



## NOW from NORTH AMERICA



Showing kids how to grow fruits and vegetables is a great way to teach them about nutrition.

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- José Graziano da Silva  
Director-General, FAO

### FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Dear reader,

With just over a decade to deliver upon the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), outrage grows at the sheer unacceptability of statistics which inform us that 815 million people still suffer from chronic hunger and another two billion are victims of one form of malnutrition or another.

There is no silver bullet for solving this problem. To deepen our understanding and explore various facets of the challenge, FAO North America is organizing a roundtable event in mid-February to discuss “Urgent Policy Priorities: Preparing Food & Agriculture Systems for a Rapidly Changing World”. With panelists from FAO, the World Bank, the Alliance Against Hunger and the Brookings Institution, the roundtable will help isolate the key priorities for meeting SDG2 by 2030.

In January, a roundtable event at FAO's Liaison Office for North America discussed the role of Geographical Indications to link people, places and products for rural development. There was also a policy seminar last month entitled “Youth Required: Building Resilient Food Systems for a Sustainable World” organized by The Hunger Project and IFPRI, where FAO called for an increased investment in agriculture to unlock its economic potential and make agriculture a profession of choice for educated youth.

In our Partner Corner, we feature EcoAgriculture Partners who have collaborated with us on many events over the last decade to underline the importance of promoting a landscape approach to development. We look forward to continuing our long enriching partnership with them.

2018 is already filled with numerous activities and we at FAO North America are really excited about it. We hope to keep you informed about our activities through this and future editions of our newsletter.

Sincerely,

Vimlendra Sharan,  
Director, FAO Liaison Office for North America

## NEWS FROM THE LIAISON OFFICE FOR NORTH AMERICA

### Geographical Indications (GIs): Linking people, places and products for rural development



From left to right: Miguel Zegarra (Embassy of Peru), Charlotte Beaumatin (Embassy of France), Vimlendra Sharan (FAO), Prof. Marsha Echols (World Food Law Institute), Jordan Khan (Embassy of Canada), Hiroaki Kojima (Embassy of Japan) and Wolf Meier-Ewert (WTO, via video) discussed the role of geographical indications and trademarks for food.

30 January 2018, Washington, DC – FAO's Liaison Office for North America and the World Food Law Institute co-hosted the second roundtable discussion on Geographical Indications (GI) for food. The event showcased different approaches to GIs, as seen through the TRIPS Agreement, WIPO's Geneva Convention, and recent trade agreements like CETA, and national (*sui generis*) laws.

The event was opened by **Vimlendra Sharan**, Director of FAO North America, who underscored that few topics have been as controversial in international Intellectual Property as the protection of GIs. He also highlighted the need to deepen understanding surrounding the role of GIs in food safety and food security. **Sibylle Slattery**, Food Quality Expert, shared FAO's work in implementing the Quality and Origin Program that supports the development of quality linked to geographical origin products that contribute to rural development.

**Wolf Meier-Ewert**, Counsellor, Intellectual Property, Government Procurement and Competition Division, World Trade Organization (WTO) provided a multilateral approach on Geographical Indications by giving a historical perspective on them, including their evolution over time from becoming part of trade beginning with the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin. Mr. Ewert also noted the TRIPS Articles 22, 23 and 24, which accommodate different views and needs of countries involved.

Representatives from **Canada, France, Peru** and other countries spoke about this critical but often overlooked food and trade policy issue. Jordan Khan, Second Secretary – Trade Policy, Embassy of Canada provided a regional approach of GIs referring to the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between the European Union and Canada (CETA). Representatives from Japan, Peru, and France shared their national approach concerning GIs and the laws that they have established to address GIs when negotiating trade agreements and protecting their agricultural products to enhance their competitiveness.

Read more on FAO's Quality and Origin Program [here](#), and a flagship publication on GIs [here](#).

### 2018 Nutrition Policy Seminar

8 January 2018, Washington DC - Tom Pesek, Senior Liaison Officer at FAO North America, served as a panelist at the 2018 Nutrition Policy Seminar co-hosted by the University of North Carolina's Public Health and Nutrition Graduate Program and Virginia Tech's Food and Nutrition Policy Graduate Program. His remarks addressed FAO's role in shaping and supporting international policies and programs aimed at addressing global food insecurity and malnutrition, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG2. He was joined on the panel by senior representatives from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

### Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government Visit FAO North America

17 January 2018, Washington DC - FAO North America hosted 40 graduate students representing more than 30 countries from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Vimlendra Sharan, Director and Thomas Pesek, Senior Liaison Officer, interacted with the students on FAO's work and how it addresses food security and agricultural development. They also shared how their personal career paths led them to serve the United Nations.

## NEWS FROM THE LIAISON OFFICE FOR NORTH AMERICA

### Youth Required: Building Resilient Food Systems for a Sustainable World



From left to right: James Thurlow (IFPRI), Claudia Koerber (IFC), Vimlendra Sharan (FAO) and Mary Kate Costello (UN Youth) discussing the role of youth in agriculture.

25 January 2018, Washington DC – Vimlendra Sharan, Director of FAO's Liaison Office for North America, participated in a policy seminar titled "Youth Required: Building Resilient Food Systems for a Sustainable World," which was co-organized by The Hunger Project and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). The event featured a multi-generational dialogue about the urgent challenges in expanding opportunities in agriculture for today's youth.

The event was moderated by **Mary Kate Costello**, Youth Representative at the UN Major Group for Children and Youth, who emphasized that more young people live in the world today than ever before.

**Vimlendra Sharan**, Director of FAO North America, presented FAO's work with youth in agriculture. With the average age of farmers steadily rising in most countries and the youth shunning careers in agriculture, he questioned who would grow the food needed to feed the ever increasing world population. Mr. Sharan elaborated on FAO's findings regarding challenges of access to land, finance, markets and knowledge inhibiting the youth from joining the agricultural work force, and underlined FAO's call for developing a strong enabling environment and viable business models, and adopting a food systems approach to attract youth to agriculture.

**James Thurlow**, Senior Research Fellow at IFPRI, presented the results of a soon-to-be published study, which finds that youth as a percentage of the working population in Africa is peaking late, but the percentage is not higher than in Asia. The study also finds that Africans are leaving agriculture slower than in other world regions, which might be explained by a squeezing of non-agricultural employment opportunities. There should be less panic and more action, as youth is better educated today compared to previous generations, and employment opportunities exist in the food system beyond farming.

**Claudia Koerber**, Knowledge Management Specialist at the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and host of Global Storytelling for Global Development, emphasized how social media can be used to engage youth in agriculture by giving them a platform to share stories and videos on challenges and opportunities in agriculture. Social media can be used as a capacity development tool and engine of change to capture and share knowledge, putting youth in a leadership role.

The event also featured two **video testimonies**: One from a farmer in Trinidad and Tobago presenting an organization ([www.whyfarmit.com](http://www.whyfarmit.com)) which creates youth engagement in Agriculture by visiting schools and telling children why to farm and how to farm; and a second testimony was from a young farmer in Indonesia who presented joint work with the local government of Lombok for implementing SDG2.

Read more on FAO's work on youth employment [here](#).

### Partner Corner: EcoAgriculture Partners

In this section, FAO's Liaison Office for North America invites a different partner organization each month to comment on how the partnership has benefitted both organizations.



EcoAgriculture Partners is a pioneering non-profit organization that advances the practice of integrated landscape management and the policies to support it. By facilitating shared leadership and collaborative decision-making by all stakeholders in a landscape, EcoAgriculture Partners empower agricultural communities to manage their lands to enhance livelihoods, conserve biodiversity and ecosystem services, and sustainably produce crops, livestock, fish, and fiber. From critical analysis of policies, markets, and land use practices, they generate innovative research, tools and methodologies that help landscape managers and policymakers create and sustain integrated landscapes worldwide.

"The partnership between EcoAgriculture Partners and FAO North America has been important to EcoAgriculture Partners' mission for nearly a decade. By working together to convene leaders in the food security, development, and conservation fields in Washington, D.C. at our bi-monthly Landscape Roundtables, we've advanced the holistic thinking and cross-sectoral work in these fields that is so critical to the future of our planet. We look forward to continuing that series while we expand the conversation to a broader public in Washington and beyond in our new seminar series, Towards Sustainable Landscapes, starting February 12th with the event 'Meeting Climate and Sustainable Development Goals through Integrated Landscape Strategies: The New Policy Imperative.'" - EcoAgriculture Partners

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## FAO NORTH AMERICA EVENTS & TAX CORNER

### UPCOMING EVENTS

What?	When?	Where?	RSVP
Meeting Climate and Sustainable Development Goals through Integrated Landscape Strategies: The New Policy Imperative	Monday, 12 February 2018 3:00 - 5:00 PM	Holeman Lounge, National Press Club 529 14th St NW 13th Floor 20045 Washington, DC	<a href="#">Here</a>
Urgent Policy Priorities: Preparing Food and Agriculture Systems for a rapidly changing world	Thursday, 15 February 2018 9:00 - 10:30 AM	FAO Liaison Office for North America, 2121 K Street Suite 800B, NW, 20037 Washington, DC	Gabriel.Laizer@fao.org

### TAX CORNER

This section provides important updates from the tax unit located at the FAO Liaison Office for North America, which processes tax reimbursement requests by FAO, World Food Programme (WFP), and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) staff members.

#### Did you know that FAO North America houses a TAX Unit?

The United States does not exempt the United Nations earnings of its taxpayers from taxes. The purpose of the reimbursement system is to place the United Nations staff members subject to taxation in the position in which they would have been if their official emoluments were not taxed. It places the staff members on the same vantage point in relation to other UN staff members who are not required to pay taxes to a Member State on their UN earnings.

For calendar year 2017, the FAO North America Tax Unit processed 539 requests from FAO/WFP/IFAD staff members (reimbursement/advances) – totaling over USD\$5.9 million in payments.

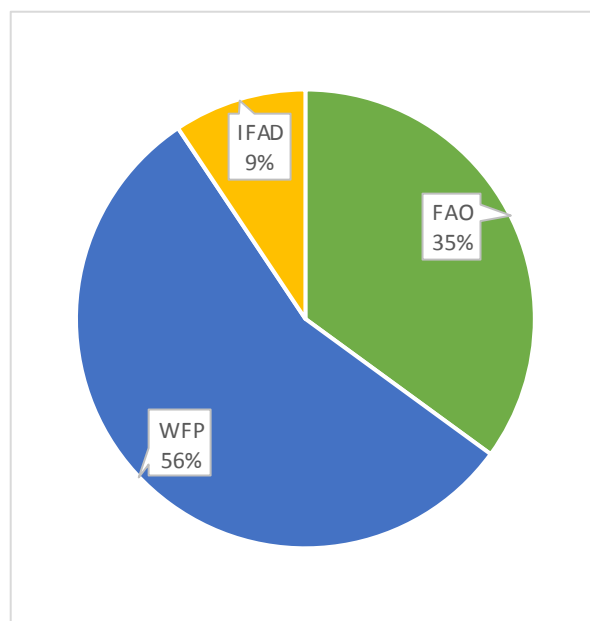
The Tax Unit manages this workload with one full time Finance/Tax Assistant, a Tax Assistant (at 40% time), and a Finance Assistant at half time.

#### Important upcoming dates:

- 28 February 2018 - FAO Administrative Circular approval (estimate date). Tax Unit begins processing 2017 tax reimbursements.
- A Guidance Note for the US Income Tax Reimbursement will be published in February 2018.

Please email the Tax Unit if you have questions: [low-ustax-settlement\(at\)fao.org](mailto:low-ustax-settlement(at)fao.org)

#### Total Reimbursement/Advance Payments FY 2017 = USD \$5.9 million



## NEWS FROM FAO

### FAO calls for renewed commitment to get Africa back on track to eliminate hunger

27 January 2018, Rome/Addis Ababa - At the African Union Summit, FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva called for hunger-fighting initiatives in Africa to be deepened and broadened for putting the continent back on track to eliminate the scourge of hunger and undernutrition. Speaking at the occasion, he said “achieving zero hunger in our lifetime is still possible. It will require a redoubling of current efforts and a push for political commitment and timely concrete actions such as never seen before.”

The summit also reviewed and renewed the 2013 partnership – forged between the AU, FAO and the Instituto Lula – to end hunger and malnutrition.

Progress towards that goal is not on track, and last year’s FAO report on the [State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World](#) reported that civil conflicts and adverse climate trends had led to an increase in the number of hungry people.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said “The majority of undernourished people in Africa live in countries affected by conflict. Hunger is almost twice as high in conflict-affected countries with a protracted crisis. Stronger commitment by governments, the African Union and the United Nations is needed to promote peace, human rights and sustainable development”.

At the conclusion of the meeting, attendees agreed on a joint communiqué that includes an 11-point action plan for AU Member States to renew their commitment to ending hunger in Africa by 2025. It includes investing in sustainable agriculture and social protection programs. Read more [here](#).



FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva with African leaders at the African Union Summit, Ethiopia.

### More than meat: Shaping the future of livestock



20 January 2018, Rome/Berlin - Speaking at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture, FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva said “the livestock sector is a mainstay for food security and rural livelihoods and the international community must work together to make sure it achieves its potential contribution to sustainable development.”

FAO estimates that more than half of the world's rural poor are livestock farmers and pastoralists. Among the poorest of the poor, they rely on livestock that play a vital role in their livelihoods.

While animal products make large contributions to nutrition and the fight against poverty, they also entail outsized impacts on the climate and environment and assuring animal health is increasingly critical for human health, he said at the [10th Global Forum for Food and Agriculture](#) in Berlin.

Read more [here](#).

### Hunger in conflict zones continues to intensify

29 January 2018, Rome - Food insecurity in conflict-stricken countries continues to deteriorate, meaning humanitarian efforts to provide affected communities with food relief and livelihood support remain extremely critical, FAO and WFP have told the UN Security Council.

The latest [joint FAO/WFP update for the United Nations Security Council on food security in countries with conflict situations](#) covers 16 countries: Afghanistan, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Iraq, Lebanon regarding the Syrian refugees, Liberia, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine and Yemen, plus the transboundary Lake Chad Basin area.

In half of these places, the FAO-WFP assessment notes, a quarter or more of the population is facing crisis or emergency levels of hunger as measured on the international IPC [food insecurity scale](#).

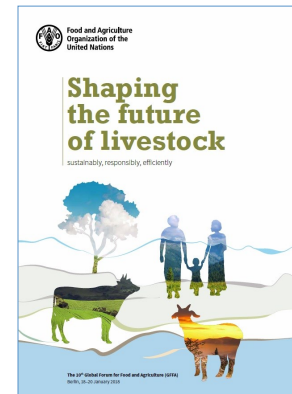
This activity complements a larger effort to track globally food crises and provide coordinated responses that is summarized in the annual [Global Report on Food Crisis](#) and its associated Global Network against Food Crises.

Read more [here](#).

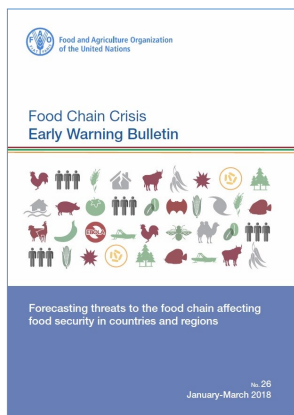
## SELECTED NEW FAO PUBLICATIONS

### Shaping the future of livestock - sustainably, responsibly, efficiently

Livestock are terrestrial, domesticated animals raised in an agricultural setting to provide traction or produce commodities such as meat, milk, eggs and hides. They contribute to diverse agri-food systems globally, playing many roles for different groups of people. From the perspective of the sustainability of the global livestock sector, there are four important and interrelated aspects: food and nutrition security; livelihoods and growth; health and animal welfare; and climate and natural resource use. Sustainable livestock are at the interface of these four topics, which provide the structure of the breakout sessions in the 10th Global Forum for Food and Agriculture. This brochure has been prepared by FAO to help guide discussions during the Forum in general and specifically during the four breakout sessions. First an overview of global livestock sector dynamics is presented, followed by four sections covering breakout session topics and discussing challenges, opportunities and possible areas for policy action. Sustainable livestock is then discussed in relation to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Finally, the diversity of global livestock systems is presented as a global map showing the distribution of the main systems. The publication is available [here](#).



### Food Chain Crisis Early Warning Bulletin, no. 26 January- March 2018

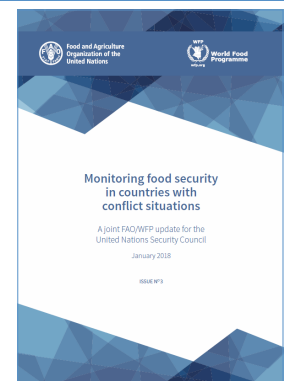


The bulletin integrates and analyzes information on transboundary animal and plant pests and diseases threatening the food chain for the three months ahead, grouped by region and by country. In this edition: Twenty-eight plant and forest pests and diseases (including Fall Armyworm) and animal and aquatic diseases were forecasted by FAO experts for the period January to March 2018. A total of 215 forecasts were conducted in 111 countries. The bulletin is available [here](#).

Map of FCC threats: The updated Food Chain Crisis (FCC) threats map showing the global distribution of FCC threats forecasted for the three-month period January- March 2018 in countries and regions is now available [here](#).

### Monitoring food security in countries with conflict situations A joint FAO/WFP update for the United Nations Security Council

Six months on from the last joint report for the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), this report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) provides an update on the acute food insecurity situation in most of the conflict-affected countries currently being monitored by the UNSC. Food insecurity in conflict-stricken countries continues to deteriorate, meaning humanitarian efforts to provide affected communities with food relief and livelihood support remain extremely critical. Read the whole report [here](#).



ACCESS FAO PUBLICATIONS [HERE](#).

## FAO IN THE USA & CANADA

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has deep roots in North America. The Organization was conceived of during a meeting in Hot Springs, Virginia, United States in 1943 and its first headquarters was located in Washington, DC. In 1945, FAO was formally established as a specialized agency by the newly created United Nations during its very first session, which was held in Quebec City, Canada. FAO's headquarters was permanently moved to Rome, Italy in 1951. The FAO Liaison Office for North America based in Washington, DC continues to strengthen the Organization's partnership with Canada and the United States.

FAO shares with Canada and the United States a vision of how to achieve a world without hunger and poverty. Both member states have been working closely with FAO since its inception more than 70 years ago. Canada and the United States both play critically important leadership roles within FAO and they are also among the Organization's largest financial supporters.

FAO's Liaison Office for North America works to support and implement FAO policies and programs through strategic partnerships with governments and other key stakeholders based in Canada and the United States, including civil society organizations, multilateral institutions, research centers and think tanks, the private sector, philanthropic foundations and the media.



[Read more](#) about the United States and FAO.



[Read more](#) about Canada and FAO.

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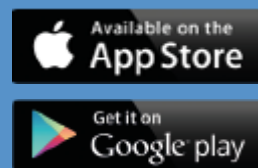
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