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Report Finds Major Challenges to Meeting Global Food and Nutrition Needs by 2050

Global Harvest Initiative's 2013 GAP Report® Highlights Regional Urgency Amid Overall Global Progress in Meeting Needs of 9 Billion

DES MOINES, Iowa (October 16, 2013) -- The Global Harvest Initiative (GHI) today released its 4th annual Global Agricultural Productivity Report® (GAP Report®) at the World Food Prize Symposium before an audience of global scientists, agricultural industry experts, farmers, and development professionals.

The 2013 GAP Report includes GHI's updated GAP Index™, an annual snapshot of agricultural productivity growth measured against growth in global population and food demand. The GAP Index is based on the measurement of total factor productivity (TFP), the ratio of agricultural outputs to inputs. Total factor productivity rises when outputs increase and inputs remain constant. The Global Harvest Initiative has been focused on agricultural productivity and the importance of TFP since 2009, and released its inaugural GAP Report in 2010 at the World Food Prize.

The 2013 GAP Report revises previous food demand and agricultural productivity projections based on new data from five regions: East Asia, South and Southeast Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa.

- Since the 2012 report, the gap between East Asia's food demand and agriculture production capacity narrowed slightly, but the region will need to meet its growing demand through imports and through continuous increases in productivity.
- At current rates of productivity growth, Sub-Saharan Africa is projected to meet only 25 percent of food demand in 2030.
- In Latin America and the Caribbean, overall regional production is expected to exceed demand by more than 50 percent with Brazil leading this increase in productivity. Output in Brazil is expected to be twice the projected demand by 2030, and Brazil will likely serve as a critical source of food and agricultural supply to meet the demand of China's growing and more affluent and urban population.

The Global Harvest Initiative report finds significant differences in the rate of productivity growth depending on per capita gross national income and recommends country-level policy changes.

- Low-income countries— Raising productivity will require creating environments friendly to new investments, technologies and practices, with a special focus on smallholder farmers and women.

EMBARGOED UNTIL OCTOBER 16, 2013, at 11 AM CDT

Continuing public-private partnerships and building agricultural research and extension capacity are key actions that low-income countries must take to improve TFP.

- High-income countries— Maintaining investments in science-based technologies, including advances in genomics, irrigation, mechanization, and precision analytics, will protect past gains in TFP growth and ensure productivity does not fall behind in high-income countries.

“The overall findings of the 2013 GAP Report indicate that over the past decade, countries are managing to maintain growth in productivity on global average. But those findings should not downplay the serious and urgent fact that we must maintain an increasing rate of global agricultural productivity year after year for the next 40 years.” said Dr. Margaret Zeigler, GHI executive director.

“The 2013 GAP Report shows that raising productivity across all regions requires long-term investments and sustained focus if we are going to have sufficient nutritious and affordable food and agriculture.” Zeigler continued, “To more sustainably increase output from every resource we use for food production, we need greater investment in agricultural research and development, better trade agreements for facilitation of global and regional trade in agriculture, and a commitment to apply information and science-based technologies.”

For the first time, the 2013 GAP Report includes case studies that demonstrate the impact of five policy areas critical for meeting the food and nutrition needs of the future, including reducing trade barriers, promoting public- and private-sector investment, increasing investments in research, and coordinating international development assistance. Together, these policy areas help drive greater efficiency and productivity along agricultural value chains.

Several agriculture experts joined Dr. Zeigler in presenting the 2013 GAP Report at today’s release event, including Claudia Garcia, Senior Director, Global Market Access, Elanco, Ruth Campbell, Managing Director, Technical Learning and Standards, ACDI/VOCA, and Dr. Robert Herdt, Adjunct Professor, International Agriculture and Applied Economics and Management, Cornell University.

Resources

- The full 2013 GAP Report is available on the GHI website, www.globalharvestinitiative.org
- The 2013 GAP Report is being presented today at the World Food Prize Symposium in Des Moines, Iowa. The event will be streamed live online from 11:00 AM to noon CDT at <http://www.globalharvestinitiative.org/index.php/gap-report-gap-index/2013-gap-report>
- Follow the event on Twitter: #GAPReport, @Harvest2050

About The Global Harvest Initiative

The Global Harvest Initiative (GHI) is a private-sector voice for productivity growth throughout the agricultural value chain to sustainably meet the demands of a growing world. Since its establishment in 2009, GHI has been focused on the importance of agricultural productivity for global food security, and since 2010, GHI has released its signature GAP Report®, an annual benchmark of the global rate of agricultural productivity. GHI’s growing membership includes DuPont, Elanco, IBM, John Deere, and Monsanto. Visit us at <http://www.globalharvestinitiative.org>, Twitter @Harvest2050 <http://twitter.com/#!/harvest2050>, and Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/GlobalHarvestInitiative>.

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