



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANT HEALTH 2020

MY STORY

Call for human-interest stories on plant health

Plants are the source of the oxygen we breathe, the food we eat, and ultimately of all life on earth. The International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) 2020 is a once in a lifetime opportunity to raise global awareness on how protecting plant health can help end hunger, reduce poverty, protect biodiversity and the environment, and boost economic development.

Despite their importance, plants and the importance of keeping them healthy are often ignored. We intend to change this by **promoting real stories** about how plant health affects the lives of a variety of people across sectors. Your story will be used to inspire people to take action – for example by encouraging people to refrain from taking fresh produce home after travelling abroad, calling on decision makers to allocate more resources to plant health institutions, or convincing farmers to adopt sustainable pest management practices.

What kind of stories are we looking for?

We need your help in identifying first-hand stories that show at least one of the following:

- how someone (farmer, public or private sector employee, student, etc.) has **contributed to plant health**;
- the **damage caused by plant pests and diseases**. This will help people understand the gravity of the problem. They can also show what actions can be taken to address these problems; or
- how **plant health can help end hunger, reduce poverty, protect the environment, or boost economic development**.

Stories aren't always about success...

It is also useful to tell first-hand stories about what happens when plants are seriously damaged by pests and diseases, or climate change. These stories will bring home the gravity of problem. These stories, however, should also highlight possible solutions and what people and organizations at various levels are doing to prevent and manage plant pests and diseases.



Finally, do you have a story that tells how improving plant health has contributed to bigger goals such as ending hunger, reducing poverty, protecting the environment or boosting economic development? These stories are always inspiring!

What do we mean by plant health?

The International Year of Plant Health definition is:

“Plant health is usually considered the discipline that uses a range of measures to control and prevent pests, weeds and disease causing organisms to spread into new areas, especially through human interaction such as international trade.”

Who is the story about?

Your story could be about a farmer, a teacher, or someone who works in the private sector. It could be about the actions taken by staff from the local government; international, regional or civil society organizations; Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) or other United Nations (UN) agencies. People who work at or with national plant protection organizations will also have a wealth of plant health stories to tell. The story could be about an ordinary citizen engaged in travel or trade, or someone whose work deals with plants or plant products in any way.

How will the stories be used?

A selection of these stories will be translated into six languages to reach an international audience through online platforms, social and traditional media and events including exhibits. They will help to:

- make the story more accessible and compelling for all audiences, especially young people
- increase media coverage for the International Year of Plant Health
- provide content for worldwide events and exhibits, publications, and FAO home page stories both for and beyond the International Year of Plant Health
- be the basis for videos or photo-stories for online distribution

We will encourage FAO communications focal points worldwide to use the human-interest stories and pitch them to regional or local media.

DEADLINE

Please advise if you **plan** to send human-interest stories with four to five different photos (high-resolution) of the main subject - farmers; local government representatives; people working in the private sector or at FAO, etc. **by 30 September 2019** to IYPH@fao.org

Please send the **finalized stories**, using the template provided by **15 November 2019**.

WHAT WE NEED

If possible, please share with us **one to three human-interest stories related to plant health.**

Stories should:

- be written in the third-person (he, she) with three to four powerful quotes, and at least one action related to plant health
- be approximately 350 words
- include four to five high-resolution photos (see below for further instructions – stories with less than two different high-resolution photos will not be considered)
- include key facts and figures
- use simple everyday language that can be understood by everyone
- follow the template provided

Suggestion: if your story concerns a specific project or initiative, please include one or two sentences explaining the key challenge it deals with and include quotes from people who have been directly affected.

Storytelling tips

Stories are usually about a person and what actions they took to overcome a challenge or problem. Therefore, have a clear “main character” and explain what obstacles the person was facing, what steps they (and others) took to overcome them, and what happened as a result.

Bring your stories to life with direct quotes from your main character and other people in the story.

Finally, a story is more than a sequence of events. Think about the main message and purpose of the story. Is it to showcase an action that all of us can take to protect plants? Is it to highlight an innovative solution? Is it to show how plant health can reduce hunger? Be sure the story has a key message.

For more tips on how to write a good story, please refer to [FAO's Digital Storytelling Guide](#)

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Here are some ideas for questions when interviewing candidates and preparing your IYPH story:

- how have your actions contributed to plant health? How have you helped protect plants from pests and diseases?
- how have you or your community been affected by plant pests or diseases? What solutions were adopted? Were they successful? Why? Why not?
- what else would you like to share with others about your experience?
- how has having healthier plants helped reduce hunger and poverty?
- what is the most important thing you would like people around the world to know about plant health?

PHOTOS

Please take and send:

- photos that have a resolution of at least 150 dpi, **300 dpi** is ideal
- **two to three portraits or close-up photos** of the interviewee preferably looking into the camera.
- **three to five photos showing their situation or environment.** Please try to create a connection between what the interviewee says and the photo you take. For example:
 - if a farmer says that she is successfully using sustainable pest management techniques, show her working in the field/harvesting, or preparing a meal with the different food items visible in the photo.
 - for people working in the public or private sector, show photos of the interviewee doing some of his/her work activities related to the story.
 - you may want to show evidence of damage caused by pests, or even a picture of the pest itself!

You should provide complete **caption information** with your **photos**. This includes:

- date on which the images were taken
- photographer's name and organization
- specific location (Region/Country/City/Neighborhood)
- the names of the principal subjects
- descriptions of the subject(s) (mother? health worker? relative? teacher?)
- what they are doing
- if applicable, the related FAO programme or project (title and code) and how it is impacting the people in the picture or their community
- technical keywords/themes clearly indicated

Annex 1 MY STORY TEMPLATE

Title	
Photos (high-resolution photos representing the interviewee preferably taking part in activities related to the story): <i>Please provide:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a link to each photo (at least 150 dpi) in a shared folder• a caption for each photo provided	
Subtitle (keep it short):	
Summary of the story:	
Main story (this should be the complete human interest story including quotes; a description of the setting or situation; additional background information on the project, its impact, partners; and next steps):	Related publications:
	Related audio:
	Related video:

	Related infographics (links):
List additional quotes (if not already included in the story above):	
Interviewee's pledge to contribute to #PlantHealth:	
Contact details of story originator or author:	

Please send an email to IYPH@fao.org if you **plan** to send human-interest stories by **30 September 2019**.
Final submissions of stories and images, using the provided **template**, are due by **15 November 2019**.



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