

UN launches IYP 2016 to battle undernourishment

The United Nations has officially launched the International Year of Pulses 2016 (IYP) in Rome, Italy, at the Food and Agriculture Organisation.



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With over 800 million people globally suffering from acute or chronic undernourishment and a rising tide of health problems linked to poor diets, IYP 2016 aims to demonstrate the integral role these nutrient-dense foods have in global food security and nutrition. The year will create a unique opportunity to produce more sustainable crops for South Africa, which is currently in the grip of one of the worst droughts.

Pulses are the edible dried seeds of legume crops and include dried beans, dried peas, chickpeas and lentils. This diverse group of staple foods has been cultivated by civilizations across the globe for over 10,000 years. They are high in protein, fibre, vitamins and amino acids. In addition, they are hearty crops that require less water. Pulses are part of the 'food basket' used by the World Food Programme in food assistance strategies.

"Pulses have great potential to help eradicate hunger, plus tackle many chronic health conditions, such as obesity and diabetes," said Huseyin Arslan, President of the Global Pulse Confederation (GPC). "We congratulate the UN on its focus on pulses and their importance to global food security and nutrition.

"We want to encourage everyone to consume more pulses in 2016 and we hope the whole world will join us on January 6 in eating pulses that day."

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