

MEDIA RELEASE

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Embargo: 9am, Monday 13 August 2018

LESSONS FROM AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH FOR NUTRITION AND HEALTH

We are still shaping the research agenda for nutrition in agriculture. This will necessitate new platforms for working across the food and health systems, and between the public and private sectors. In doing so, the collaborative skills we have developed in agricultural research remain more relevant than ever.

This will be a key message from Professor Andrew Campbell, CEO of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, in his address to “*Reshaping Agriculture for Better Nutrition: The Agriculture, Food, Nutrition, Health Nexus*”, the 2018 Crawford Fund annual conference in Canberra on 13-14 August. Professor Campbell will join international and Australian specialists to consider how to reshape agriculture to tackle the ‘triple burden’ of acute hunger, micro-nutrient deficiencies, and obesity and associated diseases.

“Improving human health through diet is far from straightforward, requiring smart approaches in the overlaps between the agriculture, food and health systems,” said Andrew Campbell.

“There are some very promising areas of current research, but it’s not clear that simply adding nutrition on top of all our existing research priorities will get us where we need to go,” he said.

“Complicating our familiar goal of increasing food production, we now confront new challenges of unprecedented scale and complexity: climate change and nutrition.”

“Systemically, agriculture is obviously part of the food system, but it is also central to the health system, with climate change as a risk multiplier for both.”

“Agriculture and health have yet to come to grips with this 21st century reality, in either science or policy.”

“There is much to learn and build on from ACIAR’s proud history of agricultural research for food security and development. The skills developed in brokering durable partnerships, the practice of involving end-users in the process of scientific inquiry, and the principle of building enduring capabilities in science and policy in the countries with which we partner, remain more relevant than ever,” he said.

The conference will discuss promising strategies and examine case studies of success and impact in regions including Timor Leste, PNG, Bangladesh, and Africa.