



2021 BORLAUG DIALOGUE: GAINING MOMENTUM

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

This past October, the World Food Prize Foundation hosted events in honor of [Dr. Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted](#), our latest Laureate, and [John Ruan III](#), our beloved Chairperson. The Borlaug Dialogue attracted 2,000 registrants from 70 countries. For the first time, we offered **free registration to all students and individuals in the Global South**. Over 350 high school and college students and 200 educators from 10 different countries participated in the 2021 Global Youth Institute, including: the United States, the Netherlands, Sweden, Honduras, China, Canada, Japan, the Czech Republic, Spain, and India. This was the most accessible series of October events in our foundation's history, and also our most innovative. While paying deference to our strong traditions, we also broke new ground in in-person and virtual delivery, and in the depth and breadth of our programming.

Conducting the program successfully was possible only with the energy and support of numerous individuals and organizations. Session recordings are available on [our YouTube channel](#).

The 2021 events, my first in-person as President, was an amazing endeavor. I learned so much from our global audience and am so proud of our work to elevate innovations and inspire action to sustainably increase the quality, quantity and availability of food for all. We aspire, as an organization, to bring you even more in 2022!



A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads "Barbara L. Stinson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

BARBARA L. STINSON
WFPF President

BORLAUG DIALOGUE BY THE NUMBERS:

6

CONTINENTS

70

COUNTRIES

40

SIDE EVENTS

1,988

ATTENDEES

25

HOURS OF CONTENT

362

GLOBAL SOUTH ATTENDEES

617

STUDENT ATTENDEES

500

GLOBAL YOUTH INSTITUTE DELEGATES



NORTH AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AGRICULTURE LEADERS DIALOGUE

The *“New Frontiers of Science: North American Agriculture Leading Pathways to More Sustainable Global Food Systems”* dialogue brought together high-level government agriculture leaders from Canada, Mexico and the United States: Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, **Marie-Claude Bibeau**; Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development, **Víctor Manuel Villalobos Arámbula**; and Secretary of Agriculture, **Tom Vilsack**, respectively.

The messages presented by the three leaders were timely, pertinent and well-received by the online and in-person global audience. All three leaders emphasized sustainability and specifically raised the following:

- In **Canada**, Minister Bibeau outlined the government’s work on the “Living Laboratories Initiative” as a roadmap for a healthier and more sustainable food system in her country. She also discussed the Canadian government’s initiative to address the increasing demand for food in the country being met through advances in crop cultivation, research, diversity and livestock genetics, while simultaneously driving a new “green revolution.”
- For **Mexico**, Secretary Villalobos explained CIMMYT’s MasAgro research for rural development project, which is focused on sustainable wheat production and is supported by the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development (SADER) in Mexico. He also covered the government’s priority on increasing agricultural productivity, mitigating climate change and integrating Mexico’s rural communities more thoroughly into a sustainable value-added, supply chain.
- Secretary Vilsack of the **USA** underlined President Biden’s target of net zero emissions economy-wide by 2050 - including in the agricultural sector - and the government’s plans to move the country from an extractive to a circular economy with a sharper focus on sustainability. He also outlined the recent, unprecedented commitment of \$10 billion by the government to promote food systems transformation through innovation and climate-smart agriculture, improved infrastructure for food access, and inclusive market opportunities.

The strong chemistry between and commitments of the three leaders to ensure food systems transformation was tracked by both the in-person and on-line audience. The important relationship these three North American leaders sets an example of strong collaboration, communication and sharing of agricultural research between partner nations.



KEYNOTE DISCUSSIONS

Several Leaders in the Food Security community shared their insights and concerns in critical discussions on topics affecting the agricultural landscape - including climate change, sustainability, gender equity, rising costs for producers and consumers, and technology as the great enabler for more efficient food systems. The 2021 WFP Laureate, Dr. Shakuntala Thilsted, Global Lead for Nutrition and Public Health at WorldFish, and Dr. Anita Zaidi, President, Gender Equality Division, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, discussed their work and ideas on gender equity and food security connections in the **"Laureate Spotlight: Advancing Women and Children Further Faster."** Both speakers championed the roles of women in countries across Asia, Africa and the Pacific, with a specific focus on Dr. Thilsted's work on aquatic food systems and their integration with the production of local micronutrient-rich vegetables in homestead gardens.



A second keynote discussion, **"Rural Renaissance, Key to Revitalize Global Economies"** between Beth Ford, Chief Executive Officer, Land O' Lakes, and Paul Schickler, Owner, Third AG and Retired President, DuPont Pioneer, examined U.S rural development and agriculture value chains. Key policy solutions included focusing investment in climate-friendly crops, and helping farmers to remain or become profitable. The leaders discussed a new bill introduced through the American Connection Project, which will provide greater broadband access to both rural and underserved communities across the nation.

LAUREATE AWARD CEREMONY

The 2021 World Food Prize Laureate Award Ceremony was held in the resplendent Iowa State Capitol Building in Des Moines. This year's ceremony not only celebrated our most recent Laureate, Dr. Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted, but the evening (and indeed the entire week of events) was dedicated to John Ruan III, who passed away following a long illness on Sept. 11, 2021. Mr. Ruan was Chairman of the World Food Prize Foundation from 2000 until his passing. He was a great humanitarian and visionary who for two decades shaped the work of the organization to increase the quality, quantity and availability of food for all.

Each year, numerous distinguished guests of honor join in an elaborate celebration to honor the World Food Prize Laureate, and 2021 was no exception. Special guests included previous Laureates, Rev. David Beckmann, Dr. Jan Low and Dr. Rattan Lal (2010, 2016 and 2020 WFPF Laureates, respectively). Governor of the State of Iowa, the Honorable Kim Reynolds, presided over the ceremony. Kes, a Caribbean soca performer known for his unique blend of soulful vocals, calypso inspired melodies, and hints of reggae, came from Dr. Thilsted's native land of Trinidad and Tobago to captivate the audience (particularly the Laureate!) with a high-energy performance.



ROUNDTABLES

Four critical areas for food systems transformation were addressed in the 2021 Borlaug Dialogue in roundtable discussions, each featuring experts from the agriculture sector, including representatives from national governments, nonprofit organizations, private sector leaders, international organizations and academia:



- 1. Research and Innovation** including challenges of scaling rural agriculture development and innovation and the need to include farmers in the development of technology (and not merely consider them only as end-users / recipients of technology). The importance of genetically-modified and gene-edited crops and how to better support young researchers, particularly those in developing countries were also covered. Solutions included identifying stronger partnerships for developing business and social finance models to accelerate the scaling of technologies.
- 2. Gender Equity and Equitable Livelihoods** analyzed underlying gender and social norms preventing women from being recognized within the agricultural sector. Solutions included promoting programs such as the Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA) of the African Development Bank; obtaining more data worldwide to argue the case for women's empowerment; enlisting men in leadership positions to be part of the change; and making technology for agriculture more accessible to women farmers.
- 3. Nutrition Sensitive Food Systems** provided creative solutions to increase nutrition through greater access to aquatic foods, recognizing the synergies between land and water systems. Discussions highlighted the importance of bolstering an accountability framework for civil society, donors and governments - with all recognized need to come together to commit to improving nutrition worldwide.
- 4. International Cooperation** covered key actions, approaches and recommendations to improve governance systems to guide the transformation of food systems, moving towards systemic change. Actions to be taken include better supporting small-scale actors, and ensuring that women, vulnerable groups (e.g. indigenous) and youth are part of the solution, and improving cooperation across regions and within societies.

WORKSHOPS

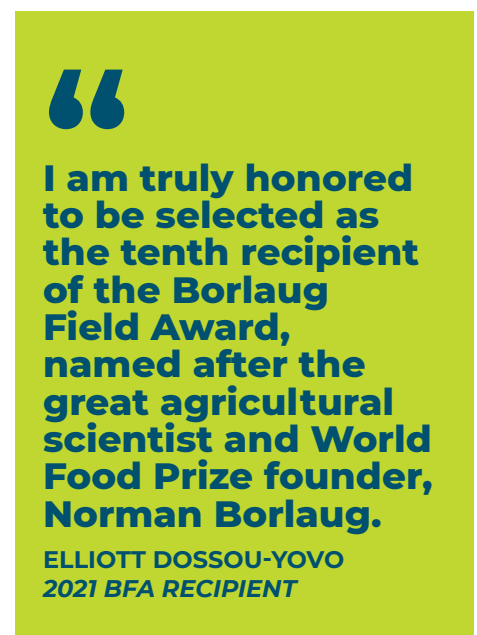
The 2021 Borlaug Dialogue interactive partner workshops went deeper into relevant topics in food systems transformation. The four included:

- **“The Global Food Security Index: Exploring Challenges and Developing Solutions”** presented by Corteva AgriScience and Economist Impact
- **“Accelerating Women’s Access to Productive Resources To Produce More and Better”** by LadyAgri Impact Investment Hub
- **“Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR): Preventing the Silent Pandemic in Food Systems”** by the Government of the United Kingdom
- **“How Resiliently Designed Food Systems Achieve Both NRM and Nutrition Wins”** by Mercy Corps and the USAID SCALE Award

Highlights included the need for increased gender smart investment. Women’s access to inputs such as seed, equipment, technology and finances must increase, as well as the inclusion of more women in agri-business and trade discussions to break silos and to shift planning processes to have more of a gender focus. Viewers also learned about AMR as the “silent pandemic” which needs much more visibility and urgency in action; 80% of antibiotics used is in farming, while 90% of this is then excreted, polluting our land, water and ecosystem. This can be better managed through the One Health model, a collaborative, multisectoral, and transdisciplinary approach with the goal of achieving optimal health outcomes through recognizing the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment.

BORLAUG FIELD AWARD CEREMONY

The Dr. Norman E. Borlaug Award for Field Research and Application, endowed by The Rockefeller Foundation - known as the Borlaug Field Award - recognizes exceptional, science-based achievement in international agriculture and food production by an individual under the age of 40. This year, [Dr. Elliott Dossou-Yovo](#) was recognized for spearheading innovative water management systems for resilient rice production in West Africa in the face of climate change. The award presentation took place on October 20th in a virtual ceremony. Barbara Stinson was joined by Roy Steiner, Senior Vice President for the Food Initiative at the Rockefeller Foundation, and Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank, to congratulate Dr. Dossou-Yovo. After the formal ceremony, the first recipient of the Borlaug Field Award, Aditi Mukherji, joined the tenth recipient, Dr. Dossou-Yovo, in a conversation about his work.





CGIAR 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The 2021 World Food Prize held a special event during the 2021 Borlaug Dialogue - a celebration for the 50th anniversary of CGIAR, the world’s largest agricultural research and innovation network. Among various speakers, CGIAR’s Managing Director for Global Engagement and Innovation, Kundhavi Kadiresan, reflected on decades of ground-breaking science and long-standing partnerships, achieving significant progress in eliminating hunger and poverty around the world.

DIGITAL AND REGIONAL DIALOGUES

In 2022, the World Food Prize Foundation intends to hold two Digital Dialogues and the first-ever regional dialogue based in South Asia, which will focus on challenges and opportunities in this region for advancing food systems discussions at local levels. Digital Dialogues will continue throughout the year to spotlight contemporary issues impacting food security worldwide, as well as an in-depth conversation with the 2022 WFP Laureate. The theme of the 2022 Borlaug Dialogue will be announced early in 2022, and will build on the momentum of COP26 and the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit, with a primary focus on climate change and nutrition in food security. The Foundation continues its commitment to elevate innovations and inspire action to sustainably increase the quality, quantity and availability of food for all.

NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

To increase representation of diverse points of view on our esteemed Council of Advisors, two seats have been added for young, developing professionals. Priscilla Trinh and Dennis Vlegels have joined the Council and will participate as full members. Ms. Trinh studies at the University of Minnesota, and Mr. Vlegels is an honours student at Wageningen University in the Netherlands.



PRISCILLA TRINH

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



DENNIS VIEGELS

WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY



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