

## Norman Borlaug Quotes

“I grew up on the land, on a small farm in NE Iowa. Life was not always easy. I experienced the economic depressions of the 1930s, and from the experience, I felt that families on the land needed help from scientists, and I dedicated my life to science, and especially to food production.”

“It was during the depths of the depression. Many unemployed hungry people, asking for a hand out, for a nickel. I’d never seen this in the rural communities where I grew up. This was a horrifying experience for me. That was part of me. I saw it!”

“I personally cannot live comfortably in the midst of abject hunger and poverty and human misery, if I have the possibilities of--even in a modest way, with the help of my many scientific colleges--of doing something about improving the lives of these many young children.”

“There was this huge harvest, mountains of grain by the railroad sidings waiting to be shipped, unthreshed grain on the threshing floors, and finally it was so bad, they had to close the schools and store the grain. And you could feel this enthusiasm—you would stop at farmer’s field days and at experiment stations, at the agriculture universities, you could feel it everywhere.”

“In a policy makers office, you say brutally, frankly, look, things are seething down there, if you want government stability, the games you played by in the past won’t serve. You’re going to have trouble. You say that thing at the wrong time you’ll be invited to leave the country.”

“I like to play the game hard. To me the most important game of all is the game of life, to try to elevate the standard of living of whom you’re trying to help. I think it requires ones best effort.”

“Food is the moral right of all who are born into this world.”

“...the first essential component of social justice is adequate food for all mankind.”

“Civilization as it is known today could not have evolved, nor can it survive, without an adequate food supply.”

“For, behind the scenes, halfway around the world in Mexico, were two decades of aggressive research on wheat that not only enabled Mexico to become self-sufficient with respect to wheat production but also paved the way to rapid increase in its production in other countries.”

“I am but one member of a vast team made up of many organizations, officials, thousands of scientists, and millions of farmers - mostly small and humble - who for many years have been fighting a quiet, oftentimes losing war on the food production front.”

“Man can and must prevent the tragedy of famine in the future instead of merely trying with pious regret to salvage the human wreckage of the famine, as he has so often done in the past.”

“The destiny of world civilization depends upon providing a decent standard of living for all mankind.”

“The forgotten world is made up primarily of the developing nations, where most of the people, comprising more than fifty percent of the total world population, live in poverty, with hunger as a constant companion and fear of famine a continual menace.”

“There are no miracles in agricultural production.”

“Therefore I feel that the aforementioned guiding principle must be modified to read: If you desire peace, cultivate justice, but at the same time cultivate the fields to produce more bread; otherwise there will be no peace.”