



Breaking silos, aligning for impact

How countries use dietary guidelines to coordinate agrifood systems' actions

23 October 2025 | 8:30–9:45 CEST | FAO HQ (Ethiopia Room) & Online

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Most countries develop dietary guidelines to help consumers make informed food choices that support healthy eating. Increasingly, however, these guidelines are recognized as powerful instruments not only for promoting healthy diets but also for informing and aligning policies across sectors to advance the transition toward more sustainable agrifood systems. Yet, their full potential to serve multiple objectives remains largely untapped.

Today, several countries are beginning to harness this broader potential, using their dietary guidelines to guide actions across sectors beyond health and education. A systems approach connects these actions, recognizing interdependencies to achieve lasting, sustainable change, it replaces fragmented efforts with coordinated action. Building on this, the session will explore FAO's systems thinking and innovative approaches by countries for developing and implementing dietary guidelines that realize their full potential.

OBJECTIVES

1. Introduce FAO's systems thinking and two innovative approaches for developing and implementing dietary guidelines that incorporate agrifood systems considerations.
2. Showcase country experiences in using dietary guidelines to bridge sectors and promote policy coherence across and within systems in support of healthy diets.
3. Present country examples demonstrating how dietary guidelines can inform and optimize agricultural policies to make healthy diets more affordable.

OPENING REMARKS

- **Lynnette Neufeld,**
Director, Food and Nutrition Division, FAO

SPEAKERS

- **Corinna Hawkes**
Director, Agrifood Systems and Food Safety Division, FAO
- **Ana Islas Ramos**
Nutrition Officer, Food and Nutrition Division, FAO
- **Maria Laura Louzada**
University of São Paulo, Brazil
- **Marco Sanchez Cantillo**
Deputy Director, Agrifood Economics and Policy Division, FAO

PANELISTS

- **Kelly Alves**
General Coordinator of Food and Nutrition, Ministry of Health, Brazil
- **Alemtsehay Sergaw**
Head of Food and Nutrition Office, Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopia
- **Paulina Addy**
Acting Director, Directorate of Women in Agriculture, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Ghana

MODERATOR

- **Fatima Hachem**
Senior Nutritionist, Food and Nutrition Division, FAO

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BACKGROUND

Efforts by countries to make agrifood systems support the achievement of healthy diets often face a persistent challenge: fragmentation. Sectoral policies in areas like agriculture, health, environment, education, and trade are frequently formulated in isolation, without a cohesive vision for achieving healthy diets for all through sustainable agrifood systems

This lack of coordination and common purpose diminishes the impact of well-intentioned programmes, weakens accountability, and slows progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those related to food security, nutrition, and sustainable consumption and production.

This side event will explore how countries are tackling the challenge of fragmented agrifood policies by using dietary guidelines as a catalyst for coordinated action across agrifood systems and how dietary guidelines can be used to optimize agricultural policies and enhance the affordability of healthy diets.

Participants will discover a new generation of dietary guidelines. To unleash the full potential of dietary guidelines, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has developed a new methodology: the food systems-based dietary guidelines (FSBDGs) methodology—a practical, innovative approach that helps countries translate evidence-informed dietary recommendations into aligned, multisectoral actions.

Ghana and **Ethiopia** will share how they applied the FSBDGs methodology to develop agrifood systems-wide action plans for implementing their national dietary guidelines. In particular, **Ghana** will describe how, through extensive dialogue with multiple stakeholders, they developed agrifood system recommendations for healthy diets. **Ethiopia** will illustrate how healthy dietary patterns, aligned with dietary guidelines, are being used to inform and optimize food and agriculture policies for improving the affordability of healthy diets—underscoring the central role of healthy diets in national policymaking.

The event will also showcase **Brazil's** approach to developing dietary guidelines which is based on a novel system for classifying foods. **Brazil** will also discuss how its guidelines have served as a foundation for intersectoral food and nutrition policies, while promoting multiple elements of sustainability—such as biodiversity, traditional food cultures, and social equity.

Together, these country experiences and perspectives will illustrate the potential of dietary guidelines to play a leading role in coordinating and aligning agrifood systems policies and actions to promote healthy diets.

KEY REASONS TO JOIN US

This event will engage participants in reflecting on how dietary guidelines can be used as a policy tool to move from fragmented approaches to more coordinated agrifood systems actions. Through the experiences of Ghana, Ethiopia, and Brazil, participants will learn how countries are translating evidence and dialogue into concrete recommendations, aligning policies, and promoting collaboration across sectors.

Moderated by FAO, the discussion will bring together representatives from governments and research institutions to share experiences and perspectives on the challenges and opportunities of using innovative approaches to develop and implement a new generation of dietary guidelines.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- [Access the FAO dietary guidelines website](#)
- [Learn more through the Food Systems-Based Dietary Guidelines Overview](#)
- [Read the Introduction to the Manual: Guidance on Developing and Implementing Food Systems-Based Dietary Guidelines](#)
- [Explore the Transforming food and agriculture through a systems approach](#)
- [Read Ghana: Food-Based Dietary Guidelines](#)
- [Read Ethiopia: Food-Based Dietary Guidelines–2022](#)
- [Read the Dietary Guidelines for the Brazilian population](#)