



## **PBEC Statement on 2002 World Food Summit and APEC Food System**

As governments prepare to track their progress towards the goals of the 1996 World Food Summit, PBEC calls upon regional agricultural leaders to take stock not only of their progress in this global endeavor, but to also seek concrete movement towards achieving an APEC Food System. In this regard, PBEC calls upon APEC Economies to add the Food System to their individual action plans in a serious sense and to work to achieve liberalization within APEC and at the World Trade Organization (WTO) agriculture negotiations.

At the World Food Summit in 1996, representatives of 185 nations and the European Community pledged to work towards eradicating hunger. As an essential first step, they set a target of reducing the more than 800 million hungry people by half by 2015.

Current data indicates that the number of undernourished is falling at an average rate of only 6 million each year, far below the rate of 22 million per year needed to reach the World Food Summit target. Although headway has been made and some striking success stories exist in individual countries and communities, much remains to be done.

World leaders are encouraged to outline the measures needed to achieve the goal, and make suggestions on how to accelerate progress. They are also encouraged to consider ways to increase resources available for agricultural and rural development. The recommendations by leaders in turn can be used in the APEC forum as a means by which to track progress towards the APEC goals as well.

Finally, all economies should recognize that trade is an important function that allows nutritious, safe and necessary agriculture and food products to flow across borders and into the mouths of all citizens. As we move forward with the important trade negotiations in the WTO, PBEC urges negotiators to remain cognizant of the needs of the hungry and malnourished as they balance trade interests with the challenges of poverty and malnutrition. In this regard, WTO agricultural negotiators are encouraged to move quickly to meet the March 2003 deadline to agree to the modalities of meeting their commitments. PBEC hopes to have a supportive role in the Fifth Ministerial Conference scheduled in Mexico in 2003 to insure that these important regional goals continue to be a priority.

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