat consumption: In 8 of the last 15 years, world wheat production has fallen short of demand.

Extreme weather events and trade dynamics have destabilized wheat markets three times since 2000, causing price spikes that especially harm resource-poor consumers.

Wheat and Food Security Rise and Fall with Grain Markets

North Africa and West and Central Asia – Wheat is the dominant staple crop and provides as much as half of all calories consumed in these regions.

The amount the world will need to grow to meet consumer demand by 2050.

We can grow more wheat responsibly to meet rising demand:

- Improved varieties and more effective agricultural practices generated remarkable wheat production increases that have fed expanding populations since the 1960s.
- The yield gains from those technologies have added US $500 million-worth of grain to wheat harvests each year and kept wheat grain prices at historically low levels until 2005, benefiting farmers and poor consumers.
- New technology and better policies can power wheat-based farming to meet the crop’s accelerating global demand, which is driven by emerging and developing countries.

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