

28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture – Written Correspondence Procedure

Item 4.4: Proposal for an International Day of Potato

Secretariat response to written questions from the Committee

The Government of Peru proposed to establish the observance of an International Day of Potato (IDP) by the United Nations and advocates for the crucial role of the potato in global food security and nutrition, and its proven socio-economic importance, contribution to poverty eradication and human health. This proposal was supported by various FAO Members. The Secretariat welcomes the support of Belgium and the European Union to the proposal for an IDP and their agreement to submit the related draft Conference Resolution to Council for further consideration.

The Secretariat acknowledges the agreement of Belgium and the European Union on the important role of potatoes to global food security, improving the livelihood of small-scale farmers and combating rural poverty. The Secretariat acknowledges the nutritious value of potatoes and their contribution to healthy diets, its cultural importance and economic benefits to the agriculture and economic sectors of Belgium. The Secretariat also appreciates the support of Belgium to the improvement of food security and nutrition worldwide to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations, in particular SDG 2 (Zero Hunger). In addition, the acknowledgment by the European Union on the challenges for development of the potato sector requiring promotion of research and innovation, empowering small-scale farmers to increase the sustainability and resilience of potatoes along the value chain, is well noted by the Secretariat.

The observance of the IDP would facilitate collaboration and action between all relevant stakeholders contributing to the sustainable intensification of potato production, enhanced investment in research and development, improvement of product quality, marketing and trade of potatoes at national, regional and global levels.

Following COAG's endorsement of the draft Conference Resolution, the Secretariat will submit the proposal for approval by the 171th Session of the FAO Council and adoption by the 43rd Session of the FAO Conference for subsequent submission to the United Nations General Assembly.