



# F@RMLETTER

The E-magazine of the World's Farmers  
issue n. 15, may 2013

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LUIS MIGUEL ETCHEVEHERE, PRESIDENT,  
SOCIEDAD RURAL ARGENTINA

# Argentina will host the WFO General Assembly in 2014



Argentina was chosen to host the Fourth General Assembly of the World Farmers' Organisation-WFO. This was decided by the WFO General Assembly in April in Niigata, Japan last April. In particular, it will be held in the first half of 2014 in the Palermo Fairgrounds of Sociedad Rural Argentina

It is a great honor for the Sociedad Rural Argentina, to host agricultural and cooperative organizations representing thousands of farmers from around the world. We will make every effort to show the full potential in the production of food, fiber and bioenergy, and to convey the commitment that, as producers we assume in the economic and social development of our region, and to feed the world.

Today, the region known as the Southern Common Market, MERCOSUR (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela) and associated countries (Bolivia, Chile, Colombia and Ecuador), has a GDP of more than \$ 3.3 trillion, which represents approximately 84% of total GDP in South America. It covers an area of almost 13 million square kilometers and has more than 270 million people (about 70% of South America). It is considered the world's fourth economic bloc in terms of importance, represents the fifth world economy in terms of turnover.

In Argentina, farming and agribusiness, is an industry leader

**“IN ARGENTINA, FARMING AND AGRIBUSINESS, IS AN INDUSTRY LEADER IN PRODUCTION EFFICIENCY AND HAS A FUNDAMENTAL ROLE IN THE RUNNING OF THE ECONOMY”**

in production efficiency and has a fundamental role in the running of the economy. The sector invests 52,000 U.S. Dollars annually and creates employment for 36% of Argentinians.

Sustainable production and export of agricultural products and food, is a key player in the global market. The sector produces annually food for 400 million people and accounts for 57% of foreign exchange entering the country thanks to exports.

Today, producers are facing a major challenge: ending world hunger and ensuring food security.

WFO is working hard to jointly achieve this this goal, so the main agenda items at the General Assembly in Buenos Aires will be: (i) climate change: directly affecting production through flood and drought cycles, and the sustained increase in global average temperature, (ii) technological innovation and research and development: key to increasing production and productivity on a sustained basis, (iii) financing and investment: access to finance and the need for public and private investments in order to enhance productive capacity; (IV) food chain: the concentration of large chain marketing leads to the redistribution of income for all actors involved in the value chain (V) food security: analyzing the production and market aspects necessary to ensure income to producers and thus increase food production (VI) sustainable production and good production practices: another key element to achieve quality food with healthy and productive trade practices in balance with the environment.

Together with WFO, in collaboration with the Board of Directors and professional staff, we hope that the event meets the expectations and proves to be a great success. In particular, from Sociedad Rural Argentina in Buenos Aires, expect to receive a very warm welcome!



# Niigata 2013

## WFO general assembly

*Marco Marzano de Marinis,  
Executive Director, WFO*

**F**armers today continue to face many challenges including their marginal position in the value chain ; climate change and the scarce recognition of their role in mitigating it, food security and their role in facing it; limited access to knowledge and new technologies; obsolete infrastructure which renders their work even more challenging (difficult access to water, roads, ports etc); lack of access to credit which is one of the greatest constraints for many farmers; gender disparity and the difficulty of ensuring continuity through generations.

These topics as well other very relevant WFO statutory and policy issues were the themes that featured prominently at the 3rd WFO's General Assembly, co-organized with the JA Zenchu and hosted at the Toki Messe Convention Center, April 15-18, Niigata, Japan.

Some three hundred participants from all over the world attended the annual get together: representing 70 international delegations including Farmers' Organizations, International Organizations, as well as Ministers, policy makers and representatives of Universities and Research Centers.

The meeting featured the participation of high level Japanese and International dignitaries, such as H.O. Yoshimasa Hayashi Japanese Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries who reiterated the relevance of Agriculture and especially farmers as critical players in the fight to end hunger, climate evolution and for assuring food security. Dr. Jose Angelo Estrella Faria, Secretary General, UNIDROIT, who provided a fair explanation of the reasons that his organization is collaborating closely with WFO, especially in the area of u Contract Farming.

Many other International Organization leaders who could not attend the WFO meeting provided a strong sign of support through video messages to



### Climate services for farmers, the challenge of WFO and WMO

WFO and WMO organized a seminar on climate services that preceded the 3rd WFO General Assembly GA in Niigata, Japan.

Farmers are on the front line of climate change, and their lives and livelihoods are directly affected by its impact. They are vital to implementing many of the solutions we need to help delay or curb climate change. This is the principal element of discussion of the seminar that the two organizations have organized before the WFO's GA in Niigata.

Food production will have to increase by 60/100% during the next 30 years and the increased production must come at a time when global warming, climate volatility, more frequent and extreme weather events and temperatures changes increasingly threaten the viability of the agriculture sector and rural infrastructure throughout the world. For this reason WFO and WMO are working together, to help farmers and to provide more accurate weather forecasts, climate analysis and climate prediction, training material and capacity building to the agricultural sector. Farmers are vital to implementing many of the solutions we need to help delay or mitigate climate change". At the seminar the WFO's latest publication of the H2O "ClimatEasy" produced by WFO & WMO was presented.

The seminar has brought together international experts, farmers, International Organizations and relevant stakeholder on Meteorology and climate services.

confirm their commitment to WFO. This was the case of Dr. Graziano Da Silva, Director General, FAO who highlighted the critical role of farmers in fighting hunger and expressed his satisfaction in having WFO as a reliable FAO partner; Mr. Michael Jarraud, Director General,

World Meteorological Organization, WMO, assured his and WMO's full commitment and enthusiasm in supporting WFO; Mr. Vallat, Director General, OIE, has reiterated the commitment of OIE to work closely with WFO to reach farmers of the world.

## THE MEETING

The objective of the meeting was to provide an opportunity to discuss WFO's statutory issues; as well as offer the possibility to farmers' organizations and cooperatives to exchange, reach common positions and share experiences in key agriculture related issues (trade, food security, climate change, gender and youth); sharing experiences on awareness raising programs, outreach activities, special programs, services, products; collecting best practices and case studies; stimulating cooperation and partnership among WFO's members and agriculture related organizations; building an

interactive platform for sharing experiences and strengthening cooperation.

### Trade Policy

One of the main achievements reached during Niigata 2013 was the approval of a WFO position on agricultural trade. This is a significant achievement because a defined policy on trade is fundamental for the global farmer community.

The adoption of this Policy have two main positive outputs: i) it shows farmers' organizations interests in having agricultural trade settled at the multilateral level; ii) and establishes the reliability of WFO as a discussion platform where to exchange and debate relevant agricultural matters.



### Gender

The GA also approved the procedural framework of the women committee. Women have more than an active role in agriculture. In some countries, especially developing economies, they are the backbone of the agricultural economy, reaching in some instances up to 70% of the farmers population, responsible for producing up to 50% of



the food in some countries, and strongly contributing to the national GDP. Yet in some cases they are not granted access to markets, to land ownership, access to credit and adequate training. A stable agricultural system passes also through an inclusive and balanced participatory system in the farming business. This committee that along with other discussion working groups was requested by the WFO GA in Rome, i.e. trade, youth, innovation, is now in place and will produce a policy along with some concrete outputs.

### Youth and Statutory issues

Also the involvement of youth in the WFO was the object of discussion. Young farmers are the farmers of tomorrow, and their involvement in WFO is critical for the success of the Organisation. This encourage WFO to adopt a motion to facilitate the access of young farmers' organizations in WFO. Some other Statutory issues were the object of discussion and vote. The result of this consultation are uploaded in the WFO portal [www.wfo-oma.org](http://www.wfo-oma.org).

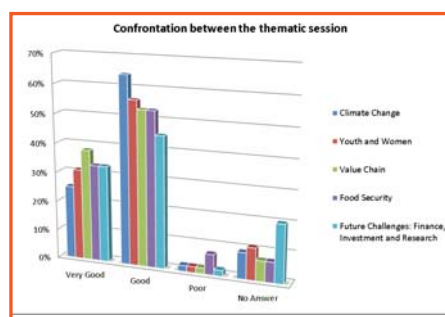
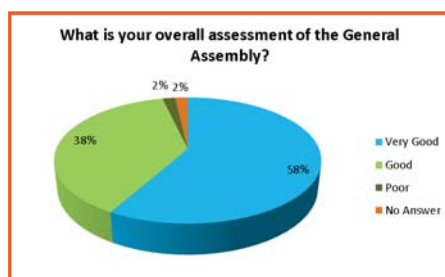
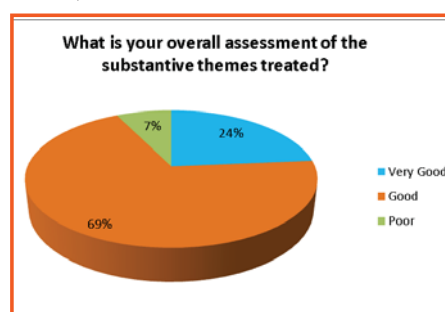
The large consensual approval of these policies, statutory procedures and activities proved the skills and ability of WFO in working as a balanced discussion platform. In the multilateral framework three elements are crucial to consolidating the image of an international body as WFO, 1) the wide array of competencies the organization covers, 2) its proficiency in delivering and 3) its reliability as a partner. The combination of these three elements makes of an Organization a trustworthy partner with which to cooperate and exchange.

WFO in this past year has worked in this direction focusing on a wide array of subjects, developing and consolidating its position on a number of issues; and

most importantly developing a qualified voluntary inclusive cooperation with its members. This experience proved the ability of WFO **working as one and delivering in the interest of many**.

### WFO'S MEMBERS GA ASSESMENT

WFO's members and attendees actively participated in the working sessions of Niigata 2013 by providing candid feedback about the result of the events and providing useful inputs for improving future meetings. In general terms the themes featured and the discussions held were fairly balanced and provided for fruitful discussions. Participants' expectations where mostly met.



### RESULTS AND FUTURE EXPECTATIONS

The GA also represented a good opportunity to have an update on the activities and results of the past year. With regards to membership, the organization experienced an enormous growth, thanks also to the enthusiasm and interest farmers' organizations have in an international body that can defend, protect and support their interests at the international level. In less than a year WFO's **membership** grew 70% and the

## “WFO WORKS AS ONE AND DELIVER IN THE INTEREST OF MANY”

Organisation now has members from all over the world. Its global representation is also testified by the composition of the Board of Directors which is now fully representative of all regions of the world.

**PRESIDENT:** ROBERT CARLSON

**AFRICA:** JERVIS ZIMBA VICE PRESIDENT;

**ASIA:** AKIRA BANZAI, TREASURER;

**EUROPE:** PIET VANTHEMSCHÉ;

**NORTH AMERICA:** RON BONNET;

**LATIN AMERICA:** LUIS MIGUEL

ETCHEVEHERE;

**OCEANIA:** BRUCE WILLS.

In 2012 WFO has consolidated its **partnerships for growth** program by signing an average of one Memorandum of Understanding per month. This strategy has brought WFO to occupy a pro-bono office on FAO premises; acquiring resources to develop substantive projects with WMO, training modules and publications; acquiring a consultative status in many international bodies, such as OIE. The growing consensus as a partner representing farmers worldwide is a clear indication of the visibility and reliability WFO has gained in the multilateral agricultural scenario. Also in the field of **cooperation** WFO has performed by providing opportunities to its members from developing countries of dialogue and sharing of experiences. A concrete output were gender side events organized in the framework of the CFS; the WTO Public Forum; and the WFO General Assembly.

During the GA in Niigata 2013 the WFO **communication** and raising awareness strategy was presented featuring a number of tools and materials aimed to support WFO's members and farmers.



Agriculture is a complex activity which requires the combination of many skills, agronomy, marketing, legal information, technology, international negotiations and rules that even when are all present if not properly coordinated and managed, will not automatically grant success. As is well known, agriculture is an on going gamble or struggle which needs to be irrigated constantly with substantive and up to date information.

To respond to those need WFO has created, also with the support of our members and active international partners a number of communication tools and services that are aimed to i) sharpening farmers' knowledge; ii) provide adequate and real time information on international issues affecting farmers; iii) offer educational support to increase farmers' awareness; iv) support the participation of farmers in research and development activities.

The screenshot shows the WFO website portal with a navigation menu at the top including 'ABOUT US', 'RESOURCES & MATERIALS', 'AGRICULTURE', and 'UPDATES'. A central video player shows a woman speaking at a podium with the text 'The World Farmers' Organisation now has a Women's Committee'. Below the video are several content tiles: 'Climate Change', 'Food Security', 'Value Chain', 'F@rmletter', 'Farmfactory', 'TRADE', 'CONTRACT FARMING', and 'WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE'. A footer contains copyright information: '©2012 WFO-OMA | P.O. Box 298280555'.

The WFO's Portal, was re-shaped and integrated with new and innovative tools that provide an easy access to international agriculture information. Moreover, the portal will soon be integrated with business, legal and substantive agricultural information easy to read and to be digested by users.

The cover of the F@RMLETTER e-magazine features the WFO logo and the title 'F@RMLETTER' in large green letters. Below the title, it says 'The E-magazine of the World's Farmers' and 'Issue n. 15, May 2013'. A table of contents is listed on the left, and a 'Subscribe to the monthly Farmletter by sending an e-mail to: info@wfo-oma.org' box is on the right. The background shows a market stall with fresh produce.

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F@rmletter, the monthly WFO e-magazine created on the occasion of the ROME 2012 GA with the aim of keeping WFO's members up-dated about agriculture international issues, is now available in WFO's four official languages and has acquired in a very short period an impressive number of "12000", users testifying the demand for and the quality of the publication.

The cover of 'The Seed' magazine features the title in large green letters and a photo of a hand holding a seed. Below the title, it says 'The Seed' and 'Issue n. 1, January 2013'. The cover includes a 'Dear Reader' section, a 'WFO IN BRIEF' section, and two world maps showing the distribution of the magazine.

**Dear Reader,**  
 We are pleased to see "The Seed" the seed information produced by WFO. The Seed is being WFO's first magazine to provide timely updates on developments, projects, and activities relevant to WFO's goals. This information is provided through a digital platform to be as close as possible to all our readers. For a complete report on our activities, please refer to the WFO's website and the WFO's social media channels. We are committed to providing you with the most up-to-date information on our work. Please note that the information has to be shared in a digital format and it will not be available in a paper form. We look forward to hearing your feedback and we are committed to providing you with the best possible information.

**WFO IN BRIEF: THE FIRST 8 MONTHS OF ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT**

• **Membership:** WFO has achieved a membership of 1700 members in a period of 8 months, representing 160 countries. At the end of 2012, the WFO's presence in 160 countries, representing 160% growth in membership, with particular success in the Southern hemisphere. An organization that has a presence in 160 countries, a presence in 160 countries is a significant achievement for WFO. We look forward to hearing your feedback and we are committed to providing you with the best possible information.

• **Budget:** WFO's International Secretariat started activities in 2012. Financial reports for 2012 have been included in the Seed's issue. At the end of 2012, the Secretariat's budget was 100,000 euros. The budget for 2013 is 120,000 euros. The budget for 2013 is 120,000 euros. The budget for 2013 is 120,000 euros.

The WFO's monthly digest, *The Seed* is aimed to keep members aware of the activities and works of WFO bodies (Board and International Secretariat).

As WFO expands, it has to strive even harder to make itself accessible to members and get in touch with them.. An effective communication strategy also implies a wide and stable presence in existing *social networks*, facebook, twitter, linkedin, youtube.

To complete this communication

strategy WFO has created with the support of goodwill stakeholders a *series of publications* called "H2O" aimed to treat relevant issues in a very practical way. The first publication of this series "ClimatEasy,presents a savvy use of meteorological information by farmers and was jointly edited by WFO along with the World Meteorological Organisation, WMO.

## THE WAY FORWARD

The results achieved in this first year are not a point of arrival but represent a point of departure. Many challenges are behind the corner and need to be faced to continuously build and strengthen WFO. **Membership**, continuing expanding the platform in regions that are still under-represented:: Asia; Africa; Latin America. But also strengthening the presence in which WFO is solidly present. **Policies:** consolidating WFO's substantive expertise and field of actions. Making of WFO a point of reference where the most relevant challenges for farmers and agriculture are addressed. **Partnership:** continue expanding the network of partners reached. **Budget:** Bring the organization to be financially solid; by building a reserve fund sufficient to face periods of crises; improve incomes coming from membership fees; engage with private sector and other stakeholders.

Niigata 2013 was an excellent exercise that proved WFO as a solid and reliable international player. It will be remembered in future for having been the place where a position on agriculture trade was reached amongst many other important issues. The kind availability and professionalism of the co-organizer JA Zenchu made this event a great success as testified by participants. At same time I am pleased to inform that the next WFO General Assembly will be co-organized with the Sociedad Rural Argentina and will take place in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Looking forward to meeting you in Buenos Aires 2014.

**Sayonara & hasta la vista.**



# WFO adopts position on Trade Policy at its 2013 General Assembly

**Shelby Matthews,**  
Facilitator, WFO Trade  
Committee

**M**eeting future world food demand in the face of dwindling resources of land and water, as well as climate change, will be a major challenge for the world in the years ahead. Encouraging trade will be one important way of meeting these challenges. Trade can contribute to food security by helping to even out demand and supply imbalances and promotes growth. It is also a way of providing farmers with increased market opportunities and thereby helps to improve our incomes and the prosperity of rural communities. But it is important trade is carried out in a way which brings real benefits to farmers and does not undermine agriculture's wider role - for example, for the well-being of rural communities and the environment. It is also important to ensure that trade does not damage the development of farming in the least developing countries. While the Doha multilateral negotiations are currently at a standstill, trade

negotiations are continuing apace at bilateral and regional level.

This is why farmers must make their voice heard on trade issues. In their General Assembly in Rome in 2012 WFO members recognised this and set themselves the task of agreeing a trade policy position at their next General Assembly in 2013.

A trade committee was set up and this was followed by intense consultations with all WFO members to establish trade priorities. The hard work has proved fruitful as it led to the adoption of a WFO position on trade policy at the General Assembly in Niigata this April.

The policy position (shown below) calls for a fair, transparent and predictable trading environment and sets out ambitious trade objectives including improving market access, reducing trade distortive support and stricter rules to prevent export restrictions. It also sets out Guiding Principles as to how these trade objectives should be achieved.

It is a two way process. For example, all governments must have the right to ensure that the major concerns of their citizens are met, including the provision of safe and secure supplies of food for their people, the well-being of rural communities and environmental

concerns. Equally, governments have a duty to ensure their domestic policies do not distort, or disrupt, trade.

WFO members strongly support the World Trade Organisation. We believe that a comprehensive multilateral agreement is the best way to achieve these objectives if the widest benefit is to be achieved. And of course, even if the Doha negotiations are at a standstill, it is important to uphold current rules and agreements such as the one on Sanitary and Phytosanitary rules (SPS). It is also essential that work continues to strengthen the world's trading system. For example, we need further progress to agree international science-based standards. We need to reduce protectionist measures such as export restrictions. We need to encourage capacity building and more market intelligence. And we need ensure that farmers benefit more fairly from the opening of markets by preventing the abuse of market power. Farmers have much more chance of getting their voice heard if they work together. Agreeing a common trade position in WFO is an important first step. Now the WFO has the hard work of getting its proposals translated into action.



## WFO POLICY ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Farmers play a crucial role feeding the world's population. We also help maintain viable rural communities and care for much of the world's land resources. But the challenges we face are increasing.

Farmers will need to increase production significantly if future demand for food is to be met. Yet the world's resources of land and water are finite. In addition, we are facing more extremes of climate and long-term shifts in growing conditions due to climate change, while price volatility is also on the increase.

A strong and viable agricultural sector will be essential if the world's population is to be assured of stable and secure supplies of food in future and farming is to continue to contribute to growth and employment in both national economies and rural communities.

Encouraging trade will be one important way of meeting these challenges. Trade helps to even out demand and supply

imbalances, thus contributing to food security, and promotes resource use efficiency and economic growth. It is also a way of providing farmers with increased market opportunities and thereby helps to improve our incomes and the prosperity of rural communities.

The WFO is committed to the pursuit of ambitious trade policy objectives and the reinforcement of the global agricultural trading system so that we can operate in a fair, transparent and predictable trading environment. It is equally important that international trade is guided by some basic principles to ensure that farmers throughout the world can fulfil their wider economic, social and environmental role and that the special needs of the least developing countries are taken into account. Agriculture must also continue to be treated differently from other economic sectors in trade agreements in recognition of its fundamental importance for food security and rural areas.

## I) Policy Objectives

The WFO is committed to achieving the following policy objectives for international trade provided they are achieved in a way which respects Guiding Principles (see section iii) to ensure that agriculture can fulfil its wider role:

- the parallel elimination of all forms of export subsidies and disciplines on all export measures with equivalent effect
- improved market access
- a substantial reduction in trade-distorting domestic support
- special and differential treatment for developing countries and least developing countries
- strengthened rules applied to export







prohibition/restriction and export taxes - proper protection of geographical indications as provided for under the WTO agreement on trade in intellectual property (TRIPS) and recognition of country-of-origin requirements that allows countries to distinguish their products without distorting trade.

The WFO is committed to working with governments and relevant stakeholders to achieve multilateral improvements to the global trading system. The WFO strongly supports the World Trade Organisation and believes that multilateral negotiations leading to a comprehensive trade agreement is the best way to pursue these objectives if the greatest benefit for the widest population is to be achieved.

In parallel, it should be ensured that bilateral and regional trade agreements contribute towards achieving these objectives in a way which is WTO compatible and also respects the Guiding Principles outlined below (see section III).

## II) WFO calls for the following action to reinforce the global agricultural trading system

### Strengthen international standards

The more open markets become the more important it is to establish international standards to protect human, animal and plant life and health and to facilitate trade so that consumers are informed and have confidence in the food they eat and that farmers who adhere to science-based standards are

not undermined by unfair competition. The WFO supports the principles set out in the WTO SPS and TBT agreements. It calls for further progress to agree international science-based standards relating to food within the framework of Codex Alimentarius, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and other organisations such as the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). The farming community should be consulted in the development of these standards in order to ensure they can be implemented in a practical and effective way.

### Reduce protectionist measures

The WFO calls on all governments to remove any measures which are inconsistent with WTO disciplines, including both export and import prohibitions or restrictions. The WFO also calls for on-going progress in investigating and eliminating non-tariff barriers which impact unfairly on farmers.

### Encourage capacity building

The WFO calls upon the governments of developed and advanced developing countries to provide farmers in the least developing countries with support for capacity building in order to improve their access to international markets. This could include support to comply with, or adopt, international standards and to implement WTO safeguard measures. It is also important to improve access to, and management

of, market information and to develop stronger local networks and training that addresses, in particular, the needs of the very many women farmers in developing countries.

Processors and retailers should also take responsibility to assist farmers to meet private standards which, increasingly, are becoming a barrier to trade for producers.

### Increase the transparency and predictability of agricultural markets

The Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) set up by FAO should be developed further in order to increase transparency and predictability of prices on the world market and therefore assist towards greater stability for the benefit of farmers and consumers.

### Ensure farmers benefit fairly from the opening of markets

The very heavy concentration which has taken place amongst traders, processors and retailers, and the growth in multinational operators, means that farmers frequently find themselves in a weak bargaining position.

The WFO calls upon governments to prevent the abuse of market power and implement competition policies which allow strong farmer-owned organisations, including cooperatives and collective marketing initiatives, to operate effectively. For its part, the WFO will seek to strengthen farmers' organisational structures so that farmers can be more effective participants in the

marketplace.

### III) Guiding Principles

If agriculture is to fulfil its wider economic, social and environmental role, with countries able to take account of their domestic concerns and conditions, trade policy should respect the following Guiding Principles.

#### Coherence

International trade agreements should be coherent with other international commitments which have an impact on the agricultural sector, such as commitments aimed at reducing poverty and hunger. A common set of outcomes will complement and maximise development in agriculture.

#### Domestic Policy

All governments must have the right to define their own domestic agricultural policy, in order to ensure that the major concerns of their citizens are met, including the provision of safe and secure supplies of food for their people, the well-being of rural communities and environmental concerns. Trade rules should also permit domestic policy measures which promote stability of supplies, such as safety nets, orderly marketing and supply management. Governments should ensure that domestic policy is fully transparent, complies with international obligations

and does not disrupt global markets.

#### Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Standards

In setting standards with the objective of protecting human, animal, plant and environmental health, governments should ensure they are based on sound science and should adopt internationally agreed standards in line with the WTO SPS agreement.

#### Least Developing Countries and Developing Countries

It is important that trade does not undermine the development of fledging agricultural sectors which have the potential to contribute to economic growth and more viable rural communities. Trade agreements should therefore have inbuilt provisions to address these needs on the basis of special and differential treatment which takes account of different levels of economic development.

Government support and development aid (education, training, research & development, infrastructure, marketing and providing social safety nets) should be directed to these sectors during their development period.

#### Food aid

Genuine food aid for humanitarian purposes should be secured in order to address natural and manmade disasters but must be carried out in a

manner that does not damage domestic markets or distort international trade and is not a disguised export subsidy. Governments should address food aid needs resulting from disasters first and foremost by sourcing in the country concerned providing this does not undermine affordable access to food.

#### Consultation with farmers' organisations

Farmers are critical stakeholders in the global and rural agricultural economy. Representative farmers' organisations must therefore be fully consulted in the decisions to open trade negotiations involving agriculture, including those at bilateral, multilateral and plurilateral level.

The WFO will support proactive, results-driven and transparent negotiating processes in which governments provide impact assessment of the consequences of trade agreements for the agricultural sector and inform and consult their farmers throughout the negotiating process.





# The challenges facing European agriculture and family farming in 2014

**“WE MUST CONVINCe SOCIETY THAT IT CANNOT DO WITHOUT US”**

*Lorenzo Ramos Silva,  
Secretary General of Unión de  
Pequeños Agricultores y Ganaderos de  
España (UPA)*

**M**ost European farms are family farms, especially in Spain, where 80% of farmers and livestock breeders have small or medium size family farms with close ties to the surrounding area. UPA is an organization of more than 65,000 Spanish farmers which believes that the future of agriculture may or may not lie in family farming. The important thing, however, is to convince society and

governments that we need laws that support and protect us. The future of the population at large depends on it. There are just a few months to go before commencement of the First International Family Farming Year 2014, which will be a milestone for small and medium farmers and livestock breeders, whose essential role in, among other things, developing a modern society, producing quality food, ensuring food security, contributing to environmental conservation and providing a structure for life in rural areas will be recognized by the United Nations.

As we have already seen, we have convinced FAO (and therefore the UN),

that farmers deserve a year which is specifically dedicated to do what they have been doing for many years now (which is doing their job). We should not underestimate the importance of the fact that millions of people around the world who produce food in their own countries (near the villages where they live and with the joint effort of their families), will, next year, see their role recognized on an international level. I believe that all professional agricultural organizations must consider 2014 as a great opportunity to make known to the whole world what we do, what exactly is our job and what are the implications for the entire world population.

**The crisis of family farming in Spain**



In Spain, as in many other countries in Europe, family farming is in serious trouble: The low prices received by farmers from commercial and industrial middlemen, together with the rapid liberalization of world markets and increased production costs have led, in terms of farms' profitability, to a crisis without precedent leading to farms being slowly but surely abandoned. Coupled with the usual lack of services in rural areas, the general government budget cuts applied in a climate of austerity have complicated life in rural areas and added to the despair and pessimism of rural youth, who should, instead, be the future of the agricultural and livestock sectors, but who are, instead, unable to start up their own farm or raise their own livestock (which would allow them to earn a decent living).

European society is losing one of the best assets that has taken shape in recent decades (without apparently

being particularly aware of the fact that this is taking place), and namely an exemplary worldwide food system (with a level of quality, supply and food security that has not been witnessed up until now).

2014 must be the year in which we change things for much of Europe's population, making them feel proud of the agricultural sector, their food and their environment, as well as making them aware of how small and medium farmers and livestock breeders play a fundamental role in these rural areas.

#### **UPA proposals to encourage family farming**

Our organization has a broad vision of agriculture and family farming, especially in terms of how family farming is conducted (farm owners - who may or may not contract out local workers - work in the local area in which their farm is located, managing it in a sustainable manner and investing in it).

I sincerely believe that priority must be given to family farms in all policy areas (and at every level thereof), from local to regional level to the Common Agricultural Policy level (in Europe). UPA proposes to establish a maximum amount that may be granted in terms of subsidies, giving a decreasing amount of aid per hectare (depending on the size of the farm and the sector in which

such farm is involved) and developing a tax system which has a social function, so as to prioritize family farming.

Family farming must be sustained and supported not only because it produces quality food and raw materials that makes one of the country's main industries (that is to say the agribusiness industry) work, but also because it makes a decisive contribution to each region's balance, as well as to land management and to new uses of rural areas.

We must defend our work and celebrate the enormous social benefits (i.e. the fight against the risks posed by fire, by soil erosion, as well as the production of secure and quality food, etc..) that come therefrom, which set our business apart. We also believe that we must recognize the role of youth within farms, supporting young people with a view to ensuring that generational change takes place.

We advocate for an agricultural policy that requires public resources to be used in order to guarantee the income of farmers and livestock breeders and we support the encouragement and recognition of farmers' and livestock breeders' associations (in the broadest sense of the term), with a view to reducing production costs and improving their market position.

### Transparency and communication skills are our main allies

Farmers and livestock breeders in the European Union in general and in Spain in particular have a pressing need to explain their situation to city dwellers. Between 1950 and 1980 there was a noticeable shift in Spain from a rural to a large urban and industrialized population (known as the rural exodus). This phenomenon, coupled with a misunderstanding of the concept of modernity and a view of rural life anchored in the past, helped shape a distorted and unpleasant view of life in rural areas (which has only started to change in recent years).

It is essential that farmers and livestock breeders, (and, all the more so, the organizations that represent them) take time, resources and effort to explain to city dwellers our lifestyle. The support and the sympathy of the urban population (which is the majority of Europe's population), is absolutely essential in order to ensure a future of progress for our rural areas.

Spain's rural population suffers from a low degree of visibility in traditional media. The bulk of newspapers, as well as radio and television stations are located in large cities, which tends to distance the members of the press from what is going on in agriculture. It is our job to go and find them.

The media sometimes have the temptation to pay almost no attention to rural areas. This misconception is compounded by the fact that agricultural activity accounts for a small percentage of the economic activities that take place in most European countries.

Another difficulty that rural populations face in having their situation reported in the mass media is the fact that it is difficult to accommodate for news about rural matters in traditional sections of the media. Farmers and livestock breeders note with frustration that, in most cases, they only appear in the media when there is a health alert informing concerned consumers about what they are eating, ignoring the producer who suffers the consequences of such warning (which, more often than not, is unjustified).

In a situation in which there is an information overload, the most complex



work that the media have to do is to decide which news shall fill the (paper or digital) pages of their newspapers. It is in our power to convince them that agriculture not only affects the small percentage of people who work in the agricultural and livestock sectors, but also affects all of us.

Since we are a representative organisation, we cannot afford to have relationships with the media which are not smooth and professional. Agriculture affects many lives, which is the reason why the media are interested in us. We must, therefore, be able to explain the influence we exert in many aspects of society, such as politics, the economy, society, the environment, food, industry, energy, leisure .etc.

### Internet and social media bring the countryside to the city

In 2014 the farmers around the world will deal with a medium which has a degree of democratization and accessibility never seen to date (ie. the internet and social networks, which will allow us to reach millions of people using resources that are available to us and which it is our duty to use).

Social networks are great tools: They not only convey our message to society at large, but they also strengthen the links between farmers, livestock breeders and rural people in general throughout the world. Let us use the Family Farming Year to improve and enhance our communication channels, taking advantage of the possibilities that social networks such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube (among others) offer for free.

We have an unsurpassed asset which is the freedom of those who do their jobs well. We must seize upon the opportunity offered by the International Family Farming Year to change once and for all society's and public administrations' view of the rural world. It's in our hands. Our future and that of our children depends upon it.





# Fair supplychains must be at the heart of world farming

*Peter Kendall, NFU President*

**H**aving recently returned from the WFO General Assembly in Japan, I am heartened to see the organisation moving from strength to strength in such a short timescale. Bringing together farmers' organisations and agricultural cooperatives from all over the world can only be of benefit to all farmers, wherever we farm, and I look forward to continuing to work together.

A big part of the discussions at the congress in Niigata focussed on trade, and we were able to agree our WFO global policy on this issue. Our WFO policy notes that 'trade helps to even out demand and supply imbalances, thus contributing to food security, and can also be an important way of providing farmers with increased market opportunities and thereby improving their incomes and the prosperity of rural communities.' I couldn't agree more, and I welcome our pursuit of ambitious trade policies.

Perhaps the most important element of our

policy thinking on trade surrounds fairness. What we produce, and where in the world we produce it, is immaterial. We need fair and sustainable supply chains for everyone, and we should be unwavering in our call for this approach. The WFO global trade objectives 'achieved in a fair, transparent and predictable trading environment and one which ensures that agriculture can fulfil its wider economic, social and environmental role' as our new policy suggests, is something for us all to aim for.

Fairness, transparency and sustainability are also the words we increasingly hear in our work in the food supply chain. As President of the National Farmers Union of England and Wales, this has been a priority for our organisation for the past dozen years. In my role as Chairman of the Food Chain Working party in the EU farmers and co-operatives organisation Copa-Cogeca, we continue to work hard to lobby, cajole and shape food supply chains across the EU to achieve fairness for all.

Recent events in the UK and across the

EU have brought this need for fairness and transparency sharply into focus. At the EU level, discussions on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy continue between the European Commission, national governments and the European Parliament. Without going into the finer detail here, it is clear that the budget for this policy will be reduced and support payments to farmers will be lower than they have been in the past. This means that farmers will need to see their returns from the market. That market has to be transparent and fair.

On a more practical level in the UK, and across Europe, we have seen unprecedented weather in the past year. With drought conditions at this point last year; record breaking amounts of rain throughout last summer and some of the coldest March evenings for years, being an arable farmer in England has certainly been very difficult. However, on my farm in East Anglia, we have remained relatively unscathed from the horrendous weather in comparison to others. The sight of my farming colleagues in the livestock sector digging sheep both



dead and alive from snow drifts presented a real life example of the determination and resilience of farmers. These increasingly regular weather events, entirely out of our control, means that now more than ever we need supply chains that work for us.

Perhaps the biggest event in the past few months which has sharpened our resolve for fair supply chains has been the EU horsemeat scandal. This illegal substitution of meat products for horsemeat in processed food led to a DNA testing programme for processed food instigated by the European Commission, an EU wide criminal investigation and big questions about the interconnected nature of food supply chains. It has become abundantly clear that the supply chains we currently have in operation are not working as they should be.

When we have long and complicated supply chains like we have seen in Europe, and indeed around the world, there is pressure. The horsemeat scandal has shown us that pressure in supply chains can lead some operators to cut corners. This is unacceptable, and has the potential to undermine all of the hard work that we as farmers put in to providing safe, nutritious and high quality food products for consumers.

For me as a farmer in England operating in an EU single market of 500 million consumers, I need a food chain that works. We need all farmers to be able to play their part in a global food system that is dynamic, innovative and provides a fair return for everyone.

We have made a good start in improving the position of farmers in the supply chain. In the UK for too long we have had examples of

unfair trading, and a number of investigations by our competition authorities. In 2008 they concluded that 'when, in the hope of gaining competitive advantage, retailers transferred excessive risks or unexpected costs to their suppliers, this was likely to lessen suppliers' incentives to invest in new capacity, products and production processes, with the potential for detriment to the long term interest of consumers.' Here is an example of the need for fairness, and it is not just the farmers who have been saying it.

We are approaching the end of over a decade of lobbying to give farmers a fairer and more transparent position in the domestic market in the UK. We now have a Groceries Supply Chain Code of Practice (GSCOP) in place which sets out the rules of the game in contractual relations between large retailers and their direct suppliers. Our competition authorities in the UK also understand that a purely 'voluntary' approach to food supply chains doesn't work, and as such we will shortly see in UK law the legal provisions for a 'Supermarket Adjudicator' to oversee the proper compliance with the code of practice. This code provides the rulebook for contractual dealings. The Adjudicator plays the part of the referee.

The European community see that there are problems with abuses of power in the food supply chain as well. In 2010 the European Commission set up a 'High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain' of high ranking policymakers, and within that pulled together a stakeholder group from across the chain to work together. This has happened, but it hasn't been easy as farming, processing and retailing interests battle it out. We have an agreement on

principles of good practice at EU level for better relations, but no agreement as yet on the best way to make sure that in reality this happens on the ground. The farming view, and indeed the practical experience of some EU member states, is that a voluntary approach only works with the regulatory 'stick behind the door.'

Many have questioned the farming motives for regulation. I am a farmer and businessman, and I spend a lot of time fighting against regulation. However, when there are clear imbalances of power, and this power is used in ways which have a disproportionate effect on the food supply chain, we need regulation. From an EU perspective, we don't mean a top down, box-ticking exercise which is expensive and a business headache. We do mean legislation to make voluntary systems and codes work. For us, a 'legislative oversight' doesn't mean messing about with business deals. It just means there's more chance the deal is a fair one.

I think it is clear, as our WFO policy paper suggests, that fair dealings and transparent trading contributes to food security, and promotes resource efficiency and economic growth. A fair and equitable supply chain in the food industry is good for farmers, for processors and retailers; and above all, for consumers. The agri-food industry, globally, is a big player and could be the driving force for economic growth in the future; we now need to improve the supply chain and collectively work together to share challenges of volatility, transparency and scrutiny. I hope that with our combined efforts in WFO we can work to make that a reality.

# THE BRIGHT FUTURE OF AGRO-PROCESSING: smallholders show the way

**Tamanda Chabvuta,**

*NASFAM, Communications Officer*

The first thing that strikes you about Chimwemwe Tchunguwe is his beam-ing smile: but then he has much to smile about. Chimwemwe lives at AlickLukhanda village, T/A Mzikubola, a few miles from Jenda Trading Cen-tre. Like the majority of the rural population in Malawi, he and his family live from their smallholding. What differs and immediately strikes you is Chimwemwe's motivation and the way he clearly looks at his farming activities as his "business venture." Like any farmer, he reaps what he sows, and the fruits of his deci-sions and hard work show themselves as he proudly looks over his beautiful, healthy family, his lovely homestead, both support-ed by his thriving farming activities.

Chimwemwe realises that crop diversifi-cation is critical

to his future. He and his family started sunflower business production in 2011/12, and they all have good stories to tell of their exploits in this venture so far. "Last year alone we harvested 300 kilograms of sunflower and sold it all at a fair price of 120 MK per kilogram, which gave us about K36,000 additional family income. This is a lot of money at my level!" he says.

But one may ask, what is driving Chimwemwe's advances? "For me I owe this success to my mem-bership with NASFAM and the services I get. I am a member of Champhira Association and sunflower is one of the crops that we now produce and market."

Since the mid-1990's, and with core support from donor partners such as the Norwegian Government, NASFAM has been inat the forefront of training small-holder farmers to operate their farming activities in a business-like manner.

As part of this approach, smallholder far-

mers like Chimwemwe are encour-aged to work in organised groups for easy access to extension services, market opportunities and increased bargaining power. "Our As-sociation has an extensive service network made up of field of-ficers and farmer trainers. These provide us with constant on-site prac-tical production training, post-harvest handling and marketing," he explains. "We now have experienced the power of numbers as we bulk up our commodities for sale and more recently, as an Association, we have moved up the sunflower value chain to engage in agro-processing."

Economists have coined the term "value-chain" to refer to the stages of pro-cessing which a crop goes through to add value to it. In an agricultural context, one of the key elements is "agro-processing", a key post-harvest activity that aims at facilitating the mar-ket for agricultural commod-ities and products. Today, NASFAM, through its farmer members, has helped in the start-up of agro-processing operations in several of the country's Districts in com-modities such as sunflower oil, groundnuts, chillies and livestock feed. Passing through Jenda in Mzimba, the NASFAM Sunflower Oil production plant easily catches one's attention as one approach-es the Trading Centre trav-elling North. It represents devel-opment of a local processing capacity which is owned and operated by the Di-strict's NASFAM-affili-ated farmer mem-bers.

Production of sunflower cooking oil commenced there in October, 2012. Construction of the plant was facilita-ted when NAS-FAM secured financial sup-port from the Farm Income Diver-sification Programme (FIDP) and the activity con-tinues with assistance from Flanders International Co-operation Agency (FICA). These agencies recogni-sed the potential in the farm-ers to ope-







rate themselves a sunflower production plant to allow a stable and reliable market for the high population of sunflower farmers. Each day the plant produces about 150 litres of cooking oil which is sold at MK 680 per litre to the local community.

It is smallholders such as Chimwemwe Tchunguwe that make up the NASFAM South Mzimba Association which, of late, has refo-cused its strategies to be more innovative and pro-ductive as it creates market stability for its members. Since the opening of the oil production plant, farmer members like Chimwem-we are both guaranteed a more reliable market for the crop they grow (allowing them to plan their farming business crop choices with certainty) and can also earn more from their sunflower harvests as value addition is now at a local plant which they themselves own. This is contrary to the past as sunflower was only sold to external vendors and sub-ject to the vagaries of their pricing.

The success story of Chim-wemwe and his Association is also repeated in other areas where NASFAM op-erates. One en-

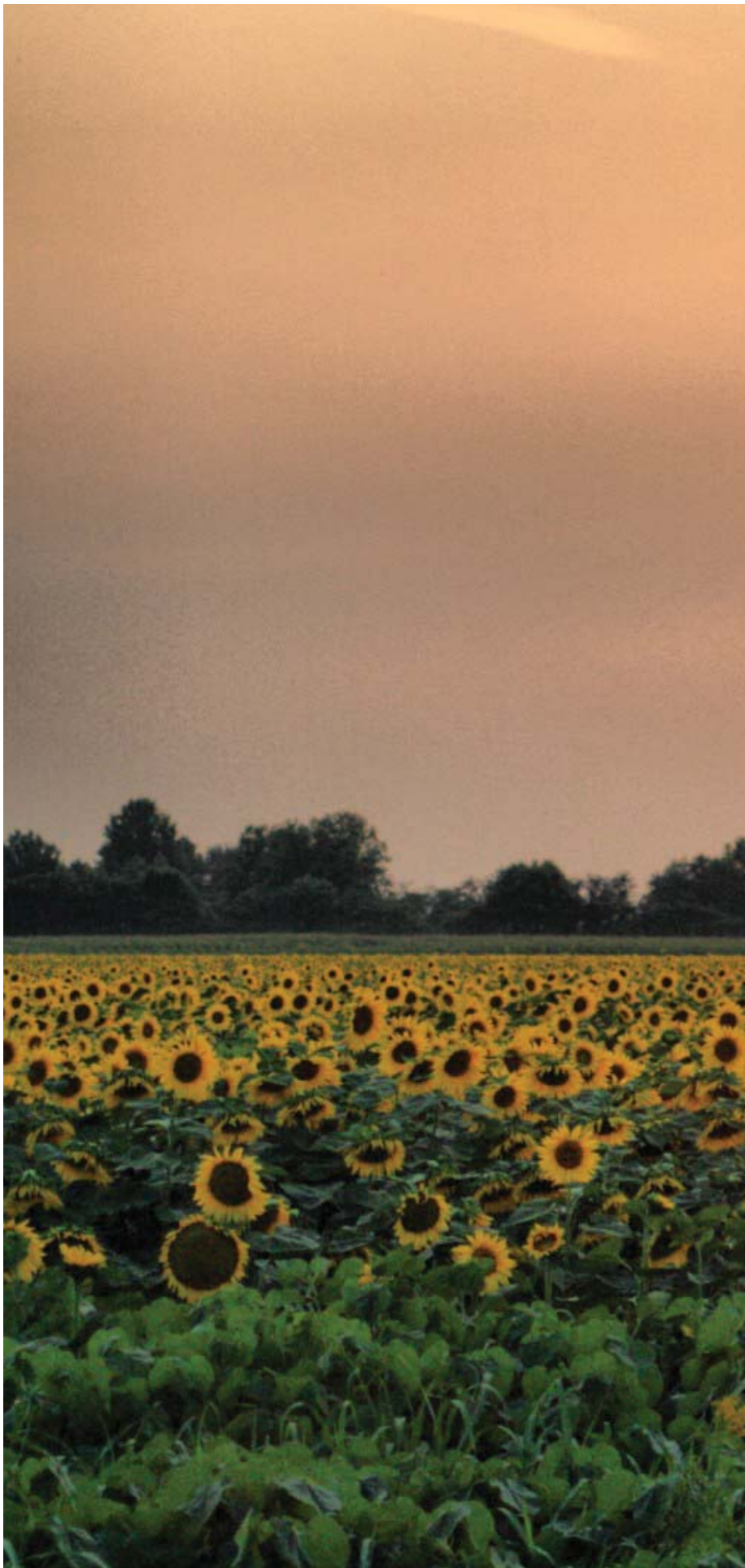
counters the same steps of development within the Central Region. For instance, NASFAM has members in Ntchisi District where many of its members are growing groundnuts for commercial as well as food and nutrition security. The District is second only to Mchinjiin its production, and contributes strongly to most of the groundnut prod-ucts produced by NASFAM and sold countrywide and internationally. Farmers in Ntchisi are also working in organised groups and they have warehouses where their groundnuts are shelled and graded before being-transported to NASFAM's groundnut processing plant in Kanengo. Ntchisi farmers have great plans in mind! They are dreaming "big" and are in the process of transforming their Association into an "Innovation and Productivity Centre" where they will be processing oil from ground-nuts locally. A site for the factory has already been allocated by the District Council and it is planned that production will com-mence within two years from now.

The growing NASFAM membership of groundnut farmers are working to improve the quality of their produce at all

levels – from seed selection, through growing the crop, to har-vesting, drying and shelling. As with any product, pro-duc-ing groundnuts to high quality standards is critical to consolidating sales to higher-value markets, including international and therapeutic food stuffs; mar-kets into which NASFAM already enjoys a growing level of access. This is all part of the process of moving up the groundnut value-chain.

Consider for example Dalitso, a farmer growing groundnuts. His harvest is the beginning of a sup-ply process that gets the groundnuts from him to a peanut processor who pro-ducees roasted peanuts from them which it supplies to a grocery shop which then sells them to us, the consumers. At each step of the way the groundnuts change hands at a higher price. Unfortunately for Dalitso, most of the money goes to the processor and the retailer. So selling his groundnuts in raw form as he does, he sees relatively little of the benefit. To ben-efit more from his ground-nuts he needs to participate in some of the agro-pro-cessing activities himself.

An example of such in-voivement is



found to the South of Lilongwe. There, smallholder farmers are involved in the operation of their very own livestock feed production facility. The NASFAM-affiliated farmers are the sole raw material providers of the factory which produces chicken and pig feed and these farmers in Lilongwe South can now sell their soya and maize grain to the plant. In addition to offering the suppliers a stable and reliable market, the plant also offers benefits to the livestock owners of the surrounding communities by providing for their daily feed needs.

These and other agro-processing initiatives by NASFAM Associations are showing the way towards achieving what the Malawi Government is trying to do through the Agricultural Sector Wide Approach (AS-WAp), where in commercial agriculture, agro-processing and market development form one of the key focus areas. However, it is clear from the highlighted examples that working with motivated farmers, encouraging them to work in organised groups and adopting a business approach to farming are all prerequisites to success. It is also necessary to develop partnerships, identify appropriate crops that do well within specific ecological zones, and indeed motivate farmers to think innovatively. These together provide a point of departure towards small-holder-led value-addition which has potential not only to stabilise agricultural markets and uplift lives of farmers but are also to catalyse job creation in rural areas. However, in all this, Government's role is key, especially in facilitating an enabling policy environment which has appropriate supportive and consistent policies for agro-processing development in Malawi.

Chimwemwe Tchungwe and thousands of other Malawi smallholder farmers continue to make strides as they work through their Associations within the NAS-FAM system and as they improve their livelihoods and farming businesses and work to increase tradable agro-products through developing their own Association agro-businesses. They set an example in their communities and nationally, that is worthy of emulation. At a time when economic hardship is often the headline of the day, they present an encouraging story of what can be achieved with the right personal application and conducive support.



# Agricultural extension services in Africa: the case of Uganda

*Katungisa Kenneth, UNFFE, Executive Assistant To President*

**T**he sustainability and productivity of the agricultural sector worldwide depends on the quality and effectiveness of extension services, among other factors. Studies show that in developing countries, there is a gap between agricultural performance and available research information. This has been attributed to poor extension services delivery as well as limited interaction between technology developers (researchers) and extension workers. Poor communication between actors in extension services delivery particularly the Government, NGOs, private sector (agribusiness) and farmers has also been shown to hinder the flow of developed technologies to farming communities. As a result, there is a lot of technology being developed but it has hardly responded to the real issues on the farm because the developers have not had the opportunity to interact with the intended beneficiaries, so what we have especially in developing countries is a lot of research being done but very little being useful.

Extension workers should be the link between researchers and farmers. To fulfill this role effectively they have to

keep abreast with new technological developments. This calls for the extension workers and researchers to work together as partners in the research and innovation processes with strong linkages. A strong link between extension workers and researchers will improve the quality of disseminated information, as well as, adoption of new technologies by farmers, and consequently lead to increased agricultural production and improved livelihoods of the rural poor.

In Uganda, the government formed the National Agriculture Advisory Services (NAADS) in 2001 (by an act of parliament) to take up the mantle of providing extension and advisory services to the farmers the main objective was to improve access to improved technology for farmers through the NAADS system. Whereas the programme was well intended, its implementation has led to an even more disorganized extension system in the country and the result has been a costly but very ineffective system that has benefited only a few. What is even worse is that when NAADS was established it led to the collapse of the other extension services structures especially the private ones, because it was offering the services free of charge, problem is NAADS has not worked well and the other systems are no longer existent.

Under NAADS regime, there are only 1600 extension workers mandated to serve over 4,000, 000 million farmer households in Uganda. This is the ratio of 1: 2500 farmer households. Is this practical? Of course not! How many days will a NAADS extension worker need to reach 2500 households? We have 360 days in a year. If a NAADS extension worker was working 7 days a week, it would take him 6.9 years to do just one round visit of farmer households. It is therefore not a surprise that the agricultural sector in Uganda has been growing very slowly despite the government efforts with NAADS, it also goes to show that even if there is a lot of research going on, it cannot be effective unless you have an effective and efficient extension system to transmit these technologies to the farmers.

It is therefore clear that for an agricultural extension service to work, there need to be a lot of synergies between government and private extension service providers, research organisations and organizations like UNFFE and other NFOs must be part of formulating, implementing and monitoring extension efforts and most importantly the farmers must be informed of what to expect so that they can be able to hold the implementers accountable and reduce the cases of abusing the system, something that has been very rampant in the NAADS system in Uganda.

# Measuring economic and social benefits of development projects in agriculture

## Field study of a young Researcher in Vietnam

**Rahel Wyss**, HAFL (Bern University of Applied Sciences, School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences)

**H**ow can available resources for development cooperation be used in the most useful and sustainable way for people in developing countries?

Implementing agencies put much effort into showing their results to donors. Impact assessment is not a new term, but governments and donors wish for clearer proof and tangible results of their money flowing into developing projects. On the other hand voices rise against a sophisticated analysis of effects of development projects: Should we really talk about 'profitability in development cooperation'? Is it not a dangerous act which tends to exclude the poorest people? My Bachelor Field study seeks to identify the effects of investments into two types of small scale infrastructures (irrigation canal and clean water supply system) in rural Vietnam, by elaborating a cost and benefit analysis at local level. Vietnam's population has more than doubled in the last 45 years from 39.9mio in 1965 to 87.9mio in 2010 (World Bank 2012). The population is young with about 60% being under the age of 25. About 70% are employed or engaged in agricultural activities. Agriculture therefore plays a crucial role in livelihoods, especially for the poor. Vietnam has remarkably strengthened its food security during the last decades. Whilst in 1980 still a net importer of food, Vietnam today became a world leading rice exporter. Political and economic reforms (such as the policy of Doi Moi) have transformed Vietnam from one

of the poorest countries in the world, to a lower middle income country with poverty rates decreasing from estimated 58% in 1992 to 10% in 2010. But poverty remains in many areas and for many groups in Vietnam, especially the Northern mountain areas (including Hoa Binh and Cao Bang provinces) continue to have rates (31.6%) above the national average.

During my five months field work, I was a team member of Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation in Vietnam. The programme I worked in is called Public Service Provision Improvement Program in Agriculture and Rural Development (PS-ARD). In 2007, the program was established by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Government of Vietnam (GoV). PS-ARD contributes to the improvement of livelihoods in the upland and ethnic minority areas of Hoa Binh and Cao Bang provinces in rural Vietnam in terms of food security, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. SDC chose PS-ARD for a pilot study about Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) in impact assessment of development cooperation. In this project, my task was to improve the knowledge about costs and benefits of small scale infrastructures in rural development at local level. A "before and after" situation comparison was done to measure the influence of the infrastructure. For this a survey with farmers was done to question them about the changes in their costs and benefits that they experienced due to the new infrastructure. We had a total of about 40 household interviews, several Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and interviews with each village head. The infrastructure was visited beforehand to





Photo 1: Irrigation Canal in a rice field in Hoa Binh province

Photo 2: Working with community members on water supply systems in Cao Bang



observe the dimension and structure of the investment within the community. One irrigation canal was analysed in the province of Hoa Binh, with 30 farmers interviewed. The canal is made of walls and basement out of concrete in order to attain a more efficient use of the water for crop production (mainly rice). The cost for material is paid by the programme; the construction itself (labour cost) is done by the community. The study shows, that the extension of the irrigation canal contributes to an increased water supply in farmers' rice fields. At the same time, farmers experience work release because the ploughing and planting becomes easier with moister fields. Technically also the use of herbicides is simplified because with the canal, the flow of water can be stopped and the fields can be set dry for herbicide application. As such, less time is needed for manual weeding. Increased water availability enables a more efficient use of fertilizer and leads to higher yields (36%). Additionally the beneficiaries of the canal mentioned in the interviews to have more time now for other activities (income or non-income generating). But not all beneficiaries can benefit to the same extent. That is partly due to the fact, that not all fields are in the same favourable position (the closer the fields are to the source, the more water is available). Most probably there will be a further construction of the canal

down the valley in the coming years. There are three major reasons for building a clean water supply system: the availability, the quantity and the quality of the household water. Availability and quantity could be improved in all analysed infrastructures (n=6), the quality of the water however was not satisfying to the people in all sites. Mostly the clean water supply system consists of two tanks made of concrete, underground pipes and taps at household level. As such, women do not need to fetch the daily water from a source anymore. This means a daily work relief in terms of work load and time saved. People experience improved health, especially concerning Diarrhoea and Red eyes disease. Some could improve their income because they now use the additional water for other activities (pig feeding, gardening, rice wine production).

These investments under PS-ARD project brought measurable benefits to the local communities and the analysed infrastructures clearly contributes towards improved livelihoods in terms of more income, higher food security and improved health of the local communities. Different benefits result from the two types of infrastructures (see table below), but we have different environments, different livelihoods and necessities.

CBA results	NPV <sup>1</sup>	IRR <sup>2</sup> (%)
	(Mio VND*)	
irrigation canal (n=1)	1'374	259
→ Comparatively low costs and high benefits from increased rice production explain the high IRR.		
clean water supply system (n=6)	7-78	12-43
→ The profitability of these infrastructures is very sensitive to what people do with saved time from water fetching.		

1 NPV = Net Present Value  
2 IRR = Internal Rate of Return

A CBA is not a tool to work on transversal topics as poverty or gender issues. It remains economic and is based on numbers from surveys or assumptions made. My study shows that the exact numbers of a CBA (NPV, IRR etc.) are not of such big importance. The sensitivity analysis is a crucial part of the whole CBA and is a must do. With the help of a sensitivity analysis, a CBA provides insight in individual and aggregated effects, provides a framework to weigh effects with each other, to communicate and explain why results are as presented, opens discussion among stakeholders and decision makers and improves transparency decision making. The CBA helps finding potentials to improve project activities and make it more efficient, but NPV or IRR should not be the deciding factor in development cooperation if it is worth investing into an infrastructure or not. However, the field study should not exclude transversal issues. For instance questions about who is doing the work in the rice field before and after the new infrastructure was built are valuable. As such also socio-economic changes due to the investment can be traced.



# NEW ARMY OF WOMEN FARMERS

## A SURPRISING CHANGE

### THE CASE OF KERALA WOMEN IN INDIA

**Sarala Gopalan**, Executive Member NIA (National Institute of Agriculture) and President of All India Women's Education Fund Association (AIWEFA)

**K**erala, a State at the southern tip of India, was always known for its elite women, who did not like to soil their hands. While women stood high on social indicators of education, health and life expectation, and formed a larger proportion of the population with their high sex ratio,

their work participation rate has been amongst the lowest in the country. Even the Census of 2001, showed only 23% of women participating in work, as against 30 to 40% in other states of India. Kerala with its near full literacy and high levels of educational attainments is also the home for high proportion levels of unemployed population.

The paradox in Kerala in recent decades has been the non-availability of workers for several kinds of manual labour, immigration of workers from the neighbouring and distant states to work in Kerala,

with the attraction of higher wages, even for construction and other work; abandonment of agricultural work leading to loss of huge chunks of land for agriculture; deficit in food production and import of cereals, fruits and vegetables, poultry and eggs from other parts of the country. Along with this, a large proportion of women has been outside productive employment, and when they seek work, they add to the queues of unemployed.

Changes in the women's work participation has come through a very silent revolution, triggered

by a series of poverty alleviation measures, institutional changes of organizing women in self-help groups under the Kudumbashree programme, leadership and guidance by the Local self Government, training and enterprise development, management of credit, and convergence of the activities of several departments of the Government to link with each other and build synergies.

The Self Help Groups made wWomen recognize their potential and strengths through organization and gain many of their entitlements, both at home and outside.

Next, the introduction of the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS), goaded women to participate in “Works” which concentrated on earth works leading to deepening of ponds, creating water harvesting systems, cleaning drains and canals, building roads etc, which helped improve water conservation and land management. The big change this brought to women’s attitudes was that they could take up these works with ‘dignity’ as these were Government works and not private work for an Employer. They often came in uniforms and were proud to be on the team. Their bank accounts bloated with the wages directly put into their accounts. Having learnt to work and the supervision being given to women ‘mates’, they comprised almost 93% of the MNREGS workers in the State.

With this experience and new input flowing from the National Livelihood Mission and Convergent action from all Departments, they took to agriculture, even as first time farmers, wherever land was remaining unproductive. They learnt farming from older persons, training and research institutions, and found their physical strength growing with more strenuous work they subjected themselves to. Their families that jeered at them to begin with soon developed respect for them and



recognized their potentials.

These changes are there to see everywhere in Kerala with large number of women’s groups coming into farming by leasing land, or forming farmers’ collectives and labour collectives, to work on every bit of land – belonging to government, institutions, or families that have none to work on the field. The activities include crop husbandry as well as animal husbandry. The synchronization of production, marketing, and linkages with credit and other inputs has made the whole effort very worthwhile.

Perambra Panchayat in Calicut District in Kerala—The fallow land as it was before women took up this area for cultivation Using Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme for Land Development,



Women worked on the development of the land in Perambra. With the convergence of finance for wages from the Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, funds from

the Agriculture Department of the State Government, additional funds from the Local Self Government (Panchayat) as well as their leadership, 253 women joined hands to relearn cultivation The same land after the women



worked on it and prepared it for paddy sowing. Large tracts of land like this one stretching over 124 hectares has been brought under thriving agriculture which is saving the forlorn lands of Kerala fields from neglect and ruin.



The women are now confident to say that they will not let a single agriculturist family in the village not send its member to work on the field.



### UN'S HUNGER SUMMIT IN MADRID: THE PRESSING CHALLENGE OF FOOD SECURITY.

A High Level Consultation on Hunger, Food Security and Nutrition, organized by the UN, took place on April 4 in Madrid -sponsored by the governments of Spain and Colombia-. A meeting that once again has demonstrated the urgent need of concrete measures to eradicate Hunger. In addition to this, the challenge to strengthen Family Farming and the importance of ensuring access to natural resources, technology and public investment, were considered necessary in the fight to eradicate Hunger and Malnutrition.

The World Rural Forum and the International Year of Family Farming 2014 were present at this event, with the participation as observer of José Antonio Osaba, AIAF-2014 coordinator for Civil Society. Also thanks to Esther Penunia, General Secretary of AFA (Asian Farmers' Association), who, in his speech, defended the potential of Family Agriculture to eradicate Hunger and Malnutrition. Among other things, she emphasized the need to ensure not only access to land for small farmers, but also access to the sea for traditional fishers and sustainable development opportunities for all.

The meeting, which counted with the participation of various Civil Society representatives, the private sector and leaders of international organizations, served to progress in the preparation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. After some discussion on priority areas related to Food Security and Nutrition, contributions were made to a document that will serve to initiate dialogue among UN' s Member States.

The document, a draft of which had been previously developed through various consultation mechanisms, reflects the importance of enhancing the role of "transformation agents". The text cites among them "small farmers and their organizations, family farmers, fishermen, farmers, workers, entrepreneurs,

communities and consumers at all levels".

<http://www.familyfarmingcampaign.net/noticias/ver.asp?id=en&pag=&Nnoticia=421682775>



### ASPIRING AFRICA.

Celebrations are in order on the poorest continent. Never in the half-century since it won independence from the colonial powers has Africa been in such good shape. Its economy is flourishing. However, poverty may have become less visible in Africa's capitals but it remains widespread. The battle against hunger has not been won.

As a matter of facts, Africa's citizens are already striving to become more productive.

In a nutshell, Africa wantsis working towards the realization of a new dream, it should be creating a common market from the Med to the Cape. That would be a boon to trade, enterprise and manufacturing: it would also get rid of much of the petty corruption and save lives.

<http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21572773-pride-africas-achievements-should-be-coupled-determination-make-even-faster>

### CLIMATE CHANGES COULD BRING MALARIA TO THE UK.

Leading health experts are urging the government to take action against the growing threat that mosquito-borne diseases, including potentially fatal malaria, could soon arrive in the UK.

"With predicted changes to climate in the UK, characterised by warming and wetter summers providing perfect breeding grounds for a number of pest-borne diseases, we need to consider some robust public health measures to minimise the potential outbreaks" said Julie Barratt, director of the ClEH.

The increasing threat posed to the UK

from exotic diseases is partially a result of changes in the way that people live today.

Julie Barratt as, in fact, also added that "Modern living conditions, urban sprawl and emerging changes in climate make the spread of pests and pest-borne diseases increasingly likely the effects of these conditions and changes need to be properly monitored and understood. We should not wait for an outbreak to happen before we act"

Harmonisation of guidelines on insecticide use and greater surveillance by both public health and veterinary agencies is, therefore, an highly needed solution.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2013/may/05/uk-tropical-disease-malaria-threat>



### AWESOME EVENT IN AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY UNIVERSITY, NEPAL

The Young Professionals' Platform for Agricultural Research for Development (YPARD), as a global community, has given particular attention to promote youth in agriculture from its establishment. On the 25 April 25, 2013, last, YPARD has organized a seminar entitled YPARD Awareness Campaign (YAC) in collaboration with Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU) atin Chitwan, Nepal where a total 113 undergraduate students were actively participateding.

YAC has been designed with the thoughtaim of promoting YPARD in Nepalese universities. Moreover, the objective is to build a students' network among different agricultural universities in Nepal to organize further programs that follow YPARD's strategic objectives and look at building upon the movement within the country.

Earlier in December 2012, YAC has successfully completed its activities in all three branches of Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science under Tribhuvan University and Himalayan College of Science and Technology under Purbanchal University.

<http://ypard.net/2013-may-2/awesome-event-agriculture-and-forestry-university-nepal> ◇◇◇



