

Warming may cause even deeper cuts to crop yields

A new study on the impacts of climate change shows warming will lead to heavier losses in global crop yields than previously believed.



Credit: CSIRO scienceimage

The study compiled by researchers from Australia, Colombia, the United States and the United Kingdom looks at global crop yields under projected levels of climate change.

Co-author, Dr Mark Howden from the CSIRO, says it shows wheat, maize and rice crop yields decline by around 5 per cent for every degree of warming.

‘Reductions in yields tended to increase as the temperature went up and up,’ he said.

Yields also go down more rapidly in tropical environments than they do in temperate environments, the study concluded.

Dr Howden says the results are worse than previous forecasts.

‘Looking back a few years, we thought maybe we could get away with a bit more warming before we went negative, but this is actually showing the spike will happen sooner than later,’ he said.

Dr Howden says the agriculture sector will need to adapt to avoid global food shortages.

‘There’s a lot of things you can do like management changes, changes in varieties and potentially changes in location as well,’ he said.

The [study](#) is published in the journal *Nature Climate Change*.

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