



Regional Forum for the Future of Agriculture Kiev, Ukraine Press release

Thursday, 25 October 2018 – Kiev, Ukraine

Meeting the food and environmental challenge – an open dialogue

The regional Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA) met on 25 October 2018 to discuss *food and environmental security in global and local contexts* and *access to new technologies*. These topics were chosen to highlight both the Ukrainian and European state of play regarding food production, environmental protection and global competitiveness.

Dr Hans Hoogeveen, Ambassador, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the UN organisations in Rome, Chair of the FAO Programme Committee introduced the first session on food and environmental security. During its celebration of World Food Day on 16 October, the FAO estimated that production must rise by almost 50% by 2050 to feed a growing global population. As most land suitable for farming is already under cultivation, additional yields must come from existing areas. This problem is made more urgent by the expansion of cities into rural hectares. However, increased production cannot be accompanied with large scale increases in input use if the EU and Ukraine are to live up to their commitments under the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Agreement.

Starting the second panel on access to new agricultural technologies, Lesya Kuzmenko, EBRD Deputy Head Ukraine, ICA (Industry, Commerce and Agribusiness) noted that innovation is key to balancing increased production and environmental protection. However, applying new technologies requires more know-how and can often be capital intensive, making farmer education and access to markets a necessity.

The debate focused on the potential of such tools as precision farming; artificial intelligence, big data and biotechnology. All participants and speakers agreed that an ambitious transformation of the Ukrainian infrastructure and farm advisory systems are necessary to be able to successfully apply these technologies and increase the competitive position of local agriculture.

Dr Hans Hoogeveen, Ambassador, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the UN organisations in Rome, Chair of the FAO Programme Committee said: *“We are losing our fight against hunger and obesities worldwide. European agriculture has to step up its contribution to global sustainable agriculture and markets.”*

Lesya Kuzmenko, EBRD Deputy Head Ukraine, ICA (Industry, Commerce and Agribusiness) said: *“Achieving a sustainable food future requires meeting three competing needs simultaneously: efficiently closing the food gap; preserving natural resources and climate, while improving the environmental and social impact of agribusiness. The EBRD adopts a responsible, sustainable and innovative approach to achieve the best balance among the three competing aspects.”*

Pierre Olivier Drège, President of the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) said: *“Ukraine remains world-famous for its black earth and its tremendous potential for local, European and indeed global agricultural production. Making the best and most sustainable use of this treasure means applying the latest technology and best farm practices, but also making sure that its farm businesses are on the cutting edge of environmental care.”*

Xavier Leprince, EAME Business Sustainability Head, Syngenta said: *“We should give much credit to Ukrainian agriculture to be one of the world leading agricultural powerhouses. However, there is more untapped potential to be a key player in feeding the growing population of the world. Implementing cutting edge innovations and technology will help sustainably increase yields and save fertile farmlands.”*

The discussion and debate held in Kiev is part of a Europe-wide search for solutions to the questions raised at the main FFA event in Brussels, which will see its 12th annual edition in Brussels on April 9th 2019.

This event was co-organised by ELO, Syngenta and Ukrainian AgriBusiness Club (UCAB); with the support of Deutz-Fahr and Friends of the Countryside.

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Notes to editors

The regional FFA in Kiev is part of the FFA series of conferences, which aim to address topics of both food and environmental security. This Regional Forum, will take place at Hilton Hotel, to examine the global need for sustainable food production and a better cooperation in the agriculture and environmental sectors between the European Union and Ukraine farmers, foresters, land managers, agribusinesses and policy makers and scientists to deliver the needed changes on the ground.

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About the Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA)

The annual Forum and regional events are an initiative of the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) and Syngenta. FFA brings together a diverse range of stakeholders to catalyse thinking on the way European agriculture needs to respond to the major challenges that it faces in delivering food and environmental security. The Forum was created in 2008 in response to a belief that many EU policies impacting agriculture are focused on solving yesterday's problems, such as overproduction, and do not deal with new challenges and market opportunities. Challenges include feeding a growing world population, demand for a higher quality diet, increased demand for renewable sources of energy and changing weather patterns. With limited arable land available, there is a need to sustainably maximize production from that already under cultivation. Every year, in addition to the annual Forum in Brussels, FFA organises two regional events with local partners in order to continue the discussion at the regional level.

www.forumforagriculture.com

About the ELO

The European Landowners' Organization (ELO), created in 1972, is a unique federation of national associations from the 28 EU Member States and beyond which represents the interests of landowners, land managers and rural entrepreneurs at the European political level. Independent and non-profit, the ELO is the only organization able to stand for all rural entrepreneurs. The ELO promotes a prosperous countryside through private property dynamism. Its Secretariat is based in Brussels.

www.elo.org

About Syngenta

Syngenta is a leading agriculture company helping to improve global food security by enabling millions of farmers to make better use of available resources. Through world class science and innovative crop solutions, our 28,000 people in over 90 countries are working to transform how crops are grown. We are committed to rescuing land from degradation, enhancing biodiversity and revitalizing rural communities.

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