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UN FAO. Slow Food

Sustainable food and nutrition: a new deal



The UN Food and Agriculture Organization has made a three-year agreement with the Slow Food Movement to promote equitable, inclusive food systems. Above are Carlo Petrini and José Graziano

Editor's note

From now on *World Nutrition* will be paying special attention to food systems as a whole.

We are giving more space to 'upstream' determinants of health and well-being. These crucially include agriculture systems. Get farming right, and food supplies will improve. Get food supplies right, and dietary patterns will be more healthy. Now please turn to [Colin Tudge's commentary on rational agriculture](#), this month's cover feature.

Rome. Our news team reports

On 15 May the most momentous alliance between a United Nations agency and a civil society organisation ever has been agreed. This is between the Food and Agriculture Organization and the Slow Food Movement, whose director-general José Graziano (right) and president Carlo Petrini (left) are seen above shaking hands. Under a three-year Memorandum of Agreement signed at FAO headquarters in Rome, the two organisations will join forces to promote more inclusive food and agriculture systems at local, national and international levels. Actions will focus mainly on joint advocacy campaigns, strengthening local, regional and global networks and raising awareness of global initiatives such as the UN International

Year of Family Farming in 2014. Actions will highlight the value of local foods and neglected food crops, and will also target market access for small-scale producers, enhancing conservation and use of biodiversity, reducing food losses and food waste, and improving animal welfare.

FAO director-general José Graziano says: ‘Slow Food and FAO share the same vision of a sustainable and hunger-free world, safeguarding biodiversity for future generations’. Slow Food president Carlo Petrini says: ‘Collaboration between FAO and Slow Food stems from our common purpose in promoting the wealth of local gastronomic traditions, in the defence of food biodiversity and in support of smallholder farmers and producers’.

The agreement includes protection of traditional food products and promoting culinary traditions and cultural heritage of rural communities. Slow Food, with its 100,00 members, can help inventories of local, indigenous and underused crops that are potentially important for food security, thus supporting the role of FAO in the appreciation and promotion of neglected crops.

FAO and Slow Food will work together to facilitate market access for small producers through producer organisations and cooperatives. Slow Food can help farmers to organise and shorten the food supply systems. *WN* editor Geoffrey Cannon comments: ‘This is great news. *WN* will be carrying much more coverage on genuinely sustainable agriculture, and in October this year, the month of World Food Day, we will be featuring the Slow Food Movement’.

Box 1

Slow Food

Slow Food is an international, non-profit grassroots organization that aims to promote quality food produced and distributed in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner. It has over 100 000 members worldwide and is active in 150 countries. Thanks to its projects and initiatives the Slow Food Movement involves millions of people worldwide.

Anon. UN FAO. Slow Food Sustainable food and nutrition: a new deal. [Updates]. World Nutrition June 2013, 4, 6, 328-329