

43rd Session of the Conference

Written Correspondence Procedure – inputs from Members - English version

Item 15.2: Evaluation of the International Year of Fruit and Vegetables 2021

Member Name	Comments
Colombia (Saturday, 10 June 2023 — 12.18)	Colombia has a great variety of tropical fruits (banana, avocado, lemon, pineapple and mango) and exotic ones (gooseberry, gulupa [purple granadilla], pitahaya [dragon fruit] and granadilla) with great acceptance in the international market. In addition, the country benefits from the great diversity of topographical and climatic conditions, which allow harvests of a wide variety of fruits throughout the year. Colombia therefore welcomes the achievements made during the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables 2021 and congratulates FAO and the Secretariat of the International Year for having successfully carried out events, workshops and webinars in all regions, organized by various actors, with a view to promoting the International Year and disseminating information on the importance of fruits and vegetables, disseminating ways to reduce food loss and waste and supporting more sustainable production practices. In addition, we highlight the publication of the documents <i>Fruits and vegetables – Essential in Your Diet. International Year of Fruits and Vegetables, 2021. Background paper</i> and <i>Fruits and Vegetables: Opportunities and Challenges for Sustainable Smallholder Agriculture</i>. We also acknowledge the intensive and well-developed communication campaign launched by FAO that ended with the celebration of more than one hundred awareness-raising events around the world. Fruits and vegetables have an important impact on the Sustainable Development Agenda. We believe that such commemorations have a positive impact on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 3 (Good Health and Well-being), 13 (Climate Action) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Finally, we encourage all FAO Members and other relevant actors to keep up the momentum of this International Year.
Argentina (Monday, 12 June 2023 — 13.07)	Under the Written Correspondence Procedure established to address specific items on the Agenda of the 43rd Session of the FAO Conference, the Permanent Representation of the Argentine Republic would like to share the following comments. Argentina welcomes the Government of Chile's proposal to declare the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables 2021 with the support of FAO as lead agency. We believe that the activities under this International Year were successful in disseminating knowledge about the nutritional benefits of fruit and vegetable consumption, fostering the understanding that they are a basic building block of healthy diets. In this regard, we welcome the communication campaign developed by FAO, particularly the production of the publication <i>Fruit and Vegetables: Opportunities and challenges for small-scale sustainable farming</i>, as well as the design of educational videos on the importance of these foods.

	Considering that this Year was observed during the COVID-19 pandemic, we are pleased with its achievements and invite FAO to continue awareness-raising actions beyond the end of the Year.
Australia (Monday, 12 June 2023 — 18.02)	Australia recognises the nutritional and health benefits of fruit and vegetable consumption, and the contribution of fruit and vegetable consumption to the promotion of diversified, balanced and healthy diets and lifestyles. Australia supported the establishment of the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables (IYFV) 2021 and can endorse this report. Australia would like to take this opportunity to thank all Members for their active involvement in this initiative and recognises the contribution of FAO in supporting and coordinating activities of the International Year. Australia was actively engaged in activities supporting the IYFV, including the development of “Top Trumps” style playing cards themed around fruits and vegetables, which were used for promotion and education purposes. Australia would like to reiterate the importance of sustaining momentum beyond the International Year, and we encourage all countries to take learnings from the International Year forward to maintain institutional focus on the importance of fruit and vegetables for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.
European Union (Thursday, 15 June 2023 — 19.35)	I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino, Serbia, Türkiye, and Ukraine align themselves with this statement. The EU and its Member States take note of the evaluation report submitted by FAO on the Evaluation of the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables 2021. We appreciate the activities undertaken by FAO to facilitate the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables (IYFV) 2021. A range of events were held, and tools developed, also within the EU and its Member States, that contributed to the main objective of the IYFV. We take note that the COVID-19 pandemic caused specific challenges in the implementation of the IYFV with the effect that many events could not take place at all or only in a virtual mode due to sanitary restrictions, and sometimes also due to a lack of funds. We are convinced that the nutritional and health benefits of fruits and vegetables, and their contribution to diversified, balanced and healthy diets deserve the continuous attention of us all. We would like therefore to encourage countries to continue to actively pay attention to promote the consumption of fruit and vegetables in their agricultural policies beyond the scope of the IYFV.
Chile (Friday, 16 June 2023 — 11.09)	Chile thanks the international community for its support in the development of the various activities that were part of the IYFV 2021. This valuable initiative brought us together in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic to deploy efforts worldwide, allowing us to raise awareness and continue deploying efforts to promote the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, healthy diets and the development of sustainable food systems in all territories. We can highlight, from the Year of Fruits and Vegetables, the health benefits of the consumption of these foods that make up healthy diets, especially in the times of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as their contribution to reducing the risk of cardiovascular diseases, which are the main cause of death globally. The consumption of fruits and vegetables plays a fundamental role in health. A diet rich in these foods can help us with a number of positive effects, including reduced blood pressure, risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

In 2017, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that 3.9 million deaths resulted from insufficient consumption of fruits and vegetables. In this context, the organization recommends a minimum consumption of 400 g daily of fruits and vegetables, that is, five servings a day to reduce the risk of developing non-communicable diseases. Fruits and vegetables are a fundamental pillar of healthy eating, which forms a critical part of social protection with a focus on nutrition. Good nutritional status provides benefits throughout our lives: it makes students learn better, workers have better job performance, and older people live a better life. In addition, good nutritional status serves to address the social determinants of health, so that everyone can enjoy wellbeing with less incidence of preventable non-communicable diseases.

With the aforementioned background in mind, the Government of Chile maintains the momentum of the IYFV 2021 and within this framework is implementing concrete measures to promote greater consumption of fruits and vegetables that contribute to improving human health. Some examples of this work are below.

Microbanks of healthy foods

The food microbanks of Elige Vivir Sano [Choose Healthy Living] and Corporación Observatorio del Mercado Alimentario (CODEMA) [Food Market Observatory Corporation] are coordination bodies between the State and civil society in which fruits and vegetables are recovered that for different reasons could not be marketed in fairs and local markets, but that are in good condition and suitable for human consumption, to deliver them at no cost to those who need them most. In this way, it contributes directly toward the food security of the country's most vulnerable population through such social organizations as solidarity kitchens, neighbourhood councils, clubs for the elderly and foundations, and also manages to reduce food waste. This initiative is in full development, with 47 food microbanks operating in 11 different regions and with very good preliminary results, such that the creation of 79 microbanks in all regions of the country should materialize in the coming months.

Chile-Mexico Fund: The strategy – which is under development – to promote and encourage the purchase of fruits and vegetables, seeks to promote their consumption by vulnerable populations. This is a project within the framework of the Chile-Mexico Fund that includes a pilot to provide a subsidy for fruits and vegetables and an educational strategy for people in communes of lower socioeconomic status. Mirror projects will be implemented in both Chile and Mexico to examine the effect of this initiative on the purchase and consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Self-consumption Programme, Support for Food Security

This programme, hosted by the Ministry of Social Development and Family, supports families in rural sectors to implement technologies for the production, processing, preparation or preservation of food, so that families can produce and benefit from healthy food. The programme is implemented by the targeted municipalities through a multidisciplinary team that includes productive, social and nutritional support, to follow up on participating families for the duration of its implementation.

Free Fairs Development Fund

The Technical Cooperation Service in the Ministry of Economy, Development and Tourism provides support and financing to fairs in the country to strengthen modernization, partnerships, management and innovation in fairs. Fairs are important sources of fruits and vegetables in Chile, offering local and healthy products at lower prices than

supermarkets; therefore, support for them is essential. It should be noted that by 2023, the call to action updated its evaluation criteria to incorporate nutrition-sensitive criteria, prioritizing for example fairs with food microbanks and those located in food deserts.

New Dietary Guidelines for Chile

In December 2022, the Ministry of Health launched the new Dietary Guidelines for Chile that dedicated the first two messages to the consumption of fruits and vegetables. The first message states, “Consume fresh food from established fairs and markets,” detailing that some fresh foods that can be found in these places are fruits and vegetables, and the second message states, “Add colour and flavour to your day with vegetables and fruits in everything you eat.” The latter specifies that the daily consumption of at least three servings of vegetables and two servings of fruits can contribute to maintaining and improving health, and that fruits and vegetables are great allies for the wellbeing of the population. Chile appreciates FAO’s support, especially that of the Director of the Partnerships and UN Collaboration Division of FAO, Ms Marcela Villarreal, and all the countries that were part of the International Steering Committee and civil society organizations worldwide, which held multiple virtual meetings to carry out actions of global, regional and local scopes, promoted by the international system in relation to IYFV 2021.

Without a doubt, we must continue to promote greater consumption of fruits and vegetables and especially promote nutritional education to generate habits and awareness that food is health and development.

Materials such as the Global Plan of Action and other documents and references for dissemination activities in your countries can be found on the IYFV Website.

www.fao.org/fruits-vegetables-2021