



**Creating More with Less
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Bonn
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On behalf of the World Farmers Organisation**

Your excellencies, Ministers, and colleagues,

Food, water, energy – these are the staff of life. Achieving food security for all, means availability, accessibility and affordability of sufficient, nutritious food. It is no easy task.

Farmers represent one-third of the world's population and one-half of its poor. All three aspects of sustainable development – social, economic, and environmental – remain equally important. The goal must be to: **continuously improve agriculture around the world** through knowledge sharing to improve the lives and livelihoods of farmers while reducing the footprint of farming.

Coming out of Rio+20, we do not need another long text. Just two years ago, **CSD-17 completed a negotiated text on agriculture and rural development. We need ACTION that provides food security while reducing pressure on water and energy demands. Today I offer three key areas for that action: focusing on smallholders; addressing post harvest losses; and rebuilding the knowledge systems for agriculture.**

1) Focus on Smallholders

Despite high profile promises, woefully few resources have truly begun to flow to help farmers break the poverty cycle. Agriculture and rural development must be treated in a holistic manner that **prioritizes the needs of small scale food producers, including women, indigenous peoples, peasants and the rural poor.**

To do this, the proportion of overseas development assistance focused on agriculture and rural development should increase to 20%. Countries should meet their commitments in l'Aquila and under CAADP (the Comprehensive Africa

Agriculture Development Programme) to achieve 10% budgetary support, 6% agricultural growth, AND also is inclusive of all stakeholders including non-state actors.

This investment is needed to **foster sustainability and address poverty by enabling smallholder farmers, including women, to break the subsistence cycle.**

Women account for 60 to 80% of peasant growers and produce 90% of food in Africa and about half of all food worldwide. Yet in sub-Saharan Africa, only 15% of landholders are women and they receive less than 10% of credit and 7% of extension services. Policies that address gender inequalities could, conservatively, increase yields on women's farms by 2.5% to 4%. This could go a long way to increasing food security, particularly if done in a way that supports proper use of energy and water.

Women's burdens are many. In much of the world they are the drawers of water and the collectors of fuel. They are also a majority of smallholder farmers but produce 20-30% less than men on average. They are good farmers but they have less access to resources.

An important first step is passing strong land tenure guidelines that protect women's tenure rights – REGARDLESS OF MARITAL STATUS. **Closing the gender yield gap could feed an extra 150 million people.**

2) Post Harvest Losses

The tradeoffs begin with the realities of the population we must feed. In order to achieve a global average food consumption of 3130 kcal per person per day for 9 billion people by 2050, an additional **1 billion tonnes of cereals** and **200 million tonnes of meat** would need to be produced annually.¹

Agricultural productivity has to be improved and food production increased in a sustainable way to find short and long-term solutions to food security worldwide.

Of course, one of the primary ways to meet needs is to reduce production losses and food waste. This is one of my key points: **WE NEED TO USE MORE OF WHAT WE GROW.**

Last year, FAO estimated that post-harvest losses ranged from 15% to an enormous 50% in some developing countries.

Let me focus on the specific consequences in my country - Uganda.

¹ Bruinsma, 2009. Based on comparisons to 2005-07 levels.

Recent studies on Maize have revealed that farmers experience losses in the field, during transportation from the field, through inappropriate drying facilities, shelling and cleaning, and storage totalling 30%.

For fruits and vegetables, the losses are even higher due to the perishable nature. Lack of cold storage/cold chain and appropriate storage increase post harvest losses. If marketing is not properly organised, losses of up to 80% can occur.

In livestock, the major product where farmers incur post-harvest losses is milk. This is mainly due to lack of cold storage at farm level. Besides, lack of primary processing equipment also contributes to these losses.

What does this mean? Waste. It is wasted food, wasted water, wasted energy, wasted effort. That means higher prices, more hungry people, and the continued reality of grinding poverty.

So, we recommend the immediate need for:

- Building local storage facilities and rural infrastructure including roads, links to railways, and to ports.

As OECD points out, the problem of food waste is not limited to farms or developing countries. One study suggests that 40-50% of food in some developed countries not consumed, and households waste can range from 14 -28% of food purchases.

We need to educate consumers and end users about **sustainable consumption practices** and the efficient use of resources. **Changing excessive consumption is essential to improve health and reduce environmental damage.** Today, the average adult in an OECD country eats an unnecessary and unhealthy extra meal each day. About 25% of the energy and water used in OECD countries is wasted. At least 50% of OECD adults are overweight or obese. Obesity costs the OECD states almost \$300 billion per year – an amount that is more than enough to meet all of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, with around \$100 billion leftover.

Waste needs to be reduced, and waste that does occur needs to be used more constructively. Re-use of spoiled food in rural areas as feed and compost, and as green energy in urban areas, offers opportunities for the energy aspect of the nexus.

3) Knowledge Based Approach

To tackle post harvest losses and to improve practices generally, we need a **knowledge-based** approach. Looking at the environmental goals of the original Rio Summit – including limiting

deforestation, fostering biodiversity, and protecting water – we must encourage adoption of improved practices, better techniques, and innovations.

In many parts of the world, agriculture has evolved dramatically. Productivity has increased in some areas but at the same time the demand on water and energy has increased too. Agriculture will need to do more with less: like reducing fuel use. Through conservation tillage, global fuel savings due to fewer movements over the field and greater soil carbon sequestration was equivalent to removing nearly 6.3 million cars from the road in 2007.²

Strides have been made – but more needs to be done. That is true for all forms of agriculture in both the North and South. Good agricultural extension services provide capacity to continually improve farming in a manner reflecting local conditions and approaches as varied as pastoralism, horticulture, cropping and beyond. Farmers are the first researchers and also the first casualties in case of failures – best practices are essential.

So we need **commitment to increasing support for farmer-to-farmer training, and participatory extension systems**. Modern extension services must increase their capacity for two-way information sharing – between experts and farmers themselves who have valuable traditional knowledge.

Rio+20 offers an opportunity to galvanize around the systems that can improve farming, better livelihoods, and provide a mechanism to further efficiency of the nexus. Specifically, **increasing and improving agricultural advisory services are a legacy outcome that provides the knowledge-based infrastructure to continually adapt in agriculture. Thank you for including food in the nexus.**

² (Brooks and Barfoot, 2009).