Introducing the *ES Food & Agroforestry*: The Frontiers of Interdisciplinary Research that Feeds the World

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It is hard to imagine any other more important subject than food for humanity. Food, as the most basic necessity, provides nutrients and energy, and regulates vital body functions. It is not only a basic need and right, but also a great source of enjoyment. With tremendous economic developments and humanitarian interventions that uplift the standard of living in the past decades, the population percentage suffering from hunger has constantly been declining globally. Nowadays, food is arguably the safest and the most abundant, diverse, convenient, and readily accessible since the primordial time. However, according to the 2020 Fact Sheets published by the World Health Organization, about 30% of the world population is suffering from malnutrition including undernutrition, inadequate vitamins or minerals, overweight and obesity, which lead to diet-related noncommunicable diseases.^[1] In particular, the prevalence of metabolic diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases and diabetes caused by unhealthy or imbalanced dietary patterns, is rapidly growing in developed countries. Therefore, there has been a drastic change in research interests among the food industry, academia, and regulatory agencies. Collectively, the research community needs to address some of the most critical questions and challenges. For instance, how to craft and market a new genre of tasty and healthy food; how to advance food production and processing technologies to be more organic, safe, sustainable, and environmental-friendly; how to engage and educate the

public to boost acceptance of new technologies, like GMO and nanotechnology; and how to innovate and support the future of humanity at the dawn of a new era of space exploration, etc.

Besides the aforementioned challenges, the food, agriculture and forestry in the twenty-first century could also face existential threats from climate change and farmland shortages. Agroforestry plays a critical role in mitigating or adapting to climate change, restoring land, protecting biodiversity, and enhancing food security. Agroforestry systems are becoming increasingly pertinent to agriculture, food, and related industries. However, there are also many challenges facing agroforestry practices, such as forest degradation and natural forest fires. It is vital for society to balance and develop synergy between food productivity and agroforestry sustainability.^[2] It is also imperative to publicize cutting-edge advances in agroforestry research and practices, while raising questions, particularly regarding the effectiveness of agroforestry to enhance food and environmental security around the world. However, we find that the connection and synergy among food, agriculture, and forestry are rarely emphasized in the established journals in either food science or agroforestry field.

ES Food & Agroforestry is dedicated to exploring high-quality and cutting-edge original multidisciplinary research encompassing science, technology, and engineering of food, agriculture, forestry, and their interdisciplinary fields (Fig. 1), such as the relationship between sustainable agriculture and food production, integration of food security through smart agroforestry model, etc.^[3] The editorial board of the ES Food & Agroforestry holds a strong commitment to providing an open-access platform for the scientific community to share their latest significant, novel, and high impact findings across all aspects of food, agriculture, and forestry. It is our privilege to help these groundbreaking discoveries reach the public, the shareholders, and the scientific society.

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Fig. 1 The concept and the focus of ES Food & Agroforestry.

Supporting information

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest to declare.

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