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20 NOVEMBER 2019

THE FUTURE OF FOOD CONFERENCE

Conference, BRUSSELS

PROGRAMME



Morning conference

PROGRAMME

09.00 - 09.45 Registration and welcome coffee

09.45-10.00

INTRODUCTION **OPENING REMARKS**

Speakers:

Andy Zynga, Chief Executive Officer at EIT Food

Dharmendra Kanani, Director of Insights at Friends of Europe

10.00-10.15

SCENE SETTING **FOOD: AN ENGINE FOR SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION**

Globally, the agrifood sector is not fit for purpose. Changing attitudes towards the environment, health and lifestyle and depleting resources are forcing the sector to adapt to 21st century challenges. Humanity's demand for ecological resources and services in a given year exceeds what earth can regenerate in that year. Malnutrition and obesity have become pandemics, intensive farming practices have led to erosion and decline in soil quality, biodiversity is plummeting, and the climate breakdown is now impossible to ignore. However, these challenges also present opportunities to the way we produce, consume and share food. Behavioural research on consumerism, new farming methods, new ingredients and the application of digital technologies to food production show there are opportunities for change.

10.15-11.15

PLENARY SESSION 1 **WHAT ARE THE KEY LEVERS FOR TRANSFORMING THE FOOD SYSTEM AND DELIVERING IMPACT?**

Europe understands the need for food system transformation, as demonstrated by its aim to remove barriers to innovation and investments through Horizon 2020 and, in the future, Horizon Europe funding. Additionally, Food 2030 addresses food and nutrition security questions in the form of R&I policy responses. Europe wouldn't be Europe if it wasn't developing innovative solutions. Plant-based and lab-grown meat alternatives are gaining ground in supermarkets and stock markets. We now know that through listening to consumers and embracing digitalisation, it is possible to find new solutions which could feed the world, address health issues and tackle the environmental crisis. But between innovative research and the generation of impact there is a huge gap to cover, so identifying the right tools at Europe's disposal will be a key determinant of future success.

Questions include:

- How can Europe leverage its high-quality research to innovate its food production and consumption?
- Do we have the entrepreneurial skills and investment tools to identify and develop the right innovations, and bring them to the market?
- What policies are needed to build the future of food in Europe and how will the EU ensure the coherence and complementarity of such policies?

Speakers:

John Bell, Healthy Planet Director at the European Commission Directorate-General for Research and Innovation

Moderated by:

Dharmendra Kanani, Director of Insights at Friends of Europe

11.15-11:45 Coffee break

PARALLEL WORKSHOPS

REVOLUTIONISING THE FOOD SYSTEM: TAKING PEOPLE ON BOARD

Consumers are kingmakers in the world of food – their dietary choices dictate what large and small companies will invest in. That’s why understanding consumer behaviour and attitudes is key to shaping the future of food. Analysing the treasure trove of data on consumer trends and preferences can focus minds on where action is most effective. Alternatively, behavioural scientists can help us understand how best to nudge consumers in the direction of healthy and sustainable diets. At present, consumers are disconnected from the food production system. Evolving from a linear to a circular food system will encourage consumers to participate in the food system again and create local food communities. In 2050, 80% of food will be consumed in cities, giving citizens the power to revolutionise the food system.

Questions include:

- What are the key drivers of consumer behaviours which shape people’s diets?
- What can Europe do to make consumers engage with food production?
- Can the trust between producers and consumers be improved through digital solutions?
- Could regions and cities be at the forefront of the food revolution?

PARALLEL WORKSHOPS

PROTEIN: THE BATTLE FOR THE CENTRE OF THE PLATE

Innovative dairy and meat alternatives are taking the global food industry by storm. Be it algae, insects or plants: traditional protein sources will have to compete for their spot in the food chain. In their pursuit of environment-friendly and healthy eating habits, consumers are starting to question their meat and fish consumption. Global warming also requires a change in diet, given that livestock and overfishing are responsible for a large extent of food-related greenhouse gas emissions. However, global demand for these products is projected to massively increase and be unsustainable by 2050. In response to these worrying trends, leading publications, The Lancet and Science, propose diversifying protein sources and switching to a largely plant-based diet to sustain our ever-growing population and remain within the planetary boundaries.

Questions include:

- How can policymakers help consumers shift to a healthy and sustainable diet, with greater diversity of protein sources?
- How do we find the right balance between innovation, consumer acceptance and producing at scale to satisfy investors?
- If the future of food means less animal-based proteins in our diet, how will the EU cope with the transition towards a less intensive livestock sector?

PARALLEL WORKSHOPS

TRANSFORMING FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION WITH DIGITALISATION

Europe's agriculture sector is still responsible for 10-11% of total greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, unsustainable farming practices are an important driver of biodiversity loss and environmental degradation. Digitalisation – whether it pertains to new technologies, the analysis of big data or the development of online and spatial applications – can contribute to achieving systemic food production transformation in a way that aligns the sector more closely with contemporary sustainability and health challenges. New techniques and systems are emerging to help us achieve these goals, such as using artificial intelligence for smart farming, precision and urban farming. ICT also offers opportunities to renew business models in the food value chains by connecting producers to consumers, setting-up innovative marketing channels, new types of short food supply chains or improving logistics.

Questions include:

- Can digitalisation be harnessed to create new successful business models that optimise the sustainable use of natural resources along the food system?
- How can farmers use digital technologies to increase consumers' understanding of challenges and opportunities in food production?
- What are the main obstacles to the uptake of digital technologies in the agri-food sector and what can the EU do to overcome them?

13.15-14.15 Lunch

Lunch will be organic and make innovative use of food waste.

14.15-15.00

FOOD FOR THOUGHT **REPORTING FROM WORKSHOPS**

Rapporteurs from the morning workshops will come together in a plenary session to discuss the results from the various parallel sessions. Each will outline the main statements and points that were made during their workshops as well as identify two key themes to be further explored. All will be shared with the conference audience and discussed during the next session.

15.00-15.15 *Choosing your table*

15.15-16.00

GOING FORWARD **TABLE SESSIONS: DRIVING CHANGE THROUGH CO-CREATION**

Table conversations among participants run in parallel on topics that were identified in the session before. Each table (maximum 6) will 'inherit' an idea/solution from one of the workshops and each will be asked to provide a set of concrete recommendations to the EU as a whole to promote that solution.

Each roundtable lead will ensure the focus is on what the EU can do to turn solutions into impact. Recommendations will be collected and compiled in a report to be disseminated after the event.

16.00-16.15 *Conclusions and end of conference*



Friends of Europe

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