

## CFS 41 - World Food Day Special Event

### Innovation in Family Farming: Towards Ensuring Food Security and Nutrition

World Food Day: Thursday 16th October, 2014 14.30 -17.30, FAO Plenary Hall.

#### 1. Context

As part of the 41<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), a Special Event on the afternoon of World Food Day (WFD) with the theme “**Innovation in Family Farming: Towards Ensuring Food Security and Nutrition**” will be held. The event is being organized by the CFS Secretariat in conjunction with the WFD Secretariat and the Steering Committee of the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF).



#### 2. Format

The session will be three hours long with full interpretation in six languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Chinese) and will be webcast. The format will be a multi-stakeholder interactive discussion panel with a professional facilitator. The panel will consist of representatives from:

- The United Nations
- The European Union
- A member nominated by the IYFF Steering Committee
- Civil Society
- Private Sector

To open the session the CFS Chair will make opening remarks and then hand over to the facilitator who will introduce the panelists. Each panelist will be invited to speak for a maximum of five minutes directly addressing the discussion questions below. Due to the limited time available for each initiative, Powerpoint presentations are not expected.

Following the presentations the facilitator will put questions to the panelists and take questions from the floor. Questions will also be accepted by email or Twitter. In order to allow as much interaction as possible, panelists and delegates are asked to keep their interventions relevant, short and to the point.

#### 3. Background

More than 500 million family farms produce most of the world’s food. Their contribution to economic, environmental and social sustainability is key to face the challenges of eradicating rural poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition. To keep playing this key role, family farmers need an environment that allows them to invest in innovation and deal with the financial risks involved, since risk and a lack of risk management tools are often key constraints to innovation. The very nature of family farms, which depend on family members for management and most labour, means that the dynamic process of innovation will involve significant gender and intergenerational considerations. The diversity of family farms in terms of size, access to markets and other characteristics means that policies must be tailored to the specific circumstances facing different types of farming households. Inclusive research systems, advisory services and market institutions are essential. The public sector plays an important role in promoting innovation related to public goods, including nutrition and environmental sustainability as well as reaching women, smallholders and marginalized groups.

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Other documents can be consulted at [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)*



More than 90 percent of farms are family farms. Enabling these farmers to innovate in a sustainable way is central to meeting the future demand for nutritious food, eradicating poverty and preserving natural resources.

#### 4. Discussion Questions

When preparing interventions, the following discussion questions should be considered:

- Why is innovation important for all family farms from commercially-oriented farms to subsistence-farms?
- How can innovation help family farms improve production of nutritious food and ensure poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability?
- How can policies and programmes ensure that the needs of different types of family farms are met?
- How do we ensure inclusiveness in access to finance, technologies and practices to allow family farms to innovate?
- How can non-state actors engage effectively with family farms to support smart innovation for sustainability?



#### 5. Background documents and resources

**The State of Food and Agriculture 2014: Innovation in Family Farming**, which will serve as a background document, provides a comprehensive evidence-based analysis of family farms and their roles in ensuring global food security and nutrition and environmental sustainability. It argues that family farms must innovate both to improve their own livelihoods and to achieve broader societal goals. But innovation requires more than action by farmers alone. The public sector - working closely with the private sector, civil society, research & knowledge institutions and farmers themselves – must create an environment that fosters the capacity of and provides incentives for farmers to innovate in ways that are beneficial to them and are socially desirable. The report provides concrete examples and policy options to enhance innovation in family farming in order to make decisive progress in these areas.

**The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2014**, which monitors hunger trends, will also serve as a background document. An updated version of the Suite of Food Security Indicators that capture the various aspects of food insecurity will be included as well as two thematic sections on the governance of food security and the enabling environment. These characteristics are discussed in more and less successful country cases.

**Ministerial Declaration of Paris 25 Feb 2014** confirming their support for the IYFF.

**CFS Policy Recommendations** on Investing in smallholder agriculture for food security (CFS 40: 2013)

**CFS HLPE Report** on Investing in smallholder agriculture for food security (CFS 40: 2013)

#### 6. Outcomes

The CFS Secretariat will prepare a summary of the event which will be attached to the CFS 41 Final Report.