



Press release

Press office

POSTAL ADDRESS Wilhelmstraße 54, 10117 Berlin

TEL +49 (0)30 18 529 - 3170

FAX +49 (0)30 18 529 - 3179

E-MAIL pressestelle@bmelv.bund.de

INTERNET www.bmelv.de

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New strategies for global food security: International Agriculture Ministers' Summit in Berlin with over 70 states

Ministers of Agriculture from over 70 states of the world will be meeting in Berlin on Saturday, 21 January 2012 for the 4th International Agriculture Ministers' Summit which is taking place on the fringes of the Green Week. A record number of foreign delegations have registered for this year's Agriculture Ministers' Summit, which will be focusing on strategies for global food security and the fight against hunger. "The Green Week has in recent years developed into a global forum of international renown for agricultural and food policies. The Agriculture Ministers' Summit as its political highlight and the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) have long been regarded as the green Davos. The results of this high-level Summit, which will also be attended by many representatives from developing and emerging countries, will provide important input for the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro (Rio+20) in June 2012", said **Federal Agriculture Minister Ilse Aigner**.

According to estimates by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the world population is expected to grow to 8.2 billion people by 2030. Thus, an additional 1.2 billion people will need to be fed, of which around 90 percent will live in developing countries. Almost one billion people, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, are today already suffering from malnutrition and chronic hunger. "The agricultural sector faces tremendous challenges in view of dwindling resources and raw materials, the dramatic increase in the world population and almost one billion starving people," said Aigner. The objective of higher productivity must be reconciled with the need for careful stewardship of nature. "There will be no global, ready-made solution for this. The structures and cultural traditions in various regions of the world are too diverse for that. A key factor in respect of

ensuring food security is to have the agricultural sector in all countries comply with the principles of sustainability."

The amount of per capita farmland in the world amounted to 5,000 square metres in 1950; by 2011, this figure had shrunk to 2,100 square metres. This is roughly the size of one-quarter of a football field. "In the face of a growing world population, farmland will become increasingly important and must be put to intelligent use," Aigner demanded. The approach taken in previous centuries, namely to clear forests in order to gain more agricultural land, is now no longer acceptable due to the need to protect the environment, species and climate. "As a result of the limited resources at our disposal, we must curb the sealing of farmland and resolutely counter the degradation of soil and water resources through erosion, salinisation, pollution, contamination and over-exploitation," said Aigner.

The Berlin Agriculture Ministers' Summit is the political highlight of the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA). One of the notable features of the GFFA is that, in addition to government representatives, it will also bring together business experts, researchers, experts from the development cooperation sector and the interested public in order to discuss various ways to ensure food security.

For further details, please visit: www.gffa-berlin.de