

F@RMLETTER

The E-magazine of the World's Farmers

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FARMERS' CONTRIBUTION TO NUTRITION FOR GLOBAL HEALTH



E-Magazine

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Optimising farmer's contribution through better health and nutrition

Iain C. MacGillivray

Special Advisor to the President,
International Fund for Agricultural
Development (IFAD)



FFor many decades, the global political and development agendas have failed to give priority to hunger and undernutrition. While increasing and volatile food prices have drawn attention to the world food situation and there have been recent commitments to tackle global undernutrition and promote nutrition-sensitive investments, 805 million people remain hungry today. A further two billion people suffer from micronutrient deficiency, or hidden hunger, affecting both individual life opportunities and collective productiveness.

It is a tragedy that one in eight women and men still go hungry, and every day 8,000 children die needlessly from conditions linked to undernutrition - a tragedy that must not be allowed to continue. The international community must ensure that food and nutrition security is at the heart of the new post-2015 sustainable development framework, and must mobilise greater efforts to end poverty, hunger, and malnutrition.

In "leaving no one behind", rural-urban inequalities must be addressed, with particular attention on small-scale agriculture, including women, indigenous peoples, and family farmers. This is truly a defining moment for the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) as these issues reaffirm its mandate and become centre stage in the post-2015 universal agenda.

Investing in rural people is IFAD's business. The women, men, and children in developing countries that depend on smallholder agriculture, forestry, livestock, and fisheries are the custodians of vital natural resources and biodiversity, and are central to mitigating climate change. They are also central to global food and nutrition security. Smallholder agricultural development and rural transformation need to be an integral part of the post-2015 global development agenda, if that agenda is to succeed. This new agenda is a unique opportunity to refocus policy, investments, and partnerships on inclusive and sustainable rural transformation.

If the needs of rural areas are not addressed, rural-

urban inequalities may only deepen, which will impact rural and urban populations alike as well as global food security. On the other hand, rural transformation and rural growth have the potential to drive inclusive sustainable development from economic growth and employment to poverty eradication, from a healthy environment to inclusive societies, from gender equality to food and nutrition security for all.

Today, 500 million smallholder family farms in the developing world support the livelihoods of close to a third of the world's population. Most of which are mostly managed by poor smallholders, nearly half of whom are women. These small family farmers produce 80 per cent of the food in sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia, and agriculture is the largest provider of employment in many countries and regions. In countries lacking adequate reserves of foreign exchange to import food (a problem exacerbated by the food price spikes of recent years), the contribution of family farming to domestic food supply is even more crucial. Indeed, in the many developing countries that are net food importers, increasing production on smallholder family farms can reduce vulnerability to exchange rate and other trade-related shocks.

It is both unfortunate, and ironic, **that those who grow the food are often those who go hungry.** Smallholder families suffer from poor quality diets and malnutrition due to inadequate consumption out of their own production. They often do not have the incomes or resources to access other sources of food. Investing in rural people to increase smallholder productivity can help improve nutrition and health in developing countries

Feeding a world population that will exceed nine billion by 2050 will require the contribution of smallholder family farms. This will be possible only if there is a more integrated and comprehensive development approach to optimise agriculture's contribution to good nutrition and make food systems nutrition sensitive. That means making sure nutrition outcomes for rural and urban people are central to planning, design, and implementation of agricultural and rural investments.

IFAD is committed to making all of its country programmes, and one-third of its projects, nutrition sensitive in just four years. This means that IFAD country initiatives will go beyond recognising that investment can improve nutritional status. They will now explicitly state how they contribute to improving the nutritional status of farm household members and incorporate nutrition objectives, indicators, and actions.

With its understanding of the need to engage with other sectors on nutrition, IFAD will expand and align its efforts on nutrition with existing global and national priorities and initiatives aimed to eliminate malnutrition.

IFAD supports the proposed sustainable development goal of ending hunger, promoting sustainable agriculture, and improving nutrition, as well as the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, which brings together international donors, civil society, private sector and agencies, and more than 50 developing countries, many of which are IFAD partners.

Improving nutrition will require working across many sectors, including health, education, and water and sanitation. It will also require that agricultural investments be designed to empower women and achieve gender equality, allow women time to take care of their children and other family members, and improve their nutritional

knowledge, as well as dietary and hygiene behaviours. IFAD aims to provide countries with the financing, technical advice, policy, and programme support needed to develop nutrition-sensitive agriculture.

Activities that make investments nutrition sensitive include: production, processing, and storage techniques related to more nutrition-oriented value chains, such as those for biofortified nutrient-dense crops; nutrition education; behavioural change communication; homestead production; institutional and community-level capacity strengthening (particularly women's empowerment); policy engagement (including advocacy and outreach); and analytical work and market studies specific to countries. These efforts can create links between agriculture and nutrition by promoting economic value for producers and traders to encourage nutritional and health value for consumers.

For IFAD, a future where healthy and well-nourished smallholder family farmers are at the centre of the agricultural, economic, environmental, and social agendas is essential for promoting equitable and sustainable development. The **Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)** this November is a chance for world leaders to demonstrate leadership with actions to arrest the scourge of hunger and malnutrition. Smallholders and agriculture must not be left behind.



Second International
Conference on Nutrition

19-21
November
2014

#ICN2

FAMILY FARMERS PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN GLOBAL NUTRITION

Roger Johnson

*President, National Farmers Union
(NFU USA)*

Family farmers, ranchers, and fishermen are the cultural, social, economic, and security cornerstones of every nation. Because of this, agriculture plays a crucial role in economic development, food security, and the overall health and nutrition of nations across the globe.

Ninety percent of the world’s 570 million farms are managed by families who currently produce 70 per cent of the world’s food products. Their practices are generally more productive and allow family farmers to combat hunger and malnutrition by getting the most out of their land while protecting their land and environment. They preserve natural resources and agriculture biodiversity, both of which are crucial for a better global nutrition.

Nutrition – both the deficiency and the surplus of – has tremendous consequences for countries around the world. Some countries like Mexico and India face the double burden of malnutrition, both under and over-nutrition simultaneously occur in these countries. A significant reduction of world hunger has occurred in the last two decades, yet approximately 805 million people lack sufficient food for an active and healthy life. In addition, more than 1.4 billion adults are overweight or obese. Both hunger and obesity contribute to premature death and chronic disease.

Family farms are a key component in addressing global malnutrition. Forty percent of global households depend on family farming for their livelihood.

od. The impact of agriculture on rural communities is even greater: over 80 per cent of the rural inhabitants in developing countries belong to families working in agriculture. Across the globe, in developing economies, growth in domestic agriculture provides greater access to food for producers. Agriculture has also been at the center for domestic economic growth for many countries. As smallholder farmers increase agricultural productivity, they experience higher incomes, which will eventually lead to the reduction of poverty and food insecurity.

Food security and nutrition are closely tied. Both are essential to sustainable development and inadequacies of either have very negative consequences on the well-being and economics of vulnerable populations. They are interdependent of one another, and have effects on population dynamics, employment, energy, health and resource management. The need for food security will impact nutrition immensely as the world’s population grows larger, and policy makers must take note of both growing demands and sustainable practices to address the need and provide better nutrition to their respective populations.

In September, the United Nations Open Working Group submitted a proposal for 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in order to determine a successor framework to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that expire post-2015. These goals are meant to bring together all industries to create a better future for the planet. The second goal of the SDGs was to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote agriculture. These three are characteristically tied together through agriculture, and thus rely on agriculture for their betterment.

To solve these problems, agriculture must be properly supported, and therefore family farms - the backbone of agriculture - must be adequately supported. The National Farmers Union’s commitment to family farmers includes ensuring they can remain competitive and productive, which allows them to



continue to be the backbone of agriculture in the fight against world hunger, malnutrition and food security issues.

The National Farmers Union (NFU), the second largest general farm organisation in the United States, has and continues to be, a strong supporter of domestic and international nutrition and humanitarian programs. Agriculture and nutrition are inherently linked and farmers care about providing nutritious, healthy food to consumers. NFU's programs increase knowledge and awareness of nutrition, sustainable agricultural practices, and young and beginning farmers' education. NFU also advocates for grassroots-driven policy, especially those that address both the quality and quantity of food available, that benefits family farmers, ranchers and fisherman in the U.S.

NFU has a rich and storied history of advocating for nutritious diets. The organisation advocated to make school lunches permanent and helped pass legislation requiring milk in schools. Today, NFU advocates for full funding

of federal nutrition programs to ensure access to both the quantity and quality of food that Americans need. NFU supports an emphasis on fresh and local food in federal nutrition programs, including procurement through farm to school programs. Farm to school programs enrich the connection consumers have with fresh, healthy food and local food producers, and create communities that foster healthy eating and habits.

In addition, NFU was a founding member of Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe (CARE), a humanitarian relief organisation, in 1945 that provided food aid to Europe in the aftermath of World War II. The organisation remains strong today. NFU also works with partners like the Alliance to End Hunger to support efforts combating malnutrition internationally. The alliance facilitates collaboration, elevates hunger on the national agenda, and convenes diverse community-led coalitions to elevate the awareness of hunger issues both in the U.S. and internationally.

The National Farmers Union, through its Education Foundation, also supports nutrition education curriculum. The curriculum, "Growing Good Taste" encourages children to make nutritious and balanced choices and support their local farmers, simultaneously. The lessons involved in the curriculum emphasise knowing the food supply system from field to fork. Many of the activities have students preparing food items to gain a better understanding of healthy ingredients. By educating children about nutrition and its consequences, NFU is able to pass a higher level of awareness for younger generations.

Family farmers and ranchers play a vital role in global nutrition and are active partners contributing to a healthier society.

To learn more about NFU and its advocacy for nutrition both in the U.S. and globally, visit our **website** (<http://www.nfu.org/>) or our **Food and Nutrition Programs policy page** (<http://bit.ly/1uzUGU4>).



STRENGTHENING FAMILY FARMERS:

*strategy in providing nutritional quality
for rural and urban society*

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Food sovereignty is the right of people to define its own policies and strategies for food production, distribution, and consumption.

The actions of Food and Nutrition Security developed in Brazil, combines food and nutrition dimensions as well as it associates with goods availability (food security) and their quality (food safety). Such reference has been used in the promotion of sustainable models that promote family based production, in the approach of food production and consumption, focusing on appreciation of the diversity of food habits.

The development of the Food and Nutrition Security in Brazil, has been mobilised by civil society, governments, and researchers for more than two decades. Since the first half of the 20th century, the country has expanding actions that may reflect

on food and nutrition conditions, such as the establishment of the minimum wage in 1940, supply programs, school meal, dining halls for labourers in 1950 and food supplement programs in the 70's [Building up the National policy and System for Food and Nutrition Security: the Brazilian Experience. (CONSEA; FAO; IICA) November 2009.].

The Zero Hunger Program, launched in 2003 by Lula's Government, undertook with two main interventions. Firstly, actions for extending access to food by the low income population (income transfer, school meal, public food utilities) together with the recovery of minimum wage and of employment; Secondly the strengthening of family farming, which is the majority of the agriculture establishments in the country, and the primarily responsible for the food supply to the domestic market.

Two programs stand out as examples of intersectoral practices promoting access to food while strengthening family farming. The first is the Program of Food Acquisition (PAA) that purchases food from family farmers in order to build stocks and supply programs that attend people in situation of food insecurity. The second is the National School Meal Program (PNAE) that aims to establish school feeding as a students' right and to focus part of its food acquisition on family farming. Basically these programs have two great



objectives: to support agricultural trading of family farmers, to encourage the food production, and also, to facilitate the access to such food by the families under food insecurity situation.

Family farming is crucial to the process of building the National System and Policy for Food and Nutrition Security in Brazil. Despite occupying only one fourth of the field area, family farming is responsible, in Brazil, for 38 per cent of production value according to data from the Agriculture Census of 2006 (IBGE). Even working on a smaller area compared to patronal agriculture (agribusiness), it may be affirmed that family farming is mainly responsible for assuring the country's food security, since it is responsible for 87 per cent of the domestic production of cassava, 70 per cent of beans, 46 per cent of corn, 38 per cent of coffee, 34 per cent of rice, 58 per cent of milk, 59 per cent of swine herd, 50 per cent of poultry, 30 per cent of bovines, and 21 per cent of wheat. Still according to the Census, family farming is the main job generator with 12.3 million workers, which corresponds to 74.4 per cent of the total workers on the countryside.

In many contexts, PAA and PNAE have promoted changes in the productive matrix of family farming as well as in their markets channels. The Programs promote polyculture, which historically were a traditional feature of a "farmer's way of life" in Brazil. Gradually, PAA and PNAE are decreasing the effects of the "modernisation of agriculture" that led farmers to specialise in a limited number of commodity crops. The adoption of unsustainable agricultural practices based on the intensive use of pesticides and other chemical inputs, has exposed these families to economic, social, and health vulnerability.

Thanks to polyculture encouraged by the governmental programs, a diversified agricultural supply provides market opportunities, since demand for traditional products or new products has increased at local markets. Besides diversification, the programs stimulates agro ecological based food production, by guarantee the payment of 30 per cent more than prices paid for conventional products. Moreover, there are preferences to local products, for the rescuing and preserva-

tion of customs, habits, and cultures that had been forgotten over the generations. Thus, it is possible to create perspectives of food security under principles of nutritional high quality of the provided food.

Due inclusion of local and diversified food in the daily feed on scholar children, changes have been observed in their dietary pattern. Through the school meals coming from the regional family farms, children receive fresh, varied and better quality food, converging to a better acceptability and consumption by these students. Studies have also reported the positive effects in terms of school frequency, performance and health of these children. For example, a study conducted in Bahia (Northeast Brazil) has shown that the frequency of children at school has increased by 51 per cent, and there was a 48 per cent increase in school performance, while the indexes of bad and regular performance decreased by 59 per cent, and 53 per cent respectively.

Furthermore, a set of public food and nutrition utilities have been implemented in many cities in Brazil, such as popular restaurants (serving almost 100,000 people per day), food banks (serving almost 700,000), and community kitchens (serving almost 70,000). The operation of such activities involves innovating educational methodologies, which benefit the reduction of food wastage, the promotion of healthy food habits, and social mobilisation.

The programs enable actions that go beyond food security and nutrition issues. Beneficiaries in the programs must be involved with social assignments in order to generate new knowledge and increase opportunities for employment and income. With the support by management institutions from civil society - such as unions, associations, and cooperatives - that work together with local government agencies, it is ensured that the program beneficiaries participate in vocational training, keep their children in school; keep children up-to-date with vaccines; participate in workshops, literacy classes, and lectures promoted by the government, among others.

However, from the current worldwide context of inadequate food and food insecurity, it is noticeable that actions to encourage diversification of local production and enhance the regional food culture are undoubtedly of great added values, which family farmers offer to society. Considering family farmers ability to produce diverse food and suitable quantities for consumption, the Brazilian example demonstrates when governments are committed and involved with an active civil society, important advances are achieved with regards to the implementation of the right to adequate food. There is no doubt that family farmers are capable in being food suppliers. Moreover, they are the key access of food with high nutritional quality who provide for the people of urban and rural society.



THE CONTRIBUTION MADE BY FARMERS FOR HEALTHY EATING

Secondo Scanavino

President, *Confederazione Italiana
Agricoltori (Italian Confederation of
Farmers)*

More agriculture to
feed the world

The super developed world of communication technology is looking toward the

future, while taking a look back to investigate the whole supply system of food, agriculture, and environment. *Feeding the planet, energy for life* is the theme of Expo 2015 that will be held in Milan, Italy. The role of farmers in recent decades has regressed in public opinion, especially in developed countries.

Two principles are essential in the current debate. The first is that of food safety as defined in the World Food Summit Plan of 1996 as “a condition in which all people at all times have physical and economic access to food in a hygienically safe manner, sufficient to satisfy the nutritional requirements in line with their food preferences, in order to carry out a healthy and active lifestyle.” The second is that of food sovereignty defined in the Declaration of Nyéléni in Sélingué summit in 2007 as the “right of the people to proper food from a cultural and healthy point of view, produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and the right to define their own food and agriculture systems.” Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social classes and generations.

As indicated by the *Confederazione Italiana Agricoltori (Italian Farmers Confederation)*



tion), there has always been a recognition of agriculture as an essential economic activity that can produce goods and services for families, and there is a need for more agriculture in order to meet the needs and expectations of a complex and rapidly growing society. Food security and sovereignty are guaranteed with more agriculture and a better allocation of resources to meet various needs of citizens/consumers. We must fight hunger and chronic malnutrition condition, which affects 805 million people worldwide, including 13.5 million in developed countries - according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) report on the State of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI) 2014. However, we must also take into account the population growth that, based on UN estimates, will bring the world's population to almost nine billion people in 2050.

Economic growth and social development of many areas of the world, especially the so-called BRICS [Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa], determines a new demand for food increasing quality, affecting well-being. The concept of food evolves, it includes more and more services and acquires the character of a relational good. Most observers agree on the FAO estimate of growth in global demand for agricultural and forest products by 70 per cent between 2010 and 2050.

Combining productivity and sustainability

Agriculture, in its 10,000 years of history, has developed in balance with the natural cycles of life. The production processes have kept a balance between the production of goods and services and the reproduction of natural resources and earth's fertility. In recent decades, the development of some super specialised, monoculture, and intensive production systems has delivered a public image of agriculture to be damaging to the natural environment. These super specialised production models have proven unsuccessful over time, even from an economic point of view, because they have created marginalisation and land abandonment, or desertification. The peak of such production systems is the so-called farming speculation, based on an economy of

plantation generally in areas of developing countries, with hoarding of large funds (land grabbing), the adoption of laws and labour-intensive monocultural at very low local labour costs for production to the international market. Thus, creating conditions of malnutrition and aggravating the lives of local people, while enhancing the processes of desertification in vast subtropical areas.

The Italian Farmers Confederation supports the development of integrated production systems related to physical and cultural territories, to safe guarding biodiversity, to ensuring a balance between the production of goods and services and reproduction of natural resources and earth's fertility. Integrated farming systems can provide a significant, contrasting contribution and mitigation of climate change. Today agriculture is held liable, especially in developed countries, about seven per cent of the production of greenhouse gases, mainly due to the animal husbandry and fertilizer nitrogen. These emissions can be reduced with proper techniques and by generating energy from animal waste. However agriculture and forestry can be a major reservoir of carbon in biomass production, proper soil management, efficient use of irrigation water, maintenance and growth of organic matter in the soil.

A new ethical dimension

Feeding the planet in a sustainable way makes sense, in the developed world, to the mission of agriculture as a means of destruction of surplus and a perception of almost unlimited availability of cheap food; which are two concepts that have been partially obscured.

The agriculture development is part of an ethical reflection that involves the whole society. It requires acquiring the correct perception of healthy eating for individual and collective well-being and to discover that our future depends on the type of relationship we have with nature.

Farmers are required to produce safe goods from a sanitary point of view. The Italian Farmers Confederation created the first Italian manual of good hygiene practice for farms, validated by the



Ministry of Health (Reg.UE 852/2004). It is a guide for farmers to analyse the hazards of physical, chemical and biological processes and to implement appropriate preventive measures and effective controls. Most importantly it is a training manual for farmers to gain full knowledge and confidence in themselves.

Health is a prerequisite for us, more important it is the quality of products. The quality profile of food is very complex. It is the ability to respond to different consumer expectations: essential (nutrients, flavours, health benefits), psycho-cultural (evocative, ethical, environmental), service (informational, preservation, technological). Historically and traditionally, many food quality have been characterised as endogenous innovations for a specific territory, where the nutritional and flavour characteristics interact with those ethical and evocative form that create the expressed by the term "typical" (traditional or local).

The Mediterranean diet, for example, is a nutritional model. Yet now we must speak more specifically and refer to it as a "lifestyle", which is inspired by traditional dietary patterns of the Mediterranean basin. In 2013, UNESCO added the Mediterranean diet to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity: based on the the original type of nutrition and health, while there are also aspects related to its small "ecological footprint" and cultural values.

The necessary economic dimension

Feeding the planet involves enhancing the role of agriculture in its various forms,

ensuring dignity and adequate income for farmers. Actually, even in the developed world farmers' income is considerably lower than the average person of other sectors. The agricultural enterprise in recent decades has changed dramatically, but it is the vital cell of agricultural and agri-food systems. Competitiveness and the acquisition of adequate income, in addition to the necessary technical expertise and business efficiency, are increasingly important in order to have effective relationships on the ground and within the supply chain. Support and development are fundamental principles to bear in mind in entrepreneurial projects and related regulatory policies. Relationships are key at all levels: in both local systems of direct sales and short supply chains, in territorial systems to promote the area, quality and multiple activities related to agriculture, and agro-industrial systems situated in large domestic and international markets.

Today there is a lot of talk about agriculture.

It will soon be time turn on the lights for Expo2015 in Milan. Yet you can not talk about farming without considering its core stakeholders: farmers.

REGIONAL PRODUCTS: PROGRESSIVELY FAVOURLED

Christine Badertscher

Senior Policy Advisor, Schweizer Bauernverband (SBV) - Swiss Farmers Union

The demand for regional products is unbowed in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. A new study by the consultancy A.T. Kaerney shows that, compared with the

previous year, the percentage of the consumers who buy regional products has increased by 35 per cent. Furthermore, consumers who buy more than 20 per cent of their products regionally has increased by 10 per cent within one year.

In summary, 80 per cent of the consumers buy local products several times in a month 65 per cent buy regional products more than once a week; while the year before this share was about 48 per cent.

How to identify regional products?

There is no clear and homogeneous definition for the term "regionality". Yet

increasing identification marks have been launched. The European Union (EU) regulation defines three geographical indications: "protected designation of origin (PDO)", "protected geographical indication (PGI)", and "traditional specialities guaranteed (TSG)".

There are also more and more voluntary designations, such as the "regional windows" in Germany or "From the region, for the region", "my region", and "the best of the region" in Switzerland. Moreover consumers can find regional products on market places, in farm shops, or with a home delivery abonnement for fresh vegetables and other forms of direct marketing.

Where to buy regional products?

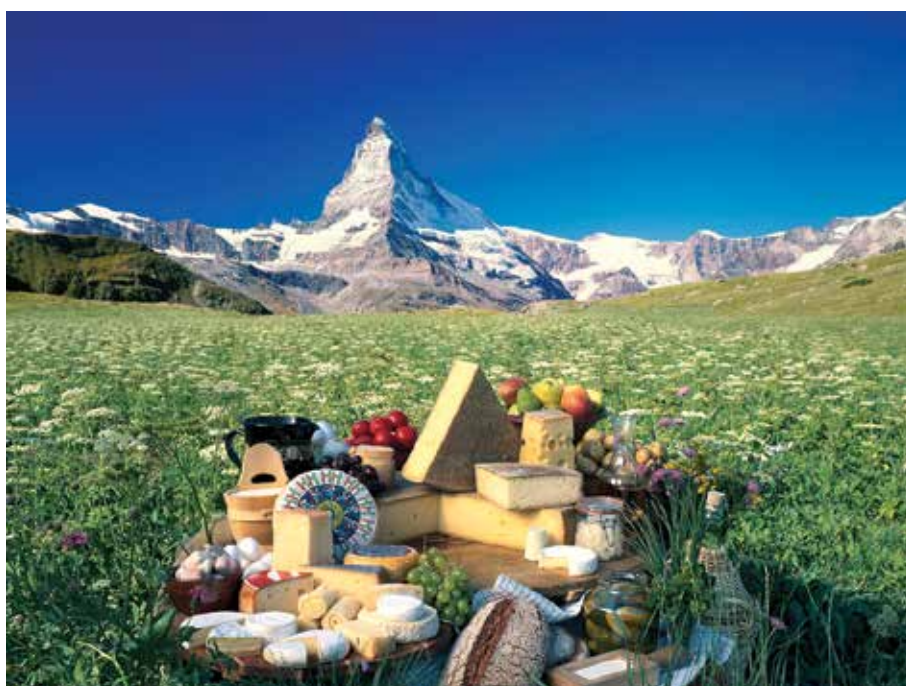
Almost half of the consumers in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland buy regional foodstuffs in supermarkets, 43 per cent on marketplaces and direct by farmers, mostly organic farmers. Whereas 39 per cent buy local products at small supermarkets and 29 per cent at discounters.

There are distinct differences between these countries. In Germany, direct marketing plays a major role in opposition to Switzerland and Austria where consumers buy regional product generally in supermarkets. Local (Swiss and/or Austrian) brands have a higher recognition of value (in their homeland) compared to Germany.

Why buy regional products?

What are the reasons why consumers buy regional products? Those interviewed in the Kaerney study mentioned mainly the taste and the freshness, but also the personal identification with their own region. Regional products are a piece of home. Other reasons are (their) confidence in the regional producers, regional confidence. Consumers associate regional brands with a good quality: "Local products just taste better".

Another important reason to choose regional products is health. Regional food has major advantages: freshly harvested products are ripe. Therefore



re the taste is better and the products contain more important ingredients like vitamins, mineral nutrients, and other vegetable ingredients that are good for health.

Products with a long transport distance must be storable for a long time. The longer the products are stocked the fewer healthy ingredients they contain. During the storage process, a portion of healthy ingredients decreases.

Also discussions about sustainability enhance the interests in regional products. All three dimensions of sustainability are involved with the purchase of regional products.

Often regional products are more ecological because of the short transport distances. Regional products generate more added values in the region, and create sustainable livelihoods for small enterprises. Therefore, local products protect jobs and even create new places of employment.

Nevertheless the price of the products is important too. Some regional products are cheaper, especially when they are bought directly at farms. Concerning the security and the quality of the provided foodstuff, consumers have the biggest confidence in products from local market places and in organic farmers.

More regional product desired

With higher demands for local products, consumer satisfaction for the offered standard products has decreased during the last years. The Kaerney study shows that only 26 per cent of consumers are satisfied with the availability of regional products. Obviously consumers desire a higher regional supply of meat, fruits, and vegetables.



Measures for retail

Retail has already taken measures to profit from the growing market of regional products.

There are some more ideas to increase this market. Firstly, a differentiated pricing is important. On the one hand a lot of consumers indicate that they would buy more local products if they are cheaper.

On the other hand, one third of consumers agree to pay more for specific products like meat, eggs, fruits, and vegetables. Due to these different willingness to pay according to the product categories, there is a need for different price strategies, for fresh and preserved products.

Consumers accept about 10 per cent higher prices for fresh products. Further measures will enlarge the offer of regional products, and will enhance regional confidence with better transparency and more information, especially

Conclusion

Consumers demand progressively more local products.

They are interested in their health, and also in the protection of the environment. However finally local products should not be much more expensive. This trade-off is typically for food and agricultural products. There is a discrepancy between consumers' wishes, the image that they have from agriculture, especially regarding animal welfare. Yet the willingness to pay more for sustainable products is not self-evident.

Often consumers do not know much about the correlation between prices and production methods. It is important to explain to consumers that there is a strong correlation between consumers' behaviours and the production methods of food. By purchasing local products, consumers can fulfil a contribution to a sustainable food production and, moreover, can do something good for their health.



CONTRIBUTIONS OF FARMERS AND AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES IN JAPAN ON NUTRITION AND HEALTH

to the past, people tend to eat more meals outside of their homes, and consume more prepared meals. Too much focus on convenience causes unbalanced diets including excessive intake of fat and lack of vegetables, which have resulted in an increase of unhealthy lifestyles, disease and obesity. This tendency is particularly notable among children.

Under such circumstances, interests in what we call “food education” have been growing among Japanese. Food education provides people with knowledge of food as well as the capability to select appropriate food, and encourage healthy dietary habits through various experience activities related to food and agriculture.

JA activities

A JA is an agricultural cooperative in Japan that is invested, utilised, and operated by farmers. Each JA puts forth efforts to provide a stable supply of safe, secure, fresh, and nutritious agricultural commodity to consumers. Using JA’s farm guidance, farmers’ groups that are organised by commodities work on the improvement of quality and productivity, as well as enhancement of food safety through standardisation and reduction of agricultural chemicals and other means.

Since eating habits formed in childhood persist into adulthood, it is crucially important to provide effective dietary and agricultural education to children, so that they can learn the basics of a healthy eating habits. JA focuses its effort on “Food and Agriculture Education”,

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Situation surrounding nutrition and health in Japan

In December 2013 “*Washoku*”, traditional Japanese cuisine, was added to the Intangible Cultural Heritage list of United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO). It is heartening news for Japanese farmers to have Japan’s food culture gain such world recognition. At the same time, it is important for us to re-acknowledge our role and responsibility to treasure our cuisine inherited in our communities, and to pass on them to the next generation.

However, dietary habits in Japan have been drastically changing. Compared



Characteristics of “Washoku”

- Utilising taste of various fresh ingredients
- Well-balanced healthy diet
- Expression of beauty and of nature
- Relationship with annual festivals or events



to nurture children’s zest for living by letting them to learn the connection between food and agriculture, as well as about agriculture’s importance and role through experience.

In a resolution of the JA National Congress in 2012, Food and Agriculture Education was designated as one of the important activities for development of local communities. Various activities are exemplified and implemented through lectures by farmers in local schools, exchange events between local residents and farmers through community farms, and supplying local farm products to school lunches to promote local agriculture.

Activities and effects of JA food and agriculture education

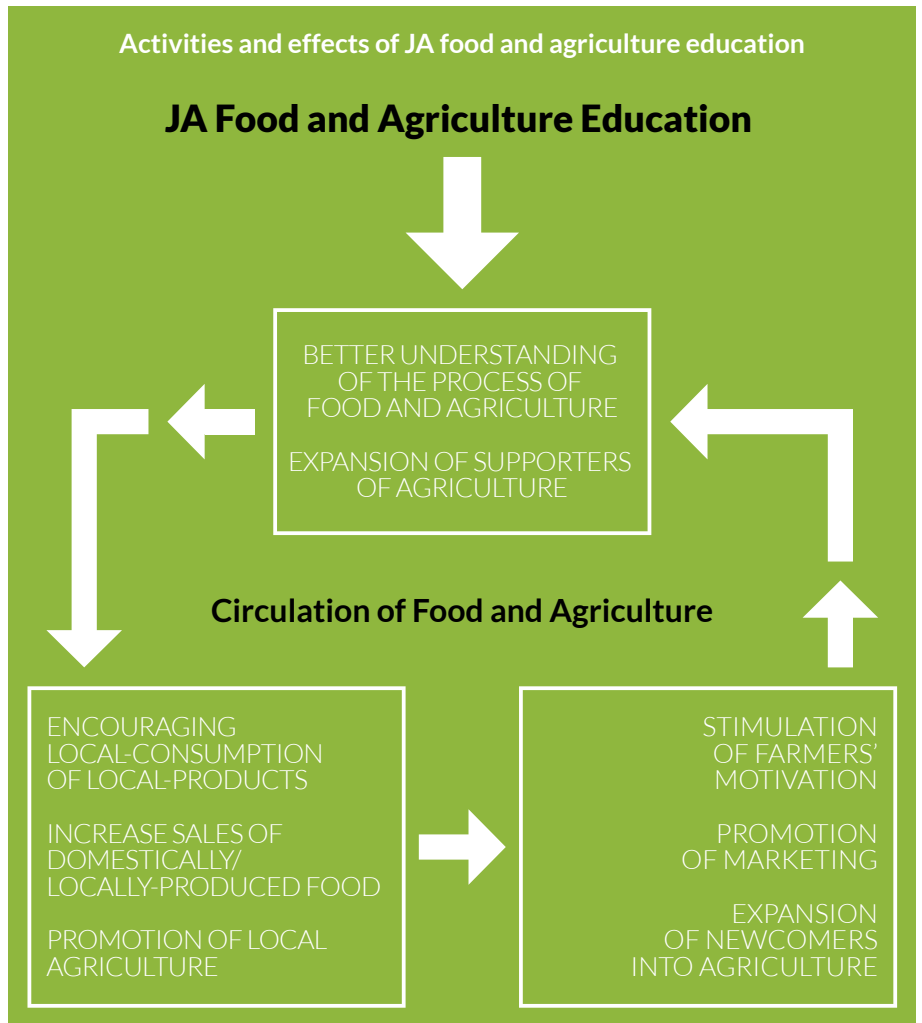


JA SUPPLIES LOCAL FARM PRODUCTS FOR SCHOOL LUNCH
PHOTO: THE JAPAN AGRICULTURAL NEWS

The resolution also emphasizes the importance of promotion of JA Farmers’ Markets. There are about 2,000 JA Farmers’ Markets operated by JAs, where local member farmers can sell their products directly to consumers. Various events are also held in local stores or nearby community farms, such as farming experience classes hosted by farmers for consumers and parent-and-child cooking classes.



AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCE PROGRAM FOR KIDS
PHOTO: THE JAPAN AGRICULTURAL NEWS



A JA FARMERS' MARKET
PHOTO: THE JAPAN AGRICULTURAL NEWS

When farmers sell indigenous specialty products and traditional local vegetables in those Farmers' Markets, producers encourage rich and healthy dietary habits by providing unique recipes.

In parallel with those activities, JA has been working on the **"Yoishoku Project"** since 2008 to enhance understanding of the importance of food for a healthy mind and body, the wealth of local and domestic farm products, and the value of agriculture.

"Yoishoku" means good eating practice.

Since there is not just one simple solution to promoting "Yoishoku", it is important to provide opportunities for people to think about how "good eating practices make our mind and body healthy". For example, we promote ideas as follows: a return to Japanese tradition, eating rice as a staple, eating breakfast, participation in "local consumption of local products" movement, eating fresh and seasonal farm products, appreciation of producers, and enjoying delightful meals with family or friends.

Collaboration with other entities

Everyone needs to eat to live. Therefore, oral care is also critical to maintaining a healthy dietary life. The Japan Dental Association and Japanese government promote the "8020 campaign", which is to keep at least 20 teeth for those who are 80 years old. JA Group promotes the campaign in collaboration with related agencies so to support the local society, as well as to provide nutritious and delicious food.

Although Japan is one of the countries with the world's highest longevity rate, the number of dementia or bedridden people is increasing, which has become a serious social problem. For this reason, JA carries out a campaign for "healthy life-span until 100". The features of this campaign are exercise, healthy diet, health check, nursing care, and medical services, and realisation of a rich life worth living. In collaboration with local agencies concerned, JA is dedicated to protect and enhance the health and lives of local residents.



Observations and conclusions

First of all we farmers are the source of farm products, which are the basis of people's nutrition and health. Therefore, by supplying safe and quality farm products, we can contribute to people's nutrition and health. Also, by providing opportunities to get in touch with agriculture as the source of foods, we can enhance people's awareness of and interests in food that will in turn lead to improvements of their dietary habits through their own initiative.

We are producers, but at the same time we are consumers. While we play an important role in local society to promote agriculture, we hope to live a healthy and peaceful life as active members of our local communities. By implementing collaborative activities with various entities, we farmers and JA will continue to play a key role in providing the source of nutrition, and thereby contribute to good health of people in the local communities.

CELEBRATING WOMEN

Mel Poulton
Farmer, Beef + Lamb New Zealand

Celebrating women and their passion for providing healthy nutritious food

As food producers in New Zealand, we take great pride in delivering healthy, nutritious food to the markets we supply both in New Zealand and across the globe. A small island nation, in located in the Pacific, we have a national population of about 4.5 million people, and produce enough food for about 20 million people. We export between 85 - 90 per cent of the food we produce as a nation.

The role of women involved in food production throughout New Zealand has always been significant for our young county. Maori women, New Zealand's indigenous people, were very much involved in food production growing root crops such as Kumara (Sweet Potato). The colonial women who arrived in the mid 1800's from the United Kingdom were also very much part of the food production system as the land was transformed to maximise its productive capacity,

whereby they were often milling flour.

There was a breakthrough to being women of influence in 1893 when New Zealand became the first nation to allow the right for women to vote in national politics, an undertaking led by Kate Sheppard. Infamously named the land girls, women later took on more responsibility with the physical demands of managing and working the land when a large percentage of our farming menfolk left our shores during World War II to fight for the king and for country, on the other side of the world.

The great connection to the land of the Maori, the creative pioneer spirit of the colonials, and the determination of our women to rise up, take their place of influence, and get on with the job of producing healthy nutritious food, are key marks of our culture and connection to food production in New Zealand.

I would like to introduce you to women of today who also feel a strong connection with the land, a creative pioneer attitude, and determination to produce healthy nutritious food.

Justine Horgan started working with her father, Keith Neylon, at the beginning of the Blue River Dairy journey. This is a company that is now a premier producer of sheep milk products. "We believe in utilising nature's goodness to provide you with nutritious and high quality award winning products." The success of the company is closely linked to the rich farming land and the lush grass on which our sheep happily graze, providing the sweet milk that creates our unique range of sheep milk products. These include milk powder, cheeses, ice cream, meat, and a range of nutritional formulations from birth to toddler as the newest product line. Justine Horgan said, "As the Sales and Marketing Manager for Blue River Dairy I am able to be at the very forefront of a new industry and a range of new products that are a first for the New Zealand market. We find there is constant demand for high specification formulated milk drinks particularly from Asia. We can deliver a secure continuous year round supply of healthy nutritious food."

Afsaneh and her husband purchased a



JANET KING UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH HER MILKING SHEEP, KINGSMEADE CHEESE

blackcurrant farm in 2006. A known superfood with high nutritional value and remarkable health benefits, the Viberi organic blackcurrants they produce contain extraordinary high levels of vitamin C, and are also full of one of nature's most powerful antioxidants, anthocyanins. Blackcurrants are known to reduce blood pressure and improve circulation, improve eye health, enhance immunity, support a healthy digestive system, assist recovery after exercise, possess anti-inflammatory properties, and improve brain functions. To the market Afsaneh and her husband deliver blackcurrants frozen, freeze dried, soft dried sweetened with organic apple juice, and freeze dried rolled in dark chocolate. Afsaneh stated, "We are proud of producing something not just rich in flavor, but healthy and nutritious too."

During October 2014, twenty one year old New Zealander Katey Craig won the world title of top female shepherd at a competition in France. She is currently working on a 3,000 ha sheep and beef farm in the North Island of New Zealand as a junior shepherd. Katey helps to look after 30,000 stock units on Otiwhiti station, where they are focussed on producing top quality beef and lamb. Katey Craig said, "I've grown up with an awareness that the tidy cuts of meat on supermarket shelves do not get there by magic. There are many hours of unseen work, planning, care, and budgeting in order to provide quality healthy safe nutritious food to consumers around the world. I believe sheep and beef farming are essential industries in New Zealand, and a big part of our national economy, and international markets. It is pleasing to notice more women are earning the respect deserved in this growing sector. Women have a huge part to play in the beef and lamb industry going forward."

Janet King is an integral person in the Kingsmeade Cheese business, which produces cheese mainly from sheep milk, due to the growth of the business they also started to produce cheese from cow milk. Janet believes research, combined with a shift in the appreciation of different foods being trialled in New Zealand, presented the business with the marketing tools to approach some of the up-market lodges as well as the burgeoning interest in far-

mers markets throughout the country. What started as a small family business after many years has grown to include: a factory capable of storing 60,000 kg of cheese; nine staff; some of the most sought-after East Friesian genetics in the country; awards for New Zealand Dairy producer of the year; sustainable business and supreme award for supplier to the lower North Island restaurants. Our cow milk Sunset Blue was one of the cheeses on the menu at Premier House for Prince William and the Duchess of Cambridge Kate, together with the New Zealand Prime Minister and his family. Part of the attraction of sheep milk is that it is high in vitamins A, B, C & E, Thiamine, Riboflavin, Nicotinic Acid, Calcium, Phosphorus, Potassium, and Magnesium. Sheep milk has been known to be one of the few foods tolerated by patients undergoing chemotherapy (lines the stomach, reducing nausea). Sheep milk is also reputed to have higher properties of short and medium chain fatty acid which are recognised to have little effect on cholesterol.

Christine Bridge has spent many hours out in the fields planting, weeding and harvesting Rhubarb – their family has been growing Rhubarb for four generations – what started as a small family business became one of the biggest Rhubarb producers in New Zealand. Their markets have been not only in New Zealand, but also Australia and England. There are many health benefits of rhubarb such as aiding digestion and much more which you can look up on the internet. Our Rhubarb is high in Vitamin C, K, B, and

also high in calcium, magnesium and beta carotene.

As for the author, I am part of a family farming business that produces 100 per cent grass fed sheep and beef to markets all over the world. I also work as an extension manager for our levy funded Industry good organisation, Beef + Lamb New Zealand. Having just returned from a 15-week international Nuffield tour looking at food production, trade, and geopolitics in a number of nations around the world, it is apparent that women across the globe play a significant role in the primary industries of food production at all levels of the industry – from out in the paddocks / fields, to administration and marketing, to representing their sectors at national or even international level.

In the case of New Zealand, you will see women achieving their dreams, being involved in any aspect of the sectors focussed on producing and delivering healthy, nutritious food to our domestic or international market places. In New Zealand, we are deeply connected to our land. Food production (and consumption) is an integral part of our culture. Our families, communities, and nation depend on the production and successful trade of healthy nutritious food.



YOUNG CATTLE BEING RAISED ON 100 PERCENT PASTURE DIET IN THE HILLS OF NEW ZEALAND.



WFO Conference: Seeding Nutrition, Harvesting Health

The World Farmers' Organisation (WFO) held a conference titled 'Seeding Nutrition, Harvesting Health' in Rome, Italy, on 14 November 2014 at Campidoglio (on Rome's Capitol Hill) in the Giulio Cesare room from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. The conference 'Seeding Nutrition, Harvesting Health' aims to promote a discussion on the central role played by farmers in tackling this global public issue.

<http://www.wfo-oma.com/world-events-2/wfo-conference-seeding-nutrition-harvesting-health.html>

PHOTO: © WFO/Francesco Ragni



Second International Conference on Nutrition

The Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) is an inclusive inter-governmental meeting on nutrition jointly organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The ICN2 will be held on 19-21 November at FAO Headquarters in Rome. The two main outcome documents of the conference are the Rome Declaration on Nutrition: a political commitment document, and the Framework for Action: a technical guide for implementation.

<http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/icn2/en/>



Farm-to-School and School Nutrition Programs: Dedicated to Serving Healthy Fresh Food

Delaware's Farm to School Program (F2S) unifies 19 school districts and assists all schools in purchasing local products. F2S is an economic benefit to Delaware farmers, as well as its economy and agricultural industry. In Delaware, utilising F2S to source local produce allows Laurel School District to meet the fruit and vegetable requirements of the new meal pattern outlined by federal guidelines for school meals.

<http://1.usa.gov/ZlwHG0>



Rethinking Hunger

The world has a nutrition problem. Though great advancements have been made toward the Millennium Development Goals of halving the proportion of undernourished people in developing countries, the problem remains persistent and complex. Effective efforts to reduce undernourishment must ensure that people have access not only to enough food, but also to nutritious food. Hunger and undernourishment have consequences to health and productivity of adults, undermining their ability to learn and work. Moreover, they impede children's physical and cognitive development, and leave them more susceptible to illness and premature death.

<http://bit.ly/1tHFYZz>



A Weighty Problem: how to halt obesity in the developing world

The latest data reveals that the number of overweight and obese people in the developing world has more than tripled – from about 250 million in 1980 to almost a billion by 2008. What has led to the rapid growth of over-nutrition in the developing world? Higher incomes, falling real costs of many foods – thanks to increased harvests and more efficient logistics in supply chains – urban lifestyles with more sedentary habits and less time to prepare meals, increasing consumption of processed foods often dense in energy from refined carbohydrate, fats, oils and sugar, and the influence of advertising overwhelmingly of processed foods.

<http://bit.ly/Jy5C0z>

