

MEDIA RELEASE

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POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA – THE IMPORTANCE OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

With the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set to conclude in 2015, the international community is now focused on the formulation of sustainable development goals to anchor the post-2015 development agenda. What will be the role of fruit and vegetables in that post-2015 Agenda?

This is the question to be addressed by Dr Shenggen Fan, Director General of the renowned food policy think-tank, the International Food Policy Research Institute, in his plenary address to the International Horticulture Congress (IHC2014). Dr Fan will be speaking to over 3000 delegates from more than 100 countries who will attend IHC2014 – the world premier horticulture event - in Brisbane from 17-22 August at the Brisbane Exhibition and Convention Centre.

Dr Fan, who was recently awarded the Hunger Hero Award from the World Food Programme in recognition of his commitment to and leadership in fighting hunger worldwide, will discuss a nexus approach that integrates food security and nutrition into sustainable development, highlighting the importance of horticulture, particularly vegetables and fruits production, for ending global hunger and undernutrition sustainably.

Dr Fan will argue that the post-2015 agenda should:

- Be people-focused, ensuring that environmental sustainability goals do not undermine the food security and nutrition of poor and vulnerable people;
- Promote win-win strategies that maximize synergies and minimize trade-offs between environmental sustainability goals and food security and nutrition goals; and
- Make it high priority to end hunger and undernutrition sustainably by 2025.

“Horticulture is key to ending hunger and undernutrition, which often results from the lack of a diverse, nutrient-rich diet that includes fruits and vegetables. Successful interventions contribute to improving micronutrient intake in vulnerable groups, as well as integrate producers into the value chain,” says Dr Fan who will be speaking at a range of events during his time in Australia.

“The global community should make ending hunger and undernutrition by 2025 the top priority for economic and moral reasons. To achieve this goal, governments and donors must devote sufficient resources and implement appropriate policies,” concluded Dr Fan.

More general issues to be covered at IHC2014 include:

- The place of horticulture in world food production
- Human health effects of fruits, vegetables, nuts and berries
- The future of indigenous vegetables and their role in the battle against malnutrition and disease
- Traditional and modern knowledge of medicinal and aromatic plants
- Functional & biofortified food and GMOs in horticulture
- Mechanisation, precision horticulture and robotics
- Connections between nature, plants, landscapes and human health