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# PROMOTING FOOD SECURITY WORLDWIDE: A U.S. Commitment

*“We’re sending a clear message to the world: that America will lead the fight against hunger for years to come.”*

*– President George W. Bush*

The United States is the world’s largest food aid donor and has acted quickly to address the rise in global food prices. The U.S. is on track to provide nearly \$5 billion – far more than any other country – to fight global hunger in 2008 and 2009. From 2001-2006 approximately 50 percent of total world food aid came from the United States. Food security is an international issue requiring an international response. The United States is coordinating closely with the United Nations, the G8, the World Bank, and other international partners.

## A THREE-PRONGED STRATEGY

- Immediate and expanded humanitarian response targeting those countries made most vulnerable to hunger by rising food prices.
- Development assistance to those countries most able to rapidly increase staple food production.
- Support for trade liberalization and increased use of advanced agricultural technologies.

management techniques and increased plantings of drought-tolerant crops. Removing barriers to trade in technologically advanced crops, including those produced through biotechnology, will increase agricultural productivity and speed progress in reducing hunger and stabilizing food markets. The U.S. is training the next generation of scientists in Africa who will utilize these technologies by expanding support for its Borlaug and Cochran fellowships.

## PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP

On May 1, President Bush asked Congress for \$770 million to support food aid and development programs. This is in addition to existing food security programs and the estimated \$200 million the President announced on April 14 to combat immediate hunger through a withdrawal from the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust.

## TARGETED ASSISTANCE

The United States’ humanitarian assistance will focus on the most vulnerable countries, where food prices have risen sharply, poverty levels are high even as safety nets are weak or non-existent, and people are highly dependent on food imports.

Efforts to increase food production and increase regional trade of food staples will initially target countries and programs in Africa. These efforts have the potential to:

- Rapidly increase the staple food supply in target countries and in neighboring countries through trade;
- Leverage significant investments from other sources, including the private sector; and
- Use market-based policies and trade incentives to ensure a rapid increase in food supplies.

## LONGER TERM SOLUTIONS

Investments in science and technology are essential to increasing the food supply. Key innovations include improved post-harvest

## PROMOTING TRADE REFORM

The United States is working to conclude an ambitious agreement in the Doha Round this year that will increase market access, and reduce tariffs and market-distorting agricultural subsidies to promote increased trade of agricultural goods.

The United States is also encouraging countries to eliminate trade-restrictive measures put into place in response to increased food prices. While these restrictions are designed to increase short-term food security locally, their effects are overwhelmingly negative. Such policies take food off the global market, driving prices higher.

## BIOFUELS ONLY ONE FACTOR

Increased production of biofuels is but one of many contributing factors to increased food prices, and not the most significant. The United States is investing significantly in the research and development of next generation biofuels that will simultaneously promote food security and energy diversification.

## MULTIPLE FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO RISING FOOD PRICES

- Large increases in fuel and transportation costs
- Economic growth and increased consumer demand
- Rapid increases in agricultural input prices (fertilizers, pesticides, seeds)
- Low world grain stocks
- Two years of poor harvests in traditional exporting countries
- Export controls and other trade restricting policies
- Production of biofuels
- Reduction in global agricultural research and development