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Editorial

Nutrition and sustainable diets

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Man is dependent on food from external sources, as the body cannot manufacture on its own unlike plants. The foods supply nutrients to nourish the body. The consumption started with hunting of animals and moved to consumption of plant based foods. Due to advancement in science and technology, natural resources were exploited. Therefore, it is time to work on sustainability. Globally, six billion people are dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. One in ten people (690 million) are under nourished and majority of developing nations are with hungry people. Currently, 52% of agriculture land is degraded due to use to fertilisers and pesticides. Biodiversity loss and climate change is noted. The United Nations developed sustainable goals to meet the challenges of the society.

The need of nutritious food by preserving natural resource is currently recognised as a great challenge. It includes production and consumption of healthy diets without food waste. Unhealthy diets lead to malnutrition, whereas low quality diet and overconsumption leads to obesity, diabetes and many other diseases. Increased consumption of calorie-rich diets and its association with non-communicable diseases are seen in higher proportion in the society. Marching on the task on sustainability is challenging as the work and changes is required at local, regional and national level. The policy framed should work with the political system to save the environment

is also warranted. Various bodies work in collaboration with people all over the world. They expressed their views on sustainability such as having universal reference diet satisfying human needs. Health and diet which would be mainly on plant-based, moderate intake of seafood and poultry, little or no red meat, sugar, refined grains, starchy foods and processed meat. These views were not accepted because low income are dependent on animals for their livelihood and also needed for agriculture practices.

The development of novel foods and use of technologies will help to preserve the nutrient content and reduce waste. To attain sustainability, with regard to nutrition more research is needed in the areas of nutrition and gut health. Cognitive and social science should work in hand with nutritionist for uptake of healthy diets. All sectors in the society should work together to create a sustainable environment. It is the right time to ponder on these areas as India is land of cultural diversity and Biodiversity. We had many practices in the past, protecting environment, preventing greenhouse gas emissions. Promoting sustainable policies by the government will help to preserve the environment and will also feed food to the hunger.

Conflict of interest

None.

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