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Empowering Agriculture

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The World Agricultural Forum (WAF) is a policy neutral and internationally inclusive agriculture forum that brings together the leaders from the private sector with policy makers and key policy influencers to focus on providing food, fuel, fibre and water to the world's growing population.

The Rt. Hon. James Bolger, WAF Advisory Board Chairman, moderates a panel at the 2009 World Congress in St Louis, USA. The uniqueness of the WAF Congresses is the format and intimacy of the discussion. Discussion takes place at a "Round Table" centered within the audience allowing maximum interaction and participation.

Join us for the 2011 World Agricultural Forum Congress

Rethinking Agriculture

to sustain a growing global population

Renaissance Hotel, rue du Parnasse 19, Brussels, Belgium
from 29th November to 1st December 2011

Register at: www.worldagriculturalforum2011.com

Selected Speakers and Highlights:

Congress Chairman: Rt. Honorable James B. Bolger, ONZ, Former Prime Minister of New Zealand

The Unprecedented Demands on Agriculture – The Stakes. - Professor Paolo De Castro, Chairman of the Agricultural and Rural Development Committee of the European Parliament

Round Table: Is this the New World Order? Higher Prices, Higher Demand and Continuing Hunger - Moderator: The Hon. Clayton Yuetter, Former US Secretary of Agriculture and former US Trade Representative

Plenary: Ms. Sandra E. Peterson, Chairman of the Board of Management, Bayer Crop Sciences

Speaker: Alex Chu, Deputy Chairman & Executive Director, Dah Chong Hong Holdings, Hong Kong

South-South Partnerships: Dr. S. Ayyappan; Secretary to the Government of India

Breakout: The Role of South-South Partnerships - Moderator: Dr. William Dar, Director General of ICRISAT, India

Breakout: John Atkin, Chief Operating Officer, Syngenta International AG

Speaker: Professor Jo Swinnen, President-elect of the International Association of Agricultural Economists; Professor of Development Economics, K.U.Leuven

Speaker: His Excellency, Mr. N. Kiran Kumar Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, India

Breakout: New Technology for Agriculture – The Challenges – Moderator: Jürgen Oldeweme, Vice-President, Crop Protection, BASF

Speaker: Stéphane Frappat, CEO Sodrugestvo Group of Companies, Russian Federation

Round Table: Agricultural Commodity Markets – Is Regulation Necessary – Moderator: Jorge Cazenave, Former Secretary of Agriculture, Argentina

Speaker: How to Reconcile Prosperity with Nature: Paul Collier, Professor of Economics, University of Oxford

Plenary: Towards a Bio-based Future - Steen Riisgaard, President & CEO, Novozymes, Denmark

Speaker: Monty Jones, Executive Director Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, Ghana, and Winner of 2004 World Food Prize

Speaker: Thad W. Simons, President and CEO, Novus International

Speaker: Crawford Falconer, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, New Zealand and former Chair of the WTO Agriculture negotiations

Round Table – Trends and Developments in Private Financing of Agriculture – Moderator: Philippe de Lapérouse, Managing Director HighQuest Partners LLC

Speaker: Bruce Tozer, Head of Sustainable Agriculture, Crédit Agricole

Breakout: View from the Land - Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment - Moderator: Thierry de l'Escaille, Secretary General, ELO

Speaker: Professor Aldas Janaiah, Head, School of Agribusiness Management-SABM, Hyderabad, India

Plenary Round Table: Ensuring Future Management has the Capacity to Re-think and Implement the Necessary Changes for the Future of Agriculture – Moderator: Corrado Pirzio-Biroli, President ELO

Speaker-Moderator v: Mark Eckstein, Managing Director, International Finance, World Wildlife Fund

Speaker: Professor Charles Godfray, Oxford University and Member of the UK Government Future of Food and Farming Expert Group

Speaker: Professor Stefan Tangermann, University of Göttingen and former Director for Trade and Agriculture at the OECD

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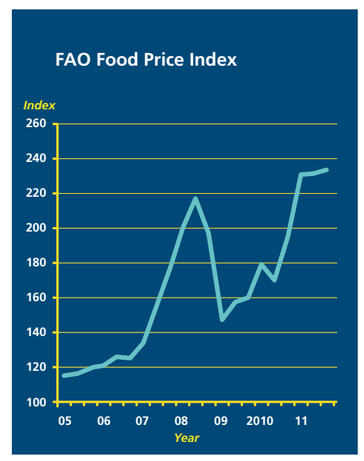
Why Agriculture needs a "Rethink"

Dr. Kenneth Baker, Vice-Chairman World Agricultural Forum Advisory Board, Chairman of the WAF 2011 Congress Organising Committee

If there is one thing which is sure to create unrest in society, it is hunger. But how many are concerned about having enough to eat in the future? Not many in the western world I suspect. However if there is one thing which cannot be compromised it is the availability of food. Food shortages lead directly to a disrupted society, no matter where in the world.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) worries the world is running out of agricultural capacity to feed itself and talks of improving "food security". The UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs prediction that global population will rise from 6 billion now up to 12 billion in 2050. And food prices have risen to historically high levels (see chart).



But can we make up the shortfall? Agriculture and the food production systems are coming under great pressure. Politicians are increasingly worried about rising prices and talk of proposals to keep prices down, export restrictions, and how to provide for future food needs. Other pressures include higher input costs, unpredictable and unusual weather patterns and pressure to perform better as regards protection of the environment.

While concerns about "food security" are real, it does not mean we are necessarily facing catastrophe – far from it. But if history is any guide, it won't happen by doing things the same old way.

The first step towards new solutions is to arrive at a common understanding. Not in a very large meeting with a cast of thousands, but in a more intimate atmosphere where discussion of new approaches and ideas are encouraged.

A modest event in Brussels, the next World Agricultural Forum (WAF) Congress titled "***Rethinking Agriculture to sustain a growing global population***" from the 28th November to the 1st December 2011 will attempt just that. It will provoke ideas to solve real problems and not political quick-fixes.

The WAF Congresses are known for their unique record of bringing together delegates in a neutral environment. Business, political, diplomatic, NGO and academic leaders will think and debate how things can be done differently. Being impartial, the Congress is open to all ideas and shades of opinion.

As Chairman for the Organisation of the Brussels Congress of the World Agricultural Forum, I guarantee the Congress will give an opportunity to peer into the future and evaluate the opportunities and the issues and above all, "rethink" agriculture. The full programme is available at www.worldagriculturalforum2011.com

Topics which will be covered include:

Political leadership: Is more needed?

Infrastructure Efficiency: Waste and spoilage are terrible enemies of food security.

Technology: How to get "more from less" as Jason Clay, Senior Vice President, Market Transformation at the WWF would say.

Co-operation agreements: "South-South" partnerships such as ICRISAT based in India in co-operation with African institutions (see illustrations).

Aid Programmes: What type of aid programmes are most effective for satisfying long term food security?

The weather: Great strides have been made in weather prediction, but are the same levels of prediction available to all.

Finance: Would food security and food prices be better helped by improving credit availability?

Agriculture as a non-food source: How to accommodate them by improving agricultural systems and productivity while still providing food security.

South-south partnerships: A bountiful harvest of sorghum released by ICRISAT and partners in Mali – photo courtesy of ICRISAT

Trade: Is it not time to re-consider facilitating agricultural trade to ensure food security?

Employment: One-third of the world's labour force is involved in agriculture. Does the farmer always gain a fair share of profit?

Training: Does the next generation have the right skills to ensure the most efficient food production systems?

Brussels, September 2011