The role of agronomy in the world economy can be defined by patterns of production, utilization and trade for field crops, especially cereals. These patterns are governed by regional demand, production, cost and supply functions; transfer costs; means of payment; and government constraints. Projections of markets, production, trade, and public policies provide bases to outline future economic opportunities and challenges for agronomy.

DEMANDS AND MARKETS

Per capita grain utilization in the United States -- over 750 kilograms per year but with little as food -- is about twice that of Western Europe. The poorest nations use about 200 kilograms per person per year, nearly all as food. Once caloric adequacy is reached in a nation, cereal food demands fall and feed demands increase as incomes rise. Poor countries are heavy grain eaters and light grain users. Increased per capita grain use therefore depends in part upon increased consumption of livestock products, especially in poor countries. In richer nations, per capita food demands for cereals will continue to fall while feed demands will rise. In very poor countries, where cereal food demand rises both