



Good for you - the planet - the farmer

Smart Food was selected as one of the top 10 game changer food innovation for the 2017 LAUNCH Food initiative run by Australia and USAID. See <http://www.launch.org/about/news/building-a-brighter-food-future-with-the-launch-food-innovators>

WHY AUSTRALIA SHOULD INVEST IN SMART FOOD

The Smart Food approach:

- is an applied approach that can be the game changer to tackle malnutrition and poverty and to cope with climate change and environmental issue, in unison, in developing countries;
- is a major focus on women and children and health needs specific to them;
- is a global application for pushing sustainable diets; and
- will lead to the development of new markets globally, including new markets and production opportunities for Australia.

Smart Food explained

SMART FOOD is a new concept that brings together solutions for different key global issues. Smart Food is defined as food that is:

GOOD FOR YOU | GOOD FOR THE PLANET | GOOD FOR THE SMALLHOLDER FARMER

Some of the biggest global issues are:

- poor diets (malnutrition to obesity);
- environmental issues (climate change, water scarcity and environmental degradation); and
- poverty.

Smart Food is one of the solutions that contributes to addressing all these issues in unison.

Aim of the Smart Food initiative

A major impact can be made if we don't just popularize but also "mainstream" Smart Food – diversifying diets and on-farm. This must be undertaken, ensuring rural communities benefit through better health

and livelihood improvements. Market development and growth and more sustainable diets will also be benefits globally.

This is to make a major breakthrough in overcoming malnutrition and rural poverty, and being more sustainable on the environment.

Major constraints

A [Food System Divide](#) exists because for decades just a few food crops have received and continue to receive the majority of investments: R&D, food processing investments, government support and even development aid.

This has led to movements away from traditional diets, a lack of diversity on-farm and in diets, malnutrition and environmental concerns and restricts the ability to cope with climate change. As a result many traditional, typically significantly more nutritious and environmentally suitable crops now struggle being viable as their value chains are under developed and the image of the food is seen as old fashioned or food for the poor.

If we want to tackle malnutrition, fast growing lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, and environmental issues like climate change and water scarcity along with poverty, we need to break the Food System Divide and bring in more diversity with Smart Food.

The Approach

A new approach is needed if we are to make a major change and bring Smart Food into mainstream.

The approach is based on **selecting some Smart Food and 'invest like crazy'**. We will start with **creating a demand pull** by the consumers. This needs to be complemented with accelerating investments and support for the research and development of **value chains** for Smart Food.

It is also critical to **ensure small holder farmers and rural communities in developing countries benefit** from the market growth and can move out of poverty and their hidden hunger.

Starting with Millets and Sorghum and Grain Legumes

Efforts will focus initially on millets and sorghum as well as grain legumes, with a geographic focus on: the countries where these crops traditionally grew including Africa, India and other areas of South East Asia; as well as the large influential markets in the West like USA, Europe and Australasia.

Millets and sorghum, often termed dryland cereals and nutri-cereals, are a Smart Food as they are:

Good for you - as millets are not only highly nutritious but target some of the highest malnutrition problems. For example pearl millet is high in iron, zinc and folic acid which is not only among the highest micronutrient needs but also particularly important for adolescent girls and women. Finger millet has three times the amount of calcium as milk – also critical for women and babies. Millets are also high in

antioxidants and important for fighting diabetes and heart disease which are at significantly increasing levels in India.

Good for the planet - reflecting the low water footprint and fewer pesticides and fertilizers needed and hence lower carbon footprint. This is not only better for the environment but means there is less financial investment risk for farmers.

Good for the smallholder farmer – as millets are naturally climate smart. They are typically the last crop standing in times of drought. Some pearl millets have been known to withstand up to 64o Celsius. Millets can be a good risk management strategy for the farmers. The multiple untapped uses (fodder, biofuels, food products, brewing and more) also can be good value for farmers if developed. Millets also have a large scope for further yield development.

However, compared to major crops, millets and sorghum receive:

- very little funding and attention,
- less government support,
- less developed value chains,
- less developed processing industry, and
- overall less awareness and knowledge about their value.

Efforts will require building a stronger scientific case for more support to millets and sorghum. A new modern image, marketing and branding will be developed for millets and sorghum including promoting the need for new modern and exciting products made with millets. Policy makers, to urban aspirational markets to the rural communities, processors the health industry and investors will be targeted.

Partner on the Smart Food initiative

A major impact and mainstreaming Smart Food can only be achieved through partnership. This requires a wide variety of players from the: food, retail and catering industries (new entrepreneurs to multinationals); the health industry; marketers and social media players; and governments; to development agencies, foundations and NGOs.

Join the Smart Food movement.....

Smart Food reality TV show goes live in March 2017 in Kenya. See

promo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7i-LB9DNgQM&feature=youtu.be>

How millets and sorghum are good for you, the planet and the farmer: <https://youtu.be/-x1CSh6XDbw>

For more information see: www.smartfood.org

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