

OPENING THE 2014 YEAR OF FAMILY FARMING

The International Year of Family Farming IYFF starts its activities in January 2014. In 2011, the United Nations General Assembly adopted this initiative and invited the [Food and Agricultural Organization](#) (FAO) to facilitate the implementation of the IYFF in collaboration with various non-governmental, government and international stakeholders. The International Year of Family Farming aims to promote policies for sustainable development of agricultural systems based on farmer and fishing families, communities and cooperatives around the world.

On its [Declaration, the UN Assembly](#) says that the goal of the initiative, including both developing and developed countries, is to focus on family farming in the framework of agricultural, environmental and social policies. The aim is to develop national agendas by stimulating an extensive debate at local, national and international level. The declaration underlines that family farming is relevant in three main ways: it is linked to world food security; it enhances balanced diets while protecting biodiversity. Lastly, it promotes local economies when coupled with other policies which serve to protect the well-being of communities

The [World Rural Forum](#) (WRF) acts as International Coordinator of Civil Society for the initiative. The WRF includes about 360 civil society organizations and farmers' organizations from 60 countries supporting the campaign, plus other representatives from all continents.

The campaign includes [the establishment of IYFF National Committees](#) (at the moment nearly 40) involving governments, international agencies, research institutes and the civil society. The campaign aims to promote the family farming via different activities. Thematic workshops, press conferences, fairs, farmer meetings, festivals and marches are some examples of planned events in the interested countries.

Partners of the initiative include the [International Co-operative Alliance](#) (ICA), [Via Campesina](#) and the [World Farmer's Organization](#) (WFO)

During the launch of the International Year of Family Farming, special ambassadors were designated for the year, including Ibrahim Coulibaly, President of the [National Coordination of Peasant Organizations of Mali](#); Mirna Cunningham of Nicaragua, former Chair of the [UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#); and Gerd Sonnleitner of Germany, President of the [European Farmers Association](#).



On the FAO website you can find a detailed explanation of the [objectives and lines of action of the initiative](#). The website will also include information on upcoming national and international events and achieved goals.

In the website of the [International Year of Family Farming Campaign](#) there is an extensive documentation about the family farming, the stakeholders involved and the campaign activities ongoing or planned in different countries and at international level.

The initiative could be an important opportunity to stress worldwide the strategic role of agricultural activities managed by families, cooperatives and communities to assure food security and sovereignty, to preserve and valorise local productions and to enhance territorial economic development processes in a sustainable way.

To know more and participate

[International Year of Family Farming Campaign](#)

[World Rural Forum \(WRF\)](#)

[International Year of Family Farming in Facebook](#)

<http://www.ifad.org/events/iyff/>

[Biodiversity International](#)

[Article in Foodtank](#)

