

Good Morning! It is really a pleasure to be here today and congratulations on 2016 being named the **International Year of the Pulse**.

Let me say right up front that I am a huge fan of PULSES.

On the personal side, Pulses are a big, and growing, part of my family's diet.

But I am not here to talk about my family's diet.

Instead I want to talk to you:

- About how the United Nations World Food Program uses Pulses to address the food security needs of millions of people around the world each year.
- About how pulses are a critical component in the food we provide to people dealing with crises and emergencies.
- And, most important perhaps, I want to share how WFP sees that increasing the production of nutrient rich commodities, like Pulses, in particular by small holder farmers, can help us address chronic under-nutrition around the world – **and, in fact, can help us end hunger in our lifetime.**

For those of you who might not be familiar with WFP, let me give you a bit of background:

- WFP is part of the United Nations system of agencies.
- WFP is the largest humanitarian organization in the world
  - 150 projects in 76 countries (think Syria, South Sudan, Ebola countries, Vanuatu, etc.
  - Assisting between 78-85 million people per year
  - Almost 15,000 staff – 90 percent of whom work in the field.

**Highlight difficult conditions.**

- In 2015, WFP requires about \$7.45 billion to carry out our mission.
  - Last year, donors gave WFP about \$5.5 billion - and we hope to realize as much or more this year. But it seems, unfortunately, that we always fall short of our goals.
  - (By the way, I want to publicly acknowledge and sincerely thank the Chippewa Valley Bean Co. and its partners for the very generous contribution to WFP's School Feeding Activities. That contribution alone will provide a school meals for about 1,000 children for three months!)
- WFP's goals are straight forward;
  - Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies and fragile settings
  - Reduce under-nutrition and break the intergenerational cycle of hunger or, as my Executive Director likes to say: WE CAN END HUNGER IN OUR LIFETIME

FIRST GOAL: WFP works toward the first goal by addressing the immediate and longer-term food security needs of those it serves in crises situations – primarily through procuring and delivering food, but also increasingly through distributing cash and vouchers.

In 2014, WFP bought food commodities in 93 countries (75 developing and 18 developed). Those purchases were valued at \$1.26 billion and totaled more than 2.2 million metric tons.

83 percent of that tonnage or 78 percent of that value was purchased in developing countries.

### **But what does this have to do with Pulses?**

WFP knows that pulses are a critical part of any emergency food response.

Last year, 11.3 percent of the quantity and 19.5 percent of the value of food WFP procured (including in-kind) was Pulses.

This equates to 275,804 metric tons of pulses from 50 countries valued at over \$168 million.

We regularly purchase:

- Dried pulses like Yellow Split Peas, Haricot Beans, Soy Beans, Cow Peas, Chick Peas, and Lentils
- Canned pulses like Fava Beans and Chick Peas

- We also use Pulses as part of High-energy Protein Supplements - Fortified Blended Foods such as Corn Soy Blend, Wheat Soy Blend, and Super Cereals – all of which include some pulse component.
- And Pulses are an ingredient in Lipid-based Nutrient Supplements such as Chick-pea based *Wawamum and Achamum* that are made in Pakistan.

### **But why are Pulses important to WFP and the people we serve?**

WFP recognizes that Pulses provide critical **nutrients** that are not readily available in cereals alone. This is essential in particular for mothers and children.

I don't need to tell you that Pulses are a good source of protein, iron, and other important micro-nutrients, including B vitamins and zinc.

Pulses are usually part of the rations that we provide to those receiving our emergency assistance. In fact, pulses are one of the three main components of our standard ration – together with a cereal and an oil.

Pulses are as **Diverse** as the people we serve: Recognizing the dietary diversity of our beneficiaries, WFP pays particular attention to the importance of delivering commodities that are familiar to them. This is particularly important with regards to pulses.

In Syria, for instance, WFP's emergency operation will serve over 4.0 million people this year. Each family ration that we distribute will include 5kg of either Chick Peas or Red Lentils.

In West Africa, WFP will distribute Black Eyed Cow Peas – purchased locally, if possible.

On an annual basis, WFP uses more Yellow Split Peas than any other type of pulse. They represent about 40 percent of the total amount we deliver. As a matter of fact, we are now working with the USG to preposition about 3,000 metric tons of YSP for emergency operation in Yemen.

So, almost every emergency program that WFP supports uses pulses to help meet the nutritional needs of our beneficiaries.

But now onto WFP's SECOND GOAL: Ending Hunger in our lifetime.

Ladies and Gentlemen: a world of no hunger may sound like a distant dream, but it is not. Despite the unprecedented level of crisis in our world, and the negative impact of climate change and population growth, we really can achieve Zero Hunger!

This vision, I am happy to say, is beautifully captured in the video **Pulses: the Food of the Future** on your website that was produced by **Pulse Canada**.

That video recognizes that with a few simple decisions, including the consumption of more pulses, the world can sustainably and adequately meet the needs of a growing world population.

WFP tries to do its part to end hunger by working in three areas: and pulses are a big part of each.

First, the latest global scientific evidence as highlighted in the Lancet in 2008 and again in 2013, tells us that getting the right nutrition throughout the time a mother is pregnant and all the way up to a child's 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday is absolutely essential to the future health and success of a child!

Poor nutrition during this critical window not only prevents proper physical growth – but also brain development – which tragically is irreversible. Such impairments have been shown to reduce attention, learning and educational attainment.

We know how to prevent this – simple, low cost solutions exist! For WFP, that means the RIGHT FOODS – what we call the *right foods at the right time* – nutritious foods. Combined with access to clean water, medicines/health care to fight infections as well as other important health & caring practices – especially breast feeding – we can ensure the RIGHT FOUNDATION for all children. This also supports

communities and nations to prosper – with evidence on the impacts to economic growth and prosperity.

The second area we work in is School Feeding: This year WFP will either directly or in support of government provide school meals to over 20 million children. Pulses are critical in these programs. As an example, in all of the WFP school-feeding activities that are supported by USDA's McGovern-Dole program, all, but Bangladesh, have a pulse component.

**And finally, WFP has its Purchase for Progress (P4P) program which enhances Market Access & Stability:** WFP recognizes, as you do, the important role pulses can play in providing incomes for small-holder farmers. Through our P4P program, WFP uses its commodity purchasing power together with other key investments to educate small holder farmers on ways to improve productivity, enhance quality, and improve drying and storage. All of this so that pulses can be marketed, at local, regional and international level, strengthening farmer's livelihoods.

In West Africa, as an example, P4P is working closely with partners to help smallholder farmers to produce a protein- and nutrient-rich crop called niébé (cowpeas/black-eyed peas).

P4P-supported farmers' organizations are provided with triple bags (PICS) specifically designed to extend the shelf life of the beans. The benefits of these bags, combined with proper storage techniques, have been clear to many farmers' organizations, allowing them to aggregate and sell larger quantities of high quality beans when prices are high.

#### CONCLUSION:

As we approach 2016 the International Year of the Pulse (IYOP), WFP knows that pulses will continue to play a critical role in our emergency food assistance activities. They will also be a vital part of our efforts to help break the cycle of chronic under-nutrition.

I firmly believe that the World Food Program and the Global Pulse Confederation share the same vision: That we can sustainably end hunger in our lifetimes and that the increasing consumption of pulses, in all of their diversity and nutritional richness, will be a critical element in the achievement of that goal.

Thank you very much!