

**Secretariat:**  
Rémi Kahane  
Tel: +886-6-5837801 ext 150  
Fax: +886-6-5830009  
Email: [rkahane@globalhort.org](mailto:rkahane@globalhort.org)  
[remi.kahane@cirad.fr](mailto:remi.kahane@cirad.fr)

Shanhua, 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2006



## The Global Horticulture Initiative - GlobalHort

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. Beyond Poverty and Malnutrition

Advances in biological sciences and in information and communication technologies provide unprecedented opportunities for the scientific community to take collective action for impact on poverty and malnutrition. The *Global Horticulture Initiative*, a consortium of international organizations and agencies already involved in horticultural research and education for development in Africa, will utilize these advances to enlist a global network to develop horticultural technologies and programs that will increase economic opportunities and food security for the poor.

Globalization, trade liberalization and changes in consumer demand are creating new market opportunities for farmers and landless laborers especially through horticultural systems in the tropics and subtropics. Many cereal farmers are already converting a portion of their land into production of high value horticultural crops. A strong horticulture sector is an engine for economic growth-it creates jobs, supports agri-businesses, and generates income to a greater degree than staple crops. Horticultural crops can create new sources of income for farmers and for laborers in the marketing and processing chain. Furthermore, horticultural crops can provide the micronutrients that are essential, yet lacking in the diets of half of the world's population.

Fruit and vegetable rich diet is the best and cheapest way to prevent deficiency, chronic and non-communicable diseases like anemia, xerophthalmia or immunity related diseases. Food safety shall be guaranteed for human health (producers and consumers) and for environment.

#### 2. Global Changes affecting Production and Consumption

Two major events occurred over the past 6 months. One received some media attention while the other went largely unnoticed. Both have major implications for global horticultural production and horticultural research. The first event was the day on which urban populations across the globe outnumbered rural populations for the first time in the history of mankind. The second, which did receive the media attention, was the recording of the highest average global temperature for the previous 1000 years and no doubt even longer.

Within the past 30 years lifestyles have changed dramatically, the massive growth of “super cities” has seen a major shift away from gardening as a leisure pursuit, and there is a “generational gap” between those living in cities and those engaged with supplying food. One of the most significant changes, however, is the emergence of supermarkets which isolates the producer from the consumer, requiring year-round produces at very affordable prices, prohibiting variations in supply, and requesting quality traits which make fruits and vegetables at high costs and these markets not affordable by small scale stakeholders..In fact, processed food has become more affordable than fresh one, and consumers have often sanitary concerns on fresh fruits or vegetables. However, the small scale producers grow close to the markets, keep social and cultural links with their customers, provide employment and services (waste composting, greening and socializing quarters, attracting inhabitants ...).

The implications of these changes for horticultural producers and horticultural scientists are considerable. The public sector has a double challenge to educate producers to good horticultural practices, and consumers about nutrition and signs of quality. The needs for independent, reliable and consistent food analyses, and proper information management, are tremendous in developing countries, and not only for certifying exports: imports and products for the domestic market shall all be traceable and safe. To keep on markets, producers have to ensure that consumers are confident in their claims about the security of food supply, about food safety and about production methods that protect soil, air and water resources for the future generations. The link between producers and consumers is essential.

## **SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH FOR THE *GLOBAL HORTICULTURE INITIATIVE***

A new milestone in the fight against poverty and hunger was set by the launch of the *Global Horticulture Initiative* (GlobalHort). At its launch, over \$2.5 million was pledged to develop horticultural systems in the world’s poorest countries. The initiative will have a substantial impact on the health and prosperity of millions in Africa and other developing countries. The launch of this international initiative brought together funding agencies from industrial countries, and researchers and stakeholders from all over the world. The official launch on March 24, 2006 in Montpellier, France, was preceded by more than two years of consultations involving ISHS, AVRDC, CIRAD, the Consultative Group, National Agricultural Research Centers of the African continent, and many more. The Declaration developed at Montpellier was endorsed by 74 science leaders and agencies present.

The GlobalHort Consortium has a major challenge to deliver a message to policy makers, research leaders and politicians that appropriate and coordinated efforts are needed to ensure that future crop production in developing regions and food supply to their own markets as well as to overseas markets, such as the European market, are safe and secure, and that natural and human resources are efficiently managed.

## **THE MISSION OF THE *GLOBAL HORTICULTURE INITIATIVE***

The mission of the Global Horticulture Initiative is to contribute to improve the health and income of the poor in developing countries through sustainable, demand driven, horticultural production, processing and marketing systems. GlobalHort will promote higher education and output-oriented research, and expand outreach activities through broad-based partnerships. Information and communication technologies will substitute for much of the conventional physical infrastructure a light and traditional institutional model. GlobalHort will energize global systems of horticultural research, production,

processing and trade. It will also enable the formulation of policies and programs that support small-scale farmers and horticultural commerce both domestically and internationally.

Four core activities are envisaged and will develop according to the allocated staff:

- promoting research for development projects through complementary grants programs
- networking of the world's fragmented community of horticulture for development players
- coordinating training and capacity building in both private and public sectors
- advocating and lobbying for horticulture and horticultural sciences

Priority crops and research themes will be driven by demand. Using the internet as the medium, the coordination team will develop information management and interactive tools to organize tenders and calls for research, training and capacity building in a more integrated rather than competitive process. Activities will focus on Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, with secondary emphasis in Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and Latin America.

To significantly contribute to the goal of alleviating poverty and malnutrition, considerable investment in horticulture is required. Outputs from the Global Horticulture Initiative will increase support opportunities for horticultural research, information exchange and capacity building. Higher awareness of all horticulture issues will contribute to improve nutritional security (especially for women and children), by increasing production and consumption of fruits and vegetables, reducing malnutrition and childhood mortality, and enhancing environmental quality and human health.

Further information and documents on GlobalHort are available at [www.globalhort.org](http://www.globalhort.org).

## **BUILDING SUPPORT FOR THE 'GLOBALHORT' IN EUROPE**

The CTA, an institution serving the interests of ACP countries within the European Union, is the most appropriate vehicle for building support for the *Global Horticulture Initiative* in Europe.

The need for a conference to build awareness of the GlobalHort amongst European international development agencies was raised during a meeting on September 8, 2006, involving DG Development and a small group of GlobalHort leaders. It was recognized that the GlobalHort objective to connect the far-flung 'horticulture for development' community and otherwise build institutional capacity for supporting development in this realm is worthy of EU support. It was further recognized that other Europe-based agencies and foundations may find this project worthy of support and should be invited.

The time needed to organize such a conference was estimated to be 6 months. It was proposed that CTA facilitate its development and that its ACP partners be invited to offer suggestions and indicate priorities. GlobalHort will coordinate the collection and implementation of the outcomes of this event. ISHS will suggest and facilitate links to the international science community. While stakeholders need to brainstorm on implementation targets, issues likely to be near the top of the priority list concern food safety, food security, improving human health, and alleviating poverty and malnutrition on a global scale.

It is envisaged that at the end of this conference the EU would appoint representatives to liaise with the GlobalHort Executive Committee.

## **POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE GHI TO SMALLHOLDER FARMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS IN ACP COUNTRIES**

As outlined above in its mission statement, the GlobalHort envisages very specific activities and outcomes that will contribute to improve incomes and life quality of smallholder producers in the ACP countries:

- Improved productivity of horticultural crops through
  - Better quality seed and propagation materials
  - More efficient use of fertilizer and water
  - Ecologically sound crop production and protection practices
  - Reducing post-harvest losses
- Improved diet and health of farm families and farming communities through
  - Reliable production and consumption of fruits and vegetables
  - Introducing varieties and cultivars with high nutrient content
  - Ensuring food safety through improvements to the production, handling and marketing chain
- Improved incomes of smallholder farmers and rural communities by
  - Diversifying agricultural systems to include high value horticultural crops
  - Achieving production levels of horticultural crops that exceed family requirements
  - Providing local market and value-added opportunities for farmers and farming communities
  - Building local knowledge information systems and infrastructure capacity for entry into more sophisticated domestic and export markets

Document prepared by:

Dr. Remi Kahane, GlobalHort Secretariat

Dr. Norman Looney, ISHS President, GlobalHort Executive Committee member

Ing. Jozef Van Assche, ISHS Executive Director