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# FACT SHEET: ROLE OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN FEED THE FUTURE

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## MESSAGE FROM THOMAS J. VILSACK, SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

President Obama's Feed the Future Initiative is the U.S. Government's strategy to support the international effort to increase the availability and accessibility of food and to improve nutrition and food safety. In the USDA Strategic Plan for 2010-2015, I laid out two objectives for the U.S. Department of Agriculture – to ensure U.S. agricultural resources contribute to enhanced global food security and to support sustainable agriculture production in food-insecure nations.

Almost one billion people around the world are currently estimated by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization to be under-nourished. A comprehensive approach to increase the food supply in food-insecure nations must promote sustainable, market-led growth across the entire food production and market chain. This growth must occur from the laboratory to the farm to the market to the table. It also must prevent and treat under-nutrition and increase the impact of humanitarian food assistance. Consumers must have access to an affordable food supply and assurance that the available food is nutritious and safe.

The USDA Global Food Security Action Plan, developed through a deliberative, consultative process across the Department, and with our partners across the U.S. Government, lays out concretely how we will deliver results against those objectives. Each Mission Area and Agency will align and leverage the implementation of its programs and our core Departmental capabilities – in-country capacity building, basic and applied research, and market information, statistics, and data and economic analysis – to Feed the Future, led by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and individual countries' investment plans. The plan focuses on existing USDA resources and authorities – our contribution to the Feed the Future but also to an important global challenge that we all face that impacts climate change, the international trading system, and rural prosperity at home.

As a Department, we will better link existing in-country activities so they are more mutually reinforcing. We will deepen USDA's efforts in the priority country and global investment areas identified in this Action Plan, so that we can have a greater impact sooner. We will strengthen our partnerships, particularly with USAID, but also with non-governmental, private sector, and multilateral organizations. Our efforts to support global food security are not just important to the many people around the world who do not have access to nutritious and safe food; they are also critically important to the sustainable economic growth of these nations, and the economic prosperity and national security of our own country.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will contribute to the U.S. Government's Feed the Future initiative by utilizing its expertise in three areas at country and global levels for sustained and enhanced impact:

- **In-country capacity building** (working with governments, farmer organizations, private sector and universities on agricultural policies, regulatory systems/sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) systems, extension systems and youth development, natural resources management/sustainability, agribusiness/market chains/trade);
- **Basic and applied research**; and
- **Market information, statistics, data and economic analysis**

The success of USDA's progress in implementation will be measured against relevant indicators from the *Feed the Future* Results Framework. Results will be reported to the USG Coordinator of *Feed the Future*.

### COUNTRY LEVEL INVESTMENTS

USDA's Country Level Investments within Feed the Future will focus on:

A select group of countries/regions – Haiti, Bangladesh, Kenya, Ghana, Guatemala, East Africa, and Central America – where we can build synergies across existing USDA programs;

A particular component of each Country Investment Plan and Feed the Future food security strategy that is aligned with USDA comparative advantages and where USDA has existing programs;

USDA expertise in global research, data and economic analysis, and trade facilitation; and

Partners where there are significant opportunities for synergy with existing USDA activities.

### GLOBAL AND REGIONAL INVESTMENTS

USDA's Global and Regional Investments will focus on transformative areas in research, market information/statistics/data and economic analysis, and trade facilitation. USDA will:

- Support the Feed the Future research strategy, which focuses on advancing the productivity frontier, transforming key agricultural production systems, and addressing food safety and nutrition issues;
- Collaborate on extension-focused activities to ensure that research results are used and that concerns of farmers and other users inform research activities;
- Partner with USAID in managing part of the research investments supporting Feed the Future through the Norman Borlaug Commemorative Research Initiative, including collaboration on specific selected issues such as wheat rust, legume productivity, water management, livestock diseases, and food safety (including mycotoxins);
- Map, identify and safeguard genetic resources, and assist in development of germplasm preservation and knowledge management systems with Feed the Future countries;
- Research the trends and determinants of agricultural productivity in developing countries, with focus on a number of key regions and partner countries covered by Feed the Future;
- Build a Global Agricultural Productivity Network to promote economic research and information sharing on productivity issues confronting agriculture to better target interventions;
- Assess and report on the status of and progress on food security;
- Assess the performance of regional agricultural markets with a focus on the Economic Community of West African States, the Common Market of East and Southern Africa and the countries party to the Central America Free Trade Agreement;
- Conduct in depth analysis for selected countries regarding the data needed to support sound metrics; and
- Support regional actions to facilitate trade, encourage harmonization with international standards, work to decrease technical barriers to trade, and support adoption of science-based policies.