



Speaker Summary Note

Session: Latin America and the Caribbean

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Title: **How Argentina Has Advanced in Regard to the Goals Set by WHO in the Document on the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity, and Health?**

The Program of Prevention of Infarction in Argentina (PROPIA) of the Universidad Nacional de La Plata is based on scientific endorsement of the benefits of replacing saturated and trans-fats by unsaturated fats in foods such as breads, eggs, beef bull frog and lizard using primarily seeds of flax, high oleic sunflower and phytosterols.

What are the strategies proposed by Argentina to the governments in order to reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases (NCD) through its Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Education? What strategies to the agriculture sector? What strategies to the industry?

There are indications that Argentina's business sector has realized that it must reduce saturated fats, sugar and salt concentrations in manufactured products anticipating the opportunity of a new changing market. For example, in 2010 it has increased the farming area of high oleic sunflower oil by 150% (from 200,000 crops to 500,000). However, the area used for farming of flax and canola has decreased in the last decade.

Why not to increase the area planted with these two seeds that are those with higher content of linolenic acid (ALA) and less saturated? Why not expanding the supply of oil rich in unsaturated fats to Spain and Latin America, encouraging the planting of other species such as chia?

The joint action of private sector and the state must establish financial mechanisms (tax relief, pricing, subsidies) and technology support. So far the industry has played its important role in reducing NCDs. However, there was a failure to develop a strong agribusiness sector during the change of Argentine's the role from "breadbasket of the world" to the "supermarket of the world." The industry should also incorporate other types of healthy foods, free of trans-fatty acids and to develop new technologies to recover residual oil that is lost during processing (extraction, shelling). Furthermore, social marketing and educational campaigns and other activities that contribute to the health of the population should be implemented.

The significant progress made by PROPIA following the Global Strategy of Diet, Physical Activity and Health has contributed to the risk reduction of cardiovascular disease in Argentina. Nevertheless, the

activities in Argentina had its strongest impact on the middle and high income population that has purchasing power. The Food Security in Argentina recently named that population group the “Rich Skinny.” In contrast, the low income population group was called “Poor Fat.” In the first third Millennium crisis lead to a higher increase in obesity than malnutrition in Argentina, but in the future it has been predicted that malnutrition may become a more severe problem. It should not be forgotten that there are 45 million hungry people presently in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), despite a surplus of food production of 30% to food consumption.

In Argentina, 12.7 million are poor and 4.7 million are homeless. However, Marcelo is well off and has a nice home with Spanish ham that he will share with Noélito.

On the other hand, the University of La Plata is involved in several projects (in collaboration with non-governmental organizations, foundations and the Bank of the Poor) targeting low income sectors. In particular, PROPIA is participating in projects organizing workshops in order to offer education to mothers of poor households and women in general.

What are the characteristics of healthy foods? How to optimize the few foods (in variety, quantity and quality) used in the “pot meal”?

These are just some of the challenges to the State, agricultural sector, industry and educational institutions. Finally, strategies and actions are needed to grant access to healthy food the most vulnerable and poor population groups.

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