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Our Growing Planet Is Good For Beef's Future, Analyst Tells Cattlemen

Beef producers are in a growth market, Jim Wiesemeyer of Informa Economics told TCFA members at their annual Convention in Amarillo recently.

Wiesemeyer said the decades ahead will be good for protein producers because of what he calls "the rise of the rest": the dramatic increase in both population and wealth occurring in Asia and Latin America.

Already, the trend toward increased meat consumption around the world is well established, according to Wiesemeyer, who said beef consumption itself is up 19% since 1990. "You've got a success story with all your good marketing programs, with all your good production practices. Global meat consumption is growing because of population and diet changes."

Noting the recent UN-FAO report, which estimated a 70% increase in global food production will be needed by 2050 to meet growing demand, Wiesemeyer said you cannot get there without modern agricultural technologies. "I'm not saying organic agriculture is bad. You can co-exist with it. But you're not going to feed this world on organic agriculture production practices."

However, Wiesemeyer attached a caveat to his optimistic outlook: Producers ability to capitalize on increasing demand relies upon the U.S. government's willingness to let them compete. Much of his presentation dealt with government actions that have or could hinder producers such as COOL, climate change legislation and ethanol policy.

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