

DRAFT Statement,
to be delivered by dr. István NAGY minister of agriculture of Hungary at
the UN Food Systems Summit

Dear Secretary-General,
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour to represent my country at this noble event of Food Systems Pre-Summit, which is the first important milestone in the process of Food Systems Summit and will hopefully be followed by many others.

Rising hunger and poverty, the COVID 19 pandemic, rising population, the climate change stress the high relevance of Food Systems Summit.

We are in a time constraint in our battle against the above mentioned negative phenomena as creating sustainable food systems is a complex task that requires an integrated approach. Key areas of focus include healthy and sustainable food, which is closely linked to sustainable water and land use, more consumption of local and seasonal food, short supply chains and credible, reliable information.

In order to help consumers make good decisions, it is vital to share clear and verifiable information through advertisements and information that encourage a more thoughtful and conscious consumption.

Hungary is highly devoted to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. We have held consultations through national dialogues about sustainability to improve food production and consumption policies and practices aimed at protecting and improving the health and well-being of individuals. One of the main findings was that consumer choices are profoundly shaping the strategies of other food chain actors.

Therefore, in Hungary, we believe that the most important ally of food business organisations is the consumer. In order to shape consumer behaviour, we have started some long-run campaigns. Among these let me mention the "Get smart

about food", a campaign aimed at a more appropriate consumer food safety risk perception, which aims to reduce food-borne illnesses on the long term.

Another good practice is the "Wasteless" Project with the goal of increasing the sustainability of food consumption and the reduction of food waste at consumer level. Food business operators, universities and NGOs have been participating in the implementation of the project. Hungary is proud that in Hungary, 10% of the food purchased ends up in the garbage cans, while globally, an average of 30% of food is wasted, in the European Union this number is 20%. As a result of the Wasteless project, a 4% decrease was observed in household food waste. During the last 5 years, every student between the age of 10 and 12 received the educational materials of this program in primary schools.

This work has been supported by the "Food is Value Forum", established by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Hungarian Food Bank Association. We have learnt that long lasting results can be achieved only through shaping the mentality of the next generation of consumers – that is our children. Over the last years these programs reached more than 400,000 children and young adults. Let me stress that the success of building a more sustainable food supply system, to a very great extent, depends on the awareness and behaviour of our consumers! I also wish to mention another of our awareness raising programs: the environmental education program launched by the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture, that addresses health and environmental awareness issues to children from kindergarten through secondary school.

Besides the Green Kindergarten Program, the Eco-School Program and the "Save a garden!" program, the National School Garden Development Program also contributes to learning about the importance of the healthy diet already in childhood.

These programs educate on responsibility, collaboration, respect of carefully produced crops and ultimately for reducing food waste and healthy diet.

Our school milk and fruit programs, also serve the healthy diet of children, as do the recent reform of school buffets and canteens. In order to reduce unhealthy diets, a public health product tax has also been introduced, mainly affecting non-essential foods with high sugar and salt content.

We have achieved a lot, but there is still plenty to do. For example, by using precision technology we can achieve safe agricultural production and higher quality of products with less environmental degradation.

Finally, it is a great pleasure to inform you that under the patronage of Mr János Áder, President of Hungary, the Planet Budapest 2021 Sustainability Expo and Summit will be held at the end of this year in Budapest.

The objective of Planet Budapest 2021 is to contribute to sustainable development by offering widely applicable, innovative and pragmatic solutions to the challenges of sustainable development. I sincerely hope many of you can also participate at this important event.

In the hope that we can create a more sustainable, climate resilient food system together, I wish all of us to make great progress on the way towards sustainability! Thank you for your attention.