In many countries food has never been so cheap and readily available as it is today. In developed countries there are now generations that have never experienced food shortages. These people are taller, bigger and live longer than in the past, and are also likely to experience fewer problems with food borne disease. Yet there is a question whether the price we pay for food adequately captures the hidden costs of our food system.

Find out how and why our food systems are evolving to generate cheaper food with a focus on livestock products. Professor Rushton will explore a framework to assess these changes in terms of the benefits, costs and resilience of the emerging systems. These costs need to include the health burdens in humans, animals and the environment. The resilience has to consider the concentration of activity and power, and the access to resources across the system. A resilience measure also needs to reflect whether the current policies and institutions in place are dealing with emerging challenges adequately.

Discover why a healthy food system requires societal management and establishment of structures that have a One Health approach in order to ensure that gains that have been made are not undermined by hidden costs and fragilities of the system.

Professor Jonathan Rushton, from the Royal Veterinary College at the University of London, is an agricultural economist who works on animal health and food systems. He leads a team working on how to improve our understanding of the global burden of animal diseases, the assessment of animal disease interventions and the use of food system analysis to improve societal development.