MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF THE 21st CENTURY

Hsin Huang, Secretary General

International Meat Secretariat

Sun City, South Africa, April 10 2013
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WE PRODUCE PLENTY OF FOOD

CREATION OF WEALTH

• Higher living standards

• Agricultural productivity

• Cost share food declining
POVERTY

- Growing population, but not always income
- Governance
- Resource distribution
WE LIVE IN INTERESTING TIMES

ROBERT KENNEDY, “Day of Affirmation” speech

ONE PLANET

• Resources are limited
• Environmental degradation
• Climate change

=== SUSTAINABILITY
WE ALWAYS UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF INNOVATION

Malthus in 18th century – we will run out of food – agricultural productivity < population growth

Times of London 1894 – every street buried under nine feet horse manure

Air pollution in China – “pea soup fog” London 19th-mid 20th

CAN WE SOLVE TODAY’S PROBLEMS?
NEGATIVE PERCEPTION OF MEAT

MISCONCEPTIONS

• Environment and Climate Change

• Use of resources

• Health
NEGATIVE PERCEPTION OF MEAT

MISCONCEPTION TO UNDERSTANDING

- Environment and Climate Change
  GHG sequestration, reduced soil erosion, etc.

- Use of resources
  true measure accounts for human edible equivalent

- Health
  meat is a crucial part of a BALANCED diet
What are the benefits of livestock?

- Meat, dairy products
- High quality protein, heme iron, vitamin b12
- Convert grass (and by-products) into protein
- Leather, wool
- Landscape, biodiversity
- Water and soil quality
- Economic and social benefits
WHAT DO U.S. CATTLE EAT?

THE U.S. CATTLE HERD CONSUMES:

- 80% nutrients in form of forages
- 20% in the form of concentrates

Forages – grasses, herbs, hay

Concentrates – **corn**, corn-mill by-product, ethanol by-product, cotton by-product, broken cookies, potato slurry, citrus pulp, etc.

MOST OF THIS IS NOT FIT FOR HUMANS!
GRASSLANDS PROVIDE MANY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

• Climate regulation by carbon sequestration
  France: 33% livestock GHG offset by pastures
• In Europe 1/3 agricultural land permanent pasture

• Biodiversity: species, pollination
• Water resources
• Soil structure and fertility
• Fire regulation
• Flood regulation
IPCC (AR4) estimates significant contribution of agriculture to reducing GHG (12-19% of total)

Cropland management; Restoration of organic soils; Rice management; Grazing land management

90% of potential is carbon sequestration – this means good pasture management is part of the solution

70% of carbon sequestration potential is in developing countries
THE CONSUMER WANTS US TO CARE

LABELLING

• Environment/Animal welfare/social equity

THE CONSUMER ASKS:

• Is it safe?
• Is it nutritious?
• Can I trust you? (horse-gate)
HOW DO WE BECOME MORE SUSTAINABLE?

• Produce more of what we want
• Produce less of what we don’t want
• Continuous improvement « journey » not a « destination »,
• Identify hotspots
• Improve profitability
PARTNERSHIP WITH FAO

- Pre-competitive issue
- Need for international normalized methods
- Realistic
- Credible

- Partnership with FAO on LCA
- Partnership with FAO GAA
OPINION LEADERS

FAO: with great power comes great responsibility

• 2006 Livestock’s Long Shadow
• 2010 Livestock in a Changing Landscape
• 2013 ???
CONCLUSIONS
SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK

• Livestock key contribution to feeding the world
• Livestock = livelihood for 1B poor (FAO)
• Count positive contributions as well — social and environmental services provided by livestock
• The consumer wants us to care

• Future is optimistic: solutions are being developed (in all sectors)
WE PRODUCE PLENTY OF FOOD

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NOT EVERYONE HAS ACCESS TO FOOD

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Grasslands provide many environmental services

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