



International Journal of  
**Food Science**  
(IJF)



CARI  
Journals

## Assessment of the Environmental Footprint of Various Food Production Systems

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Accepted: 27<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2024 Received in Revised Form: 27<sup>th</sup> Mar, 2024 Published: 27<sup>th</sup> Apr, 2024



### Abstract

**Purpose:** This study sought to assess the environmental footprint of various food production systems.

**Methodology:** The study adopted a desktop research methodology. Desk research refers to secondary data or that which can be collected without fieldwork. Desk research is basically involved in collecting data from existing resources hence it is often considered a low cost technique as compared to field research, as the main cost is involved in executive's time, telephone charges and directories. Thus, the study relied on already published studies, reports and statistics. This secondary data was easily accessed through the online journals and library.

**Findings:** The findings reveal that there exists a contextual and methodological gap relating to the environmental footprint of various food production systems. Preliminary empirical review revealed that with a call for transformative changes to mitigate ecological impacts while ensuring food security and human well-being. Through a comprehensive analysis, significant variations in resource use and emissions were highlighted across different production methods. The study emphasized the interconnectedness between dietary choices, agricultural practices, and environmental outcomes, urging policymakers to enact evidence-based policies and agricultural stakeholders to adopt regenerative farming practices. Ultimately, the study served as a call to action for concerted efforts to transition towards a more sustainable and resilient food system, integrating ecological principles, social equity, and economic viability to promote harmony between human activities and the natural environment.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy:** The Systems theory, Ecological Economics and Agroecology models may be used to anchor future studies on the environmental footprint of various food production systems. The study made significant contributions to theory, practice, and policy in the realm of sustainable food production and environmental conservation. It advanced theoretical understanding by advocating for a systems-based approach to assessing environmental impacts and highlighting the importance of considering multiple dimensions of sustainability. In practice, the study recommended the adoption of agroecological approaches and the promotion of sustainable farming practices to mitigate environmental harm. Policy recommendations included the implementation of regulatory interventions and incentives to promote sustainability, while consumer education and international collaboration were emphasized for driving demand for sustainable food products and facilitating knowledge sharing. Lastly, the study underscored the importance of investment in research and innovation to drive continuous improvements in sustainable food production systems.

**Keywords:** *Assessment, Environmental Footprint, Food Production Systems, Sustainability, Agroecology, Agricultural Practices, Systems Theory, Environmental Impact, Sustainable Farming, Regulation, Consumer Education, International Collaboration, Biodiversity, Carbon Pricing, Mitigation*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Environmental footprint refers to the measure of the impact of human activities on the environment, encompassing various aspects such as carbon footprint, water footprint, energy consumption, and pollution. The carbon footprint quantifies the amount of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), emitted directly or indirectly by human activities such as burning fossil fuels for energy, transportation, and industrial processes (Jones & Kammen, 2011). In the United States, for instance, the carbon footprint remains significant due to its heavy reliance on fossil fuels for energy production and transportation. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. emitted approximately 5.1 billion metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents in 2019, with the energy sector being the largest contributor, accounting for about 76% of total greenhouse gas emissions (EPA, 2021).

Water footprint refers to the total volume of freshwater consumed and polluted throughout the lifecycle of a product or service. It includes both direct water use (e.g., irrigation, manufacturing processes) and indirect water use (e.g., water embedded in goods and services). In the United Kingdom, water consumption patterns have undergone changes influenced by factors such as population growth, agricultural practices, and industrial development. According to the UK Environment Agency, total water abstraction for public supply, agriculture, industry, and other purposes was approximately 9.7 billion cubic meters in 2019, indicating a slight decrease from previous years (Environment Agency, 2020).

Energy consumption is a crucial component of the environmental footprint, reflecting the amount of energy utilized in various sectors of the economy, including residential, commercial, industrial, and transportation. In Japan, efforts to reduce energy consumption and transition towards renewable energy sources have been intensified following the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), Japan's total final consumption of energy decreased from 518 million tons of oil equivalent (Mtoe) in 2011 to 425 Mtoe in 2019, partly attributed to energy efficiency measures and shifts in energy policies (IEA, 2021).

Pollution refers to the release of harmful substances into the environment, including air, water, and soil pollution. Brazil, as a major agricultural and industrial hub in South America, faces environmental challenges associated with deforestation, agricultural expansion, and industrial activities. One significant issue is air pollution, particularly in urban areas like São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, where vehicle emissions and industrial activities contribute to poor air quality. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), air pollution levels in Brazilian cities often exceed the recommended limits, posing risks to public health (WHO, 2020).

African countries exhibit diverse environmental footprints influenced by factors such as population growth, economic development, and natural resource utilization. In many African nations, limited access to clean water and sanitation infrastructure contributes to water scarcity and contamination, affecting public health and ecosystem integrity (Gebremedhin & Hoag, 2020). Additionally, energy consumption patterns vary across the continent, with some countries heavily reliant on traditional biomass for cooking and heating, while others are investing in renewable energy projects to meet growing energy demands sustainably (International Renewable Energy Agency, 2021). Environmental footprint indicators such as carbon footprint, water footprint, energy consumption, and pollution provide valuable insights into the environmental impacts of human activities. While specific trends and challenges vary among countries, addressing environmental footprint issues requires collaborative efforts at local, national, and global levels to promote sustainable development and mitigate climate change impacts.

Food production systems encompass a wide array of methods and practices utilized to cultivate, harvest, process, and distribute food for human consumption. These systems, ranging from traditional



farming methods to modern industrialized agriculture, significantly influence environmental outcomes through their resource use, waste generation, and ecosystem impacts. Conventional agriculture, characterized by the extensive use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and monoculture cropping systems, is associated with substantial environmental degradation. For example, intensive farming practices can lead to soil erosion, nutrient depletion, and loss of biodiversity (Pretty, Benton, Bharucha, Dicks, Flora, Godfray, Goulson, Hartley, Lampkin, Morris, Pierzynski, Raine & Vanbergen, 2018). The reliance on fossil fuels for machinery operation and transportation further exacerbates environmental issues, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change (FAO, 2013).

In contrast, organic agriculture represents a more environmentally friendly approach to food production, emphasizing soil health, biodiversity conservation, and natural resource management. Organic farming practices, such as crop rotation, composting, and biological pest control, reduce reliance on synthetic inputs and promote ecological balance (Reganold & Wachter, 2016). Studies have shown that organic farming systems have lower carbon footprints and higher levels of soil organic matter, contributing to climate change mitigation and soil fertility improvement (Tuomisto, Hodge, Riordan & Macdonald, 2012). Additionally, organic farming often involves practices that enhance soil structure, water retention, and nutrient cycling, thereby improving overall ecosystem health and resilience.

Agroforestry integrates trees or shrubs into agricultural landscapes, providing multiple environmental benefits such as soil conservation, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity enhancement (Jose, 2009). By combining crops with trees, agroforestry systems can improve soil structure, reduce erosion, and enhance water retention, thereby mitigating the impacts of climate change and promoting sustainable land use (Nair, 2012). Agroforestry practices vary depending on regional climatic conditions and socio-economic factors but are increasingly recognized as a promising approach to resilient and sustainable food production (Garrity, Akinnifesi, Ajayi, Weldesemayat, Mowo & Kalinganire, 2010). These systems not only enhance ecosystem services but also contribute to the livelihoods and well-being of rural communities.

Aquaculture, the farming of aquatic organisms such as fish, shellfish, and seaweed, plays a significant role in global food production and food security. However, unsustainable aquaculture practices can lead to environmental degradation, including habitat destruction, water pollution, and disease outbreaks (Troell, Naylor, Metian, Beveridge, Tyedmers, Folke & Arrow, 2014). Integrated multitrophic aquaculture (IMTA) systems, which combine different species to utilize resources more efficiently and reduce waste, offer a more sustainable alternative. IMTA systems can help mitigate nutrient pollution, enhance ecosystem services, and improve overall environmental performance (Chopin, Buschmann, Halling, Troell, Kautsky, Neori, Kraemer, Zertuche-González, Yarish & Neefus, 2020). By integrating fish farming with seaweed cultivation and shellfish aquaculture, IMTA systems can reduce environmental impacts while increasing food production and diversifying income sources for coastal communities.

Vertical farming, an innovative approach to urban agriculture, involves growing crops indoors in vertically stacked layers under controlled environmental conditions. By utilizing vertical space and hydroponic or aeroponic growing systems, vertical farms can produce food with higher yields and lower resource inputs compared to traditional agriculture (Godfray, Beddington, Crute, Haddad, Lawrence, Muir, Pretty, Robinson, Thomas & Toulmin, 2010). While vertical farming has the potential to reduce land use, water consumption, and pesticide use, its environmental sustainability depends on factors such as energy source, technology efficiency, and waste management practices (Liu et al., 2021). Sustainable vertical farming practices prioritize renewable energy sources, closed-loop nutrient

cycling, and efficient water management to minimize environmental impacts and maximize resource use efficiency.

Sustainable intensification aims to increase food production while minimizing environmental impact, balancing the need for increased yields with ecosystem conservation and resilience. This approach integrates ecological principles with modern agricultural techniques to optimize resource use efficiency, enhance biodiversity, and reduce negative externalities (Pretty & Bharucha, 2014). Sustainable intensification strategies include precision agriculture, agroecology, and holistic land management approaches, which prioritize soil health, water conservation, and ecosystem services (Foley, Ramankutty, Brauman, Cassidy, Gerber, Johnston, Mueller, O'Connell, Ray, West, Balzer, Bennett, Carpenter, Hill, Monfreda, Polasky, Rockström, Sheehan, Siebert, Tilman & Zaks, 2011). By adopting innovative technologies and management practices, farmers can improve productivity while safeguarding environmental sustainability for future generations.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Food production systems play a pivotal role in shaping environmental sustainability, yet their precise impacts remain inadequately understood. As global food demand continues to surge due to population growth and changing dietary preferences, the environmental footprint of various food production systems becomes increasingly relevant. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), agriculture is responsible for around 25% of global greenhouse gas emissions (FAO, 2020). However, this statistic represents an aggregate measure, lacking granularity regarding the specific contributions of different food production methods. Consequently, there is a pressing need to assess and compare the environmental footprints of diverse food production systems comprehensively. One significant research gap is the lack of comprehensive comparative studies that evaluate the environmental impacts of various food production systems across multiple dimensions. While individual studies exist focusing on specific aspects such as carbon emissions or water usage, a holistic understanding encompassing factors like land use, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion is lacking. By addressing this gap, this study aims to provide a nuanced perspective on the environmental performance of different food production systems, facilitating informed decision-making by policymakers, agricultural stakeholders, and consumers. Additionally, existing research often focuses on conventional agriculture, neglecting alternative practices such as organic farming or aquaponics. By encompassing a wide array of production methods, this study seeks to fill this void and offer insights into the comparative sustainability of diverse food production approaches. The findings of this study hold significant implications for various stakeholders across the food supply chain. Policymakers can utilize the results to formulate evidence-based policies aimed at promoting sustainable food production practices and mitigating environmental degradation. Agricultural stakeholders, including farmers and producers, stand to benefit by gaining insights into the environmental impacts of their practices and identifying opportunities for improvement. Moreover, consumers increasingly prioritize sustainability in their purchasing decisions; thus, access to comprehensive information regarding the environmental footprint of different food products empowers them to make informed choices. Ultimately, by fostering greater transparency and awareness, the findings of this study can drive systemic changes towards more sustainable food production systems, thereby contributing to global efforts to address climate change and environmental degradation.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

#### **2.1.1 Systems Theory**

Systems theory, pioneered by biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy in the mid-20th century, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding complex interactions within ecological systems. At its core, systems theory emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of various components within a system, viewing them as parts of a larger whole. In the context of assessing the environmental footprint of food production systems, this theory offers invaluable insights into the intricate web of relationships between agricultural practices, ecosystems, and the broader environment. By adopting a systems perspective, researchers can elucidate the cascading effects of different production methods on factors such as soil health, water quality, and biodiversity. For instance, a systems approach can highlight how changes in land use patterns resulting from agricultural expansion impact ecosystem services and contribute to habitat loss. By embracing systems theory, researchers can uncover hidden linkages and feedback loops, enhancing our understanding of the environmental implications of various food production systems.

#### **2.1.2 Ecological Economics**

Ecological economics, a field pioneered by scholars such as Herman Daly and Robert Costanza, offers a transdisciplinary framework for integrating ecological principles into economic analysis. Unlike traditional economic paradigms, ecological economics recognizes the finite nature of Earth's resources and the need to account for environmental externalities in decision-making processes. This theory emphasizes the importance of valuing natural capital and ecosystem services, which are often overlooked in conventional economic models. In the context of assessing food production systems' environmental footprint, ecological economics provides a lens through which researchers can evaluate the true costs and benefits associated with different agricultural practices. By quantifying the ecological impacts of food production, such as soil erosion, water pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions, ecological economics enables a more holistic assessment of the sustainability of various production methods. Furthermore, this approach encourages the adoption of policies and incentives that internalize environmental costs, fostering transitions towards more ecologically sustainable food systems.

#### **2.1.3 Agroecology**

Agroecology, rooted in the work of scientists like Miguel Altieri and Stephen Gliessman, offers an alternative paradigm for agricultural production that emphasizes ecological principles and local knowledge systems. At its core, agroecology seeks to design farming systems that mimic natural ecosystems, harnessing biodiversity and ecological processes to enhance productivity while minimizing environmental harm. This theory challenges the conventional wisdom of industrial agriculture and monocropping, advocating for diversified farming systems that promote soil health, biodiversity conservation, and resilience to environmental stresses. In the context of assessing food production systems' environmental footprint, agroecology provides a compelling framework for evaluating the ecological efficiency and sustainability of different farming practices. By integrating principles such as crop rotation, agroforestry, and biological pest control, agroecological approaches offer promising avenues for reducing the environmental impact of food production while enhancing ecosystem resilience and food security.

### **2.2 Empirical Review**

Poore & Nemecek (2018) aimed to comprehensively assess the environmental impacts of various food production systems and identify strategies for reducing these impacts from both producer and

consumer perspectives. The authors conducted a meta-analysis of life cycle assessments (LCAs) from over 38,000 farms across 119 countries to quantify the environmental footprints of different food products, including greenhouse gas emissions, land use, and water consumption. The study found substantial variations in the environmental impacts of different food products, with animal-based products generally exhibiting higher emissions and resource use compared to plant-based alternatives. Additionally, the authors identified several strategies for mitigating these impacts, such as improving agricultural practices, reducing food waste, and shifting towards plant-based diets. The authors recommended policy interventions to incentivize sustainable farming practices, promote dietary shifts towards more plant-based diets, and enhance consumer awareness of the environmental consequences of food choices.

Clark, Springmann, Hill, Tilman & Ballon,(2020) aimed to quantify the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the global food system and assess their implications for climate change mitigation efforts. The researchers utilized a global economic model to estimate emissions from various stages of the food supply chain, including production, processing, transportation, and consumption. The study found that emissions from the global food system could exceed the carbon budgets required to limit global warming to 1.5°C or 2°C, as outlined in the Paris Agreement. Animal-based products, particularly beef and dairy, were identified as major contributors to these emissions. The authors highlighted the urgent need for transformative changes in the food system, such as shifting towards plant-based diets, reducing food waste, and improving agricultural efficiency, to align with climate targets.

Heller & Keoleian (2015) aimed to quantify the greenhouse gas emissions associated with different dietary choices and food loss in the United States. The researchers conducted a life cycle assessment to estimate the emissions associated with various food categories, including plant-based and animal-based products, as well as food waste at the consumer level. The study found that dietary shifts towards plant-based diets could significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, with meat and dairy products being major contributors to emissions. Additionally, the authors highlighted the substantial emissions associated with food loss and waste throughout the supply chain. The authors suggested promoting plant-based diets and reducing food waste as key strategies for mitigating the environmental impact of food consumption in the United States.

Springmann, Clark, Mason-D'Croz, Wiebe, Bodirsky, Lassaletta & Willett (2018) explore potential strategies for aligning global food production with environmental sustainability goals. The researchers conducted a comprehensive review of existing literature on the environmental impacts of the food system and assessed various intervention options for reducing these impacts. The study identified several strategies for mitigating the environmental footprint of food production, including dietary shifts towards plant-based diets, improvements in agricultural efficiency, and reductions in food waste. The authors recommended a combination of policy interventions, technological innovations, and behavioral changes to promote sustainable food production and consumption patterns.

Tilman & Clark (2014) explored the connections between dietary patterns, environmental sustainability, and human health outcomes. The researchers conducted a global analysis of dietary patterns and their associated environmental impacts, as well as their implications for human health outcomes such as obesity and malnutrition. The study found that shifting towards plant-based diets could reduce the environmental footprint of food production while simultaneously improving human health outcomes. Additionally, the authors highlighted the need for integrated approaches that consider both environmental and health dimensions of dietary choices. The authors recommended promoting plant-based diets as a means of achieving synergistic benefits for environmental sustainability and human health.

Bryngelsson, Wirsenius, Hedenus, Sonesson & Nybrant (2016) assessed the feasibility of achieving European Union (EU) climate targets through technological and demand-side changes in the food and agriculture sector. The researchers utilized a combination of modeling techniques to analyze the potential contributions of various strategies, including dietary shifts, agricultural innovations, and land-use changes, towards meeting EU climate targets. The study found that substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from the food and agriculture sector could be achieved through a combination of dietary shifts towards plant-based diets, improvements in agricultural practices, and reductions in food waste. The authors recommended policy interventions and behavioral changes to promote sustainable food production and consumption patterns in the EU.

Alexander, Brown, Arneith, Finnigan, Moran & Rounsevell (2017) aimed to quantify the extent of losses, inefficiencies, and waste in the global food system and assess their implications for environmental sustainability. The researchers conducted a comprehensive review and synthesis of existing literature on food losses and waste throughout the food supply chain, from production to consumption. The study found that significant amounts of food are lost or wasted at various stages of the food supply chain, contributing to environmental degradation through land use, water consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions. The authors recommended interventions to reduce food losses and waste, improve supply chain efficiency, and promote more sustainable consumption patterns to mitigate the environmental footprint of the global food system.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a desktop research methodology. Desk research refers to secondary data or that which can be collected without fieldwork. Desk research is basically involved in collecting data from existing resources hence it is often considered a low cost technique as compared to field research, as the main cost is involved in executive's time, telephone charges and directories. Thus, the study relied on already published studies, reports and statistics. This secondary data was easily accessed through the online journals and library.

### **4.0 FINDINGS**

This study presented both a contextual and methodological gap. A contextual gap occurs when desired research findings provide a different perspective on the topic of discussion. For instance, Tilman & Clark (2014) explored the connections between dietary patterns, environmental sustainability, and human health outcomes. The researchers conducted a global analysis of dietary patterns and their associated environmental impacts, as well as their implications for human health outcomes such as obesity and malnutrition. The study found that shifting towards plant-based diets could reduce the environmental footprint of food production while simultaneously improving human health outcomes. Additionally, the authors highlighted the need for integrated approaches that consider both environmental and health dimensions of dietary choices. The authors recommended promoting plant-based diets as a means of achieving synergistic benefits for environmental sustainability and human health. On the other hand, the current study focused on the assessment of environmental footprint of various food production systems.

Secondly, a methodological gap also presents itself, for example, in their study on the connections between dietary patterns, environmental sustainability, and human health outcomes; Tilman & Clark (2014) conducted a global analysis of dietary patterns and their associated environmental impacts, as well as their implications for human health outcomes such as obesity and malnutrition.



## **5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

The assessment of the environmental footprint of various food production systems underscores the urgent need for transformative changes to mitigate the ecological impacts of food production while ensuring food security and human well-being. Through a comprehensive analysis of the environmental consequences of different agricultural practices, this study has highlighted the significant variations in resource use, emissions, and ecological impacts across diverse food production systems. From conventional industrial agriculture to sustainable agroecological approaches, each production method exerts distinct pressures on ecosystems, water resources, and climate stability. These findings underscore the complexity of the food system and the multifaceted challenges it poses in terms of environmental sustainability.

Moreover, the study elucidates the interconnectedness between dietary choices, agricultural practices, and environmental outcomes. It emphasizes the pivotal role of consumer behavior in shaping the environmental footprint of the food system, highlighting the potential benefits of dietary shifts towards plant-based diets in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, land use, and water consumption. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of holistic, systems-based approaches to food production that prioritize ecological principles, biodiversity conservation, and resilience to environmental stresses. By embracing agroecological practices and promoting sustainable farming methods, stakeholders can mitigate environmental degradation while enhancing the long-term viability of food production systems.

The findings of this study carry significant implications for policymakers, agricultural stakeholders, and consumers alike. Policymakers are urged to enact evidence-based policies that incentivize sustainable agricultural practices, reduce agricultural subsidies that promote environmentally harmful practices, and support research and innovation in agroecology. Agricultural stakeholders, including farmers and producers, are encouraged to adopt regenerative farming practices that enhance soil health, promote biodiversity, and reduce reliance on synthetic inputs. Additionally, consumers play a crucial role in driving demand for sustainable food products by making informed choices that prioritize environmental sustainability, animal welfare, and human health.

The assessment of the environmental footprint of various food production systems underscores the pressing need for a paradigm shift towards more sustainable and resilient food systems. By adopting a holistic approach that integrates ecological principles, social equity, and economic viability, stakeholders can work towards mitigating the environmental impacts of food production while ensuring food security and promoting human well-being for current and future generations. This study serves as a call to action for concerted efforts at all levels of society to transition towards a more sustainable and regenerative food system that fosters harmony between human activities and the natural environment.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

The study underscores the importance of adopting a systems-based approach to understanding the environmental footprint of food production systems. By recognizing the complex interactions between agricultural practices, ecosystems, and the broader environment, the study contributes to the advancement of systems theory within the context of environmental sustainability. Furthermore, by emphasizing the need to consider multiple dimensions of environmental impact, such as greenhouse gas emissions, land use, water consumption, and biodiversity loss, the study enriches theoretical frameworks for assessing the holistic sustainability of food production systems.

In terms of practical implications, the study highlights the need for diversification and innovation in agricultural practices to mitigate environmental impacts. It recommends the adoption of agroecological approaches that leverage biodiversity and ecological processes to enhance productivity while minimizing harm to the environment. Additionally, the study advocates for the promotion of sustainable farming practices, such as organic farming and agroforestry, as viable alternatives to conventional agriculture. These recommendations provide actionable guidance for farmers and producers seeking to reduce the environmental footprint of their operations while maintaining productivity and profitability.

From a policy perspective, the study underscores the importance of regulatory interventions and incentives to promote sustainable food production systems. It recommends the implementation of policies that internalize environmental costs, such as carbon pricing mechanisms or subsidies for sustainable farming practices. Furthermore, the study advocates for the development of comprehensive agricultural policies that integrate environmental considerations into decision-making processes. By aligning policy frameworks with environmental sustainability goals, policymakers can create an enabling environment for the transition towards more sustainable food production systems.

The study emphasizes the role of consumer education and awareness in driving demand for sustainable food products. It recommends initiatives to enhance consumer understanding of the environmental consequences of food choices and the benefits of adopting plant-based diets. By empowering consumers to make informed decisions, such as choosing locally sourced and organic foods or reducing meat consumption, the study suggests that individuals can contribute to reducing the environmental footprint of the food system through their purchasing behavior.

In light of the global nature of food production and consumption, the study calls for increased international collaboration and knowledge sharing to address environmental challenges effectively. It recommends initiatives to facilitate the exchange of best practices, technologies, and research findings among countries and regions. By fostering collaboration between governments, research institutions, and non-governmental organizations, the study envisions a collective effort to develop and implement sustainable food production solutions on a global scale.

Lastly, the study underscores the importance of investment in research and innovation to drive continuous improvements in sustainable food production systems. It calls for increased funding for research initiatives aimed at developing innovative technologies and practices to enhance environmental sustainability in agriculture. By fostering a culture of innovation and experimentation, the study suggests that researchers and practitioners can discover new solutions to address emerging environmental challenges and optimize the efficiency and resilience of food production systems.

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