We've reached Peak Farmland [1]

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We're all familiar with the screams of woe from the environmental movement. Peak oil, peak fertiliser, peak water, there's even a peak copper scare out there. The idea, if it can be flattered enough to be described as one, is that we're all using too much of whatever it is, there ain't no more and we're all going to die. Aieee!

And now we've got peak farmland approaching [3]:

> "We believe that humanity has reached Peak Farmland," said Jesse Ausubel, director of the Program for the Human Environment at the Rockefeller University in New York.

So there's no more land to grow more food on and we're all going to die Aieee! etc?

No, this is sensible people, not the usual envorinmental wailers. What they're actually saying is that given the increasing efficiency with which we use farmland we're not actually going to need any more. The true quote is:

> "We believe that humanity has reached Peak Farmland, and that a large net global restoration of land to nature is ready to begin," said Jesse Ausubel, director of the Program for the Human Environment at the Rockefeller University in New York.

The one caveat is that we have to make sure we don't mess it up by growing biofuels: but even FoE and Greenpeace agree this is a bad idea now so we've only the politicians left to convince.

And it's entirely possible that this report is actually not optimistic enough. OK, this is the Mail but still: plantscrapers anyone [4]?

> Crops could soon be grown in greenhouses the size of skyscrapers in city centres across the country, it has been claimed. Birds Eye and other food producers are investigating building ?plantscrapers?, which could accommodate hundreds of storeys worth of crops, in a bid to make farming more economical, sustainable and meet increasing demand.

Or another development, hydroponics using seawater as both the growing medium and the cooling necessary [5] in a desert.

The old mantra was that we should buy land because they're not making it anymore. But the truth is, by making what land we do use more productive through the application of technology we are indeed making more of it. We're making more farmland, even if not more actual land.

One joy of this is that some good part of the land that is currently being farmed can be allowed to revert to nature. Which should of course please all those environmentalists: but it won't, they'll still be complaining. You see, hydroponics isn't organic. Ho hum.

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