

The climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic have shed light on the growing importance of resilient, sustainable and healthy food systems. For policy makers, it is crucial to tackle the double challenge of providing food security to a growing global population while ensuring a smooth transition to sustainable food systems and healthier diets. Whole grains are the best ally to overcome those challenges: they have minimal environmental impact, are nutritionally dense and weather resistant, and can be stored for long periods. On the occasion of our 4th Annual International Whole Grain Day celebration, opinion leaders from all around the world will gather to discuss the importance of whole grains to achieve sustainable, healthy, and resilient food systems worldwide.

AGENDA

15:30-15:40 Welcome & introduction



› **KATRINA SICHEL**, Moderator



› **KELLY LEBLANC**, Director of Nutrition, Whole Grains Council

15:40-15:55 Keynote address: the role of whole grain in the shift to a healthy and balanced diet



› **PROF. ROBERTO VOLPE**, Professor - Medical researcher and representative of the Italian Society for Cardiovascular Prevention (SIPREC) at the European Heart Network (EHN)



› **PROF. JANNE MARTIKAINEN**, Professor (Pharmacoeconomics) Head (Health Sciences) of UEF House of Effectiveness

15:55-16:20 Panel one: Whole grain as enabler of a diet shift to address the sustainability and food security challenges



› **PATRIZIA FRACASSI**, Senior Nutrition and Food Systems Officer, FAO



› **SASKIA DE PEE**, Chief Analytics & Science for Food & Nutrition, World Food Programme (WFP)



› **KELLY LEBLANC**, Director of Nutrition, Whole Grains Council

16:20-16:45 Panel two: Changing social norms and consumer behaviour around whole grain



› **FLORIANA CIMMARUSTI**, SAFE Food Advocacy Europe



› **BETTY CHANG**, PhD, Research - Area Lead, The European Food Information Council (EUFIC)



› **PROF. ELEANOR BECK**, Discipline Leader in Nutrition and Dietetics in the School of Medicine, Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health of the University of Wollongong

16:45-16:55 Q&A session



› **KATRINA SICHEL**, Moderator

16:55-17:00 Closing remarks: Why do whole grains matter for the whole world?



› **KELLY LEBLANC**, Director of Nutrition, Whole Grains Council




Katrina Sichel
Moderator

Katrina is a London-born and bred, Brussels-based moderator and communications specialist with a degree in Modern Languages from Oxford University. As part of an eclectic career path spanning steel-trading in West Africa to business development in the post-Soviet states, she spent four years as Director of an award-winning broadcast PR company. Here she produced news packages for the BBC, Sky News, Channel 4, ITV, AP and Reuters, interviewing well-known figures from the arts, sport and political arenas. Since 2007, Katrina has been moderating events covering diverse topics and policy areas spanning R&I, digitisation, social affairs and development issues; agriculture, environment, climate change; energy and transport, fisheries and health. Alongside, until 2017, she managed the creation and roll-out across Europe of multimedia, multilingual communications campaigns targeting the public, and EU and national stakeholders from diverse sectors. Katrina speaks fluent French, rusty Russian and a dash of German alongside her native tongue.


Kelly Toups LeBlanc
Director of Nutrition, Oldways, Whole Grains Council

Kelly Toups LeBlanc, MLA, RD, LDN, is the Director of Nutrition at Oldways, a nonprofit dedicated to improving public health by inspiring individuals and organizations to embrace the healthy, sustainable joys of the "old ways" of eating—heritage-based diets high in taste, nourishment, sustainability, and joy. Kelly holds a BS in nutrition from the University of Texas, where she completed her dietetic internship, and also holds a master's degree in Gastronomy from Boston University, with a concentration in food policy. She joined Oldways in 2014 to help promote whole grains and healthy cultural food traditions.


Prof. Roberto Volpe
Medical researcher at National Research Council of Italy and Italian Society for Cardiovascular Prevention (SIPREC). Representative at European Heart Network (EHN)

Roberto Volpe is a medical researcher at the National Research Council (CNR) of Italy, specialized in Liver and Metabolic Diseases (University of Rome) with a PhD in Atherosclerosis (University of Siena). Roberto is a team leader for national and international nutritional and cardiovascular prevention projects and a representative of the Italian Society for Cardiovascular Prevention (SIPREC) at the European Heart Network (EHN) of Brussels.


Prof. Janne Martikainen
Professor (Pharmacoeconomics) Head (Health Sciences) of UEF House of Effectiveness

Professor Martikainen is a health economist, and he leads Pharmacoeconomics & Outcomes Research team at the University of Eastern Finland (UEF). He is also a head of UEF House of Effectiveness. Currently, his team is studying health economic aspects of precision and digital health approaches in prevention and treatment of type 2 diabetes. He and his team have also extensive expertise in conducting analyses concerning the health economics of whole grains, salt, saturated fat, and functional foods.


Patrizia Fracassi, PhD
Senior Nutrition and Food Systems Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Patrizia Fracassi is Senior Nutrition and Food Systems Officer at FAO leading the work on governance, policies, programmes and investments. Previously, she was the Senior Nutrition Analyst and Strategy Adviser at the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement Secretariat focusing on government-led multi-sectoral approaches for planning, costing, managing implementation, tracking investments and mobilizing resources. Patrizia has worked in Ethiopia with UNICEF on Nutrition Information Systems and for the World Bank on Linkages between the Productive Safety Net Program and the National Nutrition Program. She also worked for UNICEF Uganda as a Nutrition Specialist and for CESVI and Oxfam Italia in Vietnam as Country Director, specializing in community based nutrition, primary health care and livelihoods. Patrizia holds a Doctorate in Health Research, a M.Sc. in Development Management and an M.A. in Human Sciences. She is interested on the political economy of nutrition



**Saskia de Pee, PhD****Chief Analytics & Science for Food & Nutrition,
Nutrition Division, World Food Programme (WFP)**

Saskia de Pee is Chief Analytics & Science for Food & Nutrition at the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), consisting of the Systems Analysis for Nutrition, Food Fortification and Specialized Nutritious Foods, and Modeling Inadequate Micronutrient Intake teams. She is also Adjunct Associate Professor at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University, Boston and at Human Nutrition, Wageningen University, the Netherlands, and collaborates with the Center for Livable Future of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. She has worked in public health nutrition for more than 25 years, focusing on science as well as practical applications, policies and strategies. Her areas of expertise include food and nutrient security, diet & climate, micronutrients, fortification, nutrition in the context of social protection, HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis. The practical application of nutrition science, at the interface with disciplines such as food technology, anthropology, economics, and in collaboration with stakeholders from government, private sector, donors and academia, to achieve sustainable solutions is her passion. Prior to joining WFP in 2007 she worked for Helen Keller International in the Asia Pacific region for 10 years. She has co-authored more than 150 scientific publications and holds a PhD in Human Nutrition from Wageningen University, the Netherlands.

**Floriana Cimmarusti****Secretary General, SAFE Food Advocacy Europe**

Floriana is an international lawyer with 20+ years of working experience gained in Italy, Belgium and Switzerland. Floriana Cimmarusti is Secretary General of the Brussels-based NGO Safe Food Advocacy Europe since 2015. Since 2022, she is representing European consumers as a full member of the management board of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). SAFE – Safe Food Advocacy Europe was created with the aim of ensuring that consumer's health and concerns remain at the core of the EU's food legislation. SAFE strives to ensure safer food standards for consumers monitoring the EU food legislation process and cooperating with EU stakeholders to draft comprehensive food regulations. SAFE notably supports the development of policies and awareness-raising actions which jointly address health, inclusion, environment, food safety and sustainability, all-the-while being involved in several EU-funded projects aimed at reducing the environmental impact of the food sector and promoting healthier food environments for consumers.

**Betty Chang, PhD****Research - Area Lead, The European Food Information Council (EUFIC)**

Betty is the Research Lead at the European Food Information Council. She has 16 years experience in conducting research in psychology, specialising in behaviour change. Betty has worked in academia in Australia, Belgium and the UK. More recently, she has worked on projects related to facilitating the change towards healthier and more sustainable diets, and communicating research for science-based decision making.

**Prof. Eleanor Beck****Discipline Leader in Nutrition and Dietetics in the School of Medicine,
Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health of the University of Wollongong**

Professor Eleanor Beck is Discipline Leader in Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Wollongong, Australia. Eleanor has 30 years of experience in clinical practice and dietetics education. Eleanor is a Fellow of Dietitians Australia and Chair of the Council of Deans of Nutrition and Dietetics (Australia/New Zealand). Eleanor's research focuses on strategies to encourage individuals to consume more high fibre and whole grain foods and includes close links with dietetics service delivery in hospitals, while working with industry partners and international collaborators in grains research. Current projects include work on cereal fibres and whole grains in relation to effects on metabolic health, and work on definitions of whole grain foods, nutrient profiling and categorisation of ultra-processed foods.

