

International Green Week Berlin 2015

7th Global Forum for Food and Agriculture 2015

The growing demand for food, raw materials and energy: opportunities for agriculture and a challenge to food security?

From 15 to 17 January, parallel with the opening of the International Green Week Berlin 2015 (16 –25 Jan.), the 7th Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) will be taking place. Its slogan is 'The growing demand for food, raw materials and energy: opportunities for agriculture and a challenge to food security?' Based on the assumption of the need for food security, the aim will be to highlight the opportunities, prospects and challenges that bio-based agriculture offers and to present ideas for sustainable, resource-saving and climate-friendly farming in the future. The organiser of the event is the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL).

The farming industry has long since outgrown its role as a supplier of food and livestock feed. There is now a growing demand for renewable raw materials for industrial usages and for extracting energy. Current worldwide developments, which are a sign of a shift in resources,



provide farms, whether family-run or large-scale businesses, with opportunities for growing new products, enabling them to secure growth markets in developing and threshold countries as well as in industrialised regions.

Businesses in rural areas can benefit from the regional value chains generated by the bio-based economy, which is defined as the production and processing of biomass for the food and non-food sectors. It will also likely secure employment. The bio-based economy has an enormous potential which must be

exploited. It helps to make the farming industry more diverse and thus more resilient in times of crisis.

However, the growing demand for biomass is likely to lead to a conflict of interests, as ultimately the amount of land available for agriculture is not infinite. Production of renewable materials must not take place at the expense of food security. An international debate on these topics concerning the future will be taking place at a number of different events at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA), where the focus in 2015 will also be on the International GFFA Panel and the 7th Berlin Agriculture Ministers' Summit, now the world's biggest conference of its kind. On Saturday, 17 January 2015, high-ranking representatives from around the world will gather in the 'Weltsaal' room of the German Foreign Office in order to discuss a joint policy-making approach to aspects of the bio-based economy. The agriculture ministers' decisions will be taken into account in international political processes such as the G7 and G20 conferences and in meetings of the United Nations.

On Saturday morning at Messe Berlin's new CityCube the International GFFA Panel will gather senior figures from politics, business, science and society who will also be examining the topics discussed by the agriculture ministers. The debate will focus on how to exploit the opportunities offered by the bio-based economy, how to prioritise food security demands, as well as on sustainable production.

At the same time companies, investors and associations will also be able to present their food security projects at a Joint Venture Exchange. The business lounge will provide a retreat for holding in-depth talks in a relaxed atmosphere. ◆

