



Feudalism: Zambia's Poorest Farmers Becoming 'Squatters On Their Own Land'

Sustainable Development, aka Technocracy, is a resource-based economic system designed to take resources away from individuals to put them into the hands of a few. Zambia has been opened up like a can of sardines, first by the United Nations and secondly by the multinational agricultural giants. □ TN Editor

Zambia's smallholder farmers could be made squatters on their own land as the country opens up to farming multinationals in an effort to boost its economy, said a United Nations expert.

Hilal Elver, U.N. Special Rapporteur on the right to food, said Zambia's ambition to develop its commercial farming sector to become "Southern Africa's food basket" risks worsening extreme rural poverty, as farmers face eviction to make way.

Elver said she was alarmed that 40 percent of Zambian under fives have

stunted growth due to malnutrition, despite the country emerging from crisis to “impressive” levels of economic growth.

Zambia’s economy has been depressed for years by low commodity prices, mine closures, rising unemployment, power shortages and soaring food prices but the World Bank predicts 4 percent growth this year.

“It is vital that development plans and policies take into account the true cost of industrial farming methods... as well as the social and economic impact on people, rather than focusing only on short term profitability and economic growth,” Elver said in a statement.

Sixty percent of Zambians are small-scale farmers, who make up many of the nation’s poorest people but produce 85 percent of its food, according to the U.N.

Elver said agricultural growth in Zambia over the last decade had focused on large businesses, leaving peasant farmers behind.

Around 85 percent of land is held under customary tenure, mostly in the hands of peasant farmers, with little legal protection from eviction, she said at the end of her first official visit to the country.

After eviction, many peasant farmers are forced to work in poor conditions on large industrial farms or are obliged to sell their crops at knock-down prices for export by monopoly-type multinationals who buy produce for export, she said.

Intensive commercial farming has also led to increased use of agro chemicals proven to damage children’s health and boosted rates of deforestation and environmental damage, she added.

[Read full story here...](#)

(Courtesy of the Thomson Reuters Foundation, which is the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters, covering humanitarian news, women’s rights, trafficking, property rights, climate change and resilience.) Visit <http://news.trust.org>)



Farmer Plows Own Field, Faces \$2.8 Million Fine For No Permit

I have warned for years that the Federal government would assert its full authority under the Clean Water Act that cedes all water in the U.S. to the them: from rivers, marshes, swamps, mud flats, drainage, playas, underground rivers, etc. The Feds are making a test case out of this farmer, and if they win, food production in America will drop precipitously. □ TN Editor

A farmer faces trial in federal court this summer and a \$2.8 million fine for failing to get a permit to plow his field and plant wheat in Tehama County.

A lawyer for Duarte Nursery said the case is important because it could set a precedent requiring other farmers to obtain costly, time-consuming permits just to plow their fields.

“The case is the first time that we’re aware of that says you need to get a (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) permit to plow to grow crops,” said Anthony Francois, an attorney for the Pacific Legal Foundation.

“We’re not going to produce much food under those kinds of regulations,” he said.

However, U.S. District Judge Kimberly J. Mueller agreed with the Army Corps in a judgment issued in June 2016. A penalty trial, in which the U.S. Attorney’s Office asks for \$2.8 million in civil penalties, is set for August.

The case began in 2012 when John Duarte, who owns Duarte Nursery near Modesto, bought 450 acres south of Red Bluff at Paskenta Road and Dusty Way west of Interstate 5.

According to Francois and court documents, Duarte planned to grow wheat there.

Because the property has numerous swales and wetlands, Duarte hired a consulting firm to map out areas on the property that were not to be plowed because they were part of the drainage for Coyote and Oat creeks and were considered “waters of the United States.”

Francois conceded that some of the wetlands were plowed, but they were not significantly damaged. He said the ground was plowed to a depth of 4 inches to 7 inches.

The Army did not claim Duarte violated the Endangered Species Act by destroying fairy shrimp or their habitat, Francois said.

The wheat was planted but not harvested because in February 2013 the Army Corps of Engineers and the California Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board issued orders to stop work at the site because Duarte had violated the Clean Water Act by not obtaining a permit to discharge dredged or fill material into seasonal wetlands considered waters of the United States.

Duarte sued the Army Corps and the state, alleging they violated his constitutional right of due process under the law by issuing the cease

and desist orders without a hearing. The U.S. Attorney's Office countersued Duarte Nursery to enforce the Clean Water Act violation.

Farmers plowing their fields are specifically exempt from the Clean Water Act rules forbidding discharging material into U.S. waters, Francois said.

However, according court documents filed by the U.S. Attorney's Office in Sacramento, the tractor was not plowing the field. Rather, it was equipped with a ripper, with seven 36-inch ripper shanks that dug an average of 10 inches deep into the soil.

Also, the U.S. Attorney alleges, Duarte ripped portions of the property that included wetland areas.

The ripping deposited dirt into wetlands and streams on the property, in violation of the Clean Water Act, according to documents filed by the U.S. Attorney.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Gregory Broderick said he could not comment on the case and referred questions to his office's public affairs department, which did not call back Monday.

[Read full story here...](#)



Tax Meat Until It's Too Expensive To Eat, New UN Report Suggests

The United Nations would like to remove every meat animal from the face of the planet, if it could, and especially cattle. People, they say, would be much more sustainable if they ate insect protein instead. □ TN Editor

Meat should be taxed at the wholesale level to raise the price and deter consumption, says a new report from the UN's International Research Panel (IRP). This will (supposedly) save the environment and prevent global warming.

"I think it is extremely urgent," said Professor Maarten Hajer of Utrecht University in the Netherlands, lead author of the report. "All of the harmful effects on the environment and on health needs to be priced into food products."

Hajer and other members of the IRP assert that livestock creates 14.5 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

Sneak the tax up on people

Rather than taxing the meat at the retail level (in supermarkets and shops), Hajer recommended taxing it at the wholesale level. “We think it’s better to price meats earlier in the chain, it’s easier,” said Hajer.

“The evidence is accumulating that meat, particularly red meat, is just a disaster for the environment,” agrees Rachel Premack, a columnist for *The Washington Post’s* Wongblog.

“Agriculture today accounts for for one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions that promote global warming,” says Premack, “and half of those agriculture emissions come from livestock.”

“Agriculture consumes 80 percent of water in the US - most of that being for meat, says Premack. “... For a kilogram of red meat, you need considerably more water than for plant products.”

“Meanwhile, Denmark [is considering](#) a recommendation from its ethics council that all red meats should be taxed,” Premack continues. “The council argued in May that Danes were “ethically obliged” to reduce their consumption to curb greenhouse gas emissions.”

[Read full article here...](#)



Yippee Ki-yay: Swagbot Tackles Cattle Herding in Australia

Robots will displace almost all agricultural workers in the future, including cowboys and sheep herders. Swagbot hopes to lead the way in herding and monitoring. □ Technocracy News Editor

Yee-ha, round 'em up cowboy. Meet Swagbot, the newest member of Australia's farm robot fleet.

Swagbot can herd cows, tow heavy trailers, and traverse rugged terrain and has been designed to manage livestock on Australia's vast sheep and cattle stations, which are often remote and difficult to access.

A trial which began last month has confirmed that SwagBot is able to herd cattle, and can navigate its way around ditches, logs, swamps, and other features of a typical farm landscape.

The next step will be to teach the robot how to identify animals that are

sick or injured, says Salah Sukkarieh of the University of Sydney, who is leading the trial.

“The trial has been very successful so far, so it’s given us the confidence to move to the next phase,” he says.

His team is planning to fit the robot with temperature and motion sensors to detect changes in body temperature and walking gait, as well as colour and shape sensors to make sure the animals have enough pasture to graze on.

[Read full story here...](#)



Jimminy Cricket: How To Make A Steak Without The Cow

TN Note: This is a giant propaganda piece that decries the evils of raising livestock. It is also typical of the United Nations position on the future of food. The sustainable answer to the world’s food supply problem is... crickets. That’s right - bugs.

The next meat may not come from an animal at all, as researchers find alternatives to unsustainable industrial farming.

A lot of people like meat. But the world's appetite for animals comes with significant costs, both moral and environmental. From animal welfare to greenhouse gases, our history of large-scale, industrial animal farming just isn't sustainable.

That's why researchers are working on new meat alternatives. No, not Tofurky. Insects. Deep-fried and eaten whole or ground up into a versatile powder, this protein source eaten in other parts of the world for millennia may find its way onto American menus in the next decade.

Even the next meat may not come from an animal at all. Impossible Foods, a California company, has been developing a hamburger patty that is closer to beef than any other simulation, yet has never come near a cow. They've even figured out a way to synthesize blood so as to give burgers their characteristic juiciness.

[Read full story here...](#)