

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## FOOD SYSTEM SOLUTIONS FOR BETTER NUTRITION IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change increases malnutrition and health risks. Now is the time for proactive research and policies to mitigate the adverse impact of climate change on diet and health as well as on production and the environment. A food systems approach has much to offer.

**Dr Warren T K Lee**, a global food system and nutrition expert, will deliver this call to action while addressing the Crawford Fund's international conference - Australia's key food security event - *Global Food Security in a Riskier World* being held in Canberra, 4-5 September. The Fund's annual conference will bring together international and Australian specialists to address the grand challenge presented by the need to produce more nutritious food, sustainably, in a riskier and more uncertain world.

"The world's food systems are failing to deliver the food security and nutrition needed for people in many countries to have year-round healthy and affordable diets. Billions of people are food insecure and for many, healthy food is unaffordable," said Dr Lee, Senior Nutrition & Food Systems Officer, with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

"Sustainable, nature positive and resilient food system transformation is the only way forward for ensuring healthier diets, better nutrition, and health amidst climate change.

"While the impact of climate change on the environment and the economy are well appreciated, less well appreciated is the impact of climate change on nutrition, and this needs to change.

"In some countries this means millions of children are stunted and under-nourished, while in others, there is a rising prevalence of obesity and non-communicable diseases. In the Asia Pacific, the situation is exacerbated by population growth, urbanisation, changing consumption patterns, and the three c's - COVID-19, the conflict in Ukraine and climate change.

"Food production is a contributor to climate change, with one-third of greenhouse gas emissions generated from food systems. Climate change influences the entire food system from poor soil fertility and reduced crop yield to biodiversity loss, pests, diseases and reduced nutrient density and bioavailability in foods. As a result, climate change increases malnutrition and health risks, deteriorated livelihoods, and unsustainable environments.

"Coupled with nature positive solutions, including climate-smart agriculture, and biodiversity and environmental conservation, collaborative efforts are urgently needed to conduct research and to develop actionable policies to mitigate the adverse impact of climatic change on diet, health and nutrition," he concluded.

Other speakers include **Dr Cary Fowler**, the US Special Envoy on Food Security, **Em Prof Kym Anderson AC**, renowned trade economist and winner of the Crawford Fund medal, **Professor Wendy Umberger**, CEO, The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, and **Ben Fargher**, Environmental Markets Lead, Cargill Asia Pacific.

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