Food supply chains remain especially vulnerable to fraud and contamination. Advances in technology should help track food from source to consumer and more quickly manage foodborne illnesses as they arise. Making more information available to consumers about food and its sourcing, processing, and treatment is more important than ever.

As uncertainty increases in the U.S. and abroad, investors seek businesses that incorporate sound sustainability and risk management strategies. Food and restaurant businesses are expected to be responsive to and aware of key concerns such as transparency, climate risk, and workplace diversity.

Chefs ignited the local food movement, and restaurant companies are now creating new concepts to bring local to the mainstream. However, established players still look to commodity markets to fill most of the plate, missing an opportunity to support local communities, a more resilient farm sector, and biodiversity.

There has been little change in how we use, or manage, farmland and ranch lands as well as soil resources in the U.S.

Antibiotic use may finally be declining after many years of continued increase as commitments made by major restaurant and foodservice companies have influenced the livestock industry. Species-specific data for 2018 and 2019 should confirm whether the decline is a true trend.

While public policy and nutrition promotion efforts have stalled, leading restaurant companies are making significant moves to reduce beef consumption, offer innovative and healthier sides, spark new customer and media interest in plant-forward flavors, and introduce new beverage choices.

Progress is being made on improving calorie quality. Efforts to also reduce serving size while serving higher-quality food have now entered the pilot phase.

Motivation aside, eating out more and eating meat less are correlated, as many in the restaurant industry continue to find ways to help diners eat less meat, a move that also addresses climate imperatives.

Americans are shifting to healthier diets, with many chefs and operators elevating the role of produce on menus. While upticks in actual produce usage are still modest, aspiration is clearly growing on the part of much of the dining public.

Americans eat most of our fish and seafood away from home but only half as much as we should. The restaurant industry can help Americans eat more fish and do so responsibly. There's much work ahead and new approaches are needed, although recent federal action may reduce illegal fishing.

The U.S. foodservice industry is beginning to pay attention to water issues as drought and groundwater depletion have weighed heavily on profits in recent years.

The restaurant industry and culinary profession are driving an important trend in reducing red meat consumption, which has the largest GHG footprint or contribution to climate change, and highlighting plant-forward menu innovation, but efforts to promote other, more sustainable animal proteins or source from producers who use far superior growing practices remain sporadic.