



International Year of Family Farming 2014 Special Order of Business

U.N. Resolution 66/222, adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on Dec. 22, 2011, designates the year 2014 as the “International Year of Family Farming.”

The International Year of Family Farming recognizes the important contributions that family farming can make to improving food security and eradicating poverty around the world. Family farming is the predominant form of agriculture in both developing and developed countries. Globally, 870 million people are suffering from chronic undernourishment and a disproportionate number of them are farmers. Forty-five percent of the global population makes its living directly from farming, and the majority of the world’s farmers are women that produce up to 80 percent of the world’s food.

In the United States, family farms still constitute 96 percent of all farms. A family farm or structured family farm is operated by a family, with the family providing the base of the labor needed for the farming operation, assuming the economic risk, and making the management decisions. The family farm is the basis of a safe, secure and stable food system. The agriculture sector contributes more than \$130 billion to the U.S. economy, employs approximately 14 percent of the total workforce and accounts for nearly 5 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product.

In order to ensure the viability of family farms for generations to come, family farmers must ensure that we are leaving our natural resources in good condition for the next generation of agriculture. We commit ourselves to being good stewards of the land by working toward innovative approaches that move beyond the parameters of past farm programs and seek to bridge philosophical differences within the agriculture community and our nation’s political structures.

As a founding member of the World Farmers Organization and the chair of the U.S. National Committee for the International Year of Family Farming, NFU joins the U.N. in celebrating the International Year of Family Farming in 2014.

NFU recognizes the vital role family farms play in the economic and social well-being of the United States and the world, and the importance of raising the profile of family farming by focusing the world’s attention on its significant role in alleviating hunger and poverty, providing food security and nutrition, improving livelihoods, managing natural resources, protecting the environment and achieving sustainable development in rural areas.

NFU urges the U.S. Congress and the administration to do its part in officially recognizing the International Year of Family Farming and to celebrate family farming’s important role in various ways throughout the year. NFU encourages countries, national organizations and states to undertake activities in support of the International Year of Family Farming.

NFU congratulates the world’s family farmers for their critical contributions to food security, environmental stewardship and rural economic development.