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FAO highlights importance of Mediterranean diet

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By **Manbeena Chawla** | February 17, 2020



fao-highlights-importance-of-mediterranean-diet

WordPress post #10447

FAO hosts the third event of the initiative “Mediterranean Diet’s Principles for Agenda 2030”

The Mediterranean diet is not only healthy for humans, but also for the environment and for biodiversity. This was the main message at an event held at the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) headquarters in Italy, with the aim of raising awareness on how the Mediterranean diet can help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The event - the third in the series of the initiative on "Mediterranean Diet’s Principles for Agenda 2030" - was organized by the Government of Italy, in cooperation with Coldiretti (Italy’s the largest farmers organization) and with Fondazione UniVerde.

Based on the regular consumption of olive oil, a rich diversity of plant-based foods (cereals, fruits, vegetables, legumes), and moderate amounts of fish and meat, the Mediterranean diet is widely recognized for its multiple health benefits and for its low environmental footprint.

However, noted Maria Helena Semedo, FAO’s Deputy Director General for Climate and Natural Resources, "this traditional way of eating is increasingly giving way to changing habits and lifestyles - from diverse and balanced meals to more monotonous meals high in fats, sugar and salt."

The result, warned Semedo, are cumulative negative consequences both on human health - with a drastic rise in obesity and overweight as well as in non-communicable diseases - and on the environment, through intensive degradation of natural resources, including loss in biodiversity for food and agriculture.

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