World hunger decreasing, but it’s not all good news

By Christopher Joyce, NPR

Among the things to celebrate this holiday season is the fact that there are fewer hungry people in the world. Just how many? Well, since 1965, researchers in Europe have been tracking the world’s food supply and where it’s going.

The good news is: The percentage of the world’s population getting what the researchers say is a sufficient diet has grown from 30 percent to 61 percent.

In 1965, a majority of the world survived on less than 2,000 calories a day per person. This was especially true in parts of the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, China and Southeast Asia. Now, 61 percent of the world has access to 2,500 or more calories a day.

But one thing the scientists discovered is that the countries that have a history of food insufficiency didn’t just up and start growing lots more food. Instead, for the most part they’re increasing supply by importing food from abroad.

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