

Title: The future of meat consumption -- Expert views from Finland

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Abstract:

Meat consumption with large environmental and ethical implications is expected to grow in the future. Some studies, however, take the opposite view, that meat consumption is at a turning point because of a growing number of vegetarians and other factors in industrialized countries. This paper examines thirty nine Finnish experts' views on the development of meat consumption and analyses the explanatory grounds used by the experts in order to identify possible factors affecting meat consumption in the future. To ensure that different types of views would be represented, a new method of categorization of the experts was developed. In answer to the question; ){"What would constitute a preferable amount of meat consumption in Finland in the year 2030?)"}, the average answer given by the experts was 66 kg per person per year and the median 71 kg, both of which would mean a drop from the current level of 72 kg. However, the average probable consumption foreseen by the experts was 75 kg and the median was also 75 kg. By analysing the grounds presented by the experts, the discussion part of the paper presents a selection of strategies that can be used to help decrease meat consumption: 1) aid the technological development of products that could replace foodstuffs that originate from animals, 2) use ad campaigns to increase consumer knowledge about animal rights and vegetarianism, 3) make political decisions to transfer agricultural production away from meat production and promote the broadening of the selection of alternatives to meat products in stores, and 4) place higher taxes on meat products.