



United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

International Youth Day 2021 Webinar

Official Commemoration

The theme of International Youth Day 2021 is **“Transforming Food Systems: Youth Innovation for Human and Planetary Health”**, with the aim of highlighting that the success of such a global effort will not be achieved without the meaningful participation of young people.

The need for inclusive support mechanisms to amplify young people’s efforts to collectively and individually restore the planet and protect life, while integrating biodiversity in the transformation of food systems, is widely recognized. With the world’s population expected to increase by 2 billion people in the next 30 years, numerous stakeholders recognize that simply producing a larger volume of healthier food more sustainably will not ensure human and planetary wellbeing. Other crucial challenges also have to be addressed, such as the interlinkages embodied by the 2030 Agenda including poverty reduction; social inclusion; health care; biodiversity conservation; and climate change mitigation. Furthermore, the issues that led to a destructive trade-off of planetary health to feed and provide essential resources to today’s population. In sum, we can no longer take for granted the ability of our ecosystems to sustain future generations.

Food systems include not only the basic elements of how we get food from farms to the table, but also all of the processes and infrastructure involved in feeding a population, as well as the negative externalities that can be generated during the process, such as food waste, air and ocean pollution as well as desertification. Moreover, we cannot overlook consumer behavior as consumers are one of the major stakeholders of the food systems. There is also the risk of zoonotic diseases that can stem from unsustainable farming practices and the climate crisis. Population health is also key in addressing food systems challenges, especially as nutrition-related chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and some forms of cancer are major contributors to the global burden of disease.

It is within the framework of the 2021 International Youth Day that the United Nations’ Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) are organizing a webinar, which will act as the official commemoration event of this important day.

The objective of the webinar is to create a unique dialogue by bringing together actively engaged youth working in this space, as well as other stakeholders from different walks of life, to mutually learn from one another. We aim for this webinar to promote innovation, knowledge exchange, and youth engagement by continuing the momentum to the high-level United Nations Food Systems Summit in September. The main audience will be Member States, youth, academics, actors from NGOs and the private sector, as well as other UN officials.

We hope you will enjoy this webinar and join us in celebrating International Youth Day!

International Youth Day Webinar Agenda

Welcome:

- **Aliye Mosaad** – Associate Expert, Division of Inclusive Social Development, Programme on Youth, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Introductory Remarks:

- **Daniela Bas** – Director of the Division of Inclusive Social Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Segment 1: Youth Innovation for Food Consumption Solutions

Discussion will focus on the need for solutions championed by youth leaders to tackle today's food consumption patterns that need to be altered to become more sustainable and environmentally friendly. This panel will discuss the much important issue of food waste in different communities. Experts will discuss high-tech food waste solutions through community mobilization in the context of advanced countries, and also traditional knowledge rooted in culture to tackle food waste in developing countries. The panel will also discuss the difficulties in promoting plant-based diets. Finally, while on one hand food waste will be addressed, initiatives and movements to tackle food insecurity in vulnerable communities, such as refugees, will be discussed.

Moderator: Lana Weidgenant – Youth Vice Chair of Shifting to Sustainable Consumption for the UN Food Systems Summit

- **Abdulaziz AlMulla** – Founder & CEO, Madar Farms
- **Varun Deshpande** – Managing Director, The Good Food Institute India
- **Shahini Vallipuram** – Financial Controller, Winnow
- **Kerry Brodie** – Founder and Executive Director, Emma's Torch

Video Presentation:

- **Alpha Sennon** – Founder, WHYFARM, Trinidad and Tobago

Segment 2: Nutrition Education, Health, and Inequalities in Access to Nutritious Food

This roundtable will discuss the current trend of food production and consumption that is rapidly shifting from traditional to westernized patterns, and how these patterns are linked to exploitative market dynamics that benefit only the privileged communities. The experts will address issues of accessibility to organic and healthy food. Issues pertaining to the incidence of nutrition consumption and heart-disease, cancer in young people and the need for including nutrition in medical and public health curriculum will be discussed. The benefits of a plant-powered or plant-dominant diet will be addressed. Finally, social movements and the participation of youth will be discussed.

Moderator: Lianna Levine Reisner – President & Network Director, Plant Powered Metro New York

- **Dr. Thomas Campbell** – Assistant Professor of Family Medicine, University of Rochester
- **Ayanna Besson** – Public Health Doctoral Student in Epidemiology, SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University, School of Public Health - Brooklyn, NY
- **Dr. Timo Bartholl** – Professor of the Department of Geography, Fluminense Federal University (UFF)/Member of Roca! Community Collective

Video Presentation:

- **Dr. Kate Tilleczek** – Professor and Canada Research Chair and Director, Young Lives Research Laboratory (YLRL), York University Canada

Segment 3: Food Systems and Planetary Health

This panel will discuss food systems in the context of planetary health. The focus of this segment will be to bring attention to the science of planetary health encompassing the private sector, policy, social movements and the civil society. The impact of the climate crisis on small farmers, the role of the private sector in sustainability, policy impact on ecoanxiety and social movements will be discussed. The segment will also focus on the effects of climate change on fisheries and indigenous fish species, decolonial approaches to climate change and the role of indigenous youth in the area.

Moderator: Vanessa García Polanco – Federal Policy Director, National Young Farmers Coalition

- **Karen Meinders** – Global Sustainability Communications Leader, Corteva Agriscience
- **Joanna Wagner** – Community Building Coordinator, Planetary Health Alliance
- **Dr. James Stinson** – Postdoctoral Fellow, Planetary Health and Education/ Dahdaleh Institute of Global Health Research/ Young Lives Research Lab, Faculty of Education, York University, Canada
- **Dr. Courtney Howard** – Past-President of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE)

Video Presentation:

- **Olawale, Rotimi Opeyemi** – Founder/CEO JR Farms Africa

Segment 4: Indigenous Youth and Food Systems Transformation

Although Indigenous Peoples are among those who contribute the least to global warming, they are among those most impacted by climate change. Indigenous Peoples have over centuries, with holistic management of their natural resources, developed practices that can play a significant role in containing climate change's impacts on natural resources and food security. This round table will focus on climate change; Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge and interculturality; land and natural resource management; Indigenous Peoples' food systems; and biocentric ecosystem restoration.

Moderator: Malachi Johnson – Gooreng Gooreng Traditional Custodian, Tumra Project Manager, Darumbal Enterprises

- **Ida Stromso** – Focal Point for Indigenous Youth and Food Security, FAO Indigenous Peoples Unit
- **Nutdanai Trakansuphakon** – Co-founder and Owner of Little Farm in Big Forest, Thailand
- **Mai Thin Yu Mon** – Indigenous UN Food Systems Champion, Director of the Indigenous Peoples Development Program of the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) and Focal Point for the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus in Asia

Video Presentation:

- **Haowa Bello** – CEO & Founder of Fula Farms and Madame Coquette

Wrap-up: Closing Remarks

- **Benjamin Davis** – Director of the Inclusive Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division at FAO
- **Pramisha Thapaliya** – Sustainable Development Goal 2 Global Focal Point, Major Group for Children and Youth Focal Point in Support of the United Nations Food Systems Summit