



Monday March 9, 2009
14:00 to 15:30

Lyon Convention Center
France

FEEDING THE CITY

Moderator

- **Ioan Negrutiu**, Professor of biology, Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS) de Lyon, France

Speakers

- **Timothy Hall**, Acting Director: Biotechnologies, Agriculture and Food, DG Research, European Commission
- **Florence Egal**, Nutrition Officer, Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods, Co-Secretary Food for Cities (FCIT), Nutrition Programmes Service, FAO
- **Nathalie Ernoult**, Vice President, Action contre la Faim, France
- **Philipp T. James**, Chairman, International Obesity Task Force, USA
- **Ard Jan Vethman**, Innovation Leader for Manufacturing, Retail & Distribution at Capgemini, The Netherlands
- **Jérôme Péribère**, President and CEO, Dow AgroSciences, USA

Summary

Topic of the session: Discussing the endangered pillars of agriculture and civilization; agriculture should not be seen as a problem, but agriculture shall serve as a solution

We are facing a multifold challenge: An increasing healthier and wealthier World population

- Growth of population to be fed combined with a large movement of people leaving rural areas leading to increasing urbanization with 2/3 of the World population is expected to live in cities in the near future
- The wealthier tier adopting the current Western nutrition model (eating more meat, especially beef)

An unavoidable link between cities and agriculture meshing synergies and antagonisms

- Historically, successful cities have been backed by a rich agricultural environment
- On the other side, in a natural move the humans are seeking for the best land and the urbanization is "consuming" high quality soils

Urban agriculture is therefore required

- This has to be planned upfront in urban design and development plan
- However, it does not mean at all that the development of rural areas should be abandoned, if life in rural areas is improved, individuals would have no reason to migrate to the cities

Science and businesses will bring their share to the solution; however, virtuous policies are also mandatory



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- Science and agro business have largely succeeded in the past
- Nevertheless politic virtue is required when one sees wealthier population adopting the current western nutrition model which has several back draws (cardiovascular disease, diabetes...). As an example, consider the recent decision of India of removing any importation duty on fat

In that sense, agriculture should be treated in all international policies by WTO as an exception:

- It can be seen as a driving force for the green economy rather than as a sector to be fully open to free global market
- Western agriculture have succeeded through subvention and protection and the agricultures of developing countries should be "given the same chance" to develop their agriculture now
- As a negative example, the local poultry industry in Cameroon has been literally destroyed by the free importation of frozen chickens

The approach for developing urban agriculture should be local, systemic and comprehensive

- The approach should mix agro and social science, moving from macro or per crop approaches
- The concerns of urban agriculture are well known, mastered and can be anticipated

The urgency is higher than generally thought

- The targets should be 2020 rather than 2050, i.e. 1 or 2 breeding generations
- The 7bn population tick-mark will be reached in Feb 2012 and the 8bn tickmark before 2020

Quotes

"We used to put our lights on 2050, that is too far in the future, by 2020 we will be 8bln citizens on the planet, we should concentrate on that."

Ioan Negrutiu

"You need to look at the poor, because if you do not look at them, the market will not anyway."

Florence Egal

"After Florence Egal gave you this very miserable story, I am going to make you even more depressive."

Philip James

"When people have access to land, people do engage in urban agriculture "

Nathalie Ernoult

"Accept that we have done a good job so far, but the job is far from being over. Science is going to make it happen or it will never happen."

Jérôme Péribère

"People are not doing, what they want, but what they are forced to do by the way, we organize our economy "

Philip James

"As long as a Chinese farmer earns 30\$/month and his son can earn 200\$/month in a industrial production plant, he will do so "

Jérôme Péribère

"We must find a way of getting out of the black and white, organic vs. GMO, thinking; there is a major fear of new technologies in Europe, but biotech is one of the technologies (next to other new technologies like nanotechnology) which can help us finding solutions."

Timothy Hall

"There is no good in doing research for developing countries; research needs to be done with developing countries. Funding for joint research that is needed has to be available."

Timothy Hall

"For improving living conditions in rural areas you will have to build cinemas and shopping malls there, because that is what people want as long as they watch TV."

Florence Egal