

What the Hectare?! How to Produce Food With Fewer Resources

By [The Mogambo Guru](#)

10/07/10 Tampa, Florida – Rick Mills of [aheadoftheherd.com](#) posted a chart from [earthpolicy.org](#) showing “World Irrigated Area Per Thousand People, 1950-2007” which is almost Malthusian in its implications, in that the world “irrigated area” per thousand people reached its maximum of about 75.5 hectares per thousand people in 1980, but has now fallen to 43 hectares, which is the same area as was irrigated in 1960!

Since we are talking about it, I want to get it off my chest that a hectare is a unit of measure that leaves me confused and befuddled, even when I am told that a hectare is 2.47 acres, which doesn't mean much to me either, even when they exasperatingly go on, their teeth gritted to conceal in a painfully irritating effort to explain it to me, that an acre is 4,840 square yards.

My face a blank, it finally dawns on me what they are talking about when they multiply 4,840 square yards per acre times 2.47 acres per hectare to give square yards in a hectare, which measures out as a square of land with 109.34 yards on a side!

Finally! Something we can all relate to! 109.34 yards is, of course, immediately meaningful because it's, as everyone knows, a solid pitching-wedge to the green, with maybe about 5 miles per hour of wind at your back, perhaps followed by a one-putt for an eagle, hopefully not with a one-putt needed to save par, but probably a three-putt for a double bogey at least, and you will be so upset that you won't care diddly-squat about any stinking acres, or hectares, or any of that crap, so why bother with something as irrelevant as land-measurement when you should be thinking of proper club selection, grip, stance, shot alignment, shifting wind conditions, shoulder turn, hip turn, wrist pronation, and hitting solidly down the line of ball flight, Just For Freaking Starters (JFSS)?

I bring this up for Two Important Reasons (TIR). Firstly, because there is a whole generation of people who wonder, “What if I am called upon to measure out a hectare of land, and all I have is a golf ball and a set of golf clubs?” Now they will know!

Secondly, it is remarkable that technology allowed us to produce enough food, on the same amount of land, for a world population that has doubled in 50 years. This is a mighty big increase in productivity per hectare, which (if you will recall from a previous paragraph) is the size of a square of land where each side is as long as a good shot with a pitching wedge.

I think it foolhardy to expect similarly fantastic results in the future, as finite arable land cannot produce infinitely more yield, just as trees do not grow to the skies, bull markets do not run forever, the Federal Reserve cannot create excess money forever without something bad happening, and only an idiot such as the mentally-ill idiots of the Obama administration could possibly believe that the federal government constantly deficit-spending such unbelievably

massive amounts of money created by the Federal Reserve could possibly make things better, or even prevent the inevitable collapse of such a bloated, ridiculous, distorted, malignant, government-centric economy, except maybe once in a million years, or maybe once in a billion years, or maybe once in freaking billion billion billion billion years, but probably, almost certainly, not even then.

Unfortunately, the inevitability of the federal government attempting the impossible task of reversing the damage done by massive deficit-spending and money-creation will turn an ordinary bout of painful inflation in consumer prices, and a painful deflation in asset prices, into a ruinous hyperinflation where all food is stolen because nobody can afford to pay the high prices for food and everything else, and the government responds with even more deficit-spending.

So, to those of you, like Junior Mogambo Rangers (JMRs) everywhere, who are hip to the demand/supply dynamic that automatically clears the market with price changes, the news of the certainty of catastrophic failure of dysfunctional fiscal policy, irresponsible monetary policy versus the natural limits of production shows that you are right to be alarmed and to be buying gold, silver and oil with a frantic, mindless abandon.

Those who are not alarmed should turn to the Mogambo Junior Ranger Handbook (MJRH) under the heading, “Fan, things hitting, monetary policy leading to, fiscal policy leading to, inevitability of, destructive nature of, morons in Congress and the Federal Reserve, fiat money. Also see ‘We’re Freaking Doomed!’ page 63.”

Or save yourself the eyestrain of all that reading, just buy gold, silver and oil as protection against the end-game idiocy of government ruining itself and the idiots that elected them, which is so simple that it makes you smile and say, “Whee! This investing stuff is easy!”