

Global warming may take its toll on veggies

Need for new growing practices: study

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

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Global warming is expected to make vegetables significantly scarcer around the world, unless new growing practices and resilient crop varieties are adopted, researchers have warned.

By the end of this century, less water and hotter air will combine to cut average yields of vegetables – which are crucial to a healthy diet – by nearly one-third, said the report in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

A 4 degree Celsius increase in temperature, which scientists expect by 2100 if global warming continues on its current trajectory, reduces average yields by 31.5%, said the report.

“Our study shows that environmental changes such as increased temperature and water scarcity may pose a real threat to global agri-

cultural production, with likely further impacts on food security and population health,” said lead author Pauline Scheelbeek.

Southern Europe, large parts of Africa and South Asia may be particularly affected.

The findings are based on a systematic review of 174 studies examining the impact of environmental exposures on yield and nutritional content of vegetables and legumes since 1975.

“Our analysis suggests that if we take a ‘business as usual’ approach, environmental changes will reduce the global availability of these important foods,” he added. “Urgent action needs to be taken, including working to support the agriculture sector to increase its resilience to environmental changes and this must be a priority for governments across the world.”