

Technology

“I am worried about the technological approach that is so powerful. We are going down a road where small farms are gotten rid of... Growing food indoors, and in labs – this is seen as the future, and we continue to disconnect food from nature.”

Scottish Global Dialogue Participant

Participants expressed a wariness of technologies that increase the distance between food growing and farmers. The group from NFU Canada was concerned over technological solutions implemented by outsiders. The group discussed how “climate smart agriculture” was being promoted by their government at COP26 as a “false climate solution.” They talked about how their government was supporting large companies to go into rural areas offering one-off compensation to farmers to build “green industrial infrastructure” on their land. The group saw this as a “re-commodification of food systems by carbon markets, carbon offsets and carbon dollars.” They also perceived it as a way in which farmers continue to lose power and control over food systems.

Yet, other technologies perceived as beneficial were also discussed.

One Laos farmer has been using digital and social media to support producers’ livelihoods and build trust: “online markets like Facebook are a very useful way to engage and build relationships directly with customers and consumers.”

Mexican participants spoke about the metate (Mexican grinding stone) and traditional baskets as other forms of technology which are embedded in and emerge from more sustainable food systems.



Global Dialogue participants from Oyo State, Nigeria and South Lanarkshire, Scotland in conversation