



Lomonosov Moscow State University

Eurasian Center for Food Security

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Photo Credit: World Bank

The 4th Eurasian Food Security Conference will take place at the Armenian National Agrarian University on October 29–31, 2019. We invite you to become a conference speaker by sending your proposal to the Program Committee.

Before May 22 you can register for the Fourth Annual International Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition in Eurasia.

Also in this edition, ECFS researchers sum up the meeting of G20 Agricultural Chief Scientists in the field of agriculture and present findings of the Nur-Sultan Symposium on Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition Governance.

As always, the Newsletter provides an updated Events Calendar.

Armenia: Annual Eurasian Food Security Conference—Call for Speakers



About the conference.

It is our great pleasure to invite professionals working in the area of food and nutrition security across the globe to participate in the 4th Eurasian Food Security Conference. The event will take place at the Armenian National Agrarian University on October 29–31, 2019. The purpose of the conference is to provide an international collaborative platform by bringing together experts from regional and

international organizations, scientific and educational institutions, and various governments to address regional food security concerns.

The first two days of the conference will include keynote presentations, panel discussions, poster presentations, and a cultural program. The conference will cover a wide range of issues related to food security: digital agriculture, climate change, natural resource management for food security, among other topics. In addition, participants from different Eurasian countries will share

their experience in addressing food and nutrition security challenges and discuss new policy approaches to promote high-value agriculture and policies regarding the use of sustainable agriculture practices.

The field trip program on the third day of the conference will provide an opportunity to explore best practices in food and nutrition security and at the same time enjoy the beautiful landscapes of Armenia! Conference participants will be able to join [one of the five field trips offered](#). They will have a chance to visit a high-tech canning factory near Lake Sevan and a family-owned wine and brandy factory in the Ararat Valley, as well as one of the leading producers of brandy in Armenia based in Yerevan. Field trip options include a visit to Green Lane Training Center, where conference participants will learn about educational and research opportunities at this unique organic farm. A field trip is also planned to a new farm and veterinary service center in Kotayk province set up by the Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development (CARD).



Call for speakers. This year you have the opportunity to become a conference speaker by sending your proposal to the Program Committee.

How to apply:

- Prepare a summary of your presentation in English or Russian. The summary should be no longer than one page (A4 size) and should include: (i) the goal of the research, (ii) research methods, (iii) a description of stakeholders, (iv) main conclusions, and (v) implications for food policy.
- Fill out [this form](#) to apply to speak and add your summary in the respective field.

We encourage all applicants to submit proposals early. This will give organizers enough time to review all applications. Please note that we will be making a decision based on the information provided.

Moscow: Fourth Annual International Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition in Eurasia Featuring IFPRI's 2019 *Global Food Policy Report*



The Eurasian Center for Food Security (ECFS) invites you to participate in the Fourth Annual International Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition in Eurasia, featuring the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI's) [2019 Global Food Policy Report](#).

When: May 28, 2019

Where: Lomonosov Moscow State University (LMSU), Faculty of Economics, 1-46 Leninskiye Gory, Room P-3

Session 1: Launch of the 2019 *Global Food Policy Report*: Highlights and Reflections on CIS Countries

[Shenggen Fan](#), Director General, IFPRI

Panelists:

- [Simeon Ehui](#), Director of Agriculture Global Practice, The World Bank
- [Evgeniya Serova](#), Director for the Center of Agricultural Policy Research, National Research University Higher School of Economics

- Sergey Kiselev, Chair of the Agroecconomics Department, LMSU

Shenggen Fan will present the *2019 Global Food Policy Report*, IFPRI's flagship report, which provides a comprehensive worldwide

review of the major food policy developments of the past year and highlights near-term challenges and opportunities.

If you'd like to participate in the conference, [please register here before May 22](#).

Results of the Eighth Meeting of G20 Agricultural Chief Scientists

By Evgeny Tsvetnov

[The 8th Meeting of G20 Agricultural Chief Scientists \(MACS–G20\)](#) took place in Tokyo on April 25–26, 2019. The meeting was attended by over 70 delegates from the G20 countries, as well as representatives of leading international organizations in the field of agriculture. Experts of the Eurasian Center for Food Security (ECFS) of Lomonosov Moscow State University have participated in this meeting since 2013. This year ECFS was represented by Deputy Director **Pavel Krasilnikov**, Deputy Director **Roman Romashkin**, and Senior Researcher **Evgeny Tsvetnov**.

Experts discussed global agricultural research priorities: (i) the transboundary distribution of crop pests; (ii) new approaches in agriculture, combining technologies for solving the problems of agriculture, and policies that support the development and implementation of these technologies; and (iii) ways to promote the introduction of climate-smart agriculture technologies.

Particular attention was paid to the initiatives that had been initiated in previous meetings of the MACS–G20. Thus, one of the first day of MACS 2019 central reports was the presentation of the results of the working group on sustainable soil management for 2018. The results were presented by **Jean-Francois Susanna** (France) and Pavel Krasilnikov (Russia).

Three 2018 working groups also presented their results: [Living Labs of Agro-Ecosystems](#) supervised by the United States and Canada; Technologies Exchange in the Field of Agriculture, supervised by China; and [Food Losses & Food](#)

[Wastes](#), supervised by Germany. It was noted that these initiatives are helping to accelerate and expand the introduction of innovative practices and technologies to ensure the sustainability of agriculture.



Pavel Krasilnikov highlighted the special role of international organizations in the work of adopting technologies of climate-smart agriculture. In particular, the participation of ECFS in the World Bank AgObservatory project was noted. The special role of FAO was identified as one that develops advanced concepts that become a common platform for all initiatives in the field of sustainable agriculture and food security.

The participants approved the adoption of the UN resolution on the [International Year of Plant Health 2020](#) on December 20, 2018.

The [Final Communiqué MACS–G20](#) recorded:

- The decision to establish an operational group co-chaired by Australia and the United States to develop guidelines for the working groups and initiatives of the MACS–G20 (the draft of these principles will be submitted for consideration and approval to representatives of the MACS countries two months before the 2020 meeting).

- A call to create an open scientific network at research institutes, universities, and diagnostic laboratories of G20 countries in the framework of fighting against transboundary plant pests.

- The need to continue scientifically promoting decision making as the basis for ensuring global food production. Research and innovation are critical to sustainable productivity growth in the agri-food sector, both at the country level and at the level of individual farmers. The G20 Agricultural Chief Scientists are called upon to play an important role in the formation, dissemination, and promotion of the necessary scientific knowledge. G20 Ministers of Agriculture were encouraged to support voluntary activities aimed at strengthening research cooperation in order to expand and introduce technologies and practices of climate-smart agriculture. It was recognized that the agricultural sector is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including in the context of greenhouse gas emissions and removals.

The meeting was preceded by a field trip to the rural areas of Miyagi Prefecture, affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and the 2011 tsunami. In the period of 2011–2019 a number of projects were implemented. They aimed at

streamlining and enlarging fields under various crops, introducing new technologies, implementing gardening, precision farming, and government support for private start-ups.

The participants visited two sites near the city of Sendai. The first was the greenhouse complexes for growing strawberries of the GRA company, which received support for the introduction of new technologies in horticulture (strawberry crown and UV radiation temperature control techniques to combat strawberry mildew); the second was the fields of the Ido Agricultural Corporation, which collaborated with the Government of Japan on the implementation of direct sowing of rice in the regions affected by the tsunami.

The results of the Tokyo meeting were used to support the G20 agriculture ministerial meetings that took place in Niigata, Japan, on May 11 and 12, 2019.

Demonstration of the "robot tractors" on the fields of Ido Agricultural Corporation



Photo credit: ECFS

Nur-Sultan: Symposium on Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition Governance for Healthy Diets in Central Asia and Caucasus

By Anastasia Fabrichnova

As part of the second coordination meeting of the regional platform for capacity building and nutrition partnership, a symposium on managing sustainable food systems to ensure healthy

nutrition in the countries of Central Asia and Kazakhstan took place on April 24–26, 2019, in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan.

The symposium was organized by the Regional Platform for Capacity Building in Nutrition, with the participation of the Capacity Development Network in Nutrition in Central and Eastern Europe ([CAPNUTRA](#)), the regional offices of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund ([UNICEF](#)), the World Health Organization UN ([WHO](#)), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations ([FAO](#)), and the UN World Food Programme ([WFP](#)).

The aim of the symposium was to promote a deeper understanding of food systems and nutrition management, as well as to raise awareness of the importance of increasing in nutrition and food systems among eight countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus.

The participating countries were Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and. Members of parliaments; representatives of the ministries of health, agriculture, and finance; and nutrition and health experts were invited delegates from the participating countries.

Outreach support for the symposium was provided by UN experts and representatives from academic organizations, as well as ministries and departments from Belgium, Finland, France, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, and Serbia.

The first day was devoted to information support aimed at raising the awareness of participants about sustainable food systems. The symposium presented mechanisms for the

A mother of two children tells about the problems that her family faces when choosing and buying food



emergence of economic profits from the eradication of malnutrition, reviewed the structure of sustainable food systems for healthy nutrition in general, and discussed ways to create healthy nutrition for children and adolescents. Malnutrition in all its forms (hunger, malnutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, excess nutrition) adversely affects cognitive development and human health.

The benefits of eradicating malnutrition in young children are enormous. It reduces child mortality and morbidity, increases the proportion of children enrolled in school, increases the length of a child's schooling by at least one year and significantly improves the child's quality of education, increases the wages earned as an adult by 50 percent, interrupts the intergenerational cycle of poverty, reduces poverty in general, and boosts GDP growth. For example, the eradication of malnutrition in Africa and Asia has already led to an increase in countries' GDP of 11 percent.

In Central Asia, the problem of malnutrition is significant. According to experts, the total cost of malnutrition for the regional economy is US\$32 million per country per year.

Generally, according to the FAO Regional Survey on Food Security and Nutrition for 2018, from 2005 to 2014, malnutrition in Central Asia and the Caucasus decreased by 50 percent (from 11.0 to 5.9 percent on average). Since 2014, there has been a slight increase in malnutrition (from 5.9 percent to 6.2 percent). The shortage of micronutrients, which is more characteristic of the countries of Central Asia than of the Caucasus region, has decreased there since 2000 from 40.8 percent to 33.8 percent. However, the level of micronutrient deficiencies in the region remains high compared with the countries of the European Union (which average 18.7 percent). The prevalence of obesity has also increased, from 13.2 to 21.0 percent in Central Asia, and from 9.9 to 16.8 percent in the Caucasus.

The second day of the symposium was devoted to considering the peculiarities of the food systems of participating countries and identifying

existing problems and gaps, especially with regard to children's food. Delegates prepared detailed reports on the national food systems of the countries they represented.

From 2000 to 2010, according to reports submitted by delegates from focus countries, there has been a sharp decrease in the effects of undernourishment—such as short stature and low birthweight—in the region. However, in some countries the problem of malnutrition is still quite acute.

For example, according to 2013 data, in Azerbaijan the prevalence of the effects of malnutrition among children is seen in stunting rates of 18 percent, wasting rates of 3.1 percent, and of low birthweight rates of 4.9 percent. The prevalence of anemia in the region is high (24.2 percent), iron deficiency (15.0 percent), and vitamin A deficiency (8.0 percent).

Experts noted that insufficient dietary diversity, insufficient consumption of vegetables and fruits, and frequent consumption of poor-quality food and fast food leads to poor nutrition in young children, which persists in adolescence. According to UNICEF, only 20–39 percent of children in the receive minimally sufficient food from the necessary food groups. Deficiencies in school feeding are also of great concern: food provided through school feeding programs is also characterized by low diversity and a lack of protein and fiber.

The expert group reviewed the approaches needed to create sustainable food systems. It was noted that the adaptation of food systems for a healthy diet is a complex task that covers all parts of the food chain (production, processing, trade, storage, marketing, consumption), as well

as related areas (politics, education, medicine, social protection).

In the presentation, invited as a speaker, a nutrition expert from the Eurasian Center for Food Security of Lomonosov Moscow State University **Anastasia Fabrichnova** reviewed nutrition-sensitive agricultural food production. Currently, the main mechanisms for creating sustainable food systems are the diversification of production on both large and small scales, the introduction of biodiversity (production of valuable food crops that are new for the region), the intensification of livestock and fisheries, biofortification (production of varieties with high nutritional value), support for horticulture, and so on. The main ways to solve the region's existing problems in relation to agricultural production, according to experts, include rejecting the large-scale production of monocultures, orienting the value chain to small producers, and avoiding price controls on agricultural products.

Importance in the improvement of nutrition is also given to consumer choice. Among the measures necessary to create optimal conditions for choosing a healthy diet are monitoring food advertising for children and adolescents; labeling products with their nutritional content; regulating the content of salt, trans-fats, and sugar in food products; as well as providing consumer education and nutrition education for health specialists.

The third day of the symposium was devoted to the development of an action plan by the delegates of the participating countries together with a group of UN experts to further address nutrition issues in the region. In order to support and monitor the activities of its results, it was decided to hold a symposium on food systems management on this platform annually.

Event Calendar 2019

Date	City, Country	Event
May 20–24	Antwerp, Belgium	AquaConSoil: 15th International Conference Sustainable Use and Management of Soil, Sediment and Water Resources
May 28	Moscow, Russia	The International Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition in Eurasia Featuring IFPRI's 2019 Global Food Policy Report
June 4–7	Gelendzhik, Russia	Grain market - yesterday, today, tomorrow
June 20–21	Istanbul, Turkey	International Conference on Agronomy and Food Science and Technology (AgroFood)
June 26–28	Halle (Saale), Germany	IAMO FORUM 2019: Small Farms in Transition: How to Stimulate Inclusive Growth?
July 2–5	Stavropol and Kislovodsk, Russia	Russian Society for Ecological Economics Conference
September 10–13	Leeuwarden, the Netherlands	Saline Futures Conference: Addressing Climate Change and Food Security (some grants for fees and travel costs are available for young researchers and farmers)
September 25–27	Braunschweig, Germany	59th GEWISOLA Annual Conference 2019
October 9–11	Hannover, Germany	Extreme Events: Building Climate Resilient Societies
October 29–31	Yerevan, Armenia	The Eurasian Food Security Conference 2019
December 5–6	Sochi, Russia	World Soil Day–2019 (conference website will be available later)