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- [Terms](#)
- [News](#)
- [Blog](#)
- [Press](#)

10th Nov 10

Action needed to boost world's rice supply

by Katie Naylor

The world must take some drastic measures in order to reverse the current trends that show a worrying decrease in the world's rice supply.

Inefficient farming methods have started to see a decrease in rice supplies throughout the world, leading to a gradual rise in hunger and poverty.

The UN International Fund for Agricultural Development president, Mr Kanayo Nwanze, said that action was urgently needed in order to reverse the worrying trend.

More than 3 billion people throughout the world rely on rice as their staple food. This represents approximately half of the world's population. The world's rice-growing areas are also home to more than 500 million of the world's poorest people.

According to a representative from the International Rice Research Institute, Robert Zeigler, demands for rice will soon outweigh our supply. Mr Zeigler attributed falling supplies of rice to unsustainable rice-growing practices and slow productivity.

Other challenges facing major rice-growing nations include natural disasters and rapid increases in population.

Speaking at a forum addressing the issue in Vietnam, the Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung told forum members, including Mr Nwanze, that this issue must not just be seen as a humanitarian and economic concern.

The Vietnamese Prime Minister said that matters of food security like this can affect social and political security.

Members of the forum also heard how almost 65 percent of the world's poor live and work in prime rice-growing areas throughout Asia. Events like this forum held in Vietnam looks to find solutions to this growing issue, and to feed these hungry people.

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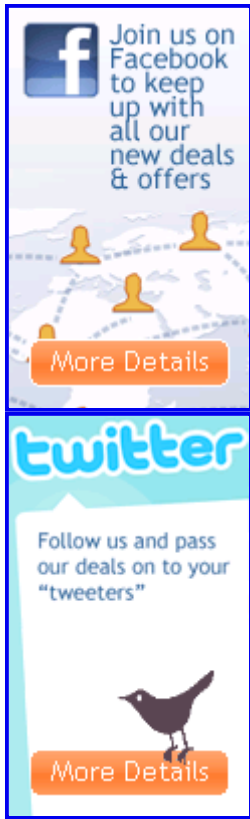
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[November 2010](#)
[October 2010](#)
[September 2010](#)
[August 2010](#)
[July 2010](#)
[June 2010](#)
[May 2010](#)
[April 2010](#)
[March 2010](#)
[February 2010](#)
[January 2010](#)
[December 2009](#)
[November 2009](#)
[October 2009](#)
[September 2009](#)
[August 2009](#)
[July 2009](#)
[June 2009](#)
[May 2009](#)
[April 2009](#)
[March 2009](#)
[January 2009](#)



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