



## *NOW from NORTH AMERICA*



8 March is World Women's Day - The 2019 campaign theme is #BalanceforBetter

### In this Issue:

- New Developments for Climate Smart Landscapes Globally
- Tackling the Story of Food Waste - Planet Forward Salon
- World Food Day Poem - The Voice of Hunger
- Q&A on Social Protection and Gender
- Partner Corner: Embassy of Denmark
- Upcoming Events
- Tax Corner
- FAO Global Highlights
- Latest Publications

“Biodiversity is critical for safeguarding global food security, underpinning healthy and nutritious diets, improving rural livelihoods, and enhancing the resilience of people and communities”

**José Graziano da Silva,  
FAO Director-General**

Launch of FAO's State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture Report, Rome, 22 February 2019

### FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Dear Readers,

It has been a cold February here in DC. The unexpected “snow day” holidays did bring some relief and cheer but the biting cold from the sinking Arctic air threw many U.S. cities out of gear.

FAO North America kept up with its planned activities for the month. To catch up on and share the most recent developments affecting the implementation and advancement of climate smart landscapes around the world, we co-organized a roundtable with EcoAgriculture Partners, underlining the need to work with farmers to improve the value proposition of ecosystem services. To enhance the understanding of issues on Food Loss and Waste, we joined Planet Forward for a livestreamed discussion focusing on storytelling as a medium of communication on this subject. We also participated in the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR) “Foster Our Future” conference to discuss the role of science and technology in achieving the SDGs and Zero Hunger. In recognition of the inaugural World Pulses Day, our office hosted a Twitter chat to promote continued positive momentum surrounding these healthy, nutritious, protein-rich, nitrogen-fixing legumes.

Over the coming month, we will co-host a roundtable on Geographical Indications with the World Food Law Institute (WFLI), concentrating on the importance of setting up controls and certification for preventing fraud. In mid-March, we will participate in the Presidents United to Solve Hunger (PUSH) and Universities Fighting World Hunger (UFWH) Summits at the University of Southern Maine, Portland and take part in Food Sustainability Business Challenge at Sloan School of Management at MIT.

We introduce two new ideas with this edition: A Q&A style article with Policy Officer Elizabeth Koechlein on FAO's work on Social Protection and a crossword to further develop your interest in Zero Hunger. Your feedback will, as always, encourage us to continue with these and other initiatives.

Thank you for your continued interest in our work. We look forward to hearing from you.

**Vimlendra Sharan**  
Director, FAO Liaison Office for North America

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM NORTH AMERICA

### New Developments for Climate Smart Landscapes Globally



Vimlendra Sharan (FAO), Sara Scherr (EcoAg) and Genevieve Maricle (WWF).

7 February 2019, Washington, DC - FAO North America in partnership with EcoAgriculture Partners organized a roundtable on new developments for climate smart landscapes globally focusing on policy, partnerships and finance.

Amidst mounting challenges posed by climate change, the global community is being asked to do more in terms of mitigation and adaptation with fewer resources. Addressing these challenges is made more difficult by a dearth of public sector funding. While this poses significant risks and constraints to implementing climate smart interventions, it is also leading many to creatively pursue opportunities for collaboration, new forms of funding and investment, and novel mechanisms for partnerships across levels and sectors.

These new developments can be tough to keep track of, which is where February's FAO-EcoAgriculture Partners Landscape Roundtable came in. Panelists for this roundtable included Thomas Hammond, Senior Officer for Land and Water at FAO and Genevieve Maricle, Global Knowledge and Innovation Lead, Climate and Energy Practice of WWF.

Thomas Hammond pointed out the importance of production landscapes – which merge production and adaptation systems. He noted the need to include plans that diversify crops, adapt to changing climates, and create means to manage drought or flooding. He also underlined the need to work with farmers to improve the value proposition of providing ecosystem services. Genevieve Maricle from WWF explained how despite a great deal of international attention and various commitments to sustainable landscapes, there is insufficient momentum to carry out commitments through completion. She suggested that greater leadership and monitoring and evaluation is needed to sustain these efforts.

The roundtable participants concluded that possible future topics for discussion include how to monitor and evaluate nutrition results on a landscape level, and highlighting success stories on global landscape action.

### FFAR's Foster Our Future conference underlines need for innovations for smallholders

5 February 2019, Washington, DC - The Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research held its all day event - Foster Our Future - in Washington, DC to discuss game-changing research technology and innovation, and highlight the importance of continued research investment in sustainable agriculture and food security. Vimlendra Sharan, Director of FAO North America, represented FAO at the event and spoke extensively on the importance of innovative technologies for unleashing the full potential of smallholder agriculture and the importance of understanding the country context in the application of new research findings. He emphasized that developed countries should not press others to accept decisions about science and technology made elsewhere, but rather encourage developing economies to build their own regulatory regimes and home-grown policy infrastructure to support decision making for their people. Amongst other high-level speakers, U.S. Secretary for Agriculture Sonny Perdue also shared his views on the topic.

### Tackling Food Loss and Waste with Storytelling



Vimlendra Sharan (FAO), Meghan Chapple (GW Sustainability) and Chip Bowling (USFRA) discussing food waste with Frank Sesno (GWU).

13 February 2019, Washington, DC - Planet Forward at the George Washington University organized a salon on tackling food loss and waste using storytelling. The discussion, moderated by Planet Forward creator and host Frank Sesno, featured Vimlendra Sharan, Director of FAO North America, Meghan Chapple from George Washington University's Office of Sustainability, and Chip Bowling, Chairman of the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance.

Vimlendra Sharan emphasized that food loss and waste are massive global challenges. FAO estimated that one-third of all food intended for human consumption is lost or wasted. While food waste is a big challenge in industrialized countries, food loss is a bigger challenge in developing countries.

Chip Bowling underlined that farmers aim to reduce their food loss and that crops might be lost on-farm for different reasons. Farmers also tell stories about their families, who eat the same food they sell to consumers, as consumers want increased transparency.

Frank Sesno underlined that good storytelling around food waste requires characters and a conflict (internal/external/forces beyond control) to be solved. Conflicts need a resolution in which the outcome can be to reduce food waste.

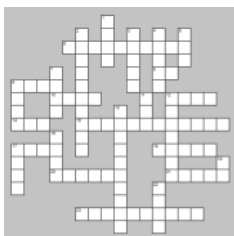
The panel agreed that shame is not effective when it comes to changing behavior, while humor, emotions, and telling a story on food insecurity or sharing a personal anecdote is a compelling way to convey the real challenges of food waste. All across the supply chain, stakeholders must work together to curb food waste and better appreciate what we consume. Read [Planet Forward's summary](#) and [watch a recording](#) of the event.



Vimlendra Sharan (FAO) and Kathleen Merrigan (Arizona State University).

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM NORTH AMERICA

### Test Your Knowledge: Zero Hunger Crossword



How many people in the world are undernourished? Where in Virginia, USA was FAO founded? Test your knowledge about FAO, food security and nutrition in our new crossword. Complete it [here!](#)

### World Food Day Poetry Contest - Honorable Mention

**The Voice of Hunger** by Diane Wilbon Parks, Bowie, Md.

Thoughts tremble and bend so far inward,  
Shoulders become cups,  
neck lines, exaggerated bones;  
 chests turn inwardly to reconcile the pain of hunger.  
Hope becomes a wall, a place to write the wrongs.

Hunger awakens desperate voices  
that echoes from skeletal walls, empty rib cages  
that float above scarcity, hopelessness, disbelief  
back into swollen bellies that do not distort truth.

An infomercial pulls me so far in,  
my thoughts begin to run wildly through the brokenness,  
the examination of thin arms and wilting legs,  
small hands reach inside me, and turn the pages of my eyes  
as I survey the withering and the loss,  
the last hope for nourishment.  
I become a wall – a place to write the wrongs.

A beautiful child speaks to me as if she knows my heart  
Her eyes crouch inside my chest, and bend so far inward,  
I churn into another time-zone,  
She finds me pearled into a place of shame  
a place where my heart tremors into fruit;  
I follow her - inside.

She's my teacher and I, her student.  
I sit inside her risen belly – a look of distortion.  
Hunger has no name. I write my name of her wall.  
I stand in the center of her hands, opened;  
she's waiting to be filled with some assurance; I owe her that.  
She lingers in my thoughts, mouth wide opened, like the doors of her heart and soul;  
today, she represents every child, every woman and man  
with tears that spill onto the shores of our cheeks – they need us.

I am left, contorted as the shapeless spasms  
that live in the restless wake of hunger.  
I am on the other side of a wall, still frozen by the growling echoes  
of starving children, women and men who write their pain, daily on the wall of hope.

Let's ~~write~~ right the wrong. It's time to move beyond the wall.

**Judges' Comments** - *This poem inspires with vivid imagery and with its personal nature. This piece illustrates how poetry – its hover and haunt – can be so powerfully useful in our fight against hunger. "I become a wall – a place to write the wrongs."*

Judges: Carla Christopher and Kim Baker

In 2018, FAO North America in partnership with Poetry X Hunger hosted the first of its kind World Food Day Poetry Contest. [Learn more about the poetry contest.](#)

### Partner Corner:

#### Royal Danish Embassy in Washington, DC

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.



**EMBASSY OF DENMARK**  
Washington D.C.

The Royal Danish Embassy in Washington, DC was established in 1893. The Embassy has a strong focus on food and agriculture and a partnership with FAO came naturally.

Danish Gastronomy is renowned all over the world with Restaurant Noma and the New Nordic Cuisine focusing on local ingredients and sustainability, but Danish food is much more than that.

The Danish food and agriculture sector is a frontrunner when it comes to tackling food waste, reduced use of antibiotics, as well as increasing production while reducing the amount of resources needed in production. Working with these issues has created a strong bond between FAO and the Danish Embassy and the two partners complement each other well.

FAO is contributing its extensive technical expertise, knowledge and research, and the Danish Embassy highlights concrete examples on how to rethink the food industry and clear proof of the effect of these new solutions.

Last year, FAO and the Danish Embassy co-hosted an event on food waste at the Danish Embassy in Washington, DC. This event pushed forward the food waste agenda to policymakers, think tanks and academia.

The Danish Embassy is looking forward to collaborate, co-host and attend many more events with FAO in the future.

Follow the Danish Embassy on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#): @FOOD\_AGRItcdk, @DenmarkinUSA #DenmarkinUSA



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM NORTH AMERICA

### EVENTS IN MARCH

| What   | When                    | Where                                  | Register             |
|--|-------------------------|--|----------------------|
| <b>Protecting Geographical Indications for Food from Fraud</b>   | Wednesday, 6 March 2019 | Cosmos Club, Washington, DC            | By invitation only   |
| <b>FAO North America at Presidents United to Solve Hunger (PUSH) and Universities Fighting World Hunger (UFWH) Summits</b> | 14 - 15 March 2019      | University of Southern Maine, Portland | <a href="#">Link</a> |

### 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.

The Internal Revenue Service is warning taxpayers that tax scams remain serious enough to earn a spot on the agency's 2019 "Dirty Dozen" list – despite a steep drop in tax-related identity theft in recent years.

Tax-related identity theft occurs when someone uses a stolen Social Security number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) to file a fraudulent tax return claiming a refund.

The IRS' Dirty Dozen is compiled annually and outlines a variety of common scams taxpayers may encounter any time during the year.

Taxpayers and tax professionals should:

- Always use security software with firewall and antivirus protections. Make sure security software is turned on and can automatically update. Encrypt sensitive files such as tax records stored on the computer. Use strong passwords.
- Learn to recognize and avoid phishing emails and threatening phone calls and texts from thieves posing as legitimate organizations such as banks, credit card companies and government organizations, including the IRS. Do not click on links or download attachments from unknown or suspicious emails. Invest in good anti-spyware and anti-malware software protection.
- Protect personal data. Don't routinely carry a Social Security card, and make sure tax records are secure. Treat personal information like cash; don't leave it lying around.

For more information, see the [identity theft section on IRS.gov](#).

## FAO GLOBAL HIGHLIGHTS

### The biodiversity that is crucial for our food and agriculture is disappearing by the day



22 February 2019, Rome - The first-ever report of its kind presents mounting and worrying evidence that the biodiversity that underpins our food systems is disappearing – putting the future of our food, livelihoods, health and environment under severe threat. Once lost, warns FAO's [State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture report](#), biodiversity for food and agriculture – i.e. all the species that support our food systems and sustain the people who grow and/or provide our food – cannot be recovered. [Full Story](#)

### Tackling food insecurity at the urban level - turning global commitments into local realities



19 February 2019, New York – FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva today urged cities around the world to redouble efforts to turn global commitments on food security, nutrition and climate change, into local realities. “To implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the political commitment of global leaders is not enough. We also need the full engagement of local authorities,” he said. “After all, it is at the local level where people live, where people eat, use water or dispose their garbage.” [Full Story](#)

### Graziano da Silva speaks at University of California Law School on the right to food and healthy diets



17 February 2019, Los Angeles - The right to food requires a new approach that encompasses a right to healthy diets, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization Director-General José Graziano da Silva has stressed during a lecture at UCLA Law School.

"We need to reposition our food systems from feeding people to nourishing people," Graziano da Silva said during Friday's lecture. "According to our latest numbers, obesity and overweight are growing faster than hunger. It is an epidemic. The right to healthy food should be a key dimension for zero hunger and for the right to food itself," he said. [Full Story](#)

Upcoming at UN Headquarters in New York from 11-22 March 2019

### FAO and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW): social protection, key ingredient for fighting hunger and poverty

The priority themes for this year's edition of CSW are key for FAO: social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. In [this Q&A](#), FAO Policy Officer Elizabeth Koechlein explains the links that exist between the priority themes and eliminating hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition as well as the reasons why increasing women's access to services is key for increased productivity, economic empowerment and more healthy rural communities around the globe. Read the [Q&A on Social Protection here](#).

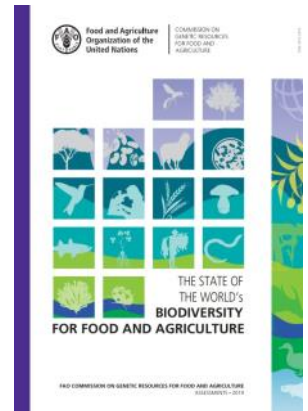


## LATEST PUBLICATIONS

### THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Based on information provided by 91 countries and 27 international organizations, analysis of global literature and datasets, and contributions from over 175 authors and reviewers, The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture assesses biodiversity for food and agriculture and its management worldwide. The first-ever report of its kind presents mounting and worrying evidence that the biodiversity that underpins our food systems is disappearing – putting the future of our food, livelihoods, health and environment under severe threat.

[Press Release](#) | [Digital Report](#)



### THE FUTURE OF FOOD SAFETY

Ready access to safe and nutritious food is a basic human right. Yet every year around the world, over 420,000 people die and some 600 million people – almost one in ten – fall ill after eating contaminated food.

This brochure includes key messages from the First FAO/WHO/AU International Food Safety Conference Addis, 12-13 February, and underlines that Food safety is an integral part of the Sustainable Development Goals. [Brochure](#)

### TOOLKIT ON GENDER-SENSITIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMS

Social protection has helped lift millions of people out of extreme poverty. However, seventy percent of the world population, particularly in rural areas, still lack social protection coverage. FAO works to enhance social protection systems in rural areas which contribute to reducing poverty and ending hunger.

Read [FAO's Social Protection Framework](#) and a [Toolkit on Gender-sensitive Social Protection Programs](#) to support policy-makers and practitioners in their efforts to systematically apply a gender lens to social protection programs.

Read more about [FAO's work on Social Protection](#).



## FAO AND THE UNITED STATES & CANADA

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has deep roots in North America. The Organization was conceptualized in the United States during a meeting in Hot Springs, Virginia 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 FAO and [Canada](#) and the [United States](#).

### CONTACT US

#### FAO Liaison Office for North America

2121 K Street, NW.  
Suite 800B.  
Washington, DC  
20037 USA

+1 (202) 653-2400  
[Faolow@fao.org](mailto:Faolow@fao.org)

[www.fao.org/  
north-america](http://www.fao.org/north-america)

#### Your opinion matters to us!

Do you have suggestions on how to improve our newsletter? Please share them via email to [fao-washington-news@fao.org](mailto:fao-washington-news@fao.org).  
If you would like to [subscribe](#) or [unsubscribe](#), please email the address listed above.

#### Follow FAO



#### Download the FAO App



CA3988EN/1/03.19