



Lomonosov Moscow State University

Eurasian Center for Food Security

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The closer we get to the end of the year, the closer we get to being able to summarize this year's outcomes. Because of the current world situation, we are doing this online with a series of webinars. In the November Newsletter, we take stock of the webinar "Food Security and Food Policy Implications of the COVID-19 Crisis" and invite you to join the joint ECSF/World Bank/IFPRI webinar "Food Policy Research and Capacity Development in Eurasia." Check out the ECFS Newsletter to learn more!

Food Policy Research and Capacity Development in Eurasia

Strengthening policy research and analytical capacity in Eurasia continues to be critical for designing and implementing evidence-based policies for agricultural transformation and inclusive food systems development. In recent years, a collaborative policy research and capacity-strengthening program supported by the Russian Federation and jointly implemented by the World Bank, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and ECFS at Lomonosov Moscow

State University has helped to strengthen capacities of research and educational institutions and individual researchers in Armenia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and other countries in the region. The program also helped facilitate the network of institutions and researchers and bring the actors and players in these countries' food policy systems to effectively engage in food policy, research, and capacity development objectives.

To learn more about the program and the research we invite you to join the joint ECFS/World Bank/IFPRI webinar “Food Policy Research and Capacity Development in Eurasia.” During the webinar, participants will highlight recent policy research and case study findings and discuss various approaches and lessons for strengthening food policy systems in the Eurasia region. Providing evidence-based and data-driven policy support, effectively engaging with policy makers, and supporting the next generation of policy analysts through educational and capacity

development programs will be emphasized. Using programmatic approaches implemented through the collaborative project of the ECFS, World Bank, and IFPRI, the webinar will explore future opportunities to strengthening the policy systems in the face of pressing social, economic, health, and environmental challenges.

The event will be streamed in both [English](#) and [Russian](#) languages when the webinar will start. To register for this free event please follow the link <https://foodpolicycapacitydeveurasia.eventbrite.com>.

Food Security and Food Policy Implications of the COVID-19 Crisis

By Roman Romashkin

The outcomes of case studies produced by 15 scientists from four countries (Armenia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, and Uzbekistan) were presented and discussed on November 24, 2020, during a webinar on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on food security and nutrition in the Eurasian region. The event was organized by the World Bank and the Eurasian Center for Food Security (ECFS).

Sergei Shoba, ECFS Director and Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Science noted that case studies are one of the flagship projects of ECFS activities and make a significant contribution to the body of regional knowledge, intensifying research cooperation and the development of informed measures for relevant research on food security and nutrition in the Eurasian region.

The ECFS Director emphasized the relevance and timeliness of the research. The fall in world oil prices; the downturn in economic activity; currency devaluation in many countries; the rupture of international, regional, and national value chains; and an unprecedented burden on the health care system from the pandemic has led to a deterioration in the economic situation. According to World Bank forecasts, the global economy will shrink by more than 5 percent this year. Many Eurasian countries will likely experience a stronger economic decline due to their high vulnerability to these shocks and the impact of social and political shocks.

Sergei Shoba also pointed out the importance of examining various aspects of the impact of the pandemic on national agri-food systems. In this regard, the cases this year are aimed at developing

policy measures and recommendations on the following issues:

- ✓ Improving the nutrition of residents of the cities of Uzbekistan and Armenia,
- ✓ Ensuring uninterrupted school meals in Armenia,
- ✓ Transforming sales systems for Russian farms,
- ✓ Strengthening food chains in the vegetable and fruit sector in Armenia,
- ✓ Optimizing the regulation of wheat exports in Russia, and
- ✓ Ensuring the sustainability of the livestock sector in the Kyrgyz Republic.

A speech by the Deputy Director of ECFS **Roman Romashkin** was devoted to the methodological and technical aspects of preparing cases. He noted that a case study is not only a publication or piece of research—it is also a research method that:

- ✓ Is used for intensive analysis of the urgent problem in the field of food security,
- ✓ Allows researchers to clearly formulate a problematic issue, and
- ✓ Seeks to develop balanced policy measures based on the interests of the main stakeholders.

According to Roman Romashkin, the joint work of ECFS and the World Bank on organizing and conducting case studies has created a community of researchers and educators from the countries of the Eurasian region who, with interest and enthusiasm, apply innovative approaches in practice. “We plan to continue to promote the use of cases in the educational process, as well as replenish the bank of

cases with relevant research on the countries of our region,” said an ECFS representative.

The event attracted over 100 participants from various Eurasian countries. The short and informative presentations of the speakers aroused keen interest among the audience. Given the time constraints for answering questions, discussions continued in chat. Following the discussion, Sergei Shoba thanked

speakers and experts of the World Bank for the work done and the webinar participants for a meaningful discussion. In addition, the ECFS Director highlighted the importance and need for early publication of research findings in the context of adapting food systems to the unprecedented challenges posed by the pandemic. The conference recording is available [here](#), speakers’ presentations are available [here](#).

Event Calendar 2020/2021

Date	City, Country	Event
September 16– December 16	ONLINE	Agricultural and Resource Economics Seminar hosted by Marc Bellemare or Jeffrey Bloem
December 1-3	ONLINE	EU-Russia Climate Conference A dialogue on climate policy and next steps towards Paris Agreement implementation in the EU and Russia
December 2	ONLINE	ECFS-World Bank-IFPRI Webinar: Food Policy Research and Capacity Development in Eurasia
December 4	Worldwide	World Soil Day (WSD)
December 6–9	ONLINE	4th International Conference on Global Food Security
February 2–5, 2021	ONLINE	FAO Global Symposium on Soil Biodiversity (GSOBI20)
July 19–24, 2021	Syktvykar, Russia	VIII Dokuchaev Congress of the Society of Soil Scientists. and the School of Young Scientists on Soil Morphology and Classification (in Russian only).

Date	City, Country	Event
August 23-27, 2021	Geneva, Switzerland	EUROSOIL 2020
September 13-16, 2021	Tashkent, Uzbekistan	Global Symposium on Salt-Affected Soils: FAO event