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FAO launches banana industry resource



The first of a series of webinars to discuss the challenges facing the industry will take place on 6 December

The World Banana Forum (WBF), part of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, is to hold a series of high-profile webinars bringing together essential voices from across the banana value chain.

"The industry behind the world's most exported fresh fruit (US\$10bn a year) faces significant challenges, from gender inequality and discrimination against migrant workers to the potentially catastrophic spread of the fungus TR4, often known as Panama disease," FAO said. "In order to face these challenges the WBF aims to involve all industry stakeholders in collaboration to improve the lives of workers, the industry's environmental impact and, at the end of it all, the quality of fruit received by consumers."

The live, free and easy to access webinars will bring together experts from the industry with collaborators around the world, discussing challenges – as well as successes – and the practices most likely to overcome them.

FAO said the webinar format has been chosen to allow the discussion to be as inclusive as possible, allowing new voices in the value chain to be heard.

"The kind of information sharing promised by these webinars has the potential to change the industry and improve the lives of a huge number of people around the world, as well as helping the environment and making things better for consumers," it said.

The first webinar will take place on 6 December at 16.00 CET, and is titled

Experiences of the Organic Banana Production Chain: The Case of Solidaridad in Peru and Banelino in the Dominican Republic.

The webinar will be presented by Gustavo Gandini of Banelino, an association of banana producers from the Dominican Republic, the world's largest exporter of organic bananas, and Diego Balarezo, of the international non-profit organisation Solidaridad.

The series of webinars will continue into 2017, with further details to be announced shortly. Each webinar will be accompanied by downloadable information leaflets.