

CONCEPT NOTE “WORLD FRUIT AND VEGETABLE DAY”



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Background

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025), as well as the need to put into practice sustainable food systems that promote healthy diets, composed of varied foods, and abundant consumption of fruit and vegetables. Similarly, the Second International Conference on Nutrition, in its recommendation 10, establishes the promotion of the diversification of crops and the increase in the production of fruits and vegetables, in the context of the important contribution of these foods to the prevention of non-communicable diseases, especially cardiovascular diseases, cancer, obesity or type 2 diabetes.

Likewise, it is relevant to point out the importance of sustainable agricultural and production practices for the life quality of millions of rural families and small family farmers around the world, highlighting the important contribution of fruits and vegetables, and particularly indigenous crops, to food security, nutrition, quality livelihoods and income of family farmers, especially small producer.

Given this scenario, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2021 as the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables (Res 72/244) with the following objectives:

- Raise awareness and focus policy attention on the nutrition and health benefits of fruit and vegetable consumption.
- Promote diversified, balanced healthy diets and lifestyles through the consumption of these food and reduce loss and waste in food systems
- Share and exchange best practices on fruits and vegetables.

In view of the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables in 2021, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) organized the FAO/WHO International Workshop on Fruits and Vegetables 2020, with the objective of reviewing the global evidence around the effectiveness of interventions and the political, programmatic and scientific advances in the decades that have elapsed since the Joint FAO/WHO Workshop on Fruits, Vegetables and Health (Kobe, Japan , 2004).

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General objective

Declare a "World Fruit and Vegetable Day" to give continuity to the International Year of Fruit and Vegetables, consolidate the actions carried out and facilitate the development of others in accordance with the strategic plan drawn up by the International Steering Committee for the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables.

Specifics objectives

- Contribute to raising awareness about the benefits of consuming fruits and vegetables for people's health.
- Promote the role of the fruit and vegetable sector in the resilience and sustainability of food systems.
- Contribute to the increase food literacy rates among the world population.
- Promote healthier and more sustainable eating patterns and lifestyles.
- Reduce losses and waste of fruits and vegetables.
- Value the role of fruit and vegetables as an indicator to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals
- Promote policies aimed at solving the current problems of world production of fruit and vegetables to meet global needs.

Justification

WHEREAS the FAO/WHO International Workshop on Fruits and Vegetables highlighted that:

- Fruits and vegetables are highly perishable foods and very susceptible to loss and waste, they require a lot of labor in their value chain and current food environments make them uncompetitive with highly processed foods.
- It is necessary to go beyond training and information actions, and include strategies that guarantee that fruits and vegetables are more available, accessible and affordable.
- Interventions to promote the consumption of fruits and vegetables begin at an early age, from the first days of life, including pregnancy; and have the support of all health professionals in different settings, especially in primary care.
- There is a need to create specific regulations that allow nations to control the losses and waste of fruits and vegetables, which stand out from the rest of the food groups and undermine the opportunities to meet the nutritional needs of millions of people.

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- The changes needed in the production, value chains and consumption of fruits and vegetables can only be achieved with the commitment of all stakeholders, adequate financing, evidence-based development and the implementation of policies, laws, regulations and programs, as well as proper monitoring and evaluation.

WHEREAS it was highlighted by the exploratory consultation of the AIAM Scientific Committee, only 2 countries of the 24 participants from various regions of the planet, complete the WHO recommendation for the consumption of fruits and vegetables, that is, at least 400g/person/day or 5 portions of fruits and vegetables. In addition, the lack of government support to national entities to promote its consumption many of them called 5 a day, and the lack of public policies to reduce food waste was highlighted.

WHEREAS the AIAM5 Global Alliance, despite COVID-19 pandemic, has carried out intense work to raise awareness of the importance of daily consumption of fruits and vegetables in the diet of the world population, and at its general assembly of partners in 2021 there was a unanimous commitment to continue supporting all its members to consolidate the objectives of the IYFV, beyond 2021.

WHEREAS the fruit and vegetable sector, civil society, academia, and governments have a key role in the creation and consolidation of healthier and more sustainable food systems, where fruits and vegetables are available, accessible and affordable for all, without leave no one behind.

WHEREAS the need to raise awareness of the world population on the importance and benefits of daily consumption of fruits and vegetables for nutrition and health, as well as to promote healthy diets and lifestyles within the framework of sustainable food systems.

WHEREAS the impact that the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables has had, even in the context of the global pandemic by SARS-COV-2 in the population for greater awareness about the origin of the food they consume and the nutritional value.

WHEREAS it is a usual action that the International Years continue their action plan with the declaration of an International/world Day such as the International Day of Pulses, International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste or International Day of Food floors

WHEREAS the costs incurred by the celebration of World Fruit and Vegetable Day, and the participation of FAO, will be covered by voluntary contributions

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AIAM5 – Global Alliance for the Promotion of the Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables "5 a day" encourages its partners to initiate conversations with their governments so they propose to their national delegations to include them in the agenda of the FAO conferences in their regions, a point about the World Fruit and Vegetable Day to take the necessary steps so that, in its next session, the General Assembly of The United Nations considers the possibility of declaring the World Fruits and Vegetables Day, to be celebrated every year and to leverage the momentum provided by the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables 2021.