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FAO focuses on food security this World Food Day

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During the World Food Day, CropLife Asia commended the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for its efforts to bring greater awareness to the need for Food Security in combatting global hunger, and took the opportunity to herald the contributions farmers enabled by plant science technologies are making in Asia and around the world are making to feed a growing population.



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According to data from the FAO, world hunger is on the rise with an estimated number of undernourished people increasing from 777 million in 2015 to 815 million in 2016. Meanwhile, the Food Security situation has also visibly worsened in parts of the world, including South Eastern and Western Asia.

“The number of people in Asia without adequate access to a safe and nutritious food supply is growing – and that’s simply unacceptable,” said Dr Siang Hee Tan. “The responsibility to ensure everyone has enough healthy food to eat is a shared one. The plant science industry fully supports the FAO in the pursuit of wiping out world hunger, and is committed to ensuring farmers in Asia are empowered and enabled to produce more food for a growing population.”

According to the UN, the world’s population is projected to exceed nine billion inhabitants by the year 2050, and Asia alone is expected to have roughly one billion more people living within it.

Growers around the world will need to produce as much as 70% more food than today to meet the expected needs of our population by 2050 while facing a host of obstacles including climate change. The numerous innovations of plant biotechnology and crop protection will be key in driving sustainable production of a safe and nutritious food supply to feed our growing population.

“FAO numbers indicate that 85% of the world’s 525 million smallholder farmers live and work within our continent,” added Dr Tan. “These farmers are crucial to combatting hunger in Asia; they deserve our support and access to the latest technological

tools to grow more food with fewer natural resources.”

Crop protection products prevent nearly 40% of global rice and maize harvests from being lost every year. Meanwhile, biotech crops helped slow the advance of climate change by reducing carbon emissions. For example, it is estimated biotech crop plantings in 2015 reduced carbon emissions by 26.7 billion kg which is equivalent to taking 11.9 million cars off the road for one year.