



DEBATES OF THE SENATE

2nd SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT • VOLUME 149 • NUMBER 2

WORLD FOOD DAY

Statement by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Thursday, October 17, 2013

THE SENATE

Thursday, October 17, 2013

[*Translation*]

WORLD FOOD DAY

Hon. Claudette Tardif: Honourable senators, every year on October 16, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations celebrates World Food Day. This day seeks to encourage countries to pay more attention to agricultural production and the issue of world hunger.

A look back over the past few decades gives us a number of reasons to rejoice. Since 1945, agricultural innovation has resulted in a dramatic increase in agricultural productivity. As a result of this progress, the world now has the resources it needs to feed all of its inhabitants.

However, despite these achievements in agricultural production, the world food situation is still cause for concern in 2013. Today, we are confronted with a food crisis on several fronts: the double burden of hunger and obesity, and the environmental impacts of modern agriculture.

The theme of this year's World Food Day — sustainable food systems for food security and nutrition — reflects these problems.

Today, nearly 850 million people are undernourished, including several thousand Canadians. One in 10 Canadian families with a child under the age of six is unable to meet its daily food requirements. Although food is abundant, unfortunately, it is often not always available to the people who need it most.

Ironically, societies around the world are facing growing health problems such as obesity, diabetes and other problems related to a diet too high in sugar, salt and fat. According to the World Health Organization, obesity is now linked to more deaths than hunger and, as a result, is on its way to becoming the public health priority of the 21st century.

With regard to the environment, today, we are more aware that high-input industrial agriculture methods have significant adverse effects on our ecosystems. This awareness comes at a time when we are facing the challenges of the impending population growth and a reduction in available farm land.

Honourable senators, there are many problems with the global agri-food system but the solution is the same: ensuring that everyone has access to nutritious food that comes from sustainable agriculture.
