

Innovative solutions for global food challenges

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Ultimately, this scenario leads to the overarching question on how to feed this hungry planet.

That's why, from 24-27 August in Canberra, Australia, Bayer and the Australian youth organization Future Farmers Network bring together 100 young thought leaders, aged 18-25, from 33 countries for the Youth-Ag Summit to exchange on the role science and modern agriculture play in feeding a hungry planet.

During the Summit, young leaders connect with each other, listen to inspirational speakers, exchange ideas in breakout sessions and experience agriculture during field trips.

They make a pledge to develop local solutions for local conditions and act as agricultural ambassadors in their home countries.

Taking into account this pressing issue of the growing world population, interactive sessions during the Summit will focus on sustainability, leadership and innovation, largely shaped by the essay topics the delegates handed in during the application phase.

"We are very pleased to co-host this once-in-a-lifetime event", says Ms Georgie Aley, Chair, Future Farmers Network. "I believe that young people have so much potential to contribute to solutions on global and local food challenges. We look forward to an open dialogue and to hearing their ideas and perspectives."

"This is the second Youth Ag-Summit and we are delighted to continue our movement in Canberra today. Australia is a key country in terms of modern agriculture and an ideal host for this event", says Mr Bernd Naaf, Member of the Board of Management, Bayer CropScience. "We are very proud to have such bright minds and great organizations on board to commonly build a sustainable global network of future leaders and strong partners in agriculture."

India has sent two delegates for the event. They are: Mr Rohit Fenn from Kottayam, Kerala and Mr Raja Kumar Bollem from Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

Their essays and submissions were selected by a panel of judges, who scored candidates on their demonstrated passion for agriculture, environmental stewardship and suggested solutions for global challenges.

Mr Justin Whittle, a delegate from Australia says "I was thrilled to hear that I will be one of the lucky youth to attend the Summit. Food Security is my passion and I cannot wait to meet all the other international delegates."

Ms Amanda Kharisma, a delegate from Indonesia adds: "For me, this is such a valuable experience. I hope to bring home lots of ideas to contribute to the advancement of my country."

The Summit provides a platform for young leaders to discuss challenges and develop solutions - small and large scale. This is reflected in the outcomes of the event.

Personal commitments are expressed in the development of the "3 little things".

These are individual challenges on food and agricultural issues which delegates want to address back home in their local communities.

The other main outcome is the "Canberra Youth Ag Declaration", a global call for action to help solve the pressing issues in modern agriculture.

The Declaration will be presented at the UN's Committee on Food Security in Rome from 12-15 October where Bayer, as a member of the private sector mechanism, is hosting a side event.