

Canadian agri-food production leaders unite to celebrate achievements and commit to continue to advance Canada's leadership role in the production of safe, sustainable and nutritious food ahead of the United Nations Food Systems Summit

September 22, 2021

Ottawa, ON - The United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) taking place on September 23, 2021 is a critical dialogue for people around the world to ensure the future of sustainable food systems and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The signatories to this statement, Canadian farmers, ranchers, input providers and food and beverage producers, play an important role in shaping the future of our national and global food systems and advancing global goals.

The UNFSS has given our Canadian Agri-Food sector the opportunity to reflect and celebrate our shared advancements and achievements in sustainability, innovation, and the production of safe and nutritious food. We are proud to be feeding Canada and the world, and we recognize that continual advances are critical to creating a more sustainable future and one that Canada will play a leadership role in. The UNFSS provides the platform to look forward and together chart an inclusive, multi-stakeholder and systems approach for the future of food.

Through science, effective policy and programs, governance, and application of best management practices, Canadian farmers, ranchers, input providers and food and beverage producers are committed to advancing safe, secure, nutritious and sustainable food systems through the following:

- **Climate Smart Solutions.** Investing in and advocating for innovation, research, and strategic and collaborative goal setting and action plans in relation to climate change mitigation, adaptation and resiliency.
- **Farmers & Ranchers of the Future.** Providing pragmatic, solution-oriented ideas, strategies and practices to ensure food production is economically viable, diverse, and a meaningful place to work for the current and the next generation. Supporting the next generation of farmers through mentorships and new entrant programs, and making it easier for young farmers to invest in their future.
- **Reducing Food Loss and Waste.** Continually evaluating food loss and waste along the value chain, and investing in and providing innovative solutions for the future.
- **Sustainable Agriculture and Production Practices.** Employing practices that advance nature positive agriculture, respect our planetary boundaries and further enhance our environmental contributions while ensuring farmers remain profitable.
- **Collaborative Approaches.** Recognizing the interconnectivity of agriculture systems and the strength brought forward by diverse perspectives, we commit to continued conversations on how to continually improve the Canadian food system.
- **Resilient Food Systems.** Increasing the resiliency of our food systems to ensure a continual supply of safe, affordable food, to maintain strong rural, coastal, urban and indigenous communities, and to strengthen food system actors' ability to withstand external shocks such as COVID-19 and extreme weather events.
- **Safe and Affordable Food.** Sharing of best food safety and animal care practices and investing in and adopting of innovations that enhance productivity as we work with communities towards achieving zero hunger and food security for all.

- **Innovation as a Lever of Change.** Embracing a science-based approach to solving the challenges faced by our food systems, recognizing that innovation and technology have the power to deliver the transformative change needed to realize a resilient and accessible food system.
- **Diverse Food Systems.** Recognizing that diverse domestic and global food systems are resilient food systems, build on the integrated circular economy within food systems that recognize the true value of food.

Quotes

“Agriculture has an amazing capacity to contribute to climate change solutions, in Canada many of our agriculture products including beef have half the GHG footprint in comparison to our global partners. That’s because we have strategically invested for generations in research, innovation and the application of these practices through the supply chain. We have to share what we have achieved but also strive to do more.”

- Bob Lowe, President, Canadian Cattlemen’s Association

“The UNFSS gives us the opportunity to reflect on our achievements as Canadian growers and farmers but also to reflect on where we want to go. I am inspired by the goals set by many of the agriculture associations and individual businesses, I have no doubt that agriculture and agri-food have the solutions to many of our biggest challenges.”

- Jan VanderHout, President, Canadian Horticultural Council

“Canadian agriculture has incredible potential as a natural climate solutions provider, and our sector has been making impressive strides for decades in terms of our GHG footprint relative to our productivity. The UNFSS allows Canada and the world to share its successes and work together to accomplish even more on this critically important front. We hope to see the Canadian government, and governments around the world recognize and harness the immense potential that our sector represents.”

- Mary Robinson, President, Canadian Federation of Agriculture

“Canola farmers have exhibited their commitment to stewarding the land. Through the adoption of innovations, they have reduced their environmental footprint increasing land use efficiency, reducing fossil fuels and sequestering greenhouse gases. We look forward to continually building on these practices to foster a more resilient food system and to be a partner in finding solutions to climate challenges.”

- Rick White, President & CEO, Canadian Canola Growers Association and Vice-Chair, Food Systems Champion Network

“Canadian agriculture is already hard at work to reduce emissions and address climate change through initiatives like the *Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef*. Across all sectors of agriculture, sustainability is a priority in how we do business today and, how we will drive our industry forward.”

- Janice Tranberg, President and CEO, National Cattle Feeders’ Association

“For Canadian chicken farmers, sustainability means protecting animal health and welfare, ensuring worker and community wellbeing, preserving the health of the land and of Canadian farms and contributing to the Canadian economy by providing affordable food to Canadians.”

- Benoît Fontaine, Chair, Chicken Farmers of Canada

“Through our audited Animal Care and Hatching Egg Quality programs the Canadian Hatching Egg Producers are global leaders in on farm food safety and animal care. We continue to explore and advance constructive realistic solutions that contribute to a resilient Canadian food system.”

- Brian Bilkes, Chair, Canadian Hatching Egg Producers

“Blue foods – especially farm-raised seafood – are a burgeoning component to meet the world’s demand for healthy and low-carbon proteins. Our commitment to producing the best quality farm-raised seafood in the world is backed up by leading international certification and forward-looking sustainability commitments. Canada’s seafood farmers stand with the Canadian food community in our dedication to excellence.”

- Timothy Kennedy, President & CEO, Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance

“As a key agricultural input, quality seed and varieties adapted to the challenges we face today are a vital resource. The seed industry can help farmers adapt to climate change by developing crops that are more resistant to drought and other symptoms of a changing climate. Plant breeding innovations can help reduce agricultural emissions by breeding crops that better capture carbon, for example, by developing plants with extensive root systems. Improved varieties allow producers to grow more with less and lead to a smaller environmental footprint.”

- Ellen Sparry, President, Seeds Canada

“Canadian agriculture has made incredible strides over the last 50 years – feeding more people, more sustainably than ever before. This is in no small part due to farmers’ adoption of innovative new tools and technologies that allow them to do more with less. Guided by science and innovation Canadian agriculture will continue in the years and decades ahead as an economic force in this country while also delivering important solutions to the challenges posed by climate change.”

- Pierre Petelle, President and CEO, CropLife Canada

“Canada has the opportunity to become a world leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions on farms by helping growers become climate-smart. We believe that proactive efforts made by Canada’s fertilizer industry in 4R Nutrient Stewardship will not only support this transition but will help position the Canada with a leading example on the international stage in climate change adaptation, resilience and mitigation.”

- Karen Proud, President & CEO, Fertilizer Canada

“As stewards of the land, dairy farmers from coast-to-coast have always been world leaders in sustainability and are committed to remaining so in the future. The resilience of our food system is critical to ensuring food security for all Canadians. We endeavour to provide Canadians with a steady supply of high-quality nutritious milk, produced in accordance with the highest standards in the world.”

- Pierre Lampron, President, Dairy Farmers of Canada

“Canadian egg farmers are true stewards of the land. We are committed to building healthy communities, a greener environment and are leaders in best practices. Through the research and adoption of new technologies, our farmers have drastically reduced their environmental footprint while increasing production. Building more sustainable and resilient food systems is the way of the future, and Egg farmers will continue to be global leaders in innovation and combatting climate change.”

- Roger Pelissero, President, Egg Farmers of Canada

Canadian Agri-Food Fast Facts

- Canada's agriculture and agri-food is a major contributor to the Canadian economy responsible for one in eight Canadian jobs and over seven percent of Canadian GDP (2018).
- Thanks to innovative best practices and technologies, agricultural production in Canada has doubled over the last 22 years while emissions have remained relatively stable.
- Canada is home to the first certified sustainable beef program in the world, the Canadian beef industry has a goal of increasing carbon sequestration in grasslands by 3.4 million tonnes per year by 2030. Beef cattle also upcycle food that would otherwise be wasted, such as fruits and vegetables that are no longer suitable for grocery stores, grain by products, and more.
- Turkey farmers reinvest in their farms and industries by way of world-leading research, innovation, food safety, and bird care. Improvements to feed efficiency over 40 years are reducing the carbon footprint of turkey production. Now, 33 per cent less feed is needed for every pound of turkey meat produced. This is the direct results of improvements along the supply chain, such as improved feeding programs, selective breeding and on-farm management programs.
- In the last 40 years, the carbon footprint of the Canadian chicken sector was reduced by 37 per cent, and water consumption has been reduced by 45 per cent.
- 62 per cent of the Canadian chicken sector's total energy use comes from renewable sources, with chicken feed accounting for the bulk of renewable energy consumption.
- Canada's seed industry is continually innovating towards increased sustainability. Technologies like gene editing can help plants capture and store more carbon, reducing excess carbon emissions by up to 46 per cent.
- Without crop protection products and plant breeding innovations Canadian farmers would need 44 per cent more land to produce what they do today (that's roughly the size of all the Maritime provinces combined).
- Over a 30-year period, agricultural soils went from being a minor source of emissions, at 1.1 million tonnes in 1981, to being a significant sink and absorbing 11.9 million tonnes from the atmosphere in 2011.
- Nutrient use efficiency on Canadian farms exceeds the world average and ranges between 66 per cent and 78 per cent. Canada is accomplishing this while also increasing productivity as a net positive contributor to world food security helping to meet the UN SDG #2 Zero Hunger goal.
- Canola fields provide habitat for over 2,000 beneficial insects, including native pollinators, honeybees, spiders and beetles.
- Canada's major ocean-farmed salmon production is 100 per cent certified to global sustainability standards, and Canada's seafood farming sector uses only 1 per cent of viable coastal area.
- Among the lowest carbon footprints for dairy in the world: producing one litre of milk in Canada emits less than 1/2 the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as compared to the global average.
- Over the past 50 years, Canadian egg production has increased by 50 per cent, while the industry's environmental footprint decreased by almost 50 per cent.

Learn more about Canadian Agriculture Sustainability Actions/Plans/Benchmarks

[Canadian Beef Industry Goals](#)

[Canola's Sustainable Future](#)

[Canadian Agri-Food Sustainability Initiative](#)

The Chicken Industry Life Cycle Assessment
Canadian Produce Sustainability
Responsible Seafood Farmers
Manage Resistance Now
Fertilizer Canada Strategic Plan
Dairy Farmers of Canada
Egg Farmers of Canada



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