

43rd Session of the Conference

Written Correspondence Procedure – inputs from Members - English version

Item 15.4: Proposal for an International Day of the Potato

Member Name	Comments
Colombia (Saturday, 10 June 2023 — 12.18)	<p>Colombia welcomes the proposal for an International Day of the Potato. This food is of fundamental importance for the Colombian agrifood system, as it is not only one of the most commonly consumed foods, but also the most cultivated. Colombia has 850 varieties of potatoes that represent 3.3 percent of the agricultural gross domestic product (GDP) and generate thousands of jobs annually. In addition, it is well established in the diet and preparations of Colombians, who consume an average of 57 kg of potatoes per capita per year.</p> <p>Colombia also recognizes the importance of helping small-scale farmers, who are mostly responsible for growing this food, to increase the sustainability of their crops, increase their incomes, protect the environment and generate greater social equity. In addition, we highlight the importance that the Committee on Agriculture has given to having an International Day of the Potato, framed around Sustainable Development Goals 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), 15 (Life on Land) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).</p> <p>Finally, and taking into account the challenges posed by the economic crisis caused by COVID-19 and other economic factors concerning this food, Colombia considers that an International Day of the Potato will be a very useful tool to raise awareness about its relevance and carry out different initiatives that promote its sustainable cultivation and conservation.</p>
Argentina (Monday, 12 June 2023 — 13.07)	<p>Under the Written Correspondence Procedure established to address specific items on the Agenda of the 43rd Session of the FAO Conference, the Permanent Representation of the Argentine Republic would like to share the following comments.</p> <p>Argentina welcomes the proposal of the Government of Peru to establish the International Day of Potato, within the framework of the United Nations.</p> <p>The global importance of this food, in various regional diets, in contributing to food security and nutrition is undeniable, as are its contributions to international trade, job creation and social welfare.</p> <p>Thus, Argentina supports the draft Conference Resolution on the observance by the UN System of an “International Day of Potato” on 30 May every year and commits to help raise awareness of the importance of this food.</p>
Canada (Tuesday, 13 June 2023 — 10.21)	<p>Canada recognizes the immense importance of the potato as a global food crop and the challenges and opportunities related to potato production and consumption that can be highlighted by way of an official International Day of Potato. Canada endorses the draft Resolution proposing an International Day of Potato.</p>

<p>Philippines (Wednesday, 14 June 2023 — 14.05)</p>	<p>The Philippines supports the endorsement of the draft Resolution, being proposed by the government of Peru, on the observance by the UN system of an "International Day of Potato" on 30 May every year.</p> <p>We look forward to the comprehensive platform that could be created from such an initiative to assess the problems and dynamics of sustainable potato production, particularly by smallholder farmers, and to come up with solutions to transform agrifood systems, with the support of the International Potato Center (CIP) among other stakeholders.</p> <p>In the Philippines, there is potential to develop its local seed production system to improve farmers' productivity and profitability as local demand for the potato tuber crop continues to increase, and as a means to contribute to biodiversity use and conservation and support efforts to reduce hunger, malnutrition and poverty.</p> <p>The Philippines hopes that this initiative can foster further cooperation in generating collaborative solutions to the problems of smallholders and sustainable potato production including through South–South Cooperation.</p>
<p>European Union (Thursday, 15 June 2023 — 19.35)</p>	<p>I am honoured to write on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.</p> <p>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, San Marino, and Serbia align themselves with this statement.</p> <p>In many countries worldwide, potato crop has contributed to food security and nutrition for a long time. However, the full expression of the potato crop’s yield capacity has not yet been achieved. More can be done in terms of making use of the wide range of potato varieties, of its functions in agricultural and ecological systems, and in terms of its nutritional qualities. Improvement is needed in terms of widespread access to locally adapted and appropriate mechanization and equipment, responsible and sustainable use of inputs, and implementation of agronomic practices.</p> <p>Similarly, high-quality potato plants production, in-situ and ex-situ variety conservation, and the continued development and availability of varieties, in particular those that are tolerant of and resistant to abiotic and biotic threats such as potato late blight and drought, must be increased for family farmers around the world.</p> <p>The International Day of Potato can be a driver to accelerate global work on potato, including the implementation of scientifically supported methods to cope with production challenges and climate-change impacts on rural communities. Involving researchers, breeders and others relevant stakeholders, including the farmers themselves, with a view to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is key. Recognising the expected growth of the world’s population, an International Day of Potato can highlight the “power” of potato-based systems to feed people. It should help to raise awareness of the potential of potato to transform food systems and contribute to the resilience of local communities, as well as being a catalyst for discussions on the potential economic levers for family farmers in rural communities. We underscore the need for diversification of farming systems, including the safeguarding of genetic resources and traditional knowledge associated with potato.</p> <p>We endorse the call to request the Director-General to present the draft Resolution to the President of the General Assembly of the United Nations and the President of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for information purposes; and we support the request to FAO Members to take the requisite steps to ensure consideration of the Resolution to observe 30 May as the International Day of Potato at forthcoming sessions of the United Nations General Assembly.</p>