

The Global Agriculture and Food After Covid19
Wednesday/May/27/17:00-19:00 CEST (08:00-10:00 PDT)

The global food value chain contributes more than \$8 trillion, or 10% of global GDP, employs more than 1.5 billion people and provides food to - almost - every living person on the planet, -almost- every day of the year. The covid19 pandemic has affected global agri-food but not as much as other industries. Most analysts agree that what we experience in global food markets could not be called a food crisis - at least not yet. Unlike what the world experienced in 2007/8, or during the decade 2009-19, when the world's economies were tormented by the financial crisis. However, while food production was not affected as such, the global food supply chains were disrupted by the pandemic itself and by the measures countries put in place to contain it. These impacts are not proportional and do not affect all countries equally. The UN had to revise its estimates due to the pandemic from 135 to 265 million people being at risk of famine in 55 countries.

How has the pandemic affected the global agrifood? First and foremost, the pandemic has altered the structure of the demand for food, mainly because consumers cook and eat almost entirely at home and little in the HORECA (hotels, restaurants and caffés). This caused significant decreases in consumption of certain products, such as dairy, potatoes, meat and others, while the demand for durables, such as pasta and legumes increased. Furthermore, the sickness of large portions of population together with the lockdowns, the closure of borders, has caused significant shortages in the supply of labour, at certain hubs of the food supply chain causing disruptions and delays. These include, ports, abattoirs, etc, although the transportation of bulk and more automated logistics systems, such as grains and oilseeds, were less affected. There have been also secondary disruptions, that is caused by bottlenecks in other supply chains which indirectly affected food value chains, such as, for example, passenger transport, where labour supply has been interrupted, or transport of fresh produce by passenger airplanes, the flights of which has greatly been reduced.

Most countries have designated agriculture and food as essential and first priority and treated agrifood specially during the pandemic. Unlike in previous crisis, countries, both individually and through international institutions and organizations, are trying to maintain free trade and open borders. In April, 22 countries – among which the largest exporters of food accounting for more than 63% of global agriculture and food exports and 55% of imports - agreed to keep trade open. On Wednesday, May 20, 2020 the European Commission unveiled the long-awaited Farm-to-Fork (F2F) strategy. The Commission used the pandemic as an opportunity to unveil a very ambitious plan for “a resilient and robust food system”, with emphasis on sustainability, by reducing pesticides, fertilizer use, increase of organic production and agroecology methods.

There are many questions still unanswered, and the public debate on agriculture after COVID-19 is just beginning. It is very timely that we bring together some world experts on the issue from some leading organizations to discuss on these issues.

The Webinar will be ZOOM and you can register here:

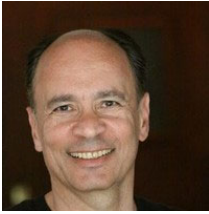
<https://slu-se.zoom.us/j/62114077387>

The Webinar will also be live streamed on LinkedIn, Youtube and Facebook

Please contact Kostas if you have any questions here:

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Panelists



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