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Universities take fight to world hunger

'A5' agri-universities will collaborate on education and research with long-term aim of eradicating global hunger by 2030



The top five agri-food universities in the world (A5), UC Davis, Cornell University, China Agricultural University, University of Sao Paulo and Wageningen University and Research, have agreed to collaborate as they look to fight global hunger together.

According to a statement, the main collaboration will first focus on education with a special role for students and staff exchange, before the universities work together on research.

The collaboration was agreed at the international SDG Conference, held in Wageningen, the Netherlands, on the 30-31 August.

"The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals include eradicating hunger in the world by 2030, as formulated in SDG goal number 2 (Zero Hunger)," an A5 statement noted. "To achieve this goal, education is of crucial importance.

"Therefore the five agri-food

universities, who call themselves A5, agreed to cooperate in developing new educational and research programmes to come to the necessary transformation of food systems. They want to empower students and educate the new leaders of tomorrow. The universities also want to stimulate the exchange of students and staff members to increase their knowledge."

The next generation is instrumental in the decision by the five agri-food universities to work together, with the universities wanting to give young people more say in how to organise their future.

This was already an integral part of the SDG Conference. Simultaneous to the main conference, students organised their own e-conference, a 'foodathon', in which more than 100 students in all continents discussed food issues during 36 hours.

These students provided a digital platform through which youth worldwide could interact, exchange

knowledge and create solutions to challenges related to Zero Hunger.

The outcome of their discussions has been presented at a solutions market of the SDG conference, where numerous organisations have agreed to act as kickstarters to end hunger, by providing knowledge, experience and their network to the next generation.

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