

A discussion of the interrelations between food, health, and the environment is extremely topical today. Rising food prices together with the price of oil and a series of so-called "natural" catastrophes dominate the news every day. At the same time, there is a lot of confusion. Why are world food prices increasing so quickly and dramatically? Why is world hunger rising again after a long steady decline? What do food prices have to do with the price of oil? Why is it so important to grow food locally and organically? In this brief talk, I shall try to show that a full understanding of these issues requires a new ecological understanding of life (a new "ecological literacy") as well as a new kind of "systemic" thinking – thinking in terms of relationships, patterns, and context.

Indeed, over the last 25 years, such a new understanding of life has emerged at the forefront of science. I want to illustrate this new understanding by asking the age-old question, what is life? What's the difference between a rock and a plant, animal, or microorganism? To understand the nature of life, it is not enough to understand DNA, proteins, and the other molecular structures that are the building blocks of living organisms, because these structures also exist in dead organisms, for example, in a dead piece of wood or bone. (...)

The article:

<http://www.ecoliteracy.org/essays/new-facts-life>

Author's website:

<http://www.fritjofcapra.net/index.html>

Basic information:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fritjof_Capra