

How innovation can help strengthen the sustainability of food systems and prevent future pandemics

Programme

Time	Proposed Content	Speakers	Related Key Messages and emphasis of the discussion
11.00 – 11.03	Introduction	Conny	To introduce the session objectives and process, setting the scene
11.03 – 11.07	Welcome Statement German Minister of Food and Agriculture	Julia Kloeckner	Opening and outlining key issues of the panel discussion
11.07- 11.09	Introduction of the Panellists		Video
11.09 – 11.25	First Round – Key aspects of innovation and food security during pandemic		
	FAO	FAO Director General	Boost to innovation in agriculture
	Example from South Africa	Minister Didiza	South Africa had a strong increase of exports how come
	Example from Uzbekistan	Minister Khodjaev	Innovation for Pandemic
	Open dialogue panel members		
11.25 – 11.40	Second Round - Innovation and post COVID recover - One Health		
	Example from Switzerland	Director of the Federal Office for Agriculture, Hofer	Innovation and Animal Traceability
	Example from Syngenta	CEO Fyrwald	Role of the private sector
	Example from South Africa	Minister Didiza	One Health
	FAO	FAO Director General	Digital Technology and innovation – transfer to 3 rd round
11.40 – 11.55	Third Round - Digital Technology Innovation		
	Example from Uzbekistan	Minister Khodjaev	Digital Technology
	Example Switzerland	Director of the Federal Office for Agriculture, Hofer	Research and Digitalization
	Example from Syngenta	CEO Frywald	Digitalization for supporting agriculture development
11.55 – 11.58	Wrap – up - Key issues to be addressed regarding innovation and pandemic		
	FAO	FAO Director General	Innovative Solutions
11.58 – 12.00	Closing	Conny	

I. Second Round: Innovation and post COVID recovery – sustainable food systems

Question 1 :

Some steps may seem incremental, but in fact they are big stepping stones: Take the example of Switzerland with its Animal Tracing Database – with the double function of – as it claims: tracing animals in order to ensure food security and at the same time prevent epi-zooties.

A public private partnership – with the Federal Office for Agriculture engaging identitas AG, a private company to run the system. At the basis of the system is an ear tag for each animal.

Christian Hofer, is the Director of the Federal Office for Agriculture of the Swiss Confederation

Christian - What ultimate purpose or goals does your system serve – and can it be rolled out to other countries?

Thank you for the question

First, I would like to thank FAO for the invitation and the opportunity offered to Switzerland to contribute to this Panel.

Indeed as you mention **our Animal Tracing Database was set up to ensure the traceability of all farm animals to ensure food safety and prevent the spreading of animal diseases.**

It is an important stepstone of our national One Health System Approach to respond to global challenge such as the COVID pandemic

Individual cattle, sheep, goats and horses are identified by their unique ear tag or chip number.

Animal keepers are obliged to report the birth, all movements, including imports and exports as well as death or slaughtering of their animals online.

A notable recent development is the increasing popularity of using the information in the animal tracing database in third party systems.

In order to facilitate this exchange of information with the database, the federal administration develops and offers a licensable interface. This enables animal keepers to share information with other information systems and thus not having to record the same data multiple times in different systems.

A good example of improved data management and reduced administrative burden on farmers brought by innovation in digitalisation.

Providing well-targeted financial support for innovative project is one component of our national approach to improve agriculture and food innovation ecosystems.

According to our Federal Constitution, sustainable development of the agricultural and food sector is the top priority of our domestic agricultural policy.

Positive transformation of agriculture and food systems towards more sustainability is indeed essential for achieving long term food security, ensuring fair livelihoods of farmers and food producers but also to increase resilience to shocks such as climate change, and of course global pandemics like COVID-19.

Innovation in all its forms (scientific and technical of course but also social, financial and institutional) is critical for food systems transformation.

Strong innovation friendly ecosystems are key to generating solutions, which meet practical challenges and have a scalable impact

Within the framework of our agricultural policy, **what we primarily want is to offer as much entrepreneurial room for manoeuvre as possible for all the actors of the food chain including farmers, so that they are able to innovate to respond to rapidly evolving market needs.**

This requires solid research that keeps expanding system boundaries and legal certainty for intellectual property. We are well equipped in Switzerland with world-leading research institutions linked to the private sector and a solid legal framework

More concretely in the new agriculture policy proposal (AP22+), the Government suggests several legislative changes to further strengthen the innovative capacity of the sector

This includes recognition of new production systems (such as aquaculture, algae, insects and other living organisms as a basis for food and feed production), increased support to digitalisation and improvement of knowledge sharing and application at farm level (through increased networking).

Coming back to your question on how to rollout Animal Tracing Database especially in developing countries, I would like to mention the Global Agenda for sustainable livestock, hosted by FAO, a multistakeholder partnership with a view to enhance the contribution of livestock systems to sustainable development and One Health.

Let me conclude on 2 positive learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Increase in public awareness of the importance of food, how it is produced and its environmental footprint.
- Incredible Innovative capacity of the food system to adapt to the challenges and the new needs (for example by multiplying the offer on farmers markets or increasing the channels and capacities to deliver food to people's doorsteps).

(Max. 585 mots 3-4')

II Third Round Concrete examples of application of digitalisation in the agriculture and food sector (3-5')

Question 2 :

Driving an agenda, driving progress is not something one player alone can do: The best results are achieved with networking and collaboration between research, education, extension, farmers, ie the practitioners and the private sector – and of course, with the involvement of a ministry.

Switzerland has done exactly that with the development of the Charter on Digitalization of Swiss Food and Agriculture Production.

On the website it is still listed as “ongoing” ... But maybe, Minister Hofer, you could already give us an indication of where this leads, what boost it will give to further digitization in agriculture - and how you think that this approach contributes also to food security?

Thank you for the question

To follow and guide the increasing application of digitalisation in agriculture and food production and to increase networking, the Swiss government took the initiative to launch “Agridigital” a multi-stakeholder platform with interested actors from the food chain.

The first step was to develop a Charter with the following objectives:

- **to create a shared understanding of the principles governing the handling of digital data and applications**
- **to jointly address the opportunities and challenges of digitalisation along the value chain**
- **to support an inclusive, transparent and sustainable shift towards digital processes**
- **to ensure a fair and equitable access to the digital world**
- **to bring actors together**

The Federal Councillor in charge of agriculture launched the Charter on the Digitalisation of Swiss Agriculture and Food Production in June 2018.

The Charter sets out 12 guidelines from “Focus on benefits” to “Technological development”, including access to data and data ownership¹.

So far, more than 120 public and private actors have signed the Charter.

The signatories commit to comply with these guidelines, to actively contribute to the implementation of the Charter *through specific initiatives* and to communicate such efforts, to take the principles of the Charter into account in

¹ 1. Focus on benefits, 2. Transparency, 3. Access to data, 4. Empowerment, 5. Fair competition, 6. Value of data, 7. Data ownership, 8. Infrastructure for data transmission, 9. Added value through data integration, 10. Duty of care 11. Research, knowledge transfer and innovation, 12. Technological development

their strategic decision-making, and to pursue joint solutions in the digitalisation of Swiss agriculture and food production.

An example is the programme PFlopF on Optimisation of Plant Protection through Precision Farming), a joint initiative between Agroscope (National agricultural Research organisation) and 3 cantonal states involving more than 50 farms.

On this issue, I welcome the establishment under the leadership of FAO of the International Platform for digital Food and Agriculture as follow up of GFFA 2019, **which pursues the same objective at the global level.** Switzerland is looking forward to actively contributing to this platform.

I will conclude by mentioning the International Award for Innovation in sustainable Agriculture and Food System co-sponsored by FAO and Switzerland.

The 2nd edition will be awarded during the 2021 FAO Conference. The call for candidatures will be issued in the next couple of weeks.

Thank you very much

396 mots, max. 2-3'