FAMILY FARMING
Feeding the world, caring for the earth

2014 WORLD FOOD DAY CELEBRATION REPORT
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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
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©FAO/Roberto Grossman
Family farming is inextricably linked to national and global food security. Both in developing and developed countries, family farming is the predominant form of agriculture in the food production sector. Family farmers carefully manage their lands to sustain remarkably high levels of productivity despite having less access to productive resources such as agricultural inputs and support (most research shows an inverse relationship between land size and productivity).

Family farming preserves traditional food products, while contributing to a balanced diet and safeguarding the world’s agro-biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources.

Family farmers are the custodians of a finely adapted understanding of local ecologies and land capabilities. Through local knowledge, they sustain productivity on often marginal lands, through complex and innovative land management techniques. As a result of the intimate knowledge they have of their land and their ability to sustainably manage diverse landscapes, family farmers are able to improve many ecosystem services.

Family farming represents an opportunity to boost local economies, especially when combined with specific policies aimed at the social protection and well-being of communities.

Family farmers have strong economic links to the rural sector; they contribute strongly to employment, especially in developing countries where agriculture still employs the majority of the labour force. In addition, the incremental income generated by family farming is spent on housing, education, clothing etc. in the local non-farm economy.

### Sustainable rice production systems and family farmers

More than a billion people depend on rice production for their livelihoods and more than 3.5 billion people depend on rice for at least 20 percent of their daily calories. Family farms are the main source of rice production – especially in Asia. In rice production systems, food security and prosperity have long been associated with the availability and diversity of both rice and fish. Traditional rice-fish systems and modern adaptations of these systems produce higher yields of rice along with fish production. In addition, since use of agricultural chemicals is minimized, wild biodiversity can flourish. Rice fields therefore harbour a rich level of biodiversity – from birds to crabs to insects – and are considered to be one of the most successful tropical rainfed systems.
How to strengthen Family Farming?

To realize the full potential of family farmers in eradicating hunger and ensuring food security, an enabling policy environment is necessary. This includes greater recognition of their multiple contributions, as well as an acknowledgment and reflection of these in national dialogues and policies. Fundamental first steps are for countries to articulate their national definitions of family farming, and collect data on the agricultural sector that recognizes and organizes farmers’ contributions systematically.

At the national level, there are a number of factors that are key for a successful development of family farming, such as: agro-ecological conditions and territorial characteristics; access to markets; access to land and natural resources; access to technology and extension services; access to finance; demographic, economic and socio-cultural conditions and availability of specialized education among others. Targeted agricultural, environmental and social policy interventions in support of family farmers are necessary in order to make tangible changes and sustainable improvements.

Family farmers are a large and extremely diverse group; the definition of family farming varies throughout the world and must be flexible, according to cultural traditions and national criteria. Within this diversity, FAO views family farming as:

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**Family Farming: agricultural production on share of land farmed**

In Brazil, family farmers provide on average approximately 40 percent of the production of a selection of major crops working on less than 25 percent of the land.

In the United States, family farmers produce 84 percent of all produce – totalling US$ 230 billion in sales, working on 78 percent of all farmland.

Family farmers in Fiji provide 84 percent of yam, rice, manioc, maize and bean production working on only 47.4 percent of the land.

**FAMILY FARMERS AROUND THE WORLD**

**KEY FACTS AND FIGURES**

- There are over 500 million family farms
- They make up over 98 percent of farming holdings
- They are responsible for at least 56 percent of agricultural production on 56 percent of the land

*Beyond absolute number of holdings, family farmers also work on a significant portion of the world’s farming land.*

*Regional averages are: 85 percent in Asia; 62 percent in Africa; 83 percent in North and Central America, 68 percent in Europe and 18 percent in South America.*

* based on census data from 91 countries
“all family-based agricultural activities which are linked to several areas of rural development. Family farming is a means of organizing agricultural, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture production which is managed and operated by a family and predominantly reliant on family labour, including both women’s and men’s.”

The international year of family farming

The United Nations declared 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with Governments, International Development Agencies, farmers’ organizations and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system, as well as relevant non-governmental organizations, is facilitating its implementation with the following objectives:

1. Support the development of agricultural, environmental and social policies conducive to sustainable family farming.
2. Increase knowledge, communication and public awareness.
3. Attain better understanding of family farming needs, potential and constraints and ensure technical support.
4. Create synergies for sustainability.
Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn
I am pleased to address this 2014 Asia-Pacific World Food Day celebration. The theme of this year’s World Food Day “Family Farming – Feeding the world, caring for the earth,” is an excellent one.

The theme is excellent not only because 2014 has been declared by the United Nations as the International Year of Family Farming, but more importantly, because family farms and smallholder farmers provide the majority of the food we eat each and every day, especially here in Asia. Around the world, it is estimated that there are more than 500 million family-managed farms.

Most people do not take time to think about the food they eat and where it came from. I ask, at least for today, that you stop and reflect on the miracles that bring so many different foods to your plates. And give thanks for all the work that is done by family farmers around the world.

Rice is grown on millions of smallholder and family farms around the countryside, by combining modern science with the benefit of centuries of accumulated wisdom and sometimes backbreaking labor. And then, in the rainy season, it must be transported over rough roads to reach the consumer.

Fruits come from orchards that take years of investment before they bear both fruit and potential profit for the farming family. These family farms undertake these activities despite the many risks that could bring hardship to the grower at any moment.

Fish are caught by fishing families who brave the rough ocean waves – and they do so while it is dark outside, while most people are still asleep.

Much of the meat and eggs that provide protein and micronutrients essential for healthy growth are increasingly purchased in supermarkets, but the animals that yielded the food are often reared on a family-run farm.

The vegetables and spices that make it to market and provide variety and flavour to our favourite dishes are likewise drawn originally from smallholder and family farms.

The appetite for dairy products continues to expand. So much so, that some milk from family farms needs to travel thousands of kilometres from other countries in order to meet the growing demand.
And yet family farmers and smallholders must do even more. As the world grows more crowded, with the population expected to reach more than nine billion by 2050, these farmers will need to produce even more food – 60 percent more than was produced less than a decade ago. Furthermore, they will have to produce all that food without damaging the environment, without using pesticides, without using too much water or fertilizer, and without contamination from dangerous micro-organisms. This is a tremendous task.

They cannot do all this without support. They need improved educational opportunities and health care in rural areas, for both women and men. Only in this way will the world get the smarter farmers that are needed in the future, young farmers who have the knowledge and skills to master new technologies, or who understand marketing, or who have the training in accounting necessary to run a sound business.

Family farmers also need sound rural banks and financial institutions that can provide credit, as agriculture is a very risky business, and they need a guaranteed system of social protection – a safety net – in case things go wrong.

Family farmers need a dense network of rural roads and refrigerated storage that will give them the incentives to produce more for the people who live outside their villages.

And it is important that research scientists work together with farmers to understand the problems they face, so that they, working together, can come up with joint solutions that are feasible and profitable.
Some of today’s youth in rural areas might not be interested in farming as a future. It is not enough to just encourage them to stay on the farms. There must be sufficient investment in rural areas so that some of them will want to stay and take responsibility for feeding more and more people in a sustainable manner. They will want to stay if there are better schools, better health clinics and hospitals, better roads and better irrigation systems.

His Majesty the King of Thailand’s New Theory is a general application of the philosophy of the sufficiency economy in the agricultural sector. It consists of an integrated and sustainable agricultural system that combines His Majesty’s thoughts and efforts in water resource development and conservation, sustainable agriculture and self-reliant community development. The new theory offers a foundation of self-reliance and a way to gradually improve farmers’ standard of living while providing immunity against the fluctuations of the market or unpredictable natural disasters.

I join you all in conveying the solidarity and support of the Thai people to FAO in its efforts towards enabling family farmers worldwide to increase productivity in a sustainable manner in order to help eradicate hunger from the face of our planet.

Thank you.
Hiroyuki Konuma
On behalf of the Director-General of FAO, Josãº Graziano da Silva, and on my own behalf, I have the honour to welcome you all to the World Food Day Regional Observance for Asia and the Pacific 2014 with this year’s theme “Family Farming: Feeding the world, caring for the earth”.

Your Royal Highness, we are especially honoured by your presence to preside over today’s World Food Day celebration. On behalf of all present today, I wish to express our heartfelt gratitude for your continuing support.

We are also privileged by the presence of Esther Penunia, the Special Ambassador of the International Year of Family Farming for Asia and the Pacific, and the Secretary General of the Asian Farmers’ Association (AFA) representing 12 million smallholder family farmers and one of the largest and most active regional alliances of national farmers organizations in Asia, who has kindly agreed to be a keynote speaker and share with us her insights. I wish to thank you, Esther, for your participation despite your busy schedule, and I look forward to hearing your speech.

I also wish to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to each of you for your participation in today’s event.

According to the latest statistics released jointly by FAO, the WFP and IFAD last month, the proportion of undernourished in Asia declined from 24.4 percent in 1990 to 12.9 percent in 2014. This means, for the region as a whole, we are very close to reaching the MDG target of reducing the proportion of undernourished by half by 2015 to 12.2 percent. In fact, the margin is very little, 0.7 percent, and many countries in the region have already reached that goal, showing that success in fighting hunger is indeed possible and within our reach. For example, ASEAN as a whole achieved the MDG hunger target a few years ago. Thailand has achieved not only the MDG hunger target, but it has also achieved the more ambitious World Food Summit goal of reducing the number of undernourished by half.

The impressive progress made in fighting hunger in Asia and the Pacific is an achievement to be proud of, but it must not blind us to the reality that there are still 805 million people in the world who are chronically hungry – that is one out of every nine people on our planet – and that there are huge variations and gaps among subregions and countries. One hundred and sixty-two million children, one out of four children under the age of five in the developing world, are stunted. More than 60 percent of the chronically hungry live in our region.
Hundreds of millions more suffer from “hidden hunger,” or “nutritional hunger” because they do not get the sufficient nutrients they need, including vitamins and minerals, that are essential for proper physical and mental growth. Children who suffer from these deficiencies will not be able to reach their full intellectual potential, permanently depriving us all of the contributions they could make to society.

While there is plenty of progress that still needs to be made, the progress we have made so far should inspire us to completely eradicate hunger. Even if we achieve the MDG hunger target by next year, we would never achieve equitable growth, social stability, peace and sustainable development if we do not eradicate hunger and target the remaining bottom 12 percent who are the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, and suffer from chronic and nutritional hunger. In order to support these efforts, the United Nations has launched the Zero Hunger Challenge, and we are actively working with many national governments and concerned UN Agencies to launch and design appropriate National Zero Hunger Challenge programmes, which focus on five key priority aspirations: first, zero stunted children; second, access to food all year round; third, all food systems are sustainable; fourth, 100% increase in productivity and income for smallholder farmers; and fifth, zero loss or waste of food.

Timor-Leste, one of the youngest nations, was the first country to launch the National Zero Hunger Challenge in January of this year, followed by Myanmar this month, and Nepal and Viet Nam in the next few months.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

What is the role of family farmers in meeting the Zero Hunger Challenge? It is well known that most smallholders are family farmers. But it is perhaps less
well-known that, in Asia and the Pacific, over 80 percent of farmers are smallholder family farmers who produce the majority of the foods we eat every day, and they constitute the largest portion of the poor and undernourished in our society. Thus, the only way to meet the Zero Hunger Challenge is to involve family farmers every step of the way in our endeavour.

While elimination of stunting requires a wide range of integrated policy interventions, family farmers must grow an adequate supply of nutritious food. In order for everyone to have access to food all year round, family farmers must grow ever larger quantities of food at affordable prices, even while they face problems of labor scarcity, shrinking available land and water resources, and have to cope with price volatility. In addition, family farmers have an essential role to play in making sure that our food systems are sustainable and minimize post-harvest losses during the value chain. Family farmers have centuries of indigenous knowledge and a history of survival. This knowledge can certainly be supplemented with modern scientific advances, but we must not forget the farmers themselves — their knowledge must be integrated with that of scientists in a harmonious manner.

But we can’t demand all this from family farmers without providing the support they need to make sure they are more productive and have higher incomes. We need to provide support in building up their skills and educational opportunities that allow them to become more productive and innovative, which in turn will lead to the higher incomes that are necessary for them to share in the gains being made by other segments of society.

These capacity building programs also need to be more responsive to the needs of women farmers, who are playing an increasingly important role in food production and whose perspectives and needs are too often ignored. We need to build more rural roads and markets so that our family farmers have more choices about where to sell their produce, and we need to promote their access to rural credit, social security and safety nets, and empowerment through promoting farmer organizations.

Furthermore, all of this is necessary in order to encourage the younger generation to remain on farms, or even move to farming, and grow food for future generations. These are our collective obligations if we expect family farmers to provide us with the healthy, sustainably produced food that we need to ensure the eradication of hunger and malnutrition, and feed our growing population.

On the occasion of World Food Day, I wish to convey once again my gratitude to you all for your presence this morning. Let’s work together and double our efforts towards eradicating hunger once and for all, while supporting family farmers to feed the world and care for the earth.

Thank you for your kind attention.
I bring warm greetings from my organization, the Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development.

The United Nations has declared this year as the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF), so it is very fitting that this year’s World Food Day carries the same IYFF theme of “feeding the world, caring for the earth.” It is indeed a great honor to be invited to address the celebration of this year’s World Food Day by the Regional Office of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations here in Bangkok. While I consider it as my duty as Special Ambassador for IYFF, this is also a great opportunity, on behalf of our member and partner farmers’ organizations, to dialogue with you about family farming in the region.

Many of the farmers in our region are family farmers. In fact, today there are more than 570 million farms in the world and more than 500 million of these are owned by families. Worldwide, 475 million farms are less than 2 hectares and more than 410 million farms are less than 1 hectare in size. A large majority – around 87 percent – of family farms that are less than two hectares are found in Asia-Pacific. Thus, small-scale farming, of two hectares or less, is the predominant mode of agricultural production in the world, and here in the Asia-Pacific region we have the most number of small-scale family farmers.

The IYFF theme focuses on two important roles of family farmers. One is on food security – “feeding the world”. Family farmers in our region produce 80 percent of the region’s food, in spite of our small landholdings. While the large number of family farmers in the region can be a factor for this, it is also because many of us practice integrated, diversified, multi-cropping farming systems. In a 1-2 hectare farm, a family farmer can grow rice/corn/wheat/millet, different kinds of vegetables, fruits and grasses, and raise livestock such as chicken, yak, cows, pigs, goats, ducks, geese and fish and get animal products such as milk, manure, leather and wool. In the Philippines, we have a song, “Bahay Kubo”, or The Nipa Hut, where it says that even if our hut is small, you can find a variety of vegetables, fruits and spices around it.
Nutritionists now increasingly insist on the need for more diverse agro-ecosystems; and in this area family farmers clearly can contribute more. My first eight years of work in the rural areas consisted of organizing mothers into mothers’ classes and clubs, conducting health and nutrition classes, making kitchen gardens, having feeding and weighing programmes, teaching primary health care, encouraging breastfeeding and forming savings and credit groups. Our work became an inspiration for the Government back then to implement at the national level a community-based primary health care programme.

The second phrase of the IYFF theme highlights the role of family farmers in sustainable production – “caring for the earth”. Climate change is real to us. We know that chemical intensive, mono-cropping and industrial agriculture is one of its leading causes. As we are highly vulnerable and affected by it, there is a tremendous call to shift to farming systems that can adapt to climate change while mitigating it at the same time. Our response to this challenge is to massively promote agro-ecological approaches – sustainable, integrated, diversified, organic, low-input, natural agriculture – as these practices enrich the soil, manage water resources, improve species and genetic diversity, and reduce losses and costs. Family farmers will be in a better position to practice agro-ecology. We live on or near our farms, and strive to preserve the surrounding environment for future generations. Also, we have been developing our own culture of coexistence with
the environment that surrounds us since the beginning of humankind, like the ingenious rice-fish system in Zhejiang province in China and the Banaue rice terraces in Ifugao, Philippines. As you may know, the Philippines was struck by Typhoon Hualian last year, but now, in the affected farming communities we work with, family farmers have started to plant root crops and short-term vegetables on their farms as well as in plastic containers right in their homes. This vertical container gardening has one time water application, with natural fertilizer, garden soil and vermicast inside re-used soft drink bottles.

However, millions of family farmers are poor and hungry. Out of the 800 million hungry people in the world, two-thirds or 533 million are in our region, mainly in South Asia, and many of them rely on agriculture and fisheries for a living.

Why are we poor? Farmers from various consultations cite the following: Many of us do not have secured rights over the lands, the waters, and the forests we live on. This is aggravated by growing large-scale land acquisitions by private companies, sometimes offering quick, hard-to-resist money in exchange for lands, or worse, grabbing our lands. Good seeds are not readily available and affordable, and are beginning to be out of our control. We do not have the capital for our production inputs and tools, and find it hard to get credit and loans. Furthermore, we have high input costs. Sometimes we find it difficult to sell in the market because of bad roads, or to know where the market is because of poor market information, or to command good prices for our produce because it is of lower quality or the market has too much of it already. And now, with globalization, unfair trade rules and large-scale land acquisitions are the norm. In this knowledge and digital age, we are still information poor. Women farmers are particularly disadvantaged as they are affected by socially constructed roles that inhibit participation in decision-making processes. Because of the massive poverty in rural areas, many rural people migrate to cities within and outside their countries; many of the youth are not attracted to farming and only farm as a last resort.

What types of policies might help farmers escape poverty?

The first are policies on agrarian and aquatic reforms, those that secure rights to lands, waters and forests by family farmers. We note, for example, how the distribution of state-owned lands in Viet Nam to farming households has helped Vietnamese farmers produce more crops and earn more in the process. Governments can implement the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests, and take relevant measures to improve cooperation and governance in the management of common property resources. Women’s rights to land and natural resources must be strengthened.

The second are policies that invest in public goods in rural areas – roads, communication, electricity, irrigation, health, water, sanitation, weather forecasting, disaster preparedness and management. Our labor force is our first and foremost asset; we want to have healthy bodies, minds and relationships.
The third are policies that help massively promote agro-ecology. Studies show that integrated and diversified farming can increase yields from 20 to 60 percent. We can promote this by giving the proper incentives – low interest credit, crop and weather insurance, training, local seed banks, extension and research through in-situ farms – where farmers and professional agriculture researchers and extensionists collaborate closely. We have many examples of integrated farming such as rice-duck, rice-free range chicken, or more complicated systems that integrate pig, goat, fish, banana, and vermiculture in a hectare of land.

The fourth are policies that promote farmer-owned, farmer managed agro-enterprises, mainly through cooperatives or joint business ventures, which strengthen family farmers’ participation in the value chain and access to domestic and international markets. We need regulations to ensure fair sharing of both the risks and benefits in contract growing and other supply and marketing arrangements, as well as starter funds, special credit windows, a system of tax incentives, support for storage and post-harvest facilities, and various capacity building activities to strengthen the entrepreneurship spirit and business skills of farmers and build their agro-processing skills. We note the success of our members in Indonesia and Cambodia who have successfully marketed organic rice to Europe and the United States of America respectively. We also note the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy and the New Theory of His Majesty the King of Thailand and are happy to see that farmers in various parts of the country are putting this into practice. Also, as many countries have signed global trade agreements, we ask for macro trade policies that promote food as a basic right, that promote just and fair trade, and that promote the livelihoods of small-scale family farmers, rather than threatening their displacement.

The fifth are policies that promote gender equality. Women farmers comprise at least half of the farming population in Asia, and with the migration of men farmers to the cities – such as what is happening in many South Asian rural areas – do as much as 80 percent of farming work. Yet, women farmers are hardly recognized as farmers. In some countries, they are not given farmers’ identity cards, the technologies are not appropriate and are not responsive to their needs, and their cultures and traditions prevent them from travelling far for trainings and meetings and to speak in public. We note the policy of the Nepalese and Philippine Governments in issuing land certificates in the names of both the husband and the wife.

The sixth are policies that attract youth to agriculture. The Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA) just had a consultation on this topic and we are happy to note that Japan and the Republic of Korea have programmes and incentives to attract youth to agriculture, providing small grants and loans for start-up farm activities, as well as training from “master farmers” from farmers’ organizations.
Last, but definitely not the least, are policies that promote the significant involvement of farmers and their organizations in policy-making processes of governments. We look forward to your support for the Medium Term Cooperation Programme with Farmer Organizations in Asia and the Pacific, Phase 2 (MTCP2), a five year programme supported by IFAD, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the European Union with FAO as technical assistance provider. The MTCP2 aims to strengthen the capacities of farmers’ organizations to deliver services to their members and to engage in effective policy dialogues with governments. Moreover, farmer leaders all over the world issued an Abu Dhabi Declaration in January 2014, and we hope to dialogue with governments on this.

We all know that we will need a doctor once in a while, a lawyer hopefully never or just once, but a farmer we will need three times a day. No farmer, no food. And food is a basic right. Thus, for food security and nutrition, for eradicating hunger and poverty, for a sustainable, ecological and resilient agriculture, investments for and with small-scale family farmers in the region through enabling policies and programmes are definitely an imperative.

We know that many policies and programmes may take more than a year to discuss, debate, enact and implement. Nevertheless, we wish that for this year, each government can enact or implement at least one important policy or programme so that we can really feel that this is our year – and that we are being specially cared for and treated well. We still have two and a half months to lobby for that. We hope you can help us liaise with your country offices on this. But we know that this year will just be a beginning. As we appreciate the role of family farmers we can look more into the construction of a more enabling policy environment that truly invests in family farmers. We hope we can enter into effective policy dialogues. Moreover, we hope you can support us in calling for a declaration of an International Decade of Family Farming and an International Day of Family Farmers to sustain this momentum of policy dialogues that will really bring dignified, decent lives to millions of small-scale family farmers in Asia and the Pacific.

Thank you for your attention.
Model farmers – awards for outstanding achievements
As a boy from a farming family in China’s Zhe Jiang province, Jin Yuepin would stare at the tall peaks surrounding his village and wonder what lay beyond. As a teenager, he got a chance to find out. An uncle living in France sent for him. Because he lacked higher education, Jin began his working life as a dishwasher in a restaurant in Paris. Eventually, he became a chef, and saved enough to open restaurants of his own.

In 2007, Jin revisited his roots, traveling back to his hometown of Quintian. With food hard to transport through the mountains, the farmers there raised fish in the waters of their terraced rice fields, providing them with two sources of nutrition. “They have been farming that way for over a thousand years,” Jin says. But just before Jin arrived, FAO designated the dual method of Zhe Jiang’s farmers as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System, worthy of preservation and promotion. With his entrepreneur’s eye, Jin saw opportunity.

Jin contracted the farmers to supply him with rice and a local strain of koi carp fish they raised, which is well renowned for its tender meat and tasty skin. However, he soon realized that the farmers’ methods had shortcomings and problems. Too many fish were dying after spawning.

Jin took courses at the Zhe Jiang Ocean University and began applying what he learned in his community. He built a Rice-Fish Farming Demonstration site, a breeding center for the carp fish, and did research on the system at his own expense. He invested over a quarter million dollars in developing and improving rice fish farming in Zhe Jiang.

He also organized a rice-fish farmers’ cooperative, registered trademarks for the products and helped both the rice and the fish to win national certification as “green food” in recognition of its natural qualities and environmental value.

Thanks to Jin’s efforts, Quintian’s farmers are earning more and eating better, while preserving their traditions and their environment. And while he made far more money in restaurants than he has yet to make in rice-fish farming, Jin says profits are not always the most important thing. “We are all much happier now.” And that is priceless.
The evolution of Shailaja Popatlal Navander as a farmer in many ways mirrors the evolution of farming in India and in the region. She said, “If my family had not changed the way we farm, we would be in deep debt.”

But change they did, thanks to the great value that Shailaja and her husband Popatlal placed on education. When they married and began farming on seven-and-a-half hectares in Umbri Balapur village in Maharashtra, they followed the trend of that time. In other words, they focused on one cash crop: wheat. And, they did well.

But as time went by, monocropping began robbing the soil of its essential nutrients. Chemical fertilizers became less and less effective. Yields were declining and debts were rising.

Other farmers in their village were also suffering. But Shailaja took the initiative. She approached agricultural extension workers in her area and asked for help. They began teaching her how to grow a variety of crops organically and with good environmental practices.

As a girl, Shailaja had wanted to be an engineer, but educational opportunities for women were limited at the time. Shailaja’s husband, Popatlal, however, supported her efforts to acquire knowledge.

They learned to use natural compost and pesticides, level their land and build irrigation systems. They now grow a variety of grains, sugarcane, flowers, fruits and vegetables. Their soil is once again rich and fertile. “Birds and butterflies visit my farm again,” she says.

Shailaja is changing farming in her community through its women. She organized thrift groups for women, and teaches them about organic farming methods. She has been appointed to the State Farmers Advisory Committee for Maharashtra.

Her farm has done so well that she and her husband were able to send their four children to university. Her son has chosen to work on the family farm, and her three daughters are now engineers.

She says, “My dream is that women, especially women in farming families, will get the respect and opportunities they deserve.” Without a doubt, this woman farmer from Maharashtra is deeply deserving of everyone’s respect.
When U Myo Tha was a boy, there were limited opportunities in Myanmar. The only school in his part of Mandalay Division was the Buddhist temple school. But his farmer parents stressed that if he wanted to be successful, he would need an education. That was, perhaps, his most important lesson of all. At the age of 18, U Myo Tha left home and founded his own farm. He started with just slightly more than one hectare, one cow and one tractor. But he realized he could earn more by milling rice from other farmers and selling it on to markets. With the profits from milling, he bought more farmland, more cows and more equipment.

Myanmar was a relatively isolated country at the time. So when agricultural extension workers visited his village, U Myo Tha didn’t hesitate to seek them out and learn from them. "The other farmers were conservative and afraid to try new ideas," he said. "But I followed every step what the extension workers taught me."

He learned how to level his fields and build better irrigation systems. His productivity began to increase. And when, a Chinese agricultural expert visited, U Myo Tha asked him for hybrid rice seeds. Before long, his harvests increased from 80 baskets of rice per hectare to more than 200 baskets. He said, "I thought that was impossible."

He also applied another key lesson from his parents: crop rotation. By growing beans and pulses, in addition to rice, he was able to grow rice twice a year, and then three times a year. In the meanwhile, his neighbors were struggling to produce one harvest at best.

As Myanmar began more open, chemical fertilizers and pesticides became available. U Myo Tha experimented with them, but for the most part he has abandoned them. He saw that the fish in his irrigation canals were dying, and so he realized that the chemicals could also harm consumers and the environment.

Today, U Myo Tha has two farms of over 100 hectares each. He employs about 50 workers. But he’s most proud of teaching other farmers what he has learnt. "I understand them, and I want to see them do better." His own goal is to start exporting his rice.
He takes seriously President U Thein Sein’s words that agriculture is important for the future of Myanmar. But U Myo Tha says the President is only half right. With populations relentlessly growing everywhere, agriculture isn’t just important for Myanmar. He says, “Agriculture is important for the world.”
One of the greatest challenges facing farming today is attracting young people to become farmers. Unless young people take up this challenge, farming will have little or no future.

For Ruth Hone, a 24-year-old woman from New Zealand, the future is all about farming. Ruth never wanted to do anything else except dairy farming. Her love for the rugged outdoor life, her affection for animals and her family’s heritage ensured that. Born in England, but raised near the town of Rotorua, Ruth began tending the nearly 600 cows on her parents’ dairy farm when she was still a young child. She never had to be coaxed or pushed into working the land.

Ruth says, “To be a good dairy farmer, you have to be passionate about it.” And Ruth has no shortage of passion. She recently became the first woman to win the New Zealand Dairy Trainee of the Year, and in addition was elected chairperson of the Tihoi Western Bays Young Farmers Club. She has also served as an officer in half a dozen other young farmers’ associations.

You see, Ruth is not just a young farmer, she is a young leader.

Ruth is the first New Zealander to be named a Model Farmer by FAO. New Zealand is one of the world’s largest producers of dairy products, and its agricultural exports feed an estimated 20 million people worldwide.

As a young leader, Ruth is concerned about the future – but not just about dairy farming, but also about the future of our planet. That’s why she stays up-to-date on the latest methods to reduce the pollution and the carbon footprint of dairy farming.

Ruth says, “We have to find new and better ways to balance our need for food with our need to protect the environment.”

That’s an approach she maintains as she diligently saves to buy her own dairy farm in the coming years. With her passion and dedication, she will undoubtedly achieve that goal. We can easily say that amongst young farmers, Ruth is the cream of the crop.
As a young man in Toong Na village in Western Thailand, Khun Patphong Mongkholkanchanakhon wanted to be a soldier. He liked the idea of serving his country. But rather than leave his young wife, Naiyana, in 1995 they pooled their resources, bought some land and continued their families’ tradition of farming maize and chili.

Public service still appealed to Patphong, and he was eventually elected as the head of his township. He soon realized that many of the farmers in his area had the same problems that he was beginning to face on his own farm.

Anyone who has driven through Kanchanaburi province could be forgiven for thinking he was in Kansas. Fields of maize stretch out as far as the eye can see. But the conventional emphasis on growing mainly one crop was depleting the soil and their yields were falling. To compensate, farmers relied ever more heavily on chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Patphong said, “I saw many farmers become ill from the chemicals, and even I developed skin rashes.”

But two factors helped turn things around. First, he learned about the Sufficiency Philosophy advocated by Thailand’s King Bhumibol Adulyadej. This philosophy advises farmers to work in harmony with the environment by diversifying crops, breeding fish and poultry, and avoiding chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Second, as a township official, he was offered training by several government agencies in alternative and better farming methods. Khun Patphong took advantage of every opportunity to study, and then applied what he learned on his farm.

It wasn’t easy. Growing crops organically took longer and yields initially were lower. But he persevered. Today, he is one of the most successful farmers in Kanchanaburi. He grows everything from rice to mangos and vegetables, while raising fish, pigs, chickens and ducks. He produces biogas from pig waste to power his home and farm. He is also involved in conservation efforts to protect elephants in his area.

Most importantly, he teaches other farmers what he has learned. And with the knowledge he shares, their outputs have increased and pollution levels have been reduced.
Although he never realized his ambition of becoming a soldier, Patphong has found a way to serve his community, his country and our planet.
The following is a list of selected guests who attended the regional observance of the 34th World Food Day at the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific on 15 October 2014.

**Guest of Honour**
Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn

**Guest speaker**
Maria Estrella Penunia Banzuela, Secretary General, Asian Farmers’ Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), and FAO Special Ambassador of the International Year of Family Farming in Asia and the Pacific

**Model farmers**
Jin Yuepin, for success as a rice-fish farmer, People’s Republic of China
Shailaja Popatlal Navandar, for success in organic farming, Republic of India
U Myo Thant, for success in hybrid rice production, Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ruth Yvette Hone, for success as a dairy farmer, New Zealand
Patphong Mongkholkhanakhanakhun, for success in integrated farming, the Kingdom of Thailand

**Office of the Privy Councillors**
H.E. Ampol Senanarong, Privy Councillor (for the Royal Agricultural Project)

**Embassies**
Bangladesh  Muhammad Eteshamul Hoque, Chargé d’Affaires and Minister (Consular)
Brazil  H.E. Gilberto Fonseca Guimaraes de Moura, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Cambodia  H.E. Eat Sophea, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
India  Anuj Gupta, Second Secretary
Indonesia  Arif Suyoko, Minister Counsellor (Economy)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name and Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Toru Adachi, First Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yoshiko Onami, Political Assistant</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chanyapach Unhajata, Political Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
<td>H.E. Ly Bounkham, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary</td>
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<td>Thipphavong Vongphosy, Second Secretary</td>
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<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Mohamad Nizan Mohammad, Minister, Deputy Chief of Mission and Permanent</td>
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<td>Representative to ESCAP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>Tun Tun Aung, Second Secretary (International Organization Affairs)</td>
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<td>Aye Aye Aung, Second Secretary (Protocol Section)</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>Shannon Austin, First Secretary and Deputy Head of Mission</td>
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<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Ata ul Munim Shahid, Counsellor and Deputy Chief of Mission and Deputy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Permanent Representative to UNESCAP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Edgar Barrairo Badajos, Minister, Consul General and Deputy Permanent</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Representative to UNESCAP</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ana B. Abejuela, Attaché (Special Agriculture Representative)</td>
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<td>Russian Federation</td>
<td>H.E. Kirill Barsky, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and</td>
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<td>Permanent Representative to ESCAP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>H.E. General Suwanda H. Shantha Kottegoda, Ambassador Extraordinary and</td>
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<td>Plenipotentiary</td>
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<td>Mohamed Lafeer Abdul Latiff, Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission and Deputy</td>
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<td>Permanent Representative to UNESCAP</td>
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<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Simon Kuersener, Third Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>Francisco Dionisio Fernandes, Counsellor and Chargé d’Affaires</td>
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<tr>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td>Carrie Thompson, Deputy Mission Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Viet Nam</td>
<td>H.E. Nguyen Tat Thanh, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary</td>
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Royal Thai Government

Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives

H.E. Petipong Pungbun Na Ayudhya, Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives
Wimol Jantrarotai, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Office of Permanent Secretary
Nirundorn Aungtragoolsuk, Chief of Inspector General, Office of Permanent Secretary
Weena Pongpattananon, Director-General, Department of Sericulture
Saridiporn Chuprayoon, Deputy Director-General, Department of Sericulture
Siriporn Boonchoo, Director of Office of Sericulture Conservation and Standard Conformity Assessment, Department of Sericulture
Pornpinee Boonbundal, Senior Subject Matter Specialist, Department of Sericulture
Buddhachard Leepayakhun, Senior Subject Matter Specialist, Department of Sericulture
Wiroje Kaewruang, Expert of Mulberry and Silk Products, Department of Sericulture
Parinya Pangsombat, Deputy Director-General, Cooperative Promotion Department
Apirak Rakkua, Cooperative Technician, Cooperative Promotion Department
Warunee Wuttisarn, Expert on Status of Cooperative Financial, Department of Cooperative Auditing
Surajit Intarachit, Deputy Director-General, Department of Fisheries
Malinee Smithritthee, Director, Fisheries Foreign Affairs Division, Department of Fisheries
Chuanpid Chantarawarathit, Chief, International Cooperation Group, Fisheries Foreign Affairs Division, Department of Fisheries
Anant Almart, Analyst, Fisheries Foreign Affairs Division, Department of Fisheries
Sontipan Pasugdee, Inland Fish Taxonomy Expert, Inland fisheries Research and Development Bureau, Department of Fisheries
Parichart Sriwipat, Deputy Director-General, Rice Department
Ladda Viriyangkun, Expert on Rice Inspection and Certification, Rice Department
Natenarit Padungsil, Expert on Rice Inspection and Certification, Rice Department
Somsot Dumnoenngam, Director, Office of Research and Development for Land and Management, Land Development Department
Pirach Pongwichian, Agricultural Research Officer, Senior Professional Level, Land Development Department
Somsak Sukchan, Senior Soil Surveyor, Land Development Department
Kreeyaporn Devahastin, Chief of International Cooperation Section, Land Development Department
Ratchanok Sangpenchan, Policy and Plan Analyst, Land Development Department
Chaveewan Pattanapong, Policy and Plan Analyst, International Cooperation Section, Land Development Department
Sunisa Boonyapatipark, Director, Foreign Relation Sub-Division, Department of Agricultural Extension
Amornthip Piromboon, Director, Agricultural Extension Media Development Group, Department of Agricultural Extension
Arpaphan Pattanapant, Director, International Cooperation Sub-Bureau, Agricultural Land Reform Office
Napaporn Wongkanit, Foreign Relations Officer, International Cooperation Sub-Bureau, Agricultural Land Reform Office
Prapatsara Khorattana, Foreign Relations Officer, Practitioner Level, Agricultural Land Reform Office
Uaithai Chaiyutto, Director, Bureau of Livestock Extension and Development, Department of Livestock Development
Thanee Pak-Uthai, Senior Economist, Bureau of Livestock Extension and Development, Department of Livestock Development
Margaret C. Yoovatna, Senior Policy and Plan Specialist, Department of Agriculture
Preyanooch Naka, Horticulture Research Institute, Department of Agriculture
Chawee Lomlek, Policy and Plan Specialist, Department of Agriculture
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Siriwat Suwannasri, Economist, Office of Agricultural Economics
Thitipong Srisombut, Economist, Office of Agricultural Economics
Kanchadin Srapratoom, Chief of Loan Project, Royal Irrigation Department
Sineenart Khovitoonkij, Acting Assistant Secretary General, National FAO Committee of Thailand
Siriporn Thanarachataphoom, Senior Policy and Plan Analyst, Bureau of Foreign Agricultural Affairs
Sumalee Wittanayun, Senior Administration Officer, Bureau of Foreign Agricultural Affairs
Yupadee Hemarat, Foreign Relations Officer, Bureau of Foreign Agricultural Affairs
Krit Hansaward, Policy and Plan Analyst, Bureau of Foreign Agricultural Affairs
Bhusanisa Chotthanatiradetch, Policy and Plan Analyst, Bureau of Foreign Agricultural Affairs
Manita Mukayapanit, Policy and Plan Analyst, Bureau of Foreign Agricultural Affairs
Pavich Kesavawong, Senior Environmentalist, Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives
Chongkolnee Chamchang, Senior Fisheries Biologist, Office of Permanent Secretary
Saowamol Puteeka, Junior Fisheries Biologist, Office of Permanent Secretary
Pote Chumsri, Secretary-General, Farmer’s Federations Association for Development Thailand
Narongrit Wongsuwan, Assistant Director, Dairy Farming Promotion Organization of Thailand
Oranooj Jirawattananuuk, Chief of Policy and Planning Department, Dairy Farming Promotion Organization of Thailand
Chokchai Chaimongkol, Chief Promotion and Dairy Farming, Dairy Farming Promotion Organization of Thailand
Thunyalucks Charoenpru, Deputy Director (Administration), Rubber Estate Organization

**Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment**
Sunan Arunnopparat, Vice Minister for Natural Resources and Environment
Korapat Dumrongthai, Inspector General, National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department
Somchai Masatian, Deputy Director General, Royal Forest Department
Nawarat Kairapanond, Director of National Resources and Environmental Management, Coordination Division
Maitree Anukulreongkitt, Analyst, Royal Forest Department
Wirawut Buaroy, Forestry Technical Officer, Royal Forest Department

**Other Ministries**
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Jiraporn Unkasem, Development Cooperation Officer, International Organisations Partnership Branch, Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Chonlatee Yangtrong, Director, Bureau of Local Administrative Development, Ministry of Interior
Somsak Suwansujaripit, Chief of Inspector for Interior, Ministry of Interior
Saravoot Suwannathab, Policy and Plan Analyst, Ministry of Interior
Khachit Chatchawanit, Deputy Director General Health Department, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration
Wanporn Srilert, Sanitation Technical Officer, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration
Pornsuda Phanukarn, Sanitation Technical Officer, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration
Arkapong Srisubat, Chief, Foreign Affairs Coordination Group, Department of Social Development and Welfare, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
Alisara Krungchit, Social Worker, Department of Social Development and Welfare, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security

Universities and research institutions
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Sakarindr Bhumiratana, President, King Mongkut’s University of Technology Thonburi
Boonsri Prommapun, Vice President for University Assets, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University
Sukaroon Wongtim, Assistant President for University Assets, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University
Sakda Intravichai, Assistant to the President for Academic Affairs, Kasetsart University
Kampanad Bhaktikul, Dean, Faculty of Environment & Resources Studies, Mahidol University
Patcharee Tungtrakul, Director, Institute of Food Research and Product Development, Kasetsart University
Thongchai Suwonsichon, Director of Kasetsart University Research and Development Institute, Kasetsart University
Visith Chavasit, Director, Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University
Rosarin Smitabhindu, The Royal Chitralada Project

Other organizations, non-governmental organizations and associations
Sumet Tantivejakul, Secretary-General, Chaipattana Foundation
Cherd sak Virapat, Director General, Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia And Pacific
Malee Suwana-adth, Secretary-General, SVITA Foundation
Chamnong Siriwongyotha, Secretary General, Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association
Tavatchai Trai tongyoo, Secretary-General, Population and Community Development Association
ML Jirapan Taweewong, Deputy Secretary-General, Chaipattana Foundation
Tint Lwin Thaung, Executive Director, Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific
U-Sarat Bunnag, Senior Division Director Marketing and Cluster Promotion Division, Thailand Science Park, National Science and Technology Development Agency
Anun Rungporntavewat, Special Executive, Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research
Wolfgang Frank, Senior Adviser, The Population and Community Development Association
Anshuman Saikia, Regional Programme Support Coordinator, Asia, International Union for Conservation of Nature
Suthiporn Chirapanda, Senior FAO Consultant

**UN and affiliated agencies**
ADB
Thamana Lekprichakul, Program Coordinator

ILO
Wolfgang Schiefer, Head, Regional Unit for Partnership

IOM CO (UNCT Member)
Duc Tran, Senior Resource Management Officer

IOM/RO
Andrew R. Bruce, Regional Director

UNESCAP
Shun-ichi Murata, Deputy Executive Secretary
Francesca Ross, Information Officer, Strategic Communications and Advocacy Section

WFP
David Kaatrud, Regional Director
Paricht Buranatanit, Donor Relations Officer

**Former FAO staff**
Narong Chomchalow
Praphas Weerapat
ANNEX 2

Media coverage

2014 WORLD FOOD DAY CELEBRATION REPORT

"Those Who Feed Asia Constitute Most of Region’s Hungry and Poor"

Report News Today

HOME BUSINESS ENTERTAINMENT FINANCE FOOTBALL SPORTS TECHNOLOGY

Arched News (15/10/2014) Smallholder, Family Farmers Focus Of World Food Day In Asia, Pacific
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Organizing secretariat  
2014 WORLD FOOD DAY CELEBRATION REPORT

Steering committee

Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative  
(Chairperson)  
Vili A. Fuavao, Deputy Regional Representative  
Adnan Quereshi, Senior Administrative Officer  
David Dawe, Senior Economist  
Tarina Ayazi, Meetings and Publications Officer  
Allan Dow, Communications Officer (Secretary)

Organizing committees

Invitations, reception and protocol  
Vili A. Fuavao (Chairperson)  
Allan Dow  
Tarina Ayazi  
Kanokporn Chansomritkul  
Supajit Tienpati  
Alisa Wacharasetkul (Master of Ceremony)  
Robert Lee (Citations of farmers)

Monpilai Youyen  
Ornusa Petchkul

Nawarat Chalermpao  
Kallya Meechantra  
Yupaporn Simuang-ngam  
Thapanee Tayanuwattana  
Thumrongsakd Phonbumrung  
Chanrit Uawongkun  
Jhongsathit Aungvitayatorn  
Sarinna Sunkphayung

Chutarat Damrongsrisakul  
Yowanat Voratira  
Thansita Thanaphatrujira  
Waraporn Onnom  
Jutamas Tritaruyanon  
Natthawit Wongkheereee  
ChokOonKit, Pawadee

Thanomkwan Rachtachart  
Bongkoch Prasanakarn  
Chatichai Intachai  
Nataporn Theppitak  
Hatairat Thongprapai  
SuArjar Lewchalermvongs  
Kanchariya Theerakaew
Liaison with model farmers
Allan Dow (Chairperson)
China: Liao Chongguang
India: Shashi Sareen
Myanmar: Roland Kassab
New Zealand: Allan Nicholls
Thailand: Chatchai Intachai

Liaison with Thai government
Vili A. Fuavao (Chairperson)
Nawarat Chalermpao
Parijat Chuntaketta
Surawishaya Paralokanon

Logistics and catering
Adnan Quereshi (Chairperson)
Kevin McKeen
Phavinee Tithipan
Kasarin Sirisoondhornpaibul
Suthep Charoenbutra
Pensri Yujang
Jaruwan Singhapanthu
Prasert Huatsawat

Media, publications and photographs
Allan Dow (Chairperson)
Kanokporn Chansomritkul
Poranee Ngarmtab
Robert Horn (journalist)
Somchai Amnuaywerot
(photographer)
Pornchai Probagsuwanwong
(photographer)
Rachanee Wisawajarn
(photographer)
• WFD issues paper
• Address by guest of honour
• Keynote address by the guest speaker
• Welcome and introductory statement by the ADG/RR
• Citations of outstanding farmers
• FAO Statistical Yearbook 2014 – Asia and the Pacific, Food and Agriculture
• The Zero Hunger Challenge
• FAO cooperation and activities with ASEAN and its member countries
• State of Food Insecurity in the World IN BRIEF – 2014
• Role of family farming in the 21st century: Achieving the Zero Hunger Challenge by 2025 – Chennai Declaration
• RAP publications catalogue 2012–13
• “Food is Life” – Save Food brochure