

## STATEMENT ABOUT THE «UNITED NATIONS FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT 2021»

September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Regarding the challenges of food systems, we would like to highlight:

- **Sustainable production.** By 2025, the world population will reach 8.2 billion, and the consumption of cereals and meat will increase 1.08 % annually in the next 10 years. Likewise, the requirement of fruits and vegetables is increasing, which should have greater incentive, in line with a healthy and balanced diet. This increase is explained 80 % by population growth and 20 % by the increase in per capita consumption. Food production must efficiently satisfy these growing demand, preserving natural resources and coexisting in harmony with the society and environment. Special attention must be in the efficient use in all the uses of water resources, increasingly scarce.
- **World food trade.** In the face of these challenges, guaranteeing access to markets with growing food flows worldwide will be crucial since the producing regions are far from the centers of consumption. This dynamic flow requires adequate infrastructure to optimize logistics and minimize trade barriers and non-tariff barriers, to foster optimal trade and investment decisions in food systems —from agriculture to retail— and to ensure food availability and affordability in the world.
- **Healthy and responsible consumption.** It is estimated that 800 million people are currently undernourished and hungry, while more than 1.9 billion adults are overweight, of whom 600 million are obese. There is no single solution to combat inequality in the economic and social development of countries, solutions must be comprehensive and adopt a multi-stakeholder approach, where governments, civil society and companies work together.
- **Minimize food loss and waste.** One third of the food produced in the world is lost or wasted. This equates to about 1.3 billion tons annually, with a global cost of more than 400 billion dollars. Reversing this situation implies adapting solutions for business, international trade and retail, as well as a conscious behavior change for consumers and governments.

Whereas that:

I. The Food Systems Summit action tracks are: *i)* Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all; *ii)* Shift to sustainable consumption patterns; *iii)* Boost nature-positive production; *iv)* Advance equitable livelihoods; and *v)* Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress.

II. The food systems of the Mercosur countries —as well as the rest of the world— have a multidimensional character since they cover various aspects: social, economic, cultural, historical, climatic, technological, political, systems and scales of production, among others. And, in this sense, it is important to highlight the connection of agricultural production systems with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

III. The goal of no poverty and zero hunger (SDGs 1 and 2) are intrinsically linked to policies aimed at allowing access to food, technology and innovation, access to credit and financing, and promotion of international trade. Which has historically been highlighted in



various FAO reports as a key element in the fight against hunger in regions that do not have the conditions to be self-sufficient.

IV. Policies and actions on climate change are also essential components of food systems, placing sustainable land and water use, low-carbon agriculture and renewable energy at the heart of the Paris Agreement (SDG 7, 13 and 15).

V. Debates on possible transformative solutions must consider the needs, priorities, characteristics, policies, challenges, and particularities of the different countries and regions.

Given the interdependence between the lines of action and the multiple interconnections of food systems with various SDGs, we present the following guidelines and recommendations to the authorities and official representatives of international organizations.

## **1. MALNUTRITION, UNDERNOURISHMENT AND OBESITY**

*Main aspects to consider:*

- Reverse the growing prevalence of malnutrition —with special focus on infant feeding— in the short term by offering greater assistance to help people with serious needs. Promote long-term universal food security by creating more and better income-generating opportunities in the less developed regions of the world.
- Address malnutrition in all its forms, primarily by educating consumers to follow a healthier lifestyle and a more balanced diet to improve the health of the world population.

*Recommendations:*

- Ensure access to and visibility of clear and accurate dietary information on food products to enable consumers to make informed purchasing decisions.
- Educate consumers about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and a balanced diet, designing general communication and school education campaigns with a comprehensive approach to food, physical activity, social problems, environment and culture.
- Facilitate, through public-private partnerships, the improvement of food production value chains in developing countries to ensure local and global food supply and access and provide more and better opportunities for job creation. The global food market generates food security.

## **2. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

*Main aspects to consider:*

- Food systems, in all parts of the value chain, contribute and play a key role in the adaptation and mitigation of climate change and the conservation of natural resources and biodiversity.
- Regenerative production systems are necessary to adapt to a changing environment, while ensuring long-term sustainability and resilience of food security.

*Recommendations:*

- Create economic benefit schemes to encourage efficient and sustainable use of key resources in food production systems.

- Stimulate the development and adoption of innovative technologies and practices to anticipate the impacts, adaptation and mitigation of climate change throughout the value chain. For this, it is essential to promote research and the generation of knowledge that develops accessible technology, easy to adopt and compatible with future demands.
- Promote and finance the creation of ecosystem management programs through public-private partnerships (for instance: territorial planning and local development, sustainable land management, etc.).
- Develop global studies to achieve significant progress in increasing the supply and streamlining the demand for water resources for the production of sustainable food.

### **3. DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION**

*Main aspects to consider:*

- Establish national and global mechanisms of public and private partnerships to identify and finance innovation for more productive, resilient and sustainable food chains necessary for future food security.
- Prioritize the development, diffusion and adoption of technology that addresses the agricultural needs of SMEs and small farmers in less developed countries.

*Recommendations:*

- Promote and encourage the development of innovative technologies (biotechnology, bioeconomy, digital agriculture, irrigation technification) to increase sustainable food production in the world.
- Increase investment in rural infrastructure (roads, logistics, services, digital connectivity, water) to improve SMEs' access to markets and knowledge.
- Facilitate technology transfer and adoption in developing countries and SMEs throughout the food value chain through specific financing mechanisms for capital investments and knowledge sharing groups for capacity building.

### **4. TRADE BARRIERS**

*Main aspects to consider:*

- Support a multilateral approach to an open, fair, market-oriented and transparent agricultural trading environment, as a critical driver for global economic growth, well-being and sustainability.
- Increase transparency and equity in trade regulation by aligning standards with science-based norms and accepted from international agreements.
- Prioritize the needs of the least developed countries and strive to improve and protect their access to world markets to promote their development. Reinforcing the importance of international trade as a fundamental instrument in the fight against food insecurity at the global level, for which it is crucial that trade be more fair and transparent and eliminate subsidies for production, levels of internal aid and non-barriers.

*Recommendations:*

- Improve the design and the transparency of identification systems in the application of non-tariff measures that affect agri-food trade, and reduce and eliminate existing non-tariff barriers to trade.
- Minimize tariff barriers by fully applying the negotiated agreements of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and support the continuity of negotiations at the next Ministerial Conference (MC12) to improve access to the agricultural market and reduce distortion of the domestic aid, prioritizing liberalization in markets and the interest of developing countries that depend heavily on agricultural trade.
- Harmonize national and regional regulations that affect trade in agri-food products and move towards equivalence and global recognition based on the foundational role of the Codex Alimentarius of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), internationally approved standards, guidelines, etc.

## 5. FOOD LOST AND WASTE

*Main aspects to consider:*

- Minimize food lost and waste throughout the value chain, from production to consumption and retail.
- While some food waste is unavoidable, circular economies in the food value chain can reduce environmental impact, increase efficiency, and provide greater food security.

*Recommendations:*

- Prioritize educating consumers on how to reduce food waste at home, including shopping, planning and responsible consumption, among others.
- Design and implement an adequate framework that includes regulations and incentives that promote circular economies, and endorse public policies that aim to reduce losses and waste, taking advantage of all possible cases of food use.
- Promote and incentivize investments in infrastructure, storage, energy availability, transportation, markets and other infrastructure works required mainly in developing countries that directly address food losses.

In summary, we consider that:

In order to *ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all planet population*, we believe in international cooperation as a way to stimulate the adoption of technology and innovation at all levels of the food value chains. We reinforce the importance of international trade as a fundamental instrument for global food security.

Regarding the *change to sustainable consumption patterns*, there are various types of food production systems based on the adoption of best practices, technologies and innovation as a transformative approach based on continuous improvement, with the aim of ensuring and diversifying the production of safe and nutritious food. The term of traceability, sustainability or the definition of any standard in this sense must be made considering the diversity of food systems around the world and the different realities of each country. It should be avoided that



they become non-tariff barriers and ensure that the least developed countries could implement them. In order to promote solutions to boost the transition towards healthy and sustainable consumption, the Mercosur region currently stimulates the development of good agricultural and livestock practices throughout the value chain, which shows the responsibility and commitment of address global food security.

Regarding *promoting the production of positive impact for nature*, we believe that the Food Systems Summit should consider that there is no unified consensus on this action track. The criteria adopted to qualify whether a production system has an impact on nature must be based on scientific bases and considering local realities.

**Organizations members of FARM:**

ARGENTINA

- Confederaciones Rurales Argentinas (CRA)
- Sociedad Rural Argentina (SRA)

BOLIVIA

- Confederación de Ganaderos de Bolivia (CONGABOL)
- Confederación Nacional de Agricultura de Bolivia (CONFEOAGRO)

BRAZIL

- Confederação Nacional de Agricultura y Pecuária de Brasil (CNA)
- Sociedade Rural Brasileira (SRB)

CHILE

- Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura (SNA)

PARAGUAY

- Asociación Rural del Paraguay (ARP)

URUGUAY

- Asociación Rural del Uruguay (ARU)
- Federación Rural - Uruguay (FR)