

FAO director-general calls on food industry to do more to support healthy foods

Qu Dongyu, director-general of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, has called for the food industry to do more to support healthy foods, and to reduce food loss and waste throughout the cycle of food systems from farm to fork.



Qu Dongyu, director-general of the UN FAO, [Flickr](#)

“Nutrition should not be an ends in itself, but rather a means to a healthy, happy life,” Qu said.

The FAO chief made the remarks on Tuesday, 24 September, at the Fixing the Business of Food: The Food Industry and the SDG Challenge event organised by the Barilla Center for Food and Nutrition Foundation, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, the Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment, and the Santa Chiara Lab - University of Siena on the margins of the 74th session of the UN General Assembly.

The food industry and businesses have a critical role in achieving food security and nutrition as they influence the production, processing, retail and marketing of the food that we eat, Qu noted. More broadly, the food industry can help transform agriculture and food systems for better environmental, social and economic outcomes.

Innovation and technology

To be more environmentally sustainable, the FAO director-general stressed, food systems have to be modified through innovation and technology so that they can safeguard and use vital natural resources such as water and soil in a more efficient ways.

Qu also pointed to the need to ensure that at the production level, farmers are equipped with the tools, the knowledge and the capacity to improve agricultural output.

He also underscored the importance of transforming supply chains and the relationship between retailer and consumer. Such change must be innovative and should embrace rather than resist digital technology, the FAO director-general said.

In conclusion, he called for value chain interventions that go beyond narrow economic considerations, but that instead respect the cultural and societal concerns of people.

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