In 2025, the population of the Earth is projected to be over 8 billion. How can we sustainably feed a population of that size? On April 9, 2013, the University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR), will host a Global Food Systems Forum on the challenges faced by food producers and suppliers in a world of growing population, strains on natural ecosystems, shifting geopolitics and other converging forces. The conversation will take place in Ontario, California, as part of a 3-day ANR statewide conference with the theme “California Roots, Global Reach.”

The forum will include a keynote address by Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and founder of the Mary Robinson Foundation — Climate Justice, an organization dedicated to a human-centered approach to development and equitable stewardship of the Earth’s resources.

The program will consist of three panels, two with a global focus and the third with a California emphasis. The first panel will address the geopolitical, ethical, economic and technical challenges facing food systems worldwide. Panel two will discuss whether we can meet these challenges without depleting natural resources, and the third panel will question the implications, responsibilities and opportunities from a California perspective. The panels will offer a lively interchange of ideas moderated by two award-winning authors and journalists, Michael Specter and Mark Arax.

As William Lesher, former chief economist for the USDA, recently stated: “We’re going to have to produce more food in the next 40 years than we have in the last 10,000. Some people say we’ll just add more land or more water. But we’re not going to do much of either.”

UC will continue to play a leadership role in convening these kinds of dialogues, which will help guide the preparation of the next generation of students for careers in sustainable food production, as well as focus innovative research on finding solutions to these worldwide challenges.

As someone interested in California and global agriculture, please join us in this important discussion. You can follow us on twitter @ucanr #Food2025 for updates, and more information on the forum will be available on our website at http://ucanr.edu.

Barbara Allen-Diaz
Vice President
UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources

“We need a new sustainable paradigm for development based on rights and equity — the one we have has proven itself unsustainable.”

Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland keynote speaker, UC ANR Statewide Conference 2013