

Clinton MUNC 2024



Committee: FAO

Topic: Maintaining Ethical Farming Practices in the Wake of Food Insecurity

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Hello delegates!

My name is Anna and I will be your co-chair for the FAO Committee. I am a junior at the Clinton School and I am thrilled to be chairing Clinton's first ever Model UN Conference! I have participated in Model UN for three years and have attended several conferences including GC MUN and UNISMUN. I began my Model UN journey in freshman year where I was actually inspired to join because of an older friend and consequently fell love with the club ever since.

Outside of Model UN I am the president of Clinton's key club and my grade's representative in the student council. In addition, I am also involved in sports at Clinton and is a 3 year varsity cross country runner. In my free time I enjoy running in central park with my cross country team and exploring new york city.

I am thrilled to see all of your various creative solutions to the fascinating topic ethics in global agriculture that align with your respective country's morals and values. I anticipate seeing every delegate try their best at the conference and hope we can foster an atmosphere of respect and kindness, where all delegates can interact and collaborate productively.

I can't wait to meet you all!

Anna Loof

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Hello delegates,

My name is Ariana and I will be your FAO co-chair at the upcoming (and first ever!) Clinton Model UN Conference. I am a Junior attending Clinton and I have been a part of Model UN since Freshman year, and a co-leader as of this year. I am so excited to be a part of the first ever Clinton conference and hear all of your ideas surrounding the prevalent issue of food security and ethical farming practices.

Throughout my past three years as an active member in Model UN, I have attended numerous conferences, like DMUN, GCMUN, and UNISMUN, and I have even gotten the opportunity to speak at the UN. Throughout this journey, I have expanded my knowledge and gained new perspectives surrounding world issues while also developing important skills such as public speaking and collaboration. I have developed a love for international relations that I plan on continuing to study in my higher education. I hope to incite these same aspirations and passions into each and every one of you throughout this conference and beyond.

Though MUN is life, I am involved in many other activities and clubs. I'm the treasurer of Key Club and participate in many community building and service programmes around New York City. I love to read and my favorite authors are Ottessa Moshfeigh and Joan Didion. I also play piano and I have learned songs from all genres, including the infamous Bohemian Rhapsody and Je Te laisserai De Mots. I have a passion for traveling and I have been lucky enough to experience the world abroad. Most notably was last summer where I spent a month in Spain and delved into Spanish culture, learning the language and the customs (and ate a lot of yummy Spanish food!)

We are so thrilled to host all of you in February and provide the space for engaging discussions and introspective thinking surrounding the intricacies of maintaining ethical farming practices in the wake of food insecurity.

Best wishes,

Ariana Harper arianaharp10@gmail.com

Dear delegates,

Hi, my name is Alessandra and I am so excited to be the director of this committee. I am a proud Brazilian born in NYC. I am a junior at the Clinton School and have been a part of MUN for two years. I have been attending Clinton since middle school and through my years have participated in many clubs; mock trial, model UN, volleyball club, mental health club, Community cares, etc.

This topic of ethical food produced in the wake of food shortage is particularly interesting because it is relevant globally and can have devastating effects if not addressed with urgency. Famine can spread affecting millions of people in overpopulated countries, along with the degradation of our planet's finite resources.

Outside of MUN, I am on the varsity girls volleyball team which has an overlap of applicational skills with MUN: working collaboratively, voice your ideas, and having the same end goal as a team. In MUN, I have learned how to do all of this and more. I have learned about the global interdependence between countries with varying relationships with one another. My favorite part is using this knowledge and applying it to my advantage when discussing with other MUN members. This is important to me because while the world is always changing, for better or for the worst, the historical context and want for harmony is always there.

I hope everyone enjoys the amazing energy we will bring to the Clinton MUNC conference!

Sincerely

Ali Bruder

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Committee Policies

- 1) Position Papers are required of every delegate to write and submit. As this will show the chairs that each delegate has researched their assigned country and has knowledge on the topic of discussion.
- 2) The use of Chat GPT is strictly prohibited and if the chairs notice the use of AI or the paper itself has been flagged, the paper will be disqualified and further action may be taken.
- 3) Electronic devices will be allowed in committee but we highly recommend using them only to draft resolution papers.
- 4) Prewriting is not permitted. All draft and final resolutions must be started and completed during committee sessions.

Committee Background

Food is a fundamental human need, and its availability and accessibility are vital for the well-being and stability of societies. The world has made significant strides in reducing hunger and improving food security over the past decades, however, as we enter the 21st century, new and evolving challenges, such as climate change and population growth, have disrupted the global food system, leading to increased food insecurity in many regions. Ethical farming practices have gained popularity as a sustainable and morally responsible way to tackle food insecurity. Ethical farming practices encompass a range of approaches that prioritize not only the quantity but also the quality of food production. These practices consider the environmental impact of agriculture, animal welfare, fair labor practices, and community engagement. They seek to strike a balance between meeting immediate food needs and ensuring the long-term viability of the food system.

While the concept of ethical farming practices is important, implementing and maintaining them in the midst of food insecurity poses significant challenges. Ethical farming practices often require changes in traditional agricultural methods, including reduced chemical inputs, more sustainable land use, and improved water management. Implementing these changes can be a complex process that demands adaptation and

collaboration from you all. Generally, the stakeholders aren't willing to adapt without incentivization by the government or IGOs and NGOs. Furthermore, the complex web of international trade, politics, and supply chains can also impact a country's ability to maintain ethical farming practices. Many nations rely on global trade for their food supply, and navigating the ethical dilemmas of international agricultural commerce can be challenging. This introduces a need for international cooperation and regulations that promote ethical practices while ensuring food security for all.

FAO

The FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization, is an international organization dedicated to addressing global challenges and issues concerning food security, agriculture, and rural development. It was founded in 1945, following World War II, with the awareness that coordinated worldwide efforts were required to secure sustainable food production and avoid the threat of famine.

The FAO has had an immense role in the “Zero Hunger” program which aims to ensure that by 2030, no individual should be in starvation. And, as food waste has become a pressing problem in 2024, the FAO has created a campaign called, "Save Food". This program attempts to eliminate unnecessary food waste by collaborating with major food supply chain companies. The FAO aims to promote environmentally sustainable agriculture in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Labor

The issue of food insecurity looms large over the global stage, highlighting the need for a solution that goes beyond food production. This entails addressing the ethics of farming practices and with labor practices in agriculture. The agricultural sector, from planting and harvesting to processing and distribution, relies heavily on human labor. When conducted ethically, labor becomes a vital goal of food security.

795 million people worldwide do not have enough food to survive on, and many of them work in agriculture. Furthermore, one-third of the world's agricultural workforce is made up of women, children, migrants, and plantation workers, totaling

over 1 billion people. A crucial component of ethical farming is ensuring that those who labor in the fields and farms are treated fairly and justly. This comprises providing fair wages, maintaining safe working conditions, and eradicating exploitative labor practices. In many parts of the world, farm laborers, often from vulnerable communities, experience precarious employment conditions. It is an ethical imperative to ensure that these individuals are afforded decent work and social protections. It is imperative to find a solution that will help millions of individuals who are working in agriculture in extreme and hazardous conditions. Government and international organization intervention is instrumental in ensuring ethical labor practices are upheld consistently.

Ethical Concerns

There are many ethical concerns surrounding food insecurity and farming practices. The most notable of these concerns is global hunger, but conversations have also been centered around environmental impacts, human health, producer and consumer rights, and animal rights.

The main ethical concern with food insecurity is global hunger. Approximately 9.2% of the world's population is suffering from chronic hunger and combined with the additional challenges posed by climate change and resource depletion, it is imperative to address the ethical dilemmas associated with food production. While the planet produces enough food to feed every individual, inequitable distribution and insufficient access to nutritious food perpetuates world hunger. Individuals are suffering from malnutrition and starvation while vast quantities of food go to waste in some regions.

Ethical concerns extend beyond this issue of hunger to the environmental impact of farming practices. According to the FAO, agriculture is a leading contributor to climate change, responsible for 24% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the overuse of agrochemicals, deforestation, and monoculture farming can lead to soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, and depletion of natural resources. Agriculture consumes approximately 70% of the world's freshwater resources. The unsustainable use of water for irrigation, often from non-renewable sources, raises ethical questions about depriving future generations, and current generations, of access to water.

Additionally, as climate change accelerates, the consequences of extreme weather events, shifting growing seasons, and dwindling crop yields are disproportionately borne by vulnerable communities. This exacerbates ethical concerns, as the environmental effects of farming practices disproportionately affect those least responsible for the problem.

The widespread use of agrochemicals, including pesticides and fertilizers, raises ethical issues surrounding the impact on both human health and ecosystems. Pesticides can have harmful effects on farmers, especially in developing countries with weaker labor protections. Pesticides lead to numerous diseases, including chronic ones like cancer and birth defects. Moreover, the increased use of agrochemicals contributes heavily to biodiversity loss, which threatens the sustainability of food systems. Agrochemicals, like pesticides, are used to reduce target animals, plants and fungi in farmlands. However, through excessive use and misuse they can affect non-target organisms, including mammals, earthworms and bees, and result in contamination of surrounding soil and water sources. The EU Plant Protection Regulation NO 1107/2009 recognises that pesticides have played a key role in the environmental degradation seen today. Additionally, the United Nations estimates that 1 million plant and animal species are currently facing extinction. This poses an ethical conundrum: as farming practices contribute to this loss of biodiversity, it compromises the ability of future generations to access diverse and nutritious food sources.

Another ethical concern arises in the meat industry. More than 100 billion animals are killed for their meat and other animal products every year. Factory farms, also referred to as 'concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO)' have been known to house animals in cruel conditions consisting of confinement, abuse and torment. It is estimated that three quarters of land livestock are factory farmed. This doesn't include fish farming, which is an estimated 111 billion more animals. Factory farming leads to a multitude of issues; human health, horrible working conditions, and the impact on the environment. One particularly concerning case surrounding factory farming is superbugs. The World Health organization claims superbugs are one of the top ten threats to human health. In fact, diseases from animals contribute to 2.5 billion cases of human illness and 2.7 million deaths globally each year. Creating a system in which we

can sustain global food intake while also protecting human, animal, and environmental health, is a pressing ethical issue as food insecurity and climate change is upon us.

Food Accessibility

While addressing food insecurity, it is critical to account for the accessibility of food between countries, and farming practices play a pivotal role in determining the availability and equitable distribution of food resources on a global scale.

The world produces an abundance of food, with global agricultural output capable of sustaining the entire population. However, significant imbalances exist in the distribution of food resources. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, one-third of all food produced for human consumption, approximately 1.3 billion metric tons, goes to waste each year.

Food accessibility disparities between countries are often exacerbated by economic inequalities and trade policies. High-income countries have greater resources to invest in advanced farming practices, enabling them to produce surplus food. In contrast, low and middle income countries may struggle to feed their populations due to limited resources and infrastructure. The World Bank reports that as of 2021, nearly 9% of the global population lives on less than \$1.90 per day, highlighting the financial constraints faced by many individuals and nations. Trade policies also influence the availability of accessibility of food. Subsidies, tariffs, and trade restrictions can affect the prices of agricultural products, creating economic challenges for countries that rely on imports for their food supply. According to The Economist, about 80% of the world's population is fed in part by imports. This percentage more specifically encompasses developing countries, with 75% of Africa's population relying on imports. Though the expansion of global trade has helped to move food from where it is produced to where it is needed, it has also come with downsides. Many developing countries have increased specialization in export crops at the expense of staple food for domestic consumption, making them vulnerable and reliant on food imports. This reliance on foreign supply increases risks and price volatility, which in turn compromises food security in many countries.

Gender inequalities play a role in food accessibility. In many regions, women make up a significant portion of the agricultural workforce but often have limited access to resources, education, and ownership rights. This gender disparity impacts both farm productivity and food accessibility, with women more likely to experience food insecurity. The Food and Agriculture Organization reports that women comprise 43% of the agricultural labor force in developing countries, and addressing gender inequalities is essential for equitable food.

The Food Abundance Index (FAI) was developed to measure the level of 'food security' and uses the presence of 'food deserts' to assess the potential levels of food insecurity in a particular community. Food deserts are seen as a violation of ethics and social responsibility from a human rights perspective.

UN Interference

The United Nations (UN) has not typically interfered with ethical farming practices in the sense of imposing specific regulations or standards on how farming should be conducted. Instead, the UN has often focused on the broader issues at hand, such as food security and sustainable development. In spite of not having interference on the ethical aspects of farming, there are a myriad of committees and agencies that promote sustainable and ethical farming practices.

- *International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*: This treaty, administered by the FAO, aims to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. It encourages responsible farming practices and the sharing of genetic resources. This was created during the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2001, and as of 2023 has over 150 member nations.
- *FAO's Global Soil Partnership*: Soil health is crucial for sustainable agriculture. The Global Soil Partnership works toward promoting sustainable soil management practices and raising awareness about the importance of soil health in ensuring food security.
- *FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*: This code addresses sustainable and ethical practices in fisheries. While fisheries are distinct from

farming, the principles of responsible resource management and ethical considerations are shared.

- *World Food Programme*: A specialized program that aims to bring food assistance to over 80 countries and 80 million people. Exist to prevent future world hunger, also respond to current or upcoming food crises globally.

Ethiopia Case Study

In sub-saharan Africa, there has been a presence of severe persistent droughts, which has caused harm and fatality to almost 19.5 million people in the horn of Africa. Within this region that is prone to droughts and land degradation, Ethiopia is one of the most affected countries. In response to these challenges, Ethiopia has taken significant steps to promote ethical farming practices.

As of 2008, Ethiopia has implemented a program, Sustainable Land Management Program (SLMP), that addresses the environmental problems of agricultural productivity, soil erosion, and land degradation. In recent years it has established practices such as reforestation and agroforestry to protect the land's integrity. Through crop diversification, Ethiopia was able to reduce its dependency on a few staple crops and begin to use indigenous, drought-resistant crop varieties. The largest field crop planted is named tef and is a large part of Ethiopia's economy, crops account for nearly 40 percent of its GDP and 80 percent of its exports. Since 2007, Ethiopia has been encouraging organic farming practices by underscoring the use of organic fertilizers and natural pest control. Therefore, reducing the use of synthetic chemicals that deteriorate the land.

Intervention from Ethiopia's government to support community-based farming cooperatives has helped generate greater quantities of crops to induce food security. This encourages farmers' resource pool, having equal access to land and resources. In order to prevent even greater drought, Ethiopia has established a climate-smart farming atmosphere to help lessen water waste that further global warming. The Climate Resilience Strategy (CR) and the Green Economy Strategy (GE) has reduced the impact of current weather on crops and livestock. The Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission (EFCCC) is the Federal institution that ensures the realization of various

environmental rights and goals by developing programs and mechanisms for the welfare of humans and the safety of the environment. These efforts not only improve food availability but also contribute to environmental conservation and poverty reduction in the country.

Guiding Questions

1. What are the key ethical dilemmas faced by farmers when balancing the need for higher yields to combat food insecurity with the environmental and social impacts of conventional agriculture?
2. How do different cultural and regional perspectives influence the definition and implementation of ethical farming practices in the context of food security?
3. What role do government policies and regulations play in promoting or hindering the adoption of ethical farming practices to address food insecurity?
4. What is the relationship between ethical farming practices and food waste reduction, and how does this impact food security on a global scale?
5. How can technology, such as precision agriculture and innovative farming techniques, be used in conjunction with ethical farming practices to increase food production and reduce food insecurity?
6. To what extent do ethical farming practices address the issue of equitable access to food in the context of food insecurity, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable populations?

Country specific:

1. What are the key ethical challenges faced by farmers in [your country] when attempting to address food insecurity, and how do they navigate these challenges?
2. What strategies and best practices can be learned from other countries' experiences with ethical farming practices in the context of food insecurity, and how might they be adapted to the specific context of [your country]?

3. How do government policies and regulations in [your country] support or hinder the implementation of ethical farming practices in response to food insecurity?
4. What are the perspectives of different local and international stakeholders (farmers, consumers, government, NGOs) on ethical farming practices in [your country]? How do these perspectives affect their adoption and impact on food security?

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