

Review: Farming in a Changing Climate: Agricultural Adaptation in Canada
Ellen Wall, Barry Smit, and Johanna Wandel (Eds.)

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Wall, Ellen, Smit, Barry and Wandel, Johanna (Eds.). *Farming in a Changing Climate: Agricultural Adaptation in Canada*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 2008. xiii, 273pp. ISBN 9780774813945. US\$34.95, paper.

Frequent incidence of drought, floods, earthquakes, and other natural disasters across the globe has created havoc to such a large extent that a large body of research has started focusing on examining and understanding the aspect of climate change. Owing to its direct relation with nature and climate, the sustainability of the agricultural sector across both the developed and the developing world has posed a challenge. In such a situation, the research on climate change and agriculture started appearing in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This book being a part of this increased interest on agriculture under changing climatic conditions is an interesting contribution. Subject-wise, it provides not only a stock of the existing situation but also delineates the prospects to revive agriculture in changing climates.

This volume is a cogent presentation of various diverse, though inter-related, issues. It contains seventeen chapters. The editors have wisely articulated the volume into five parts. The first part includes an introduction and has contributions on three main approaches: impact-based approach, process-based approach and the context-based approach. In fact, these three approaches provide a way forward for the compilation of various studies under them as each of them, though inter-related, is capable of providing numerous insights into the subject.

Impact-based studies focus on the biophysical and production effects of certain features of an agricultural system such as changes in yield or the potential for regionally-based production to respond to a stressor such as changes in temperature norms, climate change scenario and their implications for specific types of crop production. It communicates general trends and regional differences in production relative to changes in the variables included in climate change scenarios.

The context-based studies address the ways in which climate change fits in with the multiple stresses. It also examines producers' risk perception and management from individual case studies. It assesses the institutional capacity to support their claim. Process-based studies are concerned with recognising the broader forces that derive or constrain local exposures and adaptive strategies.

Overall, the book bridges the gap that was prevalent due to the lack of concise research work on the prospects of agriculture in a changing climate. Though this book is mainly concerned with the state of agriculture especially the agri-food sector in Canada, the insights provided are so rich that they are applicable beyond boundaries; they are very much useful to understanding the challenge faced by the agricultural sector in the developing world as well. Moreover, the rural and historical case studies contained in this book are very illustrative of the climate change impact on the population pattern. So, I would suggest this book as a "must-read" for not only those interested in environmental studies but also to researchers, policy makers and academicians devoted to ensuring the sustainability of the agricultural sector in a rapidly changing climate.

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