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# Die Zukunft auf dem Tisch: Analysen, Trends und Perspektiven der Ernährung

A book review by DIMANA LICHEVA

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Editors: Angelika Ploeger, Gunther Hirschfelder, Gesa Schönberger  
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Eating is an inevitable and important part of our lives. Yet most of us do not pay enough attention in our hectic daily routines to what food we buy, in what quantities we consume it and what effects our food choices have on our health and environment. In the age of globalisation we are used to having every type of food in the nearby supermarket regardless of the season. At the same time more than 2 million children die due to malnutrition each year (Horton and Lo, 2013: 1). Mass production has taken agriculture to new levels, and the pursuit of maximum yields exhausts the soils and pollutes the environment. An increase of the people's awareness has resulted in many movements and different agricultural practices, but will we eat better in the future and will we become more conscious of our food choices?

“Die Zukunft auf dem Tisch” aims at answering these questions and many more. Examining today's global trends, the authors try to give a clearer picture

of how the global challenges will affect what is and what is not on our tables in the future, what trends we may see, what will our food culture tomorrow be, and strives “not only to show, but also to analyse and discuss our perspectives for the future” (Ploeger et al., 2011: 16). It focuses on the fact that even though the future cannot be predicted, we can develop possible scenarios, but for that we need to better understand and analyse from different angles what tendencies we see today and in which direction we are going. The book comprises of 25 articles which lead the reader through discussions on lifestyles, global trends, challenges and opportunities, creating an idea of what we can expect tomorrow.

Having this big and ambitious goal in mind, the authors skilfully examine the problems from different perspectives-historical, political, cultural, social, scientific, physiological and even

emotional. Supporting their statements with data from various studies, credible literature and their own experience, the writers examine in detail, for example, the possibilities and challenges we face with our “eating out” habits if we go for sustainable consumption; to what extent is globalisation responsible for the interplay between production and consumption, hunger and abundance; what is the historical and traditional background of our eating habits and which are the influencing factors; what are the consequences of the observed today nutrition transition towards more sugar and fat and less fruits and vegetables and the so-called “Western diet”; what political hindrances we must overcome; what is done today for the food education of our children and how we can improve it; who are the LOHAS (Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability) and are they catalysts of awareness or just a marketing term for a social trend; and so on. Only from these few topics (and they only just to

name a few), can the reader grasp how complex the whole notion of nutrition is and how difficult an adequate prognosis for its future development can be given.

The rich palette of authors (scientists, social researchers, nutritionists, university professors, CEOs, journalists, etc.) encourages the readers to open their minds to new perspectives and to realise that there is much more to food production and consumption and everyday food choices than they thought. With this regards the book “Die Zukunft auf dem Tisch” can be recommended not only to professionals in the nutrition field, but also to ordinary citizens, and even politicians. For after all the biggest challenge for the society today is to manage the individual and global nutritional demands, mitigate hunger and obesity and provide food security for us and for our children.

### **References:**

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### **Author information:**

Dimana Licheva is currently pursuing M.Sc. in International Food Business and Consumer Studies, Kassel University and Fulda University of Applied Sciences, Germany. She holds a B.Sc. in Biotechnology from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria.