

# In action

Joining forces to shape  
a resilient, sustainable,  
safe & healthy food  
system !



March 2021

## In a foreword

Dear readers,

1 Achieving a fresh food system that is healthy, inclusive and sustainable has always been one of WUWM's main objectives. Our wholesale markets are fully committed to a future in which everyone can access healthy and safe food easily. A future in which produce is sourced and sold using sustainable practices so that our current future generations can enjoy fresh and high-quality diets. It is therefore important that our wholesale markets are fully committed to making the United Nation's 2021 Food System's Summit (UNFSS) a success. That's why we decided to make our March newsletter a special edition about the UNFSS.

The Summit was launched to establish actions that will help achieve a sustainable food industry by 2030. Governments, organizations, and communities around the world are brought together through different means to think about the future of our food system. The results and follow-up of the Summit will be presented in September this year. We have been actively supporting the Summit's organization in examining game-changing solutions to improve our sector. As you know we are also organizing an independent dialogue to examine the role of wholesale markets in the transition towards a sustainable food system.

Covid-19 and the resulting inequities have reinforced the need for urgent action to address the main challenges linked to food security. It has also increased poverty rates and disrupted food supply chains worldwide, that is why we need to find solutions to improve our current agricultural practices and their environmental effects, as well as feed a growing urban population, and tackle climate change.



An effective fresh food supply chain with smart logistics requires improvements in urban planning and major investments in food infrastructures. Wholesale markets are key participants to ensure a vibrant fresh-food ecosystem for all actors that can continuously offer safe, quality, affordable, healthy, and sustainable food to cities.

In the coming months we will have discussions with wholesale markets and other food experts around the world in our independent dialogues on April 8th, 13th, and 14th to make a contribution to this Summit. It is with great pleasure that I announce Ms Agnes Kalibata, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Food System's Summit, has agreed to an interview with WUWM for this edition of the newsletter to talk about the importance of the UN's 2021 Summit and why it is crucial that wholesale markets are included in this event.

We count upon your participation!

Yours sincerely,

**Eugenia Carrara**, Secretary General

# In the loop

## Board of Directors elections

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Eleven board of directors positions will be open for elections before WUWM's conference in Florence on June 25, 2021. Our board is looking for directors who can be important to the goals of WUWM and can create added value to the current team !

The specifics for applicants are the following:

- He/She must represent a member in good standing of the Union for a period of at least one year.
- Apply before April 24th, 2021 with a motivation letter and curriculum vitae.

The elected board members will serve for a mandate of 4 years with the chairman and vice chairman. We encourage engaged candidates to send their applications. For more details on the elections, please contact WUWM's Secretariat at [e.carrara@wuwm.org](mailto:e.carrara@wuwm.org)

**Eleven board of directors positions will be open for elections before WUWM's conference in Florence**

**In 2020 an estimated 2 billion people in the world did not have regular access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food.**

## In facts

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- In 2020 an estimated **2 billion** people in the world did not have regular access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food.
- The number of people affected by severe food insecurity is close to 750 million –nearly one in ten persons in the world-.
- UN reports point out that the COVID-19 pandemic could tip over 130 million more people into chronic hunger.
- The diet-related social cost of greenhouse gas emissions associated with current dietary patterns is estimated to be more than USD 1.7 trillion per year by 2030.
- Healthy diets are estimated to be, on average, five times more expensive than diets that meet only dietary energy needs through a starchy staple.
- Nearly 60% percent of the population of sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia cannot afford a healthy diet.
- Malnutrition is the single largest contributor to disease in the world.



# Insightful :

## the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) launched practical guidance to keep markets safe

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One of the world's leading organizations to tackle malnutrition, the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), recently launched a set of tools to help markets get through the current pandemic and maintain a high level of safety for workers, customers, and the products sold. With GAIN, we believe that everyone in the world should have access to nutritious, safe, and affordable food. Therefore, we joined forces to maintain open street markets worldwide!

### 3 **Could you briefly introduce what tools you have developed and published?**

We have developed a guideline to help traditional markets remain safe places free of Covid-19. The guideline is presented in different visual formats, including booklets, posters, and short animations, and is designed to be accessible and relevant to local and regional audiences. The materials are made available in the form of 'toolkits' that can be easily reproduced and used by local partner organizations, at little or no cost. It can be shared in print or online, including through social media channels.

### **How are these tools in line with GAIN's field of work and mission?**

These tools are part of a set of responses that GAIN is currently doing, under the "Keeping Food Markets Working initiative" and with the major goal to protect and sustain food systems in the face of covid-19. By helping to keep fresh food markets open, we are focused on mitigating the immediate risks that Covid-19 poses, in the markets, and keeping affordable nutritious foods flowing in African and Asian markets, to the people who most need it.

**We are focused on keeping affordable nutritious foods flowing in African and Asian markets, to the people who most need it.**

### **What are some of the best ways markets can use these materials?**

A series of short animations have been produced. Each animation is tailored to a particular audience – market authorities, vendors or consumers – and each focuses on one topic, such as hygiene, social distancing, payments, or what to do if experiencing symptoms. All the materials emphasize the importance of street markets to communities, while explaining that markets are also places where Covid-19 can spread quickly. These guidelines were developed through a highly collaborative process with the country representatives and review in consultation with vendors and consumers

*We encourage all our retail markets to check out the tools which can be found here:*

[https://www.gainhealth.org/media/news/practical-guidance-keep-markets-open-and-safe.](https://www.gainhealth.org/media/news/practical-guidance-keep-markets-open-and-safe)

*WUWM thanks Augusto Diogo Navarro de Almeida, Program Manager for GAIN's Keeping Food Markets Working Initiative for this interview.*



# Interview :

## Dr. Agnes Kalibata, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the 2021 Food Systems Summit

We are very grateful that Dr. Agnes Kalibata has accepted an interview for this newsletter. Dr. Kalibata is the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Summit, she served as Rwanda's minister of agriculture and animal resources from 2008 to 2014, and she is the president of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). WUWM is fully committed to making the UN's Food Systems Summit a success! Here are our questions to Dr. Kalibata:

### **Why is the Food Systems Summit an important event for the world?**

The term "food system" refers to the constellation of activities involved in producing, processing, transporting and consuming food. Food systems touch every aspect of human existence. The health of our food systems profoundly affects the health of our bodies, as well as the health of our environment, our economies and our cultures. When they function well, food systems have the power to bring us together as families, communities and nations.

But too many of the world's food systems are fragile, unexamined and vulnerable to collapse, as millions of people around the globe have experienced first-hand during the COVID-19 crisis. When our food systems fail, the resulting disorder threatens our education, health and economy, as well as human rights, peace and security. As in so many cases, those who are already poor or marginalized are the most vulnerable.

The good news is that we know what we need to do to get back on track. Scientists agree that transforming our food systems is among the most powerful ways to change course and make progress towards all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Rebuilding the food systems of the world will also enable us to answer the UN Secretary-General's call to "build back better" from COVID-19. We are all part of the food system, and so we all must come together to bring about the transformation that the world needs.



This is why the Food Systems Summit is an important event for the world.

### **Why is the Summit an important event for you personally?**

The Food Systems Summit gives me an opportunity to start helping people understand that climate change happening in so many, in whatever places, is impacting communities. And for these communities, it takes away everything. It's just not acceptable. We have to work to help build the resilience of these communities. We have to work to help build adaptation to climate change. But more importantly, we have to deal with the climate change issue and the Food Systems Summit gives me that opportunity to highlight all these issues, to show people how interconnected our world is. COVID-19 has definitely shown us that. But also, even before COVID-19, we are interconnected. You're hurting us by what you're doing in places that are so far removed. But maybe we are also hurting you by cutting down trees for charcoal, wherever.

And the thing is, we can all do something about it. And we need to fix it, because I think we've come to a place where our world can't take it. Our planet can't take it any more. And the people that are suffering today the most don't even understand what is going on in the world or how this is happening.

### **What is your role in the Summit and how do you experience it thus far?**

As the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy, I work with the United Nations system and key partners to provide leadership, guidance and strategic direction towards the 2021 Food Systems Summit. I am responsible for outreach and cooperation with key leaders, including governments, to ensure the Summit serves as a catalytic process within the Decade of Action to improve food systems around the world to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Paris Agreement.

We now are in the Food Systems Summit and we have drawn out the key goals that really show that food systems are part of ensuring that we come through zero hunger, which is not impossible. I know it's possible to come through zero hunger. I have seen it with my own eyes.

As Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Food Systems' Summit, what keeps me awake these days is the fear that I would let these communities down. Those people are me. Those people are my parents. I grew up in that environment, in that landscape. I now know, having been a scientist and seen the opportunities that are around the world, I know that they can get out of there. I've seen it when we try to get them out of there, that they can get out of there. I hope that we can come through for them.

Hunger is increasing every year, why? So that's number one. Number two is I actually need to convince the world. I know the world is nearly there, but we actually need all to be convinced that we don't have a plan B. We only have one plan and that one plan is to correct how we do business around our food systems, around the environment, and what our environment can handle.

You know, our planet can take care of itself. It will eject all of us and move on. But is that where we want to be? Is that where we want to be? No, we are human beings. We are people. We are innovative. We are creative. We've come this far. We need to scale back and live in harmony with our world. You know, I wake up planning. I wake up and I find myself saying, 'OK, did I have this meeting? Did I not have that meeting? Did I talk to so-and-so? Who did I bring on board? Who did I not bring on board? Will I be able to convince people that the time has come? That it's now or never?' You know, those are the things that keep me awake. (more on this subject is available on UN podcast 'Finding the Thing You Love' - Source)

**For producers, wholesale markets allow producers to aggregate their production, increase their market access and income, reduce post-harvest losses, and assure standards and food safety.**

5





### **What do the independent dialogues contribute to the Summit?**

The success of the 2021 Food Systems Summit depends on the engagement of citizens all over the world. By convening or joining an Independent Dialogue, you can have a seat at the table and contribute directly to the Summit's ambitious vision and objectives. But that's not all: Dialogues also give you the chance to learn from others in your community, form new partnerships, and explore important challenges facing your local food system.

Anyone with an interest in food systems is invited to convene an Independent Dialogue.

Independent Dialogues can take many forms — from a webinar to a town-hall meeting to an informal gathering of community members. A diverse range of stakeholders — including youth activists and indigenous leaders, smallholder farmers, fishers, scientists and CEOs — help to ensure that your Dialogue identifies the most powerful ways to make your food system stronger and more equitable.

Dialogue participants might include people who work to feed a population (including farmers, supermarket managers, and food marketers); people who work in sectors that shape food systems (such as transport, logistics and financial services); and people whose work affects other facets of food systems (including natural resources, the environment, culture, indigenous knowledge, trade, and more).

The Summit's only request is that three key features guide the Dialogues: 1) Respect the Summit's Principles of engagement; 2) Feature structured conversations among groups with different perspectives; and 3) Report back to the Summit process through an official feedback form.

By submitting the feedback form, you ensure that the outcome of your Dialogue will inform the Summit process and help to guide individual and collective action towards a future of food that is sustainable, equitable and secure. Don't miss this chance for you and members of your community to sit at the table at the milestone UN Food Systems Summit!

### **Why is it important to have the voice of wholesale markets included in the Summit?**

The private sector, in all its diversity, is invited to engage in the Summit process alongside academia, government, youth groups, women's organizations, smallholder farmer cooperatives, workers' unions, indigenous groups and civil society.

With wholesale markets being critical players in our food systems linking producers and consumers, they have the power as well as the responsibility to act with urgency to shift the world's food systems onto a path that is healthier, more sustainable and more equitable.

For producers, wholesale markets allow producers to aggregate their production, increase their market access and income, reduce post-harvest losses, and assure standards and food safety. For consumers, wholesale markets can also provide access to diversified, nutritious diets at affordable prices, as well as stable access to local products. All these are important aspects of a more sustainable food systems that the Summit is driving towards.

**For consumers, wholesale markets can also provide access to diversified, nutritious diets at affordable prices, as well as stable access to local products.**



# Hosting an independent dialogue is indeed a very important way for wholesale market to get involved, have your seat at the table, and contribute directly to the Summit's ambitious vision and objectives

## What will happen after the Summit, is there a follow-up ?

There will be an accountability and follow-up mechanism after the Summit to ensure the outcomes of the Summit can be delivered. This mechanism is currently in design stage.

7

It is also important to understand the current support structure for the Food Systems Summit, which includes a multistakeholder Advisory Committee, an independent Scientific Group, a system-wide UN Task Force, and a Champions Network seeking to bring in a wide range of ideas and drive a new coalition for change and collective action.

These structures draw on the strength and complementary views of different individuals and institutions by seeking diversity across geographies, constituencies, expertise, gender, age and other dimensions. The members identified for the structures are intended to get broader input from the networks that they connect into so that this is an inclusive Summit that mobilizes all countries and all people.

In addition, they will provide important feedback and strategic guidance, bring to bear the foremost scientific evidence, and help expand the base of shared knowledge about experiences, approaches, and tools for driving sustainable food systems, and ensure that there is a strong connection with the knowledge and unique capabilities of the UN system to deliver on this agenda beyond the Summit.

## What is your experience so far of the contributions to the Summit, has there been a lot of involvement from stakeholders across the food sector? And from member states ?

In keeping with the Summit's fundamental commitment to inclusivity, the Summit process is open to everyone. Not just another conference, this is truly a people's Summit, and everyone is encouraged to contribute – from smallholder farmers and research scientists, to indigenous leaders and corporate executives, to youth organizers and environmental activists, to supermarket cashiers and avid home cooks. This will be the first ever UN Food Systems Summit, but it builds on decades of countries, civil society and UN leadership and critical efforts to ensure food security and nutrition for all.

The 2021 Summit aims to engage a very broad set of actors in addition to those who typically engage within the food security and nutrition area, acknowledging the critical role of food systems to achieve all SDGs. The Food Systems Summit is not a platform for negotiation, but a time-bound opportunity to unleash ambitious new actions, innovative solutions, and plans to transform our food systems and leverage these shifts to deliver progress across all SDGs.

So far, the Summit is fortunate to have built on the leadership, evidence, knowledge, ideas, innovations, and actions that are emerging from many leading actors and institutions across the landscape, including in Member States, the UN System, and, particularly, the Committee on World Food Security. The Summit intends to help grow the movement around food systems and strengthen the role of existing institutions for the duration of the Decade of Action.

Specifically, United Nations Member States are central in defining and operationalizing solutions and actions that will allow food systems to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. Their engagement is essential in the preparatory process and in the delivery of the United Nations Food Systems Summit. During preparations for the Summit, we have been engaging with Member States to establish agile and innovative consultations, including regional and country consultations, such as the Food Systems Summit Dialogues (So far, over 70 countries have signed up for member states dialogues and over 60 of them have already nominated national convenors).

**We are all part of the food system, and so we all must come together to bring about the transformation that the world needs**

8

**What are some of the best ways for wholesale markets and other stakeholders in the food industry to get involved in addition to our independent dialogue?**

Hosting independent dialogue is indeed a very important way for wholesale market to get involved, have your seat at the table, and contribute directly to the Summit's ambitious vision and objectives.

In addition, we also encourage you to get engaged in the on-going member state dialogues, where conversations are happening at national level. So far, over 70 countries have signed up for member states dialogues and over 60 of them have already nominated national convenors. Find out if the country you are in is hosting a member state dialogue, and do participate and provide inputs.

We also welcome wholesale markets and other stakeholders to join the [food systems community site](#), which is a platform gathering key stakeholders across the food system and is open to everyone with an interest in following developments and contributing to the Summit.

*WUWM thanks Dr. Kalibata for this fantastic interview and we are determined to making the UN's 2021 Food Systems Summit a success and achieving a sustainable food industry by 2030 !*





# Incoming events

## WUWM's independent dialogues

WUWM will organize an independent dialogue series to support the United Nation's 2021 Food System Summit. Our series is called: 'Making Nutritious and Healthy Diets Available to All: Empowering a Sustainable and Resilient Fresh Food Supply Chain Worldwide'.

There will be three different sessions to include voices around the world:

- **April 8** – 5.30pm / 17.30 CET (Latin America session / in Spanish)
- **April 13** – 9.00am / 9.00 CET (Asian session / in English)
- **April 14** – 3.30pm / 15.30 CET (European session / in English)

The sessions will focus on three concrete topics of relevance to wholesale markets and the food industry:

- 1.** Nutritious Diets Accessible to All
- 2.** Smart Logistics and Urban Planning
- 3.** Reducing Food Waste

The dialogues will discuss some of the main issues and challenges wholesale markets and the fresh food industry are currently facing, where to be in 10 years from now, and how to achieve those objectives.

A wide range of stakeholders has been invited to these dialogues. The dialogues will be fantastic opportunities to examine the future of the fresh food sector with experts !

# In reality :

## Which is better to eat, cooked or raw veggies ?

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Phylogenetic analysis suggests that human ancestors may have invented cooking as far back as 1.8 million to 2.3 million years ago! Analysis of burnt bone fragments and plant ashes from the Wonderwerk Cave in South Africa proved that humans were making fires 1 million years ago. Anthropologists believe that widespread cooking fires began about 250,000 years ago when hearths (cooking stoves) first appeared in different parts of the world.

Cooking is directly linked to human evolution. Cooking can prevent many foodborne illnesses that would otherwise occur if the food is eaten raw, and it can kill or inactivate harmful organisms, such as bacteria and viruses, as well as various parasites. Cooking also increases the digestibility of many foods which are inedible or poisonous when eaten raw. However, there are some important considerations to be made when cooking your vegetables.

In fact, you must have also heard that it's better to eat some vegetables raw. Here are a few examples:

Broccoli are better to consume when they are raw, as they have three times the amount of sulforaphane compared to cooked ones, helping with cancer preventions.

Garlic is usually consumed cooked but can be eaten raw, which is even better because the raw form preserves all its beneficial nutrients. Most of the benefits of raw garlic come from the allicin enzyme. Allicin has anti-inflammatory, antioxidative, antibacterial, and anticancer properties

On the other hand, cooked carrots, spinach, mushrooms, asparagus, cabbage, peppers and many other vegetables supply more antioxidants, such as carotenoids and ferulic acid, to the body than when eaten raw.

The truth is that both raw fruit and vegetable have many healthy benefits for us and the decision should be made depending on the food! There are many facts that support both sides :

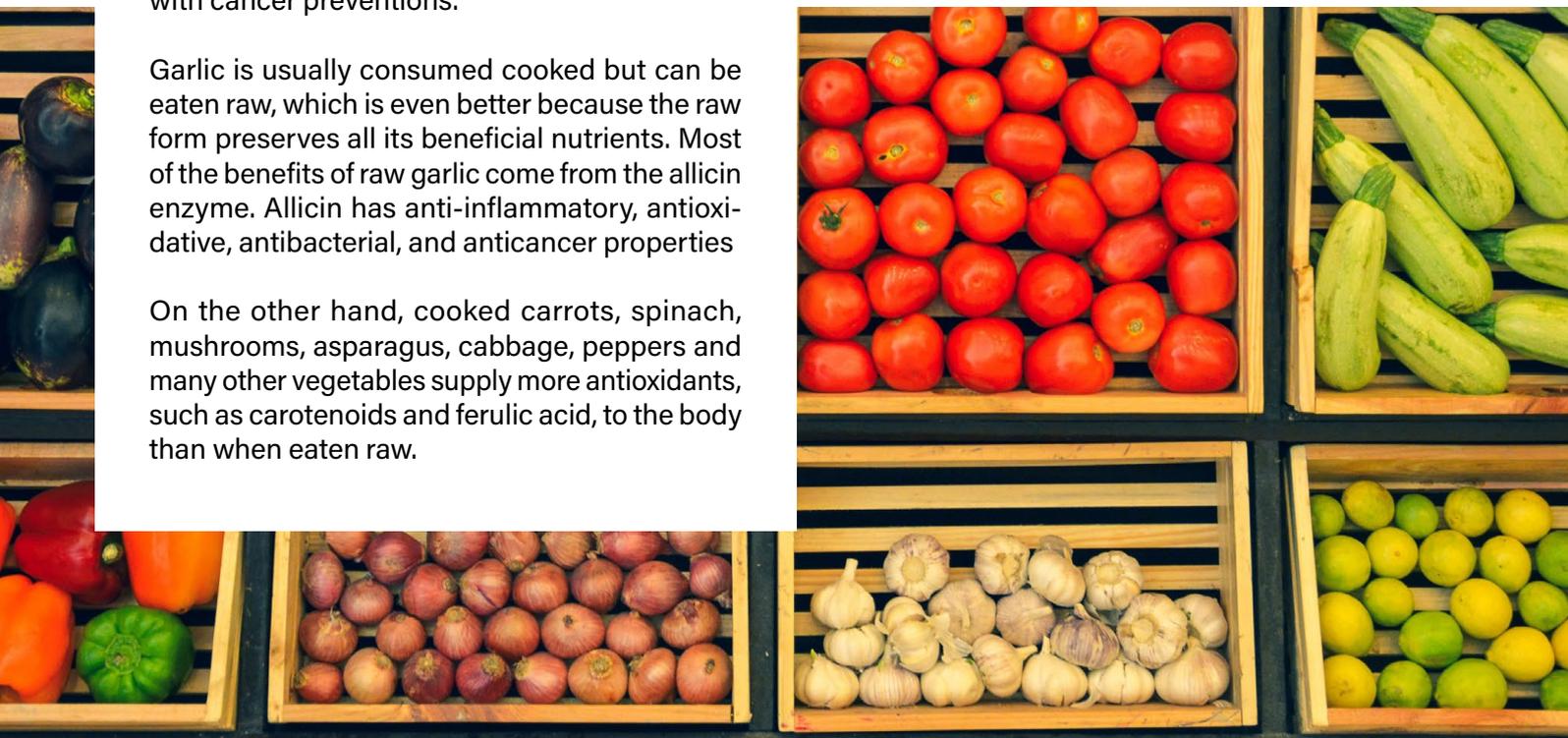
Cooking kills enzymes in your food as they are heat sensitive. Yet there is no evident found that the enzymes from your food contribute to your digestion.

Water-soluble vitamins are lost during cooking. This is the reason why raw fruits and vegetables contain more vitamin C and B than cooked one.

Some antioxidants in your food are more easily absorbed by your body after it's cooked.

Summing up, comparing the healthfulness of raw and cooked food is quite complicated. There are still many mysteries about how the different molecules in plants interact with the human body. The common ground is to eat more veggies and fruits, no matter how they're prepared !

## The common ground is to eat more veggies and fruits, no matter how they're prepared !



# In membership :

## WUWM's Regional chairmen share their engagement and vision for the UNFSS !

For this special edition of our newsletter our regional chairmen share their visions and priorities for the region with us in order to help make our sector sustainable and enhance food security.



**Arturo Fernández Martínez.** Chairman of WUWM's Americas Group and President of FLAMA

### 1) Why is it important for the markets in your region to have their voice included in the actions of the United Nations towards a more sustainable food system ?

To begin with, it is fair to say that we agree with the UN's actions for the food sector, we find it very important as part of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

In Latin America, our markets, wholesale and retail, are a vital force to families, cultures and communities. The challenges we face in the coming years are great and cannot be assumed in isolation, the effort requires consensus, inclusion

and committed participation of all stakeholders, from production, to collection, packaging, processing, distribution, sale, storage, marketing, consumption and the disposal of waste. All of the above makes the importance of a food summit very clear and how important it is for us in Latin America.

Our regional diagnosis, carried out over the last few years in collaboration with the FAO, coincides with the information that supports the UN Food System Summit. Currently, the way in which food is produced, processed, distributed, consumed and wasted has undergone profound changes that increasingly endanger the sustainability, equity and security of food in the future.

Throughout the length and breadth of our territories, the cultural, geographic, economic and social diversity of our people present different dimensions that require attention in a cross-cutting manner as they are connected to all aspects of our lives: Water, Land, Energy, Culture, Jobs, Technology, Economies and Public Policy.

## In Latin America, our markets, wholesale and retail, are a vital force to families, cultures and communities





For us, all this determines the importance of making our reality known and above all, showing the world how our markets in Latin America are responding in this stage of health and economic crisis that is currently affecting us and that will undoubtedly continue to be present in the immediate future.

The solutions for the future lie with us, the main protagonists of this great task of feeding humanity.

## 2) What are some of the principal challenges of markets in your region, and why would regional and international discussion of these challenges help advance concrete solutions?

The Covid-19 pandemic altered food systems around the world, affecting food security and nutrition of urban populations and Latin America is no exception. Given that up to 70% of the world's food supply is destined for urban consumption, the disruption suffered by these has especially affected the food distribution sectors through significant alterations throughout the production and distribution chain. The closure and restrictions on primary establishments as well as restrictions on the use of the food supply chain completely modified demand, volumes, quality and prices of products. This has undoubtedly impacted the food supply of people, especially the vulnerable population and those with some level of poverty, which has increased significantly in our region. Covid-19 also had a significant impact on the labor force related to primary food production and on employment in activities related to food services.

Today more than ever it is indispensable to have a space for reflection and analysis among the stakeholders of the global food system; governments need to demonstrate with greater strength their support for this topic. That is why I see this summit as a global milestone. I believe that it is essential to achieve the committed participation of all actors of the global food system and especially in our markets. I want to make it clear that a summit without the committed participation of governments will be fruitless.

## 3) What are the "game-changing" ideas wholesale markets could offer to ensure the availability of a healthy diet in your region?

This question is of particular importance to us, today, the solutions, initiatives and innovations that have emerged from our partners have allowed us to fulfill our mission of bringing food to families, in all latitudes and spaces of our regions.

Today, the «game-changers» that we can contribute, from our wholesale and retail markets, are related to the practices that we have implemented throughout our territory in the following areas:

- **Communication and permanent accompaniment** through the most important virtual community ever built in our sector, our forums and multi-thematic virtual meetings have reached everywhere, we are convinced that the spaces for communication and dialogue, the latter understood as knowing how to listen to each other, has given us a dimension of work in which our idea is, « we are not alone ».

- **Generation of protocols of good food management practices** in the midst of the crisis. On this issue we are proud to see success stories generated by initiatives of local actors shared in exchange networks that have generated, among other actions, direct purchases from local and regional producers, generation of school food packages and their approach to communities where schools remain closed; logistics and home delivery services and to public and private work centers; permanent monitoring of our markets and providing trainings.

- Finally, on the subject of «big ideas» we must **include the markets in the Urban Food Agenda** program. Is something that we are already doing in some countries, for instance they have allowed us to influence effective urban policies and establish collaboration agreements with governmental and civil society institutions; perhaps the greatest result is the **agreement to establish short supply chains and inclusive public purchases of food in our markets.**

I would like to emphasize the commitment of the entire Americas region to the International Food Summit 2021, and I would like to make it clear that we are all very interested in its realization and, consequently, its contribution to a better planet and, above all, a better food system.



**Zengjun Ma**, Chairman of WUWM and Chairman of WUWM's Asia-Pacific Group

**1) Why is it important for the markets in your region to have their voice included in the actions of the United Nations towards a more sustainable food system?**

With the large population and increasing economy of Asia-Pacific region, we contribute more and more to the global economy while enhancing our actions to achieve the sustainable development goals.

There are thousands of wholesale markets in the Asia-Pacific region, especially after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. These markets play a key role in keeping the supply chain and economy stable. Upgrading wholesale markets and establishing a more resilient supply chain in the Asia-Pacific region should be a part of the call for building a sustainable food system done by the United Nations. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, global citizens should realize the importance of wholesale markets in stabilizing the supply chain and the market prices of agricultural produce.

Meanwhile, people should also be aware of the importance of the construction and management of these markets. On that note, we should make our voice clear worldwide for the wholesale markets in the Asia-Pacific region.

**2) What are some of the principal challenges of markets in your region, and why would regional and international discussion of these challenges help advance concrete solutions?**

Currently, the agro-produce wholesale markets, except Japan and South Korea, of most developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region are faced with challenges, such as obsolete facilities and lack of supporting equipment, especially in small and medium agro-produce wholesale markets. In recent years, with the rapid development of economies in the Asia-Pacific region, the outdated planning, layout and infrastructures of wholesale markets are not able to meet the development of demand in this new era. The other challenges include:

**Low systematization in the process of agricultural production.** Agro-produce in the Asia-Pacific region is produced by tens of thousands of individuals with the characteristics of loose small scale organizations supplying various quantities. This means that it is difficult for producers to guarantee food safety both in thought and action during the production process. Moreover, the danger hid in the sector of inputs and the fresh storing during the production process will cause the difficulties in line with the market entrance regulation.

**Low packaging rate.** Fresh produce, especially for the vegetables, are less packaged in the Asia-Pacific region. From the process in the producing area to the final selling section, mountains of agro-produce pile up and a lack of regional ID packaging will lead to the difficulties in tracing back. Nevertheless, taking China for example, there is development of social economy, continuous improvement of governmental regulation systems and the increasing systematization in the production process together with the system of certificate of origin, which deepens the level of standardization and packaging rate in China. At present, the challenges that food safety has been faced with is changing and the overall food safety is stable and better-oriented.

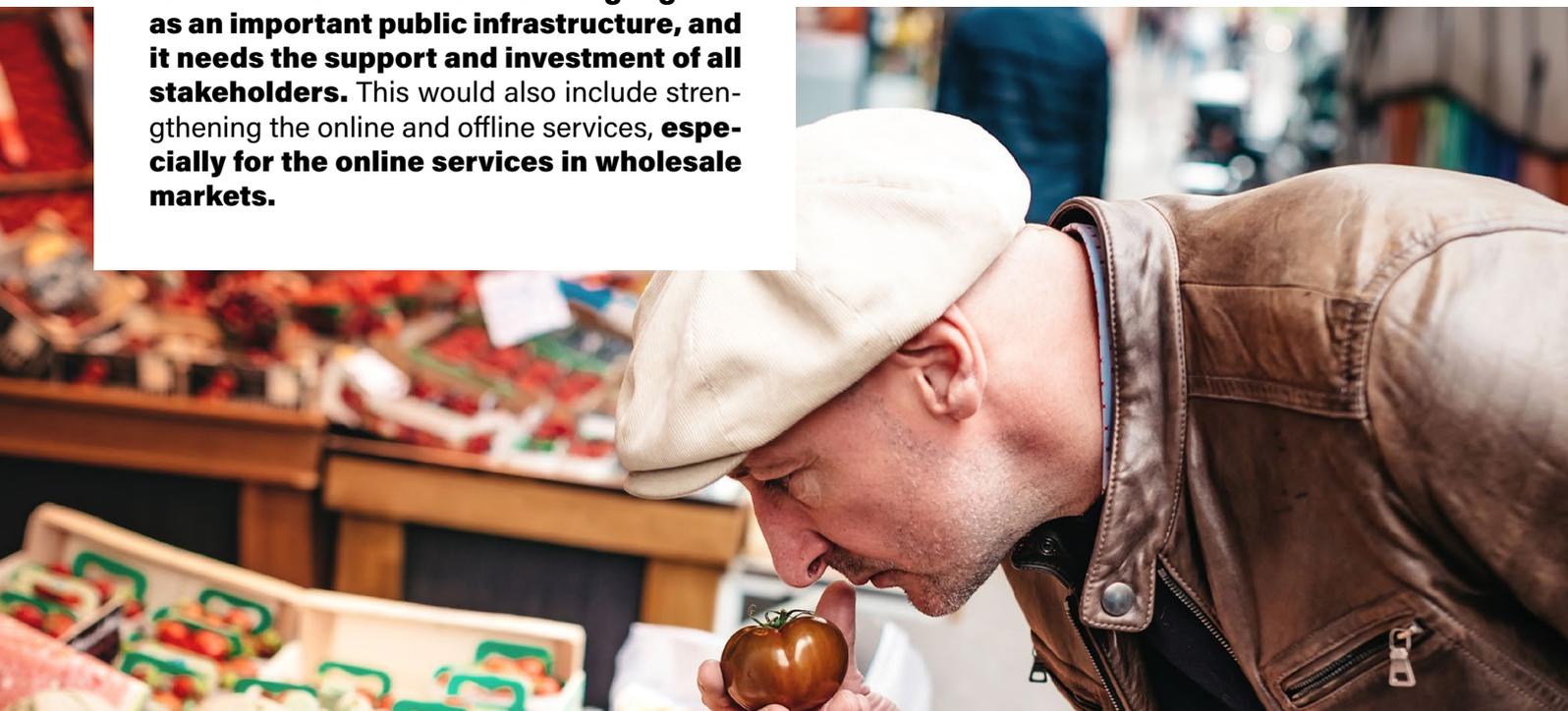
**3) What are the “game-changing” ideas wholesale markets could offer to ensure the availability of a healthy diet in your region?**

An example of a “game-changing” idea would be:

**14** **Establishing a tracing system covering all agricultural products in wholesale markets.** Taking China as an example, all of the imported fresh produce can be traced to the source; but for domestic agro-produce, only certain ones have established the tracing system. Therefore, in order to guarantee that the safe and healthy food are available to everyone, all agro-produce need to be covered in the tracing system of wholesale markets in the future.

**Wholesale markets should be highlighted as an important public infrastructure, and it needs the support and investment of all stakeholders.** This would also include strengthening the online and offline services, **especially for the online services in wholesale markets.**

**In recent years, with the rapid development of economies in the Asia-Pacific region, the outdated planning, layout and infrastructures of wholesale markets are not able to meet the development of demand in this new era**





**Fabio Massimo Pallottini**, Chairman of WUWM's European Group

**1) Why is it important for the markets in your region to have their voice included in the actions of the United Nations towards a more sustainable food system?**

Our task is to ensure access to healthy and nutritious food while supporting access to the market for producers and demonstrating respect for nature. It is important to mobilize our existing knowledge from this role by contributing insights to the United Nations actions aimed at achieving a more sustainable food system. We recognize the need to transform our markets and our sector to ensure optimal linkages for the fresh food supply. We have been investing in our market's modernization and sustainability for years including through major investments in good waste management. In fact, some of our markets have recycling percentages near 100%, renewable energy sources with photovoltaic installations and some are engaged in promoting a respectful use of water and packaging.

European wholesale markets play an essential role in the reduction of food waste, working hand in hand with associations to enable effective food donation to combat wastage. In this regard, the European Union's food donation guidelines are a key guide with the merit of setting up a continent-wide system.

To contribute to the United Nations' actions, we intend, as we have done in the past with the FAO and with the European Commission, to offer and share our expertise and professionalism in collectively shaping a more sustainable food system. Europe can count on this long-standing tradition of trade in which wholesale markets have always played an important role. Today, amid this difficult moment in history, they continue to demonstrate their ability to serve as a model for the whole world.

**2) What are some of the principal challenges of markets in your region, and why would regional and international discussion of these challenges help advance concrete solutions?**

Let us take the case of the Covid-19 outbreak which saw other actors experience blockages in the food supply chain. Wholesale markets demonstrated their resilience and ability to respond to the challenges of this global crisis. With a robust and diversified supply network, wholesale markets were able to guarantee the necessary volumes of fresh, safe and accessible fresh food to all European citizens. There is much to learn from the strategies of wholesale markets in combatting these challenges, which a discussion at both the regional and international levels would bring needed visibility and light to.

In fact, wholesale markets have become agro-industrial-logistical poles in which the key players of the food and agriculture industry interact in a virtuous way. Our modern and efficient logistics represent the best platforms to operate for all fresh food actors. In Europe, on average 50% of all produce and 40% of all seafood is currently handled by wholesale markets.

However, the challenges for the future are the same for all wholesale markets. Thus, they need to be addressed with active policies demonstrating respect for the environment, a focus on the consumer, and inclusive policies for primary producers. In Europe, we can do this through a consolidated alliance with agricultural producers which we have done through organised spaces within our structures. Through this, we are able to produce ready-to-eat fresh products capable of attracting new customers, as well as informing citizens about the quality of their food and confirming the central role played by markets in ensuring transparency, traceability and safety in the industry.

In relation to this last aspect, based on the recommendations contained in the Farm to Fork directive, European wholesale markets are implementing programmes for monitoring pesticide residues. They have demonstrated their role as an unrivalled logistics platform for organic fresh food in line with the transformation of the sector.

### 3) What are the “game-changing” ideas wholesale markets could offer to ensure the availability of a healthy diet in your region?

Modern wholesale markets have proven to be real «game changers» in ensuring fresh food availability in Europe. Their structures are vital to support the whole European agri-food system with structures that enhance a virtuous linkage between farmers, wholesalers, logistics operators, retailers and consumers. In this sense, **promoting and investing in the modernization of European wholesale markets** is an easy but “game changing” strategy to ensure healthy and affordable diets.

«Nutrition is more complex than just food” claimed Dr. Kalibata in a recent interview. To make our food system more sustainable, we will have to transform the way we eat.

European markets have taken steps to make a growing part of the population aware of this, **promoting healthy diets and the consumption of fresh products**. This is achieved by increasing the attractiveness of the consumption of fruits and vegetables at every age group, which represents, even today, the best support for the policies of the United Nations through the promotion of a correct diet.

In this sense, a “game-changing idea” could be to **make European wholesale markets become “The Chefs’ Homes» - by building innovative and appealing communication strategies to promote the consumption of healthy diets and safe food**. Chefs have big audiences today and can deeply influence consumption patterns by helping citizens to eat better and understand the food chain better. This could be done by offering advice on how to use our fresh and ultra-fresh produce to European citizens through videos, social media, etc. **We could also create real urban gardens with producers and wholesale operators** in our markets to teach consumers how to recognize the quality of products.

Some European markets have recycling percentages near 100%, renewable energy sources with photovoltaic installations



# Involved :

## WUWM's Acting Chairman Stéphane Layani participates on Third United Nations Food System Summit CEO Consultation

On Monday, April 29th, WUWM's Acting Chairman Stéphane Layani participated in a high-level meeting on the United Nations (UN) Food Systems Summit. Mr. Layani was invited to speak among several influential CEOs in the global food sector to find pathways for a healthier and more sustainable world. The meeting was led by UN's Special Envoy for the Food Systems Summit, Dr. Agnes Kalibata, and CEO of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), Peter Bakker.

Mr. Layani expressed WUWM's eagerness to develop synergies with major stakeholders to reduce food loss and waste and promote affordable fresh and healthy diets. He expressed his commitment to explore projects in wholesale markets to achieve a "zero waste" strategy.

We are looking forward to our collaboration with the UNFSS to ensure a sustainable food system by 2030!

17

Mr. Layani represented the voice of wholesale markets speaking on topics such as the necessity to improve logistics and the cold chain worldwide, an innovation fund for the food actors and a framework to reduce global food loss, and the promotion of healthy and sustainable diets.

"Cities are growing at very fast rates, and in 2050 almost 70% of the world population is expected to be living in cities! There is an urgent need to ensure accurate supply, smart logistics, improvements in urban planning, and major investments in food infrastructures. Together we can build a vibrant ecosystem that can continuously offer safe, quality, affordable, healthy, and sustainable food to cities" Mr. Layani said during the plenary session.



# In WUWM's world

**March 2:** WUWM met with Cecilia Marocchino, Urban Food Agenda Coordinator at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to discuss how wholesale experiences can potentially support growing cities around the world

**March 8:** We had a meeting with FAO division on Food Loss and Waste to examine collaborations which can help spread best practices and reduce food loss and waste

**March 10, 11, 17, 23, 30, 31:** WUWM participated as permanent taskforce member in meetings for the development of the European Code of Conduct for Responsible Business and Marketing Practices

**March 12:** WUWM met with Dr. Corinna Hawkes, Director at the Centre for Food Policy at City, University of London and lead for the Nutritious Foods Workgroup at the UN Food System Summit to discuss some topics relevant to wholesale markets that might support the Summit

**March 12:** We met with Solidaridad to examine whether technical tools they have developed for markets and producers around the world can help improve wholesale markets and wholesalers and how WUWM could potentially support the work Solidaridad is doing.

**March 12:** WUWM had several meeting with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) discussing how to improve the responses of markets to the pandemic, a research on food sources in developing countries, and how to add more nutrition to food

**March 18:** We met with the OECD's Centre for Responsible Business Conduct to learn more about [OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains](#). We think these guidelines could help improve markets around the world and we will examine further promotion and implementation in wholesale markets.



**March 23:** We met with FAO's SDG Pilot Testing division to discuss testing indicators to determine the progress on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at wholesale markets

**March 25-26:** WUWM attended the SDG Global Festival of Action to find out how to best approach changes to a sustainable world by 2030. Find more information about it here:

<https://globalfestivalofaction.org/>

**March 29:** Acting Chairman Stéphane Layani participated at the Third UN FSS CEO Consultation together with many influential CEOs in the food sector and led by Dr. Agnes Kalibata, UN Special Envoy to the Food Systems Summit and Peter Bakker, CEO of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development

**March 31:** WUWM met with UN-Habitat to examine collaboration opportunities to ensure the sustainable and continuous supply of fresh healthy food to cities of the future.

## WUWM met with UN-Habitat to examine collaboration opportunities!

18



### About WUWM:

We aim to facilitate access to healthy diets for everyone in the world by delivering more sustainable, inclusive, and high-quality fresh food supply systems. We exchange ideas, share best practices and cooperate with our partners in international organizations, governments, businesses, and the public.

