



International Conference on Sharing Innovative Agribusiness Solutions

# From Farms to Markets: Providing Know-how and Finance

26-27 November 2008 Cairo, EGYPT

- ★ Supply/value chains, market access and linkages
- ★ Compliance with standards and conformity assessment
- ★ Technology and value addition
- ★ Innovative forms of financing



## Presentation

The current global food crisis has highlighted the extreme vulnerability of developing country populations to fluctuations in food prices and supplies. Most recently this has been exacerbated by the financial and economic crisis. The international community has attempted to tackle this complex set of challenges in various ways. UNIDO, in line with its mandate, is responding by increasing its efforts towards strengthening agribusiness value chains, expanding developing countries' food supplies and their access to markets, technology and investment.

In order to provide an opportunity to share innovative solutions to agribusiness problems and promote networking and matchmaking, UNIDO is organizing an international conference in cooperation with the Government of Egypt and the SEKEM Initiative. The conference is supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and co-financed by the Italian Development Cooperation and the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), as well as by private sponsors.

## Innovative conference approach

The conference aims at inspiring new approaches to interactions throughout the agribusiness value chain by sharing innovative agribusiness solutions and best practices that can potentially be scaled up and/or transferred to other countries or regions. The conference will:

- Present a large number of **innovative agribusiness solutions and best practices** which have proved to be successful and can serve as models. Rather than generic presentations on problem and needs assessment, viable solutions will be demonstrated through case studies.
- Provide **opportunities for matchmaking and networking** between those participants who are seeking ways to achieve sustainable agribusiness development and those with innovative solutions, as well as those with financing for development assistance and investment.
- Allow participants to **observe applied solutions first-hand** and exchange experiences and views in an informal

environment, as the first day of the conference will be held on SEKEM Farm, located outside Cairo, which won the Right Livelihood Award widely known as the "Alternative Nobel Prize" in 2003.

- Bring together some **300 participants from over 60 countries** - from farms and agro-industries, from producers associations and NGOs, from public and private technical and financial institutions, from governments, international organizations, donors, and academia.
- Follow-up on the successful "**Global Agro-Industries Forum - Improving Competitiveness and Development Impact**" organized by UNIDO, FAO, IFAD and the Government of India in New Delhi, 8-11 April 2008.
- Feature **interactive panel discussions in Davos format**. The opening session will be moderated by Todd Benjamin, contributing financial editor for CNN International.

## Success story

The inspiration for the conference was the success achieved by the UNIDO project “Traceability of agro-industrial products for the European market”, funded under the Italian-Egyptian Debt for Development Swap. The project established an effective traceability system for exports to the EU, which has enabled Egyptian farmers and the food industry to increase food safety and

overcome technical barriers to trade, thus facilitating the sustainable access of Egyptian food products to export markets. The project assisted about 100 of the 200 packing houses in the country, and it is estimated that these account for over 70 per cent of exports. Through them, the project has reached around 45,000 farms and thus nearly 5 million people.

## Preparation and follow-up

Conference preparations are being supported by an International Advisory Board and by a Technical Committee, which is responsible for reviewing the solutions submitted and selecting those with the greatest potential as models for sustainable agribusiness development.

In order to sustain the results of the conference and to promote South-South cooperation, a platform will be initiated to continue the identification and dissemination of **successful agribusiness solutions**.

## Conferences Topics

The conference will focus on innovative agribusiness solutions that can serve as models for development in the following four areas.

- 1 Supply/value chains, market access and linkages.** Farmers, especially small farmers, and SMEs need viable business solutions to be able to participate in a sustainable manner in the food industry supply/value chain. Transaction-based mechanisms must be developed to fill gaps along the chain in order to facilitate market access for these farmers and food processors and link producers with buyers.
- 2 Compliance with standards and conformity assessment.** Agribusiness actors must comply with standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures throughout the supply chain, including private standards and SPS measures, in order to overcome barriers to trade. Greater compliance will increase the quality and safety of food, protect consumers in both developing and developed countries and increase access to domestic, regional and global markets.
- 3 Technology and value addition.** Food producers in developing countries need to progress from producing and exporting commodities to adding value and increasing quality, safety and productivity through sustainable processing and manufacturing. Such changes also contribute to domestic food security, by reducing post-harvest crop losses.
- 4 Innovative forms of financing.** The development of domestic farms, enterprises and suppliers and strengthening of agribusiness related infrastructure requires innovative forms of financing to support technical cooperation, business development and investment.

# PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Wednesday, 26 November 2008

## Sessions at SEKEM Farm

- 7:30 Buses leave from Fairmont Hotel to go to SEKEM Farm
- 8:00 Registration at SEKEM Farm  
(for participants who have not registered at the hotel)
- 9:15 **Opening session**  
**Introduction and Discussion of Themes as selected Innovative Agribusiness Solutions**  
Moderated by **Todd Benjamin**, *Contributing Editor, CNN*

### SESSION I

- 11:45 **Introduction and Discussion of Themes and selected Innovative Agribusiness Solutions**
- 14:45 Lunch
- 16:00 Tour of SEKEM Farm: Applied Agribusiness Solutions

Thursday, 27 November 2008

## Sessions at Fairmont Hotel

### SESSION II

#### **Solution sharing and matchmaking**

- 8:30 - 15:00 Individual matchmaking meetings to promote replication and scaling up of Innovative Agribusiness Solutions
- 8:30 - 15:00 Parallel sessions with presentations and discussions of individual Agribusiness Solutions and other themes
- 15:00 Lunch

### SESSION III

- 16:30 Closing



## REGISTRATION

Potential participants are invited to register online on the conference web site [www.agribusiness-solutions.org](http://www.agribusiness-solutions.org) where they will be provided with a password for future access to their user account. There is no registration fee. Those who are accepted for participation will be informed by the organizers.

## INNOVATIVE AGRIBUSINESS SOLUTION

Submitted by participants will be shared during both the conference sessions and the matchmaking event. The best model solution identified in each of the four themes will receive an award. The registration form and forms for submitting and seeking agribusiness solutions are available on the conference web site.

## EXHIBITS

Conference participants and sponsors will have the opportunity to exhibit and present information materials in parallel to the conference sessions.

## CONFERENCE VENUES

The main conference venue is the Fairmont Towers Hotel, Uruba Street, Heliopolis, Cairo, Egypt;  
Tel. +20 2 2696 0000;  
Fax: +20 2 2696 0300

[www.fairmont.com/towersheliopolis](http://www.fairmont.com/towersheliopolis)

The first day's sessions will be held at the SEKEM Farm, El-Sharkia, Belbeis, Cairo, Egypt

Tel. +20 55 9580 114/5;  
Fax: +20 55 9580 961;

[www.sekem.com](http://www.sekem.com)

Transport will be provided for all participants between the Fairmont Towers Hotel and the SEKEM Farm.

## LANGUAGES

The conference language is English. Interpretation into Arabic and French will be provided during the conference sessions.

## DRESS CODE

This conference has been conceived as a new way of getting together to share ideas and discuss opportunities for the development of agribusiness. Therefore, casual dress is encouraged throughout the conference.

## TRAVEL AND ACCOMODATION

UNIDO will cover travel and accommodation for a limited number of participants. Potential participants who are able to cover their own costs can still register. Meals will be provided during the conference for all participants.

## HOTELS

UNIDO funded participants will be accommodated at the Fairmont Hotel, where self-financed participants are also encouraged to stay for logistical reasons. Other nearby hotels are also listed on the conference web site. While participants are not obliged to stay in any of the suggested hotels, attention should be given to the distance and time required to travel within Cairo and to/from the SEKEM Farm.

## VISAS

Participants are recommended to check with the nearest Egyptian Embassy for up-to-date information on visa requirements. UNIDO will provide visa assistance letters for those who require them.

## WEATHER

The weather in Cairo in November is mild and sunny with an average maximum temperature of 20°C and an average minimum temperature of 10°C. Although rain is unlikely, it is possible. Light woolen clothes are recommended.



## CONTACT

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### *Organizers*

UNIDO  
Egyptian Ministry  
of Industry

### *Supporting institutions and Sponsors*

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Rawya Mansour  
Italian Development  
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Banque Misr  
Swiss State Secretariat  
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