

# CONTENTS

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Preface .....	vii
<b>INTRODUCTION - Believing in the Future .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PART I - Human Nature in a Changing World .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Embrace Change! .....	15
When Human Nature Gets in the Way.....	33
Since We Cannot Beat Nature... .....	41
Pragmatic Thinking Helps.....	51
Regaining the Public's Trust.....	59
<b>PART II - To Feed and Preserve .....</b>	<b>67</b>
Many Challenges and Many Opportunities .....	69
A Complex Multi-level Issue.....	85
How Diet Makes a Difference .....	101
Money Matters .....	117
<b>PART III - The Leadership We Need .....</b>	<b>131</b>
Dealing with Issues .....	133
Getting to Leadership.....	141
A Fresh Look at the Future.....	147
Leading from the Vision .....	155
Helping Farmers Produce Better .....	161
From Vision to Execution .....	169

<b>PART IV - The Likely and the Desirable .....</b>	179
Food Shapes the World .....	181
Consumers Shape Food Production Systems .....	185
Markets Will Reach a New Equilibrium .....	197
When Externalities Become Visible.....	203
An Uncertain World .....	215
Rethinking the World .....	223
<b>CONCLUSION - What Is Next? .....</b>	231
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	239
About The Author.....	245



## Preface

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My first book, *Future Harvests*, focused on the challenges to meet the food demand of a growing world population. I had written it many months before it became a trendy topic in the media. I decided to write it because I could not find any similar book that took a comprehensive look at the many areas of food and farming. Most books and articles were either focused only on one particular area; or were biased and tried to promote one particular system. The book indicated which principles would be helpful to overcome the future challenges. It also presented many areas where food production and food supply have potential for improvement and optimization. In the conclusion of the book, I wrote the following sentences:

*The answer to “Can we feed nine billion people by 2050?” is “Yes!” Will we feed nine billion people by 2050? That is a different question! It will all depend on everyone’s attitude.*

*Future Harvests* was mostly about facts and technical aspects. The future is not just about science and technology, though. The book sold well and copies are now on all continents. It brought me in contact with some of the readers. From our conversations, I felt a need to engage in a more philosophical reflection about the true role that human nature plays in securing food supply in the future. “*We Will Reap What We Sow*” focuses on the human factor. Indeed, our attitude and the way we deal with problems will play an essential role in our future decisions.

The consequences of these decisions will shape our future world. Success or failure depends on us. The current level of technology, combined with the amazing developments that we can expect in the coming decades, is not the limiting factor. Our ability to act for the common good will determine our fate.

When I started my professional life, I strongly believed that the world had to revolve around technical and scientific knowledge. After all, my curriculum was all about mathematics, biology, physics and chemistry. After many years spent in sales, management and leadership positions, my views have changed profoundly. Although I remain very interested in all new scientific and technical progress, I also know that nothing happens unless people make it happen. I also know that interacting with people is everything but mechanical. Science and technology help developing superb tools and gaining amazing knowledge, but to become reality, people need to see the sense of these tools and to believe in them. Reaching people both in their minds and in their hearts is the only way to make a positive use of knowledge and science. Communication, honesty and respect are key ingredients for a successful future.

For those who have read *Future Harvests*, this book will be a useful sequel focusing on human nature, behavior, responsibility and leadership. The book will start where *Future Harvests* ended. This new book reviews the interaction between human population and their leaders, with all other aspects that contribute to food production and prosperity of societies. Those who have not read *Future Harvests* will find it a stimulating basis for discussions about the topic of feeding an increasing world population, and hopefully they will feel like read *Future Harvests*, too.

The true purpose of *We Will Reap What We Sow* is to make the reader think. It addresses the main questions that need to be answered. It discusses the pros and cons of different points of views. It indicates what the most likely consequences of different scenarios might be.

Human nature being as it is, the book also focuses on how to develop positive incentives and reduce the possibility of negative stimuli. *We Will Reap What We Sow* presents a balanced discussion between economic, scientific, technical, philosophical, and moral aspects. It describes how they contribute to build a prosperous future. In my opinion, it is important to integrate all these dimensions in the reflection. Food and agriculture are not only about technical performance. They are a reflection of society. They have a direct impact on health and environment and fill an ecological, social and emotional function too.

Not so long ago, people used to thank God before every meal for the food they had on the table. Nature was not always benevolent and food was precious. Nowadays, in developed countries, people do not feel this connection with Nature anymore. The fear of God forced some humility. This fear seems gone and in many areas, humans are playing God, at their own risk.

During the writing of *Future Harvests*, it became obvious to me how crucial the role of leadership is for future success. In the course of a number of assignments with my firm, this observation has grown even stronger. In order to be able to feed nine billion people, leadership is paramount. In this new book, I review the expectations that leaders will have to meet. The book discusses how leaders can help humankind overcome the fear of change and make the transition to a more food-secure world. Leaders will have to work towards eliminating practices that have no future. Dealing with change will be a major part of building the future world. Much has changed over the past decades. Much will change again in the future. The coming changes are beyond what most of us can imagine. Yet, it will happen. We had better accept it and prepare to adapt. It is not realistic to expect excesses to go on forever. In the coming evolution of our societies, we will have to give up certain things that we like. It is inevitable.

Unlike most of the articles published recently because of the media hype about the seventh billion human on Earth, *We Will Reap What We Sow* does not look for sensationalism. Doing that is quite easy. It may be entertaining, but it is not productive. Moreover, asking how we can feed seven billion people at a time when we have already passed this landmark is purely and simply futile. I will leave to others the fun of predicting the past and the present.

Just like *Future Harvests*, *We Will Reap What We Sow* will explore possibilities. It focuses on solutions, not on problems. There is no point of mongering fear. People do not get in orderly motion when they are afraid. Either they run in all directions or they freeze completely. Neither of these behaviors is useful to fix problems. Leaders are there to help people dare and succeed, not to hide afraid or give up hope. The task ahead is not easy, but it is not impossible. Only by realizing the benefits of responsible and collaborative action, will humanity ensure its future food security, and its future as a whole.

I wish you a happy reading!

*Christophe Pelletier*