

## Sustainable agriculture – a double volume

Organised and edited by Chris Pollock, Jules Pretty, Ian Crute, Chris Leaver and Howard Dalton

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The two special editions look at the approaches being adopted to make agriculture more sustainable. Papers in this special issue draw on the expertise of an international team of scientists who have critically reviewed both past progress and future challenges. Issues covered include: how greenhouse gas emissions attributed to agriculture can be reduced, ecoagriculture, novel pest management schemes in Africa, research looking into how plants use water and how chemistry can help protect arable crops.

On behalf of the guest editors, Howard Dalton, Chris Pollock, Ian Crute, Jules Pretty and Chris Leaver, Professor Chris Pollock commented, 'Working toward agricultural sustainability is not likely to happen easily. Many present agricultural policies are unhelpful. Many existing institutions do not heed the voices of local people, particularly if they are poor or remote, and many companies still think that maximising profit at a cost to the environment is acceptable behaviour. Changing national and local policies will be a necessary initial step. But good intentions are not enough. Governments often wish for certain things, but do not demonstrate the political will and consistency necessary to achieve desired outcomes. Structural distortions in economies, self-interest, unequal trading relations, corruption, debt burdens, profit maximisation, environmental degradation, and war and conflict all reduce the likelihood of achieving the systemic changes required to nurture new forms of agriculture and food systems. Sustainable agriculture outcomes can be positive for food productivity, reduced pesticide use, and for carbon balances. Significant challenges, however, remain to develop national and international policies to support the wider emergence of more sustainable forms of agricultural production across both industrialised and developing countries.'

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