
C12T6P1 测试练习

The risks agriculture faces in developing countries

Synthesis _____ of an online debate*

A Two things distinguish _____ food production from all other productive _____ activities: first, every single person needs food each day and has a right _____ to it; and second, it is hugely _____ dependent on nature. These two unique _____ aspects, one political _____, the other natural, make food production highly vulnerable and different from any other business. At the same time, cultural values _____ are highly entrenched _____ in food and agricultural systems worldwide.

B Farmers everywhere face major risks, including extreme weather, long-term climate change, and price volatility in input and product markets. However, smallholder _____ farmers in developing countries must in addition deal with adverse _____ environments, both natural, in terms of _____ soil quality, rainfall _____, etc., and human, in terms of infrastructure _____, financial systems, markets, knowledge and technology. Counter-intuitively _____, hunger is prevalent _____ among many smallholder farmers in the developing world.

C Participants _____ in the online debate _____ argued that our

biggest challenge is to address _____ the underlying _____ causes of the agricultural system's inability _____ to ensure sufficient food for all, and they identified _____ as drivers _____ of this problem our dependency on fossil fuels and unsupportive government policies.

D On the question of mitigating _____ the risks farmers face, most essayists _____ called for _____ greater state _____ intervention _____. In his essay, Kanayo F. Nwanze, President of the International fund for agricultural development, argued that governments can significantly reduce risks for farmers by providing basic services like roads to get produce _____ more efficiently to markets, or water and food storage facilities _____ to reduce losses. Sophia Murphy, senior advisor to the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, suggested that the procurement _____ and holding _____ of stocks _____ by governments can also help mitigate wild swings _____ in food prices by alleviating _____ uncertainties about market supply.

E Shenggen Fan, Director General of the International Food Policy Research Institute, held up _____ social safety nets _____ and public welfare programmes in Ethiopia, Brazil and Mexico as valuable ways to address poverty _____ among farming families and reduce their vulnerability to agriculture shocks _____. However, some

commentators _____ responded that cash transfers to poor families do not necessarily translate _____ into increased food security _____ , as these programmes do not always strengthen food production or raise incomes. Regarding state subsidies _____ for agriculture, Rokeya Kabir, Executive Director of Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha, commented in her essay that these 'have not compensated for _____ the stranglehold _____ exercised by private traders. In fact, studies show that sixty percent of beneficiaries of subsidies are not poor, but rich landowners _____ and non-farmer traders.'

F Nwanze, Murphy and Fan argued that private risk management tools, like private insurance _____ , commodity futures markets _____ , and rural _____ finance can help small-scale producers mitigate risk and allow for investment in improvements. Kabir warned that financial support schemes _____ often encourage the adoption _____ of high-input agricultural practices _____ , which in the medium term may raise production costs beyond the value of their harvests. Murphy noted that when futures markets become excessively _____ financialised they can contribute to short-term price volatility _____ , which increases farmers' food insecurity. Many participants and commentators emphasised _____ that greater transparency _____ in markets is needed to mitigate the impact of volatility, and make evident _____ whether adequate stocks and supplies are available. Others contended

_____ that agribusiness companies should be held responsible for paying for negative side effects.

G Many essayists mentioned _____ climate change and its consequences for small-scale agriculture. Fan explained that 'in addition to reducing crop yields _____, climate change increases the magnitude _____ and the frequency of extreme weather events, which increase smallholder vulnerability.' The growing unpredictability of weather patterns increases farmers' difficulty in managing weather-related risks. According to this author, one solution would be to develop crop varieties that are more resilient _____ to new climate trends and extreme weather patterns. Accordingly, Pat Mooney, co-founder _____ and executive director of the ETC Group, suggested that 'if we are to survive climate change, we must adopt policies that let peasants _____ diversify the plant and animal species and varieties/breeds that make up _____ our menus _____.'

H Some participating authors and commentators argued in favour of community based and autonomous _____ risk management strategies through collective action groups, co-operatives or producers' groups. Such groups enhance _____ market opportunities for small-scale producers, reduce marketing costs and synchronise _____ buying and selling with seasonal price conditions. According to Murphy, 'collective

action offers an important way for farmers to strengthen their political and economic bargaining _____ power, and to reduce their business risks.' One commentator, Giel ton, warned that collective action does not come as a free good _____. It takes time, effort and money to organise, build trust and to experiment. Others, like Marcel vernooij and Marcel Beukeboom, suggested that in order to 'apply what we already know', all stakeholders _____, including business, government, scientists and Civil society, must work together, starting at the beginning of the value chain.

I Some participants explained that market price volatility is often worsened by the presence _____ of intermediary _____ purchasers who, taking advantage of farmers' vulnerability dictate _____ prices. One commentator suggested farmers can gain greater control over prices and minimise price volatility by selling directly to consumers. Similarly, Sonali Bisht, founder and advisor to the Institute of Himalayan Environmental Research and Education (INHERE), India, wrote that community-supported agriculture, where consumers invest in local farmers by subscription _____ and guarantee _____ producers a fair _____ price, is a risk-sharing model worth more attention. Direct food distribution _____ systems not only encourage small-scale agriculture but also give consumers more control over the food they consume, she wrote.

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