

44th Session of the Conference

Subitem 16.4: Proposal for an International Day of Fruits and Vegetables (Draft Resolution)

Fruits and vegetables are important for human health and nutrition.

In 2021, however, a low intake of fruits and vegetables featured among the top 20 risk factors for global mortality.

The World Health Organization recommends that adults consume a minimum of 400 grams per day of fruits and vegetables to prevent non-communicable diseases, and reduce the risk of various vitamin and mineral deficiencies.

Many countries have made specific local recommendations as part of their dietary guidelines.

With current consumption well below the recommendations, action by both supply- and demand-sides is urgently needed to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables.

For instance, by developing diversified and integrated systems that deliver multiple ecosystem services, we can not only boost income opportunities for smallholders and family farmers but also promote the sustainable conservation and utilization of biodiversity, while improving consumer access to a wider range of nutritious foods.

Given the perishable and sometimes delicate nature of fruits and vegetables, appropriate handling, infrastructure and cold-chain systems are essential to avoid substantial qualitative and quantitative losses at the various stages of the supply chain.

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2021 the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables and designated the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as the lead agency to celebrate the Year in collaboration with governments, international organizations and relevant non-state actors.

This International Year encompassed many events to raise awareness on the importance of consuming fruits and vegetables, reducing food loss and waste, and increasing and supporting more sustainable production systems.

During the closing ceremony in February 2022, a general desire was expressed to see the momentum of the International Year carried forward.

In response to this momentum at the 29th Session of the Committee on Agriculture, the Government of Chile put forward a draft Conference Resolution on the observance by the United Nations System of an “International Day of Fruits and Vegetables” to be held on 4 March every year.

The Conference is invited to adopt the draft Conference Resolution as endorsed by the Council at its 176th Session in December 2024.

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