

Press release

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Population growth and the food crisis

With sharply rising food prices being matched by a steady rise in world population numbers, experts are predicting increasing conflict over scarcity of resources.

Last year, estimates of the world's population put it at more than 7 billion people – with the knock-on environmental concerns of sustaining such a growth worrying scientists and decision-makers.

The mechanics of feeding an ever-expanding populace are fraught with social, political and economic difficulties, as can be seen by the continuing furore over genetically modified crops.

While there is a movement in the West away from agribusiness, in developing parts of the world this is seen as a model to follow as a quick way of feeding growing numbers of people.

The [Manchester Salon](#) is hosting a discussion on population growth and the ethics of food production. The talk is being led by MMU lecturer Angelica Michelis, journalist Louise Bolotin, magazine editor Rob Lyons and Dr Carol Wagstaff, senior lecturer in food security.

One radical solution advocates the mass replacement of insects as a nutritional alternative to meat. Insects form part of the staple diet of many non-Western countries, and with meat production being seen as contributing to greenhouse gases and obesity in the West, a move away from meat consumption is put forward as a way forward.

Questions asked at the discussion will include:

- Have Europeans something to learn from the developing world, or are such dietary choices the product of poverty rather than culinary experimentation?
- Why do most of us find the eating of insects repulsive, but don't flinch when offered fish eggs, liver, kidney, snails?
- Might not science and modern-farming methods help us go beyond bug-burgers or should we all just become less squeamish?

Date: Tuesday, 29 October, 6.30pm

Venue: Cross Street Chapel, Cross Street, Manchester, M2 1NL. Tickets are free but need to be booked online (<http://www.manchestersalon.org.uk/solving-the-worlds-food-crisis.html>) in advance as part of Manchester Science Festival as well as a Battle of Ideas satellite event, or by mailing events@manchester-salon.org.uk