PRICE IS THE KEY TO PRODUCTION

IS IT REALLY GOING TO HAPPEN THIS TIME? After all these years of wrong predictions? Is food scarcity on a world wide level inevitable?

MALTHUS STARTED THE STORY—MANY YEARS AGO. It has been revived periodically...in books such as *The Hungry Planet*, *The Population Bomb*, and *Famine 1975*. These concerns led the USDA to urge farmers to plant "from fence row to fence row." They did, and surplus production plagued us.

Is IT DIFFERENT THIS TIME? Farm price supports are phasing out. A new era is forecast. Grain had to be pulled from accumulated stocks to satisfy 1995 food demands. To meet the same world needs this year, farmers must grow an additional 60 million tons of grain, and to feed the 100 million people born in the last year will require 25 million tons.

CAN WE MEET SUCH NEEDS IN THE YEARS AHEAD? Of course we can. Precision farming, sustainable agriculture, and conservation practices all have their place, but the answer ultimately lies in production and price. The price of wheat, relative to wages in the U.S., is only about one-twentieth of its level two centuries ago.

SHOULD FOOD BECOME TOP PRIORITY, PRODUCTION POTENTIAL IS BEYOND IMAGINATION. With modern technology and attractive prices, farmers and agricultural scientists can meet any production challenge...and still conserve our resources.

J. Fielding Road

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