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“Global food security and food safety:  
The role of universities”

## The Role of Sri Lanka Universities for Establishing a Food Secured Environment in the Country

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### Abstract

The basis of this economy was the successful water management strategy throughout the country. However, with the encroachments of westerns, commercial crop production initiatives as well as recent introduction of the open economy have lead a degradation of the food security in the country. Some spotted initiatives have been taken mainly by some of the non-governmental organizations to rejuvenate degraded soil, establish water management strategies and the farming environment, and to regain the food security within the country. However, such efforts have failed to continue due to less governmental policy support, lack of funds availability and the medium-term nature of the projects.

At present, there are fifteen state universities in Sri Lanka, and all these have trained and competent pools of human resource. Other than few universities located in urban areas, regional universities are well-located representing various agro-ecological regions in the country. Thus, such regional universities have an excellent set up to address regional food security issues within the country. The Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, located in the heart of the dry region of Sri Lanka has already initiated research projects to address the food security aspects in the dry region. All the five faculties (Agriculture, Social Sciences and Humanities, Management studies, Applied Sciences and Medicine and Allied Sciences) are equipped with multi-disciplinary research teams to address the region-specific food security problems.

Specifically, different faculties of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka are continuing few multidisciplinary research and development activities at various levels to address food security related issues. Among them, the health and environmental effect of Glyphosate and other weedicides in leading agricultural areas, the relationship between the environment and Chronic Kidney Disease (Unknown)-CKDu, the socio-economic aspect of CKDu, the ancient irrigation system and , and traditional knowledge and food security are few research projects which directly address the food security aspects in the dry region. Similarly, there is a vast potential for other regional universities to address their region specific problems on food security as well.

**Keywords:** Food security, research and development, traditional knowledge, university, water resource management

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