

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Monday, 26 April 2021 20:00 GMT -04:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	How to Eat Responsibly? A Dialogue between College Students in China and the U.S.
CONVENED BY	Hua Dong, Senior Academic Specialist, Northeastern University, USA; Huiyu Ouyang, UNFSS-AT2 China Action Hub
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/9592/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	China, United States of America

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE



PARTICIPATION BY GENDER



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP



2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

By convening a dialogue among the college students in China and the U.S., who share the same interest in food systems, we recognize the urgency and complexity of setting up a global network of young people to contribute to more sustainable and equitable food systems.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The Dialogue was the climax of a semester-long course on the relationship between food, health, and the environment. The students shared their learning and findings with their Chinese counterparts, embracing the complexity of the issue, being respectful of each other's culture and background, and building trust to achieve the common goal.

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?

Yes

No

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

The 90-minute dialogue focused on the following five themes:

1. Agrobiodiversity and Food System: The effects of agrobiodiversity (agriculture biodiversity) on food systems and vice versa. Specifically: 1) Mono crops (soybeans/corn etc in the US) 2) Crops in Brazil and how that affects the environment, specifically the Amazon, or other countries 3) Effects of industrialized farming on mono-culture crops.
2. Food Waste: What kind of food waste occurs on the dining table, in the kitchen, or on the production line (can be discussed in specific aspects such as the school cafeteria, the kitchen in the family, etc.); if you want to improve the problems related to food waste, what can the young people do? Any concrete action plans?
3. Fake Meat: As vegetarianism, health consciousness, and environmental consciousness have increased in recent years, fake meat has become more popular, though it still does not approach real meat in terms of popularity, even though they are significantly better for the environment. How can fake meat be marketed, produced, and sold in a way that will make it competitive to real meat?
4. Food Education: When discussing food choices, how do we balance the freedom to choose with the consequences of our choices? What methods should we adopt to promote and educate on food topics? How to keep the public's attention to sustainable food and take action? How do we combat food inequity relative to educational tactics? How do we educate people not in school about food systems and ethical purchasing? How do we inspire interest and for people to take action?
5. Consumers: To find out the challenges of how our food choices and the concept of sustainable food consumption relate to consumers in the aspects of different cultures, geographic environments, and the gap between the rich and the poor. And moreover, what we should do to help resolve them.

ACTION TRACKS

- Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- Finance
- Innovation
- Human rights
- Women & Youth Empowerment
- Policy
- Data & Evidence
- Governance
- Trade-offs
- Environment and Climate

MAIN FINDINGS

The major findings from the different discussion groups were all complex in nature but also had similar themes of cultural acceptance and ethical food systems throughout the discussions. The Agrobiodiversity and Food Systems group found that current food systems are not sustainable for the environment, and are mainly decreasing the agrobiodiversity due to the widespread use of mono-crops, which also depletes the soil of its nutrients and genetic diversity. The group also found how our eating habits have affected what we plant and vice versa, the effect industrialization and globalization (global trade) have on food systems. The Food Waste group discovered that while consumers should be aware of their personal contribution to food waste, those major corporations also needed to take responsibility for their share of the problem. The Fake Meat group determined that most individuals in our age demographic would be curious to try fake meat and that limiting our meat consumption would have a considerable impact on global health. The Food Education group concluded that food education is vital in order to allow people to make “good choices” about their food, and it’s also important to our health as a society to ensure that everyone gets a good food education. Food education not only affects our physical health, but it also affects the health of our environment (our water, our land, the air) and our future generations as well. Furthermore, it is the media’s and government’s responsibility to also inspire society to care more about food and how our choices affect not only us, but also one another. Finally, the Consumers group found that food equity is a challenge in eating and purchasing ethically and more options and choices would substantially increase healthy eating and sustainable practices.

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KEYWORDS

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|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
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| | ✓ Environment and Climate |

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

A lot of interesting views and solutions were brought up during the Dialogue. The Agrodiversity group agreed on the importance of shifting to more of a "plant-focused" diet, instead of changing completely to a plant-based diet, to win wider acceptance from society. Their previous research also suggested that new innovations, such as vertical farming, could be a solution to the increasing population and food demand.

The Food Education group agreed that science and cultural norms need to work together and not against each other to properly educate others about food and create a community that strives for a better system. The group was able to highlight an action that should be taken in order to benefit our future, and that was to establish an effective food education system such that society would be able to make the best-informed decisions about their food. This would include ethical purchasing, and taking into account how the production of our food affects others and the environment; does the production allow for mistreatment of workers, or does it harm the environment in any way? Food education is a responsibility that everyone should take because ultimately it affects everyone in the future. The Consumer group agreed on the importance to ensure the access and affordability of healthy and sustainable food that is good for the planet to all of the public. Actions should be taken by governmental and non-governmental organizations so that taxes and/or subsidies can be implemented to help increase access to good food for all of the public, and decrease availability/access to food that is not as beneficial to us, our communities, and our world.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

The areas of divergence usually originated from cultural differences. For example, there was a question about “ethical purchasing” and how people should be taught to be aware of it in the Food Education group—however, most people that had a solely Chinese background were not aware of the term “ethical purchasing”. They also discussed the differences between food education in China and food education in America. One of the major points that came up was that in China, there’s no formal food education; since food is so ingrained into Chinese culture, there’s no formal way that citizens are taught about food. A lot of the education they get comes from their family or their peers, and there isn’t much attention focused on the corporations or government when it comes to food. The Agrodiversity group was not convinced about the possibility of erasing meat completely from our diet. They were uncertain about the environmental impact of a vegan diet, citing the social-economic hurdle to be a vegan for the poor. The Consumer group disagreed on how people make food choices based on their economic and cultural background. They noted the discrepancies in some scientific research supported by large corporations to sell certain products, such as organic food, sugar, etc. The conflicting but shared responsibility between consumers and corporations was also observed by the Food Waster group. Though most of the group members blamed the food producers for food waste, some participants reminded that consumers, such as college students in a buffet-style dining hall, contribute to food waste. The Fake Meat group disagreed on whether the government should subsidize the fake meat industry. Currently, fake meats just take 1% of the world market share, without help from the government, and it cannot be the mainstream of the food system only if accepting help from the government.

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- **"How to Eat Responsibly? A Dialogue between College Students in China and the U.S."**
https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/NortheasternUniversity2021_0426Feedback-Form.pdf

CORRECTIONS, ADJUSTMENTS, OR CHANGES

Title How to Eat Responsibly? A Dialogue between College Students in China and the U.S.

Date 22/06/2021

By convening an independent dialogue among the college students in China and the U.S., who share the same interest in food systems, we recognize the urgency and complexity of setting up a global network of young people to contribute to more sustainable and equitable food systems. The Dialogue was the climax of a semester-long course at Northeastern University on the relationship between food, health, and the environment. The students shared their learning and findings with their Chinese counterparts, embracing the complexity of the issue, being respectful of each other's culture and background, and building trust to achieve the common goal.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Dialogue Program**
https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/FSS_program.pdf