How Energy Choices Affect Health, Agriculture, and the Environment

The major impact of energy choices on health will be determined by the degree to which those choices affect air quality and climate-change induced warming of the planet. Importantly, the increased risk of warming will affect infectious diseases in particular. Human health will also be affected in more diffuse ways – choices that affect land use and water supply will have consequences for food supply and infectious diseases may affect food safety. Insecurities in food and/or water may have profound consequences for public health. Much of public health thinking centers on prevention. Earlier energy choices may have moved us beyond primary prevention of these public health problems. Instead, we need to focus on adaptation and mitigation of anticipated problems so that informed energy choices can minimize health consequences for communities across the world.