



Transcription details:

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Transcription results:

The two Chinese characters for the word population are the character of a person and the character of an open mouth. Do you know how many people there are in the world today? For most of human history, our population increase has been slow and steady, but in the last 120 years it has accelerated from 1.5 to more than 7 billion. Around one billion people, or one in seven, are chronically hungry. It is predicted that by the end of this century, we will welcome person number 11 billion. Experts agree the planet can definitely produce enough food for 11 billion, but they question whether we can do it in ways that are environmentally responsible and whether safe and nutritious foods will be distributed fairly. What we are talking about here is called food security. It's not a term you might have heard before, so let's define it.

According to the United Nations, food security exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. There are four dimensions of food security: availability, access, utilization, and stability. You might like to explore these further.

Australia is one of the most food secure countries. We produce enough food to feed the nation nearly three times over. But food security is more than just how much food is produced. For a country to be food secure, there needs to be a consistent supply of healthy food and it needs to be accessible to all. We already have enough healthy food to feed the world, but the problem is that it isn't distributed equally. You may like to discuss what constitutes healthy food, and how it can be accessible to all the world's people.

One potential piece of the puzzle is the re-emergence of local food systems, in which food is grown, processed, packaged, and consumed, in the same community. There are lots of great examples of this including Western Farms in Brighton, Tasmania, where food is produced for farmers markets and restaurants including their own cafe in Hobart. You might like to consider the economic health and environmental benefits of local food systems.

So, now you've stated to think about food security, perhaps the two Chinese characters that make up the word population - that is a person and an open mouth - make more sense to you. Ultimately, we must balance people and resources. This is a challenge for agribusiness and consumers alike, but one I think we're up for.