

NEW IPES-FOOD REPORT 2025

FUEL TO FORK. WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO GET FOSSIL FUELS OUT OF OUR FOOD SYSTEMS?

September 2025

In June 2025 [iPES-FOOD - International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems](#) published the new Report [Fuel to Fork. What will it take to get fossil fuels out of our food systems?](#)

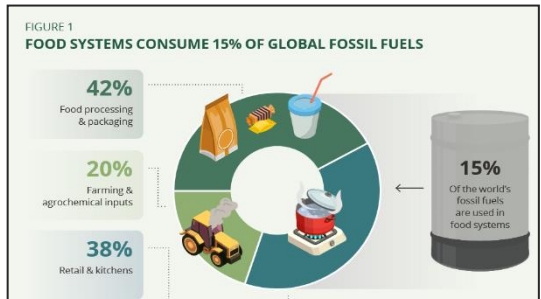
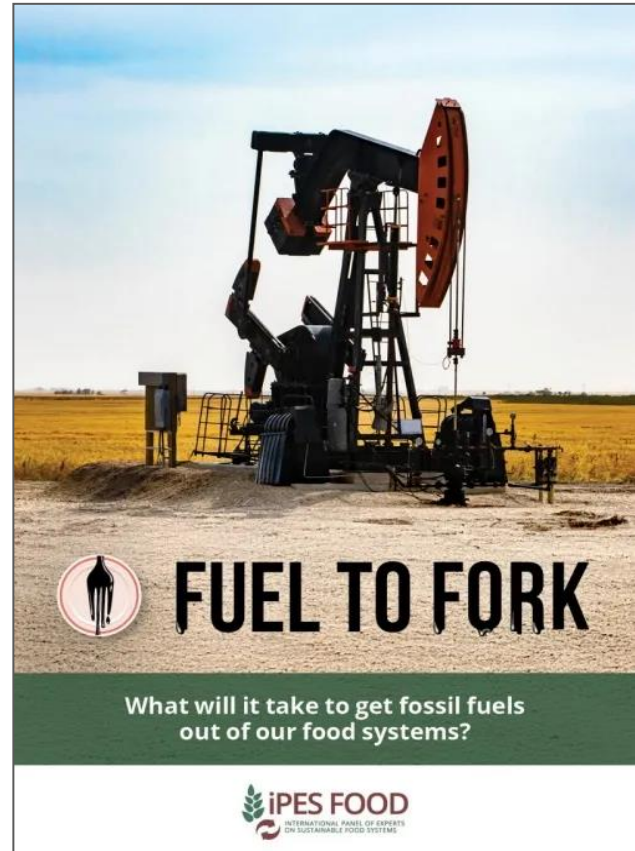
The Report underlines that “The industrial food system uses 40% of petrochemicals and 15% of fossil fuels, yet it’s being left out of the climate conversation. This major new report exposes false solutions, and lays out real paths to fossil fuel-free food and farming.

Our food system is hooked on fossil fuels. From fossil-fuelled fertilizers and pesticides to plastic packaging, ultra-processed foods, and long-haul cold chains, fossil fuels are entwined at every link in the food chain. Food systems now consume 40% of all petrochemicals and 15% of fossil fuels globally making them a key growth frontier for Big Oil. Yet food remains glaringly absent from the climate conversation.

This dependency is deepening climate risks and threatening food access. As geopolitical shocks drive oil price volatility, food prices follow worsening hunger. Meanwhile, as other sectors begin to decarbonize, food the fossil fuel industry is doubling down on fertilizers and plastics to sustain its growth locking in pollution and keeping food systems on an industrial, fossil-fuelled path.

This report sets out what it will take to break that addiction and why it must start now. It exposes the false solutions being peddled by powerful corporations from ‘blue’ ammonia to high-tech digital farming and maps out real pathways forward: phasing out chemical inputs, investing in agroecology, building resilient local food systems, and reining in corporate power”.

[The Report Summary underlines that](#) “Fossil fuels are the lifeblood of the food industry. They are deeply embedded in every part of the food chain – accounting for at least 15% of total fossil fuel use globally – and their use in food systems is accelerating. As fossil fuel extraction continues to expand, and decarbonization strategies focus on energy and transport, the oil and gas industry is increasingly



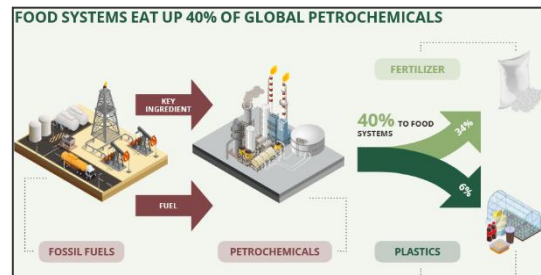
turning to petrochemicals particularly agrochemicals and plastic food packaging as its next growth frontier. Governments agreed at COP28 to transition away from fossil fuels, yet action on food systems is missing.

Fossil-based fertilizers and plastic food packaging have become critical lifelines for oil and gas companies, offering a new way to keep fossil fuels flowing even as other sectors begin to decarbonize. Ultra-processed foods are the ultimate expression of fossil-fueled food systems – born from commodity crops produced with fossil-based agrochemicals, harvested with fossil-fueled machinery, shaped by energy-intensive industrial processing, wrapped in layers of plastic packaging, and shipped around the world.

At the same time, major agribusiness corporations are aggressively pushing solutions that only deepen dependency on fossil fuels and agrochemicals while introducing new environmental and public health risks. Meanwhile major food corporations are actively working to block or weaken environmental and public health policies aimed at reducing plastic use and curbing ultra-processed foods. We can't tackle climate change unless we get fossil fuels out of food systems, yet this remains a major blind spot in climate and food policy debates”.

Key findings from the Report include:

- 40% of all global petrochemicals are consumed by food systems, mainly in the form of synthetic fertilizers and plastic packaging for food and beverages.
- One-third of all petrochemicals go toward producing synthetic nitrogen fertilizers, making them the single biggest fossil fuel consumer in agriculture.
- 99% of synthetic nitrogen fertilizers and pesticides are derived from fossil fuels.
- At least 3.5% of global plastics are used in food production, and 10% in food and drink packaging.
- Fossil fuel-dependent food systems are dangerously vulnerable to price shocks, with spikes in the price of oil and gas triggering surges in fertilizer and food prices – putting millions at risk of hunger.
- While food transportation relies on fossil fuels, its role is relatively small compared to the broader fossil fuel footprint of food systems, and it is rapidly electrifying.
- Industry-promoted ‘blue’ ammonia fertilizers, ‘synthetic biology’ approaches, and high-tech, digital farming tools are expensive, energy-intensive, and risk keeping food systems tethered to fossil fuels and farmers dependent on agrochemicals.
- These technologies are controlled by a handful of powerful corporations, locking farmers into industrial monoculture systems, and deepening existing power imbalances in food systems.
- Most of the bioplastics introduced to replace conventional plastics are made from industrially-grown



MOST GREENHOUSE GASES FROM FOSSIL-BASED FERTILIZERS ARE EMITTED ON THE FARM



food crops and synthetic chemicals. They can leach harmful chemicals into the environment, and may compete with food production for land and resources.

Food systems are a critical front in the fight against fossil fuels. To break industrial food's fossil fuel addiction, we must phase out agrochemicals, and scale up agroecological farming, local food supply chains, and healthy food environments. This transition is already underway, and if accelerated, it can deliver healthier, more just and climate-resilient food systems.

What it will take to get fossil fuels out of food systems:

- Advance a just energy transition that expands and equitably distributes renewable energy;
- Phase out agrochemicals;
- Promote agroecological farming;
- Rebuild local food supply chains;
- Reduce plastic by scaling up reuse systems and holding corporations accountable;
- Cut ultra-processed food consumption and build healthy food access;
- Scale up clean and electric cooking and eliminate food waste;
- Rein in corporate power and democratize food systems governance.

This report is ready in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese [in the iPES-FOOD website](#).

[The International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems \(IPES-Food\)](#) is an international non-profit thinktank headquartered in Brussels, Belgium. Bringing together [25 groundbreaking thinkers and practitioners](#) from diverse fields and world regions, we conduct in-depth research, provide policy recommendations, and advocate for sustainable, equitable, and healthy food systems worldwide. Rooted in science, and grounded in the realities of those on the front lines of hunger and climate crises, IPES-Food has since 2015 been a leading voice advancing policy solutions and bringing together alliances to address the major challenges facing food and farming.

To know more

[Fuel to Fork Report in iPES-FOOD website](#)

[Fuel to Fork Report 2025](#)

[Report Summary](#)

[iPES-FOOD website](#)

[iPES FOOD Reports](#)

[iPES FOOD Approach](#)



[Fuel to Fork report in FAO website](#)

[Fuel to Fork in futureoffood.org](#)

[Fuel to Fork in downtoearth.org.in](#)

[Fuel to Fork in forbes.com](#)

