

## BOOK REVIEW

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*Food System Sustainability: Insights from duALIne*. Edited by C. Esnouf, M. Russel and N. Bricas. Cambridge University Press (2013), pp. 303, £60.00. ISBN 978-1-107-03646-8.

This book reports various aspects of a 2009–2011 review and foresight project undertaken by two French research organisations, INRA and CIRAD. It has a focus on downstream components of food systems such as food processing and consumer behaviour rather than agriculture itself, although the life cycle analysis (LCA) approach attracts praise. Chapters include those on consumption, industrial organisation, urbanisation, wastage and international trade. Much of the content is descriptive, discursive or ‘questions for research’ rather than empirical, but numerical results are occasionally reported, e.g. on the carbon footprint of alternative French diets (showing that nutritional quality of the diet has little effect), or estimates of losses and wastage in Northern and Southern countries. Perhaps surprisingly, there is little discussion of specific aspects of sustainability, such as the most relevant risks, time-frames or ‘resilience’ in food systems, and the various possible indicators and assessment methods for sustainability are reviewed rather than adjudicated. Despite globalisation and the spread of the agro-industrial food system, the distinct problems of food sustainability (including obesity as well as under-nutrition) in Southern countries are noted. It is concluded that reducing GHG emissions associated with foods will depend more on reducing total quantities ingested than on changes to the structure of food consumption (e.g. away from animal products). Excellent English with few typos, over 500 references (UK and global, as well as French), and a good index, make this a welcome addition to the literature.

Kenneth J. Thomson