Integrated weed management Sustainable agriculture An ethical perspective

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Achievements

Cell phone Computer Medical advances Immunization Travel Abundant food

The problems

Climate change Global warming Pollution Social inequality **Environmental degradation** Soil erosion

Weed Science problems

Herbicide resistance Invasive species Biotech/GMOs Sustainability

We humans, Earth's dominant species, are not just figures in the landscape we are shapers of the landscape.

We need to think carefully about what we are shaping. We need to think about what we do and undo. How do we know what to do? In agriculture/in life

How do you know what you choose to do is the right thing to do?

Ethics

What we all have and practice

Societal principles

Ethics is not

A set of prohibitions

Do not rules

Ideal, but useless

Relative

Subjective

Critical Thinking

Open-minded Analyzing/evaluating information

It is accurate, consistent, and based on sound evidence and good reasons

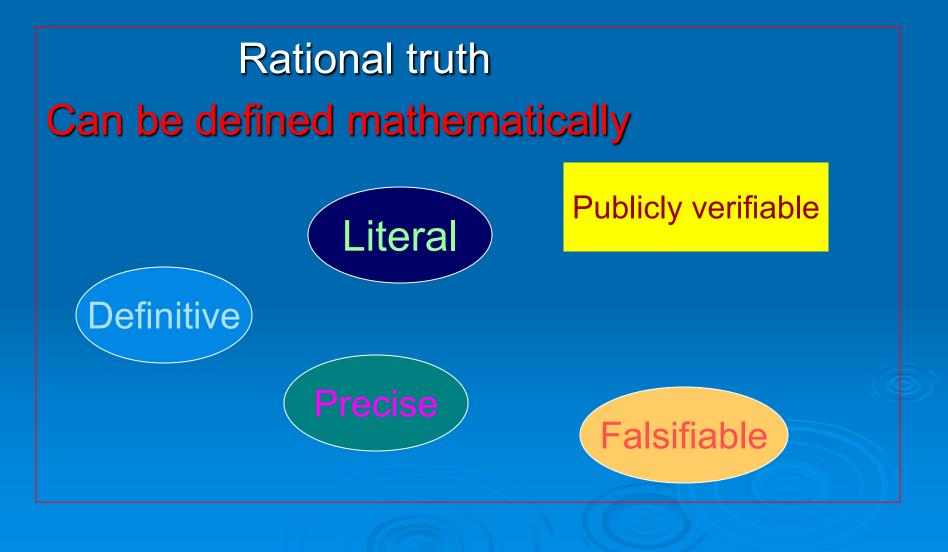
A test of the moral condition of a discipline is a willingness to examine its assumptions

Philosophers study ethics

They don't tell us what is right and wrong.

They show us how to think about what is right and wrong.

The scientific truth model



The central norm of agricultural science

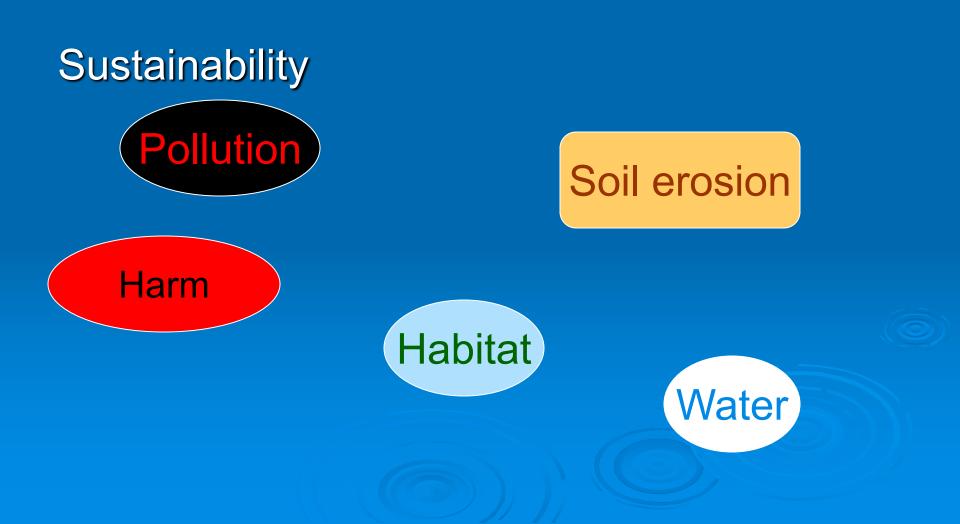
Productionism

Producing food and fiber to benefit humanity

Is production a sufficient criterion?

Does it justify everything?

Responsibilities



We have lived by the assumption that what was good for us would be good for the world. We have been wrong. For I do not doubt that it is only on the condition of humility and reverence before the world that our species will be able to remain in it.

(Berry and Wirzba 2002)

Ethics for Agriculture Societal Concerns Pesticide contamination Animal treatment – CAFO pollution Biotech/GMOs Corporate agriculture Water mining Loss of small farms & rural communities **Genetic diversity Migrant labor** Soil erosion

Ethics for agriculture Are these just fringe concerns?



Agriculture has an ethical dilemma

Agriculture...

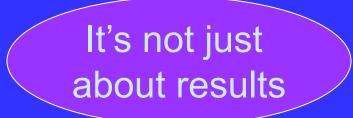


the largest and most important interaction between humans and the environment.

Ethics for agriculture

Agriculture – the essential human activity.

Must have a firm ethical foundation



Three points about agricultural science

1. Those engaged in agriculture are certain about the moral correctness of what they do.

2. The basis of their moral certainty is not obvious to those who have it.

3. Agriculture's moral certainty is potentially harmful because it is unexamined The benefits and costs of modern agriculture

The greatest story never told

A productive marvel

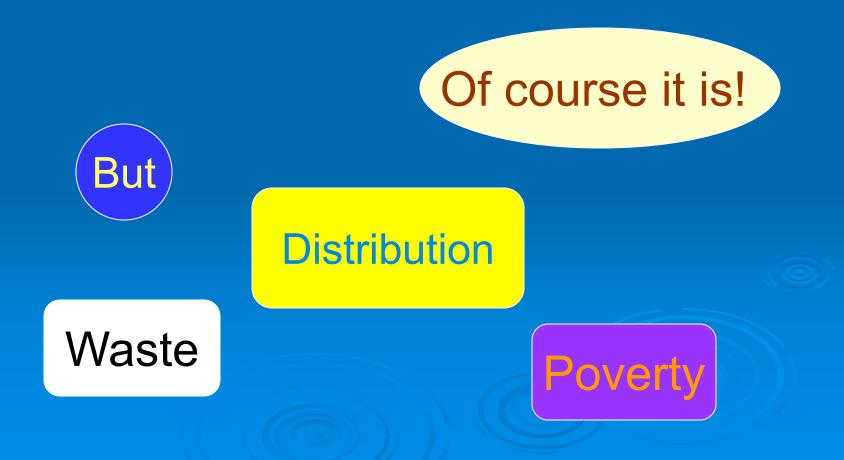




Listening and understanding

What is the problem?

Is it food production?



Social goals for agriculture

Sustainable, environmentally safe production

Contributes to a just social order

Environmental goals for agriculture

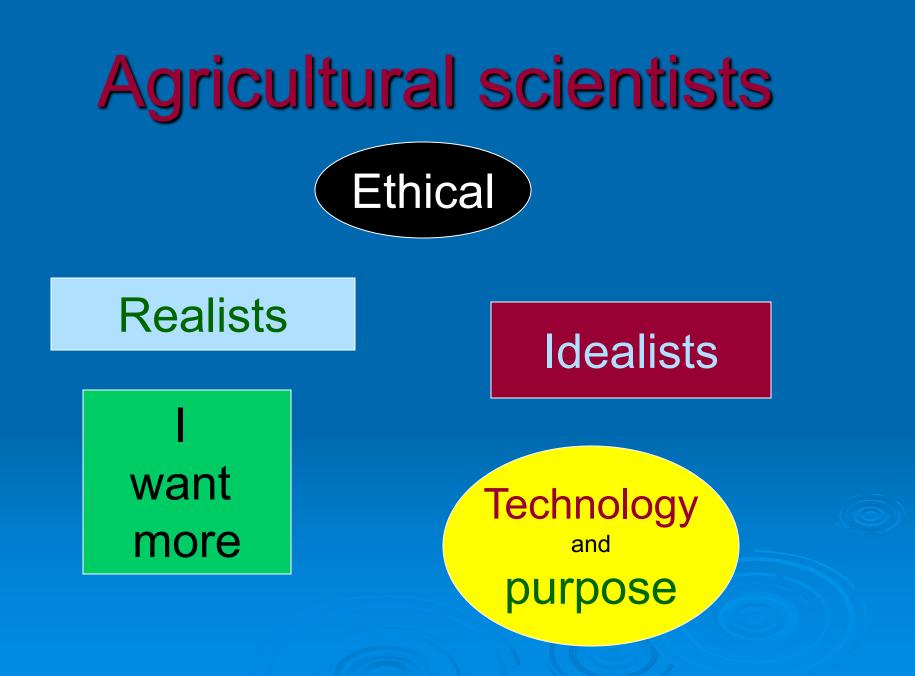
Sustainability Production Environmental quality The land Values

Science is value laden

Assumptions Research and teaching

A view of the future we expect, desire, or fear

What is the right thing to do?



Agriculture's many forms

Productive Scientific Environmental Economic Social Political and Moral



