

International Trade, Food Security, and Climate Change in an Era of Liberal Trade

Authors : M. Barsa

Abstract : This paper argues that current liberal trade regimes have had the unfortunate effect of concentrating food production by area and by crop. While such hyper-specialization and standardization might be efficient under ordinary climate conditions, the increasing severity of climate shocks makes such a food production system especially vulnerable. Examining domestic US crop production, and the fact that similar patterns are evident worldwide, this paper explores the vulnerabilities of several major crops and suggests that the academic arguments surrounding increasing liberalization of trade are ill-suited to the climate challenges to come. Indeed, a case can be made that protectionist measures—especially by developing countries whose agricultural sectors are vulnerable to the cheap US and European exports—are increasingly necessary to scatter food production geographically and to retain a resilient diversity of crop varieties.

Keywords : climate change, crop resilience, diversity, international trade

Conference Title : ICELP 2020 : International Conference on Environmental Law and Policy

Conference Location : Berlin, Germany

Conference Dates : May 21-22, 2020