



Health and food safety: same stakes, same challenges. The risk of a major food crisis as a consequence of Covid-19 - 2020.05.04
Jacques Bruhét and Dr Papa Abdoulaye Seck, French Academy of Agriculture

Covid-19 has caused a global health crisis unprecedented in its rapid spread and evolution. Jacques Bruhét, Vice-President of the French Academy of Agriculture¹, and Papa Abdoulaye Seck, former Minister of Agriculture and Rural Equipment of Senegal and member of the French Academy of Agriculture, fear that this health crisis could lead to an even more serious food and humanitarian crisis, particularly for the countries of the South, and question the "survival" of the globalization of agricultural markets. They also express concern that interdependence will be sacrificed, and the lack of solidarity between countries will become the norm.



Jacques Bruhét and Papa Abdoulaye Seck



Why?

Containment measures are causing a sudden halt to most economic activities and a global recession. It will be the poorest and most fragile populations who will have the most difficulty in coping with the crisis, especially in the vital function of feeding themselves.

In addition, major disruptions in agri-food supply chains, combined with the limitation of international trade, will have serious consequences for a large number of countries:

- Some agricultural production for export will suffer sharp declines, leading to a **loss of income for producers** in both Europe and Africa.

- Conversely, food imports will be severely disrupted (especially in countries that no longer export to preserve their resources), with obvious risks of undersupply of domestic markets in importing countries and **possible hunger revolts**, like the 2008 agricultural crisis in some capitals.

It is in the light of this alarming prospect that we propose a proactive approach, based on our experiences of situations in the South, in Africa, and in the North, in France.

¹ Available on : <https://www.academie-agriculture.fr/academie/presentation/english-presentation>