

Third International Conference on Financing for Development

Uncommon Partnerships Address Aflatoxins, an Urgent Worldwide Food Safety Challenge

SIDE EVENT:

15 JULY 10:00 – 12:30

**Jupiter International Hotel,
Tito St., Addis Ababa**

ABSTRACT

Food safety is the essential pillar of food security and nutrition. Without access to safe food, consumers are prevented access to adequate food, nutrition or health. Unfortunately, unsafe foods are significant, pervasive and they impede the lives of billions of people daily. Unsafe foods in the supply chain-- from production to the consumer-- impact access to nutrition, better health and improved economic status. UN facts indicate that 25% of food crops are contaminated by mycotoxins, especially aflatoxins. With 4.5 billion people exposed to contaminated food annually, and aflatoxins associated with premature deaths of women, high rates of liver cancer and childhood stunting, further action is needed now.

Fortunately, solutions exist to prevent, solve and manage safety challenges, especially with multi-sector, multi-disciplinary partnerships. This side event will illustrate the progress being made on food contamination through uncommon collaborations and partnerships, and will point toward future solution pathways. Representatives of several organizations involved in pursuing uncommon partnerships will:

- Illustrate food safety problems through aflatoxin challenges and present a compelling need for comprehensive strategies with urgency for action
- Humanize aflatoxins' devastating impacts on the nutrition and health of women, children and the reduced income consequences for farmers
- Share lessons learned and opportunities to prevent and control aflatoxins to achieve freedom from the harmful effects of aflatoxins
- Highlight the need for and value of increased purpose-focused research and development, training, capacity development and long term commitments.

AGENDA

Panel Co-Moderators- Dr. Amare Ayalew, PACA and J.B. Cordaro, Mars, Incorporated

10:00 - 10:05 **Welcome and Introduction** - J.B. Cordaro, Mars, Inc.

10:05 - 10:20 **Amare Ayalew** - Program Manager, Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA)

Dr. Amare will describe the landscape and architecture of food safety challenges, especially aflatoxins in Africa; causes of contamination and relationship to food security and nutrition, economic, social and human impacts; solution pathways along the value chain; PACA's role and strategic plan; resources invested and needed for the future; stakeholder engagement progress; and next steps.

10:20 - 10:25 - **J.B. Cordaro and Dr. Amare** -
Questions, conversation and questions from audience

10:25 - 10:40 **Dr. Lynn Brown** - Independent Consultant, Special Adviser to World Bank Vice President for Climate Change; Representative for Global Panel for Agriculture, Food Systems and Nutrition

Dr. Brown will describe the devastating impacts aflatoxins have on the nutrition and health of women, children and the reduced income consequences for farmers.

10:40 - 10:45 - **Dr. Amare and Dr. Brown** -
Questions, conversation and questions from audience

10:45 - 11:00 **Dr. Alem Abay** - GAIN, Country Program Manager

Dr. Abay will discuss GAIN's global perspective on the role that food safety plays in food security; share program focus and activities in Ethiopia, including insights on a new program funded by the Netherlands Government which looks at testing for aflatoxins at the laboratory level through a regional approach; describe laboratory controls and link to the broader nutrition agenda, including fortifying blended foods and staple foods to ensure they are aflatoxin free.

11:00 - 11:05 - **J.B. Cordaro and Dr. Abay** -
Questions, conversation and questions from audience

11:05 - 11:20 **Dr. Isabelle Mballe** - Chief Food Safety and Quality, World Food Programme

Dr. Mballe will describe the unique challenges that the WFP faces in feeding millions of people in scores of countries; the adaption to a new business model from distributing donated foods to local sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution; role of partnerships and programs in addressing food safety challenges.

11:20 - 11:25 - **Dr. Amare and Dr. Mballe** -
Questions, conversation and questions from audience

11:25-11:40 **Dr. Melanie "Tor" Edwards** - USAID Foreign Service, Technical Specialist on Transboundary Maize Issues

Dr. Edwards will provide an overview of USAID's assessment of how mycotoxins, including aflatoxins, impact food security, nutrition, trade and development; program priorities to address harmful consequences of human, social and economic impacts; needs and values of research and development; and perspectives on public-private partnerships for implementation.

11:40-11:45 - **J.B. Cordaro and Dr. Edwards** -
Questions, conversation and questions from audience

11:45-12:00 **J.B. Cordaro** - Mars, Inc., Consultant

J.B. Cordaro will offer a summary of Mars, Inc. food safety activities worldwide; the importance on specific value chains; focus on the need for and value of partnerships; the uncommon collaborations of Mars' partnerships along with the philosophy of pre-competitive, transparent engagement; and the scheduled launch of the Global Food Safety Center in China.

12:00 - 12:15 - **Dr. Amare and J.B. Cordaro** -
Questions, conversation and questions from audience

12:15 - 12:30 **Wrap-up** - Each panel member will present a brief wrap-up on their key take ways and final messages. Co-Moderators Cordaro and Ayalew will offer concluding observations.

BIOGRAPHIES OF PANEL MEMBERS



J.B. Cordaro, Consultant, Mars, Inc.

J.B. Cordaro is a Global Food and Nutrition Business Advisor serving as a Mars, Inc. consultant with a focus on the linkages among Food Security, Nutrition and Food Safety, especially building food safety collaborations and partnerships. J.B. has played productive roles working with UN Agencies, Donor Countries, NGOs and other stakeholders, including senior management positions with USAID, US Congress and the Council for Responsible Nutrition. He chairs the Nutrition Group for the Private Sector Mechanism (PSM) of the UN Committee on World Food Security (UN CFS), and actively participated in the preparation and implementation of the 2014 International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2).



Dr. Isabelle Mballa Chief, Food Quality and Safety, World Food Programme

Isabelle Mballa is the World Food Programme's (WFP) Chief of Food Quality and Safety. Isabelle began with WFP in 1998 as a Logistics Officer in Kenya. Her career has taken her to eight countries across Africa in various operational areas from logistics to programme implementation. From 2010 to 2014, she worked with smallholder farmers through the Purchase for Progress initiative (P4P), first as the Coordinator in Mali and then as the Regional Coordinator in West Africa. During her time with P4P, Isabelle witnessed the challenges of procuring locally grown cereals in West Africa, particularly due to aflatoxin in maize – a staple food in the WFP food basket and for beneficiaries across Africa. As Chief of Food Quality and Safety, Dr. Mballa is responsible for ensuring food safety and quality across WFP's complex supply chain, with a particular focus on local procurement and expanding purchases from smallholder farmers. Prior to joining WFP, she worked in the shipping sector for the Bollere Group in her home country of Cameroon.

Lynn Brown, Independent Consultant

Lynn Brown is a post graduate trained food policy economist specialized in the nexus of agriculture, health and nutrition. She was the first Chief Economist of the World Food Program and enjoyed a long career at the World Bank. As an independent consultant, Lynn is a senior adviser to Harvestplus, the World Bank Group Vice President and Special Envoy for Climate Change, and Representative to the Global Panel on Agriculture, Food Systems and Nutrition. She also chairs the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development's Agriculture and Nutrition thematic group, where she has spearheaded dialogue on aflatoxins and their linkage to health and nutrition.

Melanie "Tor" Edwards, USAID, Africa Regional Mission

Dr. Edwards received a Masters Degree from Oregon State University in Wheat Breeding and Biotechnology. She received a doctorate from Texas A&M, focused on breeding African Maize for Resistance to Aflatoxin. As a Fulbright Professor and Researcher, she is focusing on market limitations and phytosanitary issues. Dr. Edwards manages several projects through the Agricultural Research and Policy office of USAID/Washington that focus on aflatoxin mitigation. She is currently stationed at the USAID/East Africa Regional Mission, working on transboundary Maize Issues, including aflatoxin mitigation.



Dr. Amare Ayalew, Program Manager, PACA

Dr. Ayalew has led PACA's strategic planning process and the launch of regional and country programs in the last two years. He has researched the occurrence, epidemiology, and management of aflatoxins and other mycotoxins as well as plant health for over 20 years. Prior to joining PACA, he had served as Associate Professor of Plant Pathology and Head of the School of Plant Sciences at Haramaya University, Ethiopia, coordinated diverse projects and has worked with a range of interest groups. He has supervised more than 50 post-graduate students including 10 at PhD level. Dr. Ayalew received a PhD in plant pathology majoring mycotoxicology from the University of Goettingen, Germany, 2002, and a bachelor's and master's degrees from Haramaya University in Ethiopia. He holds certificates in project management, higher institution leadership, and pest risk analysis. In 2008, he was a USDA fellow and visiting professor for specialized training on sanitary and phytosanitary issues at Texas A&M University, USA. He had five separate research stays at the Bavarian State Research Center in Freising/Munich, Germany, studying mycotoxigenic fungi, mycotoxins, and biorational plant disease control between 1993 and 2012, and participated in wide ranging international trainings and professional forums.



Alem Adera Abay, Country Manager, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition

Alem Adera Abay is a citizen of Ethiopia who has worked extensively in the area of public nutrition, development and operational research and academia in Ethiopia, Malawi, and Sudan for the past 25 years. Currently, he is working in Ethiopia with GAIN in coordinating and rolling out of large-scale food fortification programme including Universal salt iodization, wheat flour and edible oil fortification, and mother, infant and young children nutrition programmes such as production and introduction of complementary foods that address stunting and micronutrient deficiencies. He has worked with the Millennium villages project for six years as Director of Millennium Development Ethiopia, and coordinated the implementation of the multi-sectoral project. He has led a team of multidiscipline professionals and demonstrated remarkable results in health and nutrition, natural resource management and small-scale irrigation, agri-business development and provision of basic services (health, education and agriculture) at grassroots level that contributed significantly to improved health and nutritional status of the local population in the villages, and also worked in different capacities with international NGO and UN agencies as Senior Nutritionist for GOAL, Programme Manager for Concern Worldwide, and Nutrition Programme Assistant for WFP. More so, he has worked as Senior Lecturer in Jimma University, Ethiopia in the first seven years of his career life. Alem obtained his MPH in International Health and Development focusing on Nutrition in May 1996 from Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, and his BA in Psychology from Addis Ababa University in July 1987. He has also received certificates in various short-term trainings, including the Human Right to Food and Nutrition from Central European Summary University in Budapest in August 2001. He has published in the area of stunting reduction and CMAM.

Co-Sponsored by Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) And Mars, Inc.



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