

Statement delivered by
His Excellency Kok Thai LIM
Chief executive Officer of the Singapore Food Agency
on the occasion of the 43rd Session of the FAO Conference (1-7 July 2023)
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Chairperson, distinguished delegates. It is an honor to be here with you to discuss and exchange ideas on food and agriculture. This year marks the 10th year since Singapore became a Member of the FAO. Singapore is appreciative of FAO's exceptional work and continued efforts to enable safe food for all. The global food crisis has been exacerbated by events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, extreme weather, geopolitical conflicts, and supply chain disruptions among others.

These events have affected the global supply of food and has had a disproportionate effect on countries, particularly small island states like Singapore, which are highly reliant on food imports. This crisis underscored the importance of food resilience as well as building and sustaining links with trading partners to ensure continued and stable access to food.

The challenge of feeding our populations in a manner that is efficient and sustainable is one we all face. Our solutions must be climate resilient to withstand the impacts of climate change. As such, we need to transform our food systems, leveraging on technology to help us grow more with less resources and in a more sustainable and resilient manner.

This will be crucial in an increasingly resource-constrained world. As a city-state with limited natural and human resources, Singapore has turned to various technology-driven solutions. This can help shift farming to become more land and labor efficient. For example, indoor vertical farms can significantly increase use while using less land, as well as minimize the impact of extreme weather given its climate control environment.

At the same time, technologies such as hydroponics and recirculating aquaculture system use significantly less water than traditional farming methods, which can help us address the water challenge facing the world. A potential game changer on the horizon is novel food such as culture meat. Singapore has ventured into novel foods such as alternative protein and culture meat, which can help meet our food needs. Singapore was the first country to approve for sale culture meat in 2020 and such Novel foods leverage on labor technology and can be produced with comparatively less land, water and labor than traditional methods.

However, countries that want to turn to social food solutions will need to have a good food safety system in place. Our experience in developing the novel food, food safety framework and guidelines we are very happy to share. Coupled with close partnership among regulators and industries this facilitates the development of food that can potentially elevate the food crisis. As a Member of the FAO Singapore will continue to support this organization in achieving its goals. We are also eager to exchange views and lessons learned with fellow Members in building resilient food supply chains, food safety systems, as well as urban food systems and solutions to ensure safe food for all. I thank you.