

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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ADDRESSING THE EFFECT OF AGRICULTURE ON GLOBAL HEALTH

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Michigan State University has launched the first-of-its-kind center to research and address the growing global effects of agriculture on human and animal health.

The Center for Health Impacts of Agriculture links MSU's renowned agriculture and food security research with its three colleges of medicine – the College of Human Medicine, College of Osteopathic Medicine and College of Veterinary Medicine – to address growing global health concerns with agriculture, including:

- Antimicrobial resistance in humans, animals and plants, and the implications on human health
- Agricultural development and economic effects related to increased cases of malaria in Malawi, Africa
- Health risk assessment and nutrient regulation policies, including assessment of carcinogen levels in current health policy

Felicia Wu, John A. Hannah Distinguished Professor leads the new center. Wu's research, at the crossroads of human health and agricultural practices and policies, inspired her to develop the interdisciplinary research center.

"The world's population is expected to reach 9 billion by the year 2050, creating drastically increased demands on agriculture and food production around the world," Wu said. "It is not enough to just produce more food for the growing population. We need an integrated approach that will feed the population while maintaining health."

The center is co-lead by Dr. Ned Walker, MSU professor and medical entomologist.

In addition to the colleges of medicine, CHIA involves several other university units, including: College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, College of Natural Science, Center for University Toxicology, Center for Gender in Global Context, Food Security Policy Innovation Lab, Legume Innovation Lab, AgBioResearch, Kellogg Biological Station and BEACON (Center for the study of Evolution in Action).

"MSU is already a leader in food security research, but there is a global need for projects that examine the public health impacts of agriculture," said Wu. "With agricultural practices changing worldwide, the nature and epidemiology of disease also is changing."

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