

Crisis and Opportunity: Sustainability in American Agriculture

John Ikerd

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With the decline of family farms and rural communities, the rise of corporate farming and the resulting environmental degradation, American agriculture is in crisis. But this crisis offers the opportunity to rethink agriculture in sustainable terms. Here one of the most eloquent and influential proponents of sustainable agriculture explains what this means. These engaging essays describe what sustainable agriculture is, why it began, and how it can succeed. Together they constitute a clear and compelling vision for rebalancing the ecological, economic, and social dimensions of agriculture to meet the needs of the present without compromising the future.

In *Crisis and Opportunity*, John E. Ikerd outlines the consequences of agricultural industrialization, then details the methods that can restore economic viability, ecological soundness, and social responsibility to our agricultural system and thus ensure sustainable agriculture as the foundation of a sustainable food system and a sustainable society. John E. Ikerd is professor emeritus of agricultural economics at the University of Missouri. He is the author of *Sustainable Capitalism, A Return to Common Sense*, and *Small Farms are Real Farms*.

“For those who want to understand what sustainable agriculture is all about, *Crisis and Opportunity* is a major tour de force. Ikerd’s book is a profound source of information, perspective, and inspiration.”—Fred Magdoff, professor emeritus of soils at the University of Vermont and coeditor of *Hungry for Profit*

“An amazing collection of essays that reveal some of the clearest thinking on the sustainability of food and farming systems. This is a clarion call to come to our senses about our own future health and well-being as well as that of our communities and the planet that sustains us.”—Larry Yee, director of the University of California Cooperative Extension, Ventura County, and co-chair and cofounder of the Association of Family Farms

“Ikerd counters the efficiency model of industrial agriculture and presents a more rational path that leads to opportunity in agriculture and a more civil society. The book is well written and easy to read, it challenges us to a higher order of thinking.”—James E. Horne, president of Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture Inc. and coauthor of *The Next Green Revolution*.

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