FOOD SECURITY IN
ISRAEL AND THE REGION

CHALLENGES AND PRACTICES

Professional Speakers

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ISRAEL CLIMATE OF INNOVATION
Dr. Dorit Adler

We are in the midst of a global syndemics the synergy of the pandemics: obesity and diabetes on one hand, nutrition insecurity, mal-nutrition and hunger on the other hand and together, and the climate crisis with dramatic droughts, floods, record temperatures, and lower agricultural yields are all interrelated and threatens nutrition security globally and regionally. Our food system is broken: responsible for a third of global anthropogenic GHG emissions, and a major contributor to rainforests, soils, and biodiversity degradation. The covid 19 pandemic and the geopolitics crisis in Ukraine exposed the fragility of our food systems. Our food systems are driven by - food as a commodity attitude and not as a basic right and by physical and virtual obesogenic environment that fuels the global western dietary pattern, with high consumption of meat and ultra-processed foods, in ever increasing demand as well as food waste. Food systems are at the core of the climate, biodiversity and health major crisis to name a few, and therefore in the core the solution.

Ms. Naama Kaufman-Fass

Adv Naama Kaufman-Fass serves as the Director General, Israel Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD). She holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Law, and a Master's degree in Business Administration, with a major in Finance.

In her previous position, she served as Deputy and Acting Director General of the Ministry of Economy and Industry and, in addition to this position, she served for a year as the Registrar of Cooperative Associations, as well as in the position of Director of the Industrial Cooperation and Foreign Investment Promotion Authority. Prior to that, she served as a senior attorney at the Ministry of Finance and as the Chief Risk Officer and a member of the Accountant General's Management Team at the Ministry of Finance. She served as a director of a number of government companies such as: Israel Railways, Ashra – the Israel Foreign Trade Risks Insurance Corporation Ltd., Agur Provident Fund and Advanced Studies Fund Management Fund Ltd., etc.

Prof. Noga Kronfeld Schor

Moderator

Prof. Noga Kronfeld-Schor is the Chief scientist of the Israeli Ministry for Environmental Protection, a full Professor and the head of the Ecological and Environmental Physiology Laboratory, and former Chair of the School of Zoology at Tel Aviv University. She is a Fulbright, Rothschild and Alon fellow. She published over 100 papers which were cited over 5000 times, and mentored over 50 graduate students and post-docs. Prof. Noga Kronfeld-Schor is Israel's convener to the UN food system summit.

Dr. Dorit Adler

The problems and challenges of food systems, climate crisis and food security

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Prof. Ronit Endevelt  
Solutions: healthy, affordable and sustainable diets

The epidemic of chronic disease, alongside the global warming face us with new challenges. Food can be your medicine but can cause many chronic diseases and influence global warming. On one hand, we need to produce healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, lentils and some animal source food at affordable prices, and on the other hand we need to limit unhealthy food production and consumption such as ultra-processed foods and drinks and some animal source foods that contributes to global warming. The built environment has to change if we want a healthy and sustainable country.

Dr. Yael Kachel  
How to transform agriculture in the era of climate change – the role of government

Extreme weather, COVID and geo-political events in recent years increased our awareness of the vulnerability of global and local food systems and the urgent need for action to make food systems more sustainable and resilient and ensure an adequate supply of food. Climate change already affects agricultural production all over the world, while at the same time food production and consumption are contributing to the climate crisis. Israel is located in one of the world's hotspots for climate change and is expected to have a hotter, drier and more-extreme climate, with temperatures increasing faster than the global average. These changes pose a huge challenge to agricultural production. Israel is in a unique position to tackle these challenges and to contribute to adaptation efforts in other countries, based on the expertise developed in coping with difficult climatic conditions (semi-arid to arid climate with no rainfall in summer), advanced agricultural research and investment in innovation. To design a policy for coping with the challenges to food systems and ensuring food security today and in the future a food systems approach is necessary, taking into account risks, tradeoffs and linkages. Based on the cooperation of relevant government ministries and the involvement of stakeholders integrated solutions have to be developed, relating to food production and consumption and the impact on the environment. In the last year, Israeli government ministries are cooperating in the framework an inter-ministerial committee to prepare an implementation plan for the adaptation of food systems to climate change. The plan is focusing on actions which can be implemented in the near future, and will include adaptation as well as mitigation measures.
Dr. Moran Blaychfeld Magnazi
Education as a tool for healthy and sustainable food system

Education on nutrition and climate change for all ages plays a critical role both in the policy-making process of professionals and decision-makers, in the selection of research fields in academia, and in public support and acceptance and implementation of regulatory moves and impact on the community. This public acceptance will affect the demand for healthy and sustainable food and thus also the food industry. We must educate from a young age about the connection between nutrition, the climate crisis and sustainability, and also educate in a practical way to love and eat raw food from childhood, to consume mainly plant foods, to reduce food waste and to use reusable utensils and dishes. Additionally, it is important to invest in education for nutrition activism and an overall holistic approach related to food and the climate crisis, which takes into account not only the reduction of consumption of animal foods but also the reduction in ultra-processed foods, with an emphasis on nutritional security, budgetary considerations and providing tools for healthy and affordable consumption. Many bodies deal with education, and so it is recommended to pool resources and speak with a unified message on health and environmental issues.

Dr. Michal Levy
Innovation – Agtech as a solution

Israel has a strong ecosystem in agriculture of academic research capabilities, government, entrepreneurship environment & industry that brings together forces from different disciplines with innovative approach to the local and global agriculture. This was developed in Israel over years of dealing with local challenges. These days we invest in implementing new technologies and approaches to agricultural practices using methods such as Artificial intelligence (AI), Big Data, the internet of things (IoT), image processing and more. All these in order to have a better production, better nutrition, better environment, better life.

Dr. Shira Efron
Partnering for a food secure - MENA region

Food insecurity in the MENA region is an increasingly growing security and regional stability in multiple ways, such as by exacerbating socioeconomic and ethnproblem due to several structural challenges, including water scarcity; climate change; fast population growth and urbanization; dependence on food imports; and non-market-based food subsidies, which hinder the development of a flourishing food industry. Even before COVID-19, over 55 million people across the region were undernourished. And these numbers have only grown as poverty deepened in the last three years, and especially as a result of the war in Ukraine due the significant role that Russia and Ukraine play in the MENA’s staple food supplies. The difficulty of feeding a fast-growing population also creates a feedback loop threatening national ic tensions, increasing the risk of intra-state and inter-state conflict, and adding to migratory pressures that could lead to displacement and refugee hood. This lecture will examine the prospect of transforming food insecurity from a factor in conflict to a driver for innovation and cooperation. Instead of competition over scarce resources, the session will analyze how MENA countries can harness their added value and utilize cross-border and multilateral cooperation to advance their collective interest—a food secure and stable region.

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