



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
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# NEWSLETTER

## FAO IRAQ



# FAOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the **FAO Iraq Monthly Bulletin!**

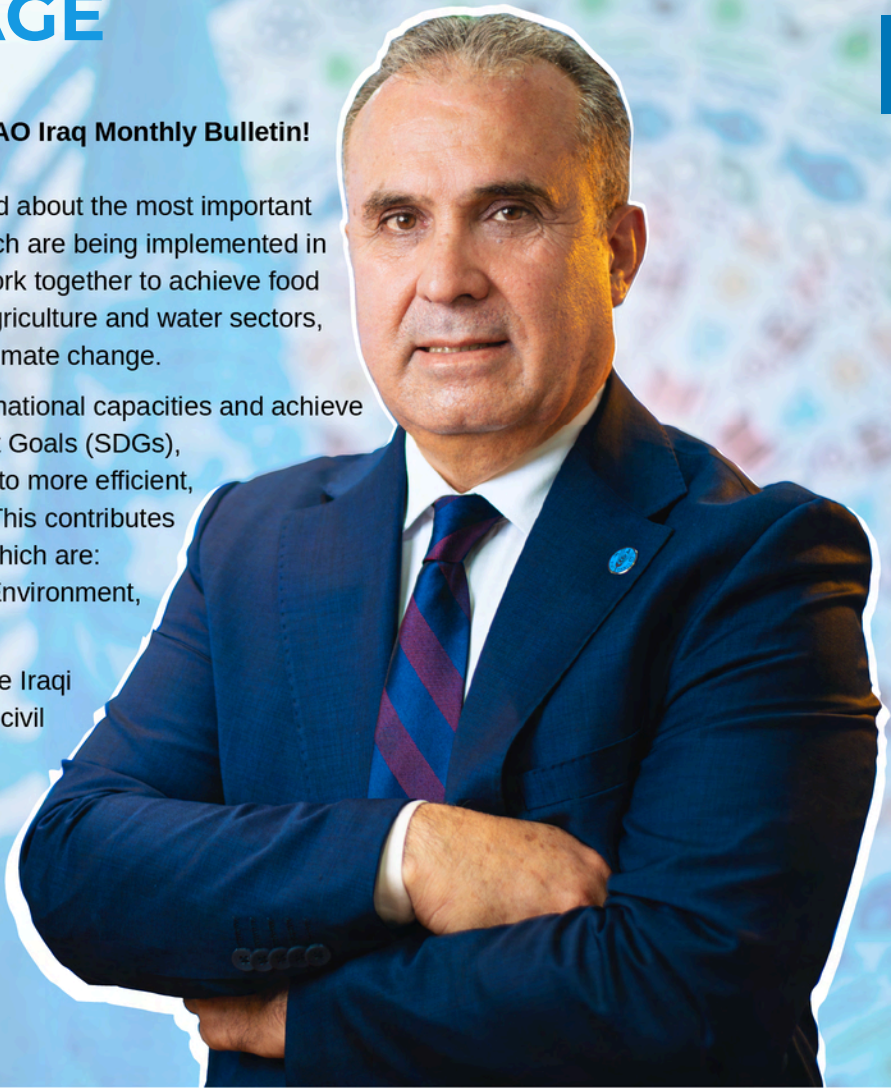
This newsletter will allow you to stay informed about the most important activities and events of the organization, which are being implemented in Iraq in collaboration with our partners. We work together to achieve food security and support efforts to develop the agriculture and water sectors, in addition to addressing the challenges of climate change.

Through these efforts, we aim to strengthen national capacities and achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), supporting the 2030 Agenda by transitioning to more efficient, resilient, and sustainable agrifood systems. This contributes to achieving FAO's Four Betters approach, which are: Better Production, Better Nutrition, a Better Environment, and a Better Life, leaving no one behind.

Our success relies on our partnership with the Iraqi Government, development partners, donors, civil society, the private sector, and national and international expertise.

Thank you for joining us as we work towards a more sustainable and resilient future for agriculture sector in Iraq.

**Dr Salah ElHajj Hassan**  
FAO Representative to the Republic of Iraq



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## PROJECTS' INTERVENTION

### ENHANCING EXPERTISE IN NURSERY PRODUCTION AND URBAN GREENING IN SULAYMANIYAH

FAO in Iraq, in collaboration with Sulaymaniyah Municipality, and the local government, conducted a two-phase training on enhancing expertise in nursery production and sustainable urban greening as component activity of the EU funded project. The workshops, attended by Mayor Layla Omar, covered foundational and advanced horticultural techniques. At the closing session, FAO Representative Dr.Salah ElHajj Hassan awarded certificates to participants and highlighted the importance of adopting modern agricultural practices for sustainable development and impacts. This support aligns with the trend of promoting agriculture beyond rural areas and is component of the FAO "Green Cities" Initiative.

Learn more:

Launching: [X](#) / [Facebook](#)

Second phase launching: [X](#) / [Facebook](#)

Closing session: [X](#) / [Facebook](#)



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### EMPOWERING 40 GOVERNMENT EXTENSION OFFICERS TO PROMOTE AGROECOLOGY AND MARSHLAND CONSERVATION FOR SLM

FAO in Iraq, in partnership with the Iraq Ministry of Environment (MoEN), the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), and the local governments of Al-Muthanna and Thi-Qar governorates held a 5 days training workshop in Basra Governorate which capacitated 40 Agricultural Extension Officers to effectively deliver extension service to promote a sustainable farming of Agroecology practice and Marshland Conservation in southern Iraq.

The training was held under the project on "Sustainable Land Management (SLM) for Improved Livelihoods in Degraded Areas of Iraq" which is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with the objective to reverse land degradation, conserve, and sustainably manage land and water resources in degraded southern Iraq marshlands to enhance ecosystem resilience and improve livelihoods.

- Learn more:
- [Press release](#)
- Video: [X](#) / [Facebook](#)
- Launching: [X](#) / [Facebook](#)
- Closing session: [X](#) / [Facebook](#)

### FIELD DAYS FOR LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN IRAQ

FAO Iraq, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, conducted eight field days across the Maysan, Basra, and Thi-Qar Governorates, with the participation of 200 farmers and facilitators. The initiative aimed to promote green fodder crops to improve ruminant nutrition and enhance milk quality and production. These community-based networking events have been crucial in fostering stronger connections between fodder producers and livestock breeders. Participants received practical training in soil preparation, fertilization, seed management, irrigation, and harvesting to optimize fodder cultivation and usage. These activities are part of an EU-funded initiative to restore and strengthen the resilience of agri-food systems in Southern Iraq.



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## OPTIMIZING WATER USE AND APPLYING CLIMATE-SMART RICE FARMING IN NAJAF

FAO Iraq in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, organized a field day in Najaf Governorate to demonstrate climate-smart and water-saving practices such as mechanical seedling and transplantation methods for rice cultivation under a SIDA-funded project. The initiative aims to optimize water use and enhance productivity to address water scarcity and the impacts of climate change.

The visit was attended by the FAO team, led by the FAO Representative Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan and local officials. Farmers expressed their commitment to adopting climate-smart practices due to the benefits observed, including over 25% savings in irrigation water and significant reductions in input costs, saving 75% on seeds, 80% on herbicides, and 90% on insecticides, while achieving better growth uniformity and higher yields.

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## STRENGTHENING ANIMAL HEALTH EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND DISEASE DIAGNOSIS IN

FAO in Iraq, in collaboration with Iraq's Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources (MoAWR-KRG), conducted two key workshops in Erbil to strengthen Iraq's animal health systems under the "Strengthening Iraq Veterinary Legislation and Expanding Delivery of Animal Health Services and Disease Surveillance" project, funded by the United States Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA).

During the first four-day workshop on "Clinical Diagnosis and Disease Recognition" 17 veterinary staff from Najaf, Sulaymaniyah, Diyala, and Missan governorates received practical training in clinical and differential diagnosis and sample collection, with the aim of improving disease diagnosis, reporting, and surveillance.

The second four-day workshop, focused on "Good Emergency Management Practice (GEMP)" where 20 participants, including veterinary and laboratory specialists, were trained on management of Transboundary Animal Diseases (TAD) like Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis, enhancing emergency preparedness and response capacities.

Learn more:

[Press release- 01](#) / [Press release- 02](#)

Launching: [X](#) / [Facebook](#) / [X](#) / [Facebook](#)

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## LAUNCHING OF 28 FARMER FIELD SCHOOLS. TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE FARMING PRACTICES

FAO in Iraq launched 28 Farmer Field Schools (FFS) across seven (7) governorates, benefiting 28 direct and 560 indirect smallholder farmers under SIDA and Canadian -funded projects. The objectives and focus of the FFS were on improving agricultural practices for crops such as wheat, barley, okra, lettuce, and cucumber crops. The FFS trainings focused on modern agricultural techniques such as laser land leveling, drip irrigation, improved sowing methods, while providing NPK fertilizers and quality seeds to the targeted farmers. A pilot women-only FFS was also established to ensure women's further engagement, and that their priorities and needs are met under FFS approach.

# EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF RURAL WOMEN CELEBRATION

Under the patronage of H.E. Abbas Jabr Al-Maliki, Minister of Agriculture, FAO Iraq participated in the International Day of Rural Women celebration organized by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). The event featured a discussion panel with Dr. Mithaq Al-Khafaji, Technical Deputy of the MoA, and highlighted achievements in empowering rural women as key contributors to food security and sustainable livelihoods. Empowered women partners showcased products like dairy, dates, honey, and vegetables, which were produced through FAO-MoA projects supported by the EU, SIDA, Canada, and Norway, to emphasize women's inclusion and diverse contributions to the agricultural sector.

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Video: [X](#) / [Facebook](#)



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## PARTICIPATION IN WORLD URBAN FORUM

FAO in Iraq participated in the “Greening Cities” session at the World Urban Forum (WUF), presenting innovative strategies to build climate resilience in the NENA region. A Sustainable Land Management (SLM) expert presented solutions to combat sand and dust storms using SLM practices, enhancing sustainability in urban and rural areas. FAO also highlighted Iraq’s contingency plan, linking green urban spaces with broader climate strategies and emphasizing the importance of cross-border collaboration for effective climate change adaptation.

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## SUCCESS STORY

### ABDUL AMIR SALMAN AISSA "RYE GRASS HAS TRANSFORMED OUR FARMING."

Abdul Amir Salman Aissa, a 53-year-old farmer from southern Iraq, has been raising buffalo since he was five. Facing challenges like water scarcity, land degradation and low soil fertility issues as well as financial constraints, he adopted resilient fodder crops such as rye grass and implemented drip irrigation. These sustainable practices have significantly increased his yields and milk production, providing a reliable income for his family.

Read more > [Entire story](#)

## MEETINGS

### FAO AND IRAQI MINISTRIES ARE COLLABORATING TO DEVELOP THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR ANIMAL HEALTH

FAO in Iraq is collaborating with several Iraqi ministries and official entities to develop the regulatory framework for animal health. This effort includes holding three in-person meetings with the legislative committee, which comprises members from these entities, to discuss legislation related to animal health. Additionally, the FAO, through the joint working committee between the Ministries of Agriculture and Health, has held two in-person meetings to address the legislative overlaps between the Animal Health Law and the Public Health Law.

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## ENHANCING COLLABORATION WITH THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT IN IRAQ

H.E. Dr. Heh Lu Al-Askari, Minister of Environment, met with Dr. Salah ElHajj Hassan, FAO Representative in Iraq, to review the ongoing programs and progress of the GEF-funded project on sustainable land management to improve livelihoods in degraded areas. They also discussed the upcoming Green Climate Fund project agreement aimed at enhancing the resilience of vulnerable rural communities to climate change, emphasizing the need for its prompt finalization to commence activities. Future cooperation and plans were also explored.

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## KEY NEWS FROM THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE:

- The distribution of bran and molasses to buffalo breeders in Basra continues as part of the emergency support plan.  
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- Mechanical sowing operations for alfalfa have been launched, utilizing fixed sprinkler irrigation systems at the Abu Ghraib Research Station.  
[Learn more> Facebook](#)
- The Council of Ministers has approved a 75% reduction in the prices of rice seedling machines, supporting rice cultivation with modern techniques to reduce water consumption.  
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- The national program for ornamental plant propagation continues to provide seedlings to government institutions and citizens at subsidized prices or free of charge.  
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- The Agricultural Research Department has initiated wheat planting for the 2024-2025 winter plan in Nineveh and Kirkuk. Superior seed grades, mechanical sowing technologies, and modern irrigation systems are being used to achieve self-sufficiency and increase production.  
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With thanks to our esteemed partners for their support to our country programme



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 [www.fao.org/iraq](http://www.fao.org/iraq)

