



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF  
**FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**  
2021

2020 HLPF side-event

**“On the road to the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables 2021:  
Highlighting health and nutritional benefits through sustainable production and  
consumption of fruits and vegetables”**

**13 July 2020, 12:00 – 13:30hs (EDT/NY Time)**  
**Virtual Meeting (register [here](#))**

**Concept note**

**Background**

The International Year of Fruits and Vegetables 2021, approved by the General Assembly and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2019, that will be formally launched towards the end of 2020.

The International Year seeks to advocate for the importance of healthy diets and lifestyles through sustainable food systems, within the framework of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025). It also seeks to strengthen the role of smallholder and family farmers in sustainable farming and production practices, accountable for the livelihoods of millions of rural families within the framework of the UN Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028), and raise awareness about the nutritional and health benefits of fruit and vegetable consumption as well as the high levels of food loss and waste in fruit and vegetable supply/value chains.

Additionally, in 2021, the United Nations Secretary General will convene a Food Systems Summit which aims to maximize the benefits of a food systems approach across the entire 2030 Agenda and will be a critical part of the decade of action and delivery towards the SDGs.

In the context of responding to and recovering from the coronavirus disease COVID-19 pandemic, it is urgent to assess the effects of the pandemic on food security and nutrition, including the importance of fruits and vegetables in boosting immunity, and to identify urgent and coordinated actions to avoid the most adverse consequences. Hence, food security and nutrition must be a central element of international action and national policies and a specific focus of partnerships. It is essential that safe, nutritious, affordable foods, including fruits and vegetables, continue to get to all people, particularly the most food insecure and nutritionally vulnerable when they need it.

Besides posing a dramatic health emergency, the COVID-19 will also have a remarkable socio-economic impact at the global level. There are concerns that the current health crisis could trigger a food crisis, increasing risks to health and livelihoods for hundreds of millions of people. These shock waves from such a crisis will be visible across the fruit and vegetable sector. Policy measures should aim to address disruptions, setting the basis for long term sustainability and enhance coordination with all concerned actors along the food supply chain.



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## Objective

This side event, in preparation for the official launch of the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables in late 2020, aims to have a discussion among relevant stakeholders in order to highlight the key roles of fruits and vegetables in contributing to nutrition, health, sustainable production systems, income and employment generation and other relevant dimensions of sustainable development. All governments must work together with all relevant stakeholders to ensure participation of all actors in the construction of a better, more sustainable and resilient fruit and vegetable sector.

The primary role of the food and agriculture sector is to adequately feed people by increasing the level of consumption of diverse and nutritious diets that are in line with dietary recommendations and all dimensions of sustainability. Globally, national strategies are being developed to encourage healthy diets and reduce the intake of foods with high levels of fats, sugar, salt and calories, which are major risk factors for non-communicable diseases, and encourage daily consumption of a minimum of 400 g of fruits and vegetables.

Fruit and vegetable production generate comparably higher levels of income when compared to other traditional staple crops and offers immense scope to increase the income levels of smallholders, and family farmers. When compared to other crop production sectors, the fruit and vegetable sector is far more labour intensive, thereby generating employment and income, especially for women in rural areas.

The production of fruits and vegetables offers opportunities to increase the efficiency of the use of land, water and other farm inputs. When compared to other categories of food commodities (dairy, fish, grains, etc.), fruits and vegetables suffer the highest levels of loss and waste in the production-to-consumption continuum.

On the other hand, the Covid-19 pandemic has affected food supply chains, increasing the risk of food loss and waste in perishable commodities such as fruits and vegetables, fish and milk, due to delays in production and delivery, and labor shortage including from temporary and migrant workers, as well as the need to implement appropriate measures, including biosecurity, to safeguard sufficient, safe, and nutritious food, food security and nutrition.

## Agenda 2030

Given the importance of sustainable agriculture in fruit and vegetable production, this initiative is linked to several Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, including, in particular, SDG2: "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture", SDG 3: "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages", and the SDG 12, "Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns" and SDG8 "Decent work and economic growth".



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**(<https://forms.gle/uLDHQbvxMfzM1QFP8>)**

**DRAFT PROGRAMME**

**12.00-12.10 Opening Remarks**

- *H.E. Mr. Milenko Skonkic Tapia, Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations*
- *H.E. Mr. Nagaraj Naidu Kakanur, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations*

**12.10-12.20 Nationalizing the International Year of Fruit and Vegetables**

- *Mr. José Ignacio Pinochet Olave, Vice-Minister of Agriculture*
- *Ms. Daniela Godoy, Executive Secretary, “Elige Vivir Sano” Program, Ministry of Social Development and Family of Chile*

**12.20-12.50 Panel**

- *Ms. Anna Lartey, Director, Nutrition and Food Systems Division, FAO*
- *Mr. Leo Nederveen Advisor, Food, Nutrition and Physical Activity in Schools, PAHO/WHO*
- *Mr. Federico Mattei, Representative, Global Project Development and International Relations, Slow Food International*
- *Ms. Alejandra Domper, Five A Day Chile, Executive Secretary*

**12.50-13.25 Interactive Dialogue**

**13.25-13.30 Closing Remarks by the Moderator**

- *Ms. Marcela Villarreal, Director, Partnerships Division, FAO*



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