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Asian Experts Meet to Discuss Six-point Plan for Food Security *Farming First Coalition Calls for Farmer-Centric, Research-led Policy Engagement*

Today, leading policymakers and influencers from around Asia will join the Farming First coalition to discuss the region's food security imperatives for the future.

As part of the International Conference on Asian Food Security (ICAFS), these leaders will meet to discuss the six pillars of the Farming First action plan and how these should be put into action in Asia:

1. Safeguard natural resources
2. Share knowledge
3. Build local access and capacity
4. Protect harvests
5. Enable access to markets
6. Prioritise research imperatives

Siang Hee Tan, Executive Director of CropLife Asia and Farming First spokesperson, says: "Asia's farmers are small-scale entrepreneurs in the making. If they are equipped and supported to adapt to meet the world's food demands, they can boost their own livelihoods while driving broader economic development. With significant new challenges from the impacts of an increasing population, climate change and water scarcity, the time to act is now."

Ensuring food security in the 21st century requires finding solutions to complex challenges. Policymakers need to ensure that the world's farmers have access to the appropriate mix of tools, knowledge and technologies they need to boost productivity and maintain viable rural livelihoods.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), 81% of expected increases in crop production in South and East Asia are expected to come from yield increases alone [rather than increases in cropping intensity (14%) or increased land under cultivation (5%)]. And according to IFAD, 60.5% of rural Asians are living in poverty (or 1.325 billion persons). This is more than three times the number of poor in Sub-Saharan Africa. And 31.4% (or 687 million persons) in rural Asia are living in extreme poverty (2008 calculation).

Since 2007, there have been riots over food in more than 60 countries around the world. Because more than three-quarters of the world's poor rely on agriculture as their only source of livelihood, food security also helps ensure political, economic and social stability as well.

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ABOUT FARMING FIRST

Farming First is a global coalition representing the world's farmers, scientists, engineers and industry as well as more than 100 national farmers' associations and agricultural development organisations. Farming First calls for a broad-based, knowledge-centred approach to increase agricultural output in a sustainable and socially responsible manner.

To view Farming First's position on food security, visit:
www.farmingfirst.org/food-security