G8 Agricultural Development Working Group Proposal:
U.S. Leadership in
Global Agricultural Development and Food Security

A White Paper prepared for the U.S. Government
in advance of the G8 Summit 2012

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THE 2012 G8 IMPERATIVE:
RENEW THE COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY

The 2012 G8 Summit presents the opportunity to address head-on the ever-present and growing crisis of global food insecurity. Approximately 925 million of the world’s people suffer from chronic malnourishment and hunger; over half of these people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for their livelihoods.1 Volatile commodity prices continuously threaten to plunge even more into the ranks of the hungry. This already desperate crisis is compounded by the projected surge in the global population to 9 billion by 2050. To meet skyrocketing demand, global food production will need to double by that time.2

The consequences of food price shocks among the millions already on edge have been foreshadowed in the riots that spread across forty countries during food price spikes in 2008. The recent uprisings in North Africa and Middle East were sparked not just by pent-up political discontent, but by the anger and frustration of vulnerable people as global food prices soared to unprecedented levels.3 Indeed, the explosive relationship between volatile food markets and economic and political instability is undeniable.

The urgency of the global food security crisis was recognized by the G8 in 2009 in L’Aquila. The L’Aquila Food Security Initiative committed member nations to take all the necessary measures to achieve global food security, including mobilizing $21.5 billion over three years for sustainable agricultural development.4 The initiative has begun to reverse decades of neglect of agricultural development and stimulated new efforts—from cofinancing, human capital development, institutional capacity building, and marketplace strengthening —to improve food security, especially in the least developed nations.

Three years later, this pledge is set to expire. Yet the imperative for achieving food security is no less vital. A sustained political and financial commitment by the G8, other nations, and the private sector is critical to transforming undeveloped rural areas into drivers of economic growth. Significantly greater investments in agricultural research will be needed if the agriculture and food system is to meet the demands created by a growing global population, rising incomes, climate change, and resource scarcity. The technological innovation and diffusion needed to increase food production is minimal in many parts of the world because of limited capacity to carry out localized research and adapt and disseminate technologies. Insufficient attention to aligning market incentives and government policy with food security and agriculture development objectives has locked hunger and poverty in place.

Surmounting these challenges will not be easy. But the history of agriculture has proven that it is achievable. With sufficient leadership and support, underperforming lands can be transformed into life-sustaining fields and gardens. Once isolated communities can become local, regional, and even global food suppliers. New technologies and techniques can help preserve and restore precious natural resources to meet the needs of the world’s families today and for generations to come. The incomes of the women and men farming these
lands can be increased. Now is the time to renew the pledge to eliminate food insecurity and move toward a sustainable future.

The Importance of U.S. Leadership

The United States has long played an integral role in mobilizing both political will and resources towards addressing the food security imperative. In 2009 the United States helped forge consensus among G8 member states on critical steps for strengthening bilateral and multilateral support for agricultural development under the L’Aquila Principles. In fulfilling this pledge, the current administration has gone a step further by making food security a top pillar of its global development agenda. Under the Feed the Future initiative, the administration has pledged $3.5 billion toward helping the world’s rural poor build resilience against agricultural supply shocks. The initiative is committed to targeted, high-potential, country-led food security strategies that focus on building long-term capacity across the entire supply chain, from improving farm-to-market roads in Tanzania to funding research for nutrient-dense rice production in Bangladesh. Each of these programs is tailored to the needs of specific, at-risk populations and incorporates resources from national governments as well as private stakeholders and international NGOs.

The 2012 G8 Summit provides an extraordinary opportunity for the U.S. administration to make the case for coordinated agricultural development and highlight the U.S. commitment to achieving global food security. This year is the 150th anniversary of historic legislation in 1862 that opened America to agricultural and other development—the Homestead Act, the Morrill Act that created land-grant colleges, the Emancipation Proclamation, transcontinental railway legislation, and the creation of the United States Department of Agriculture. The legacies of that history include an American agricultural sector that has the most productive farmers in the world. American agriculture has thrived in the current economic downturn, led the growth of American exports, and developed an unparalleled capacity for innovation in global agriculture. America is home to many agribusiness companies with global reach, to the greatest concentration of university-based and commercial agricultural research centers anywhere in the world, and to the world’s largest agricultural commodities futures market.

President Obama will have an opportunity to speak to the American people about his vision for U.S. leadership in the quest for global food security against this backdrop of historic American accomplishment. In Secretary Clinton’s words, we must “rededicate ourselves to breaking this cycle of food shortages, suffering, and dislocations” such as those seen most recently in the Horn of Africa. Even in a fractured Washington, food security remains a bipartisan and publically supported goal. But Congress and the American people understandably want an endgame to these investments. While the United States, like many G8 members, is facing a period of budgetary stress and fiscal austerity, we must recognize that finances are only one dimension of this crisis. The administration needs to make the case that food security policies can leverage the work and will of others who share the
burden, including developing states, and that they are aimed at achieving a transition to greater self-reliance, productivity, and human security in the foreseeable future.

Ensuring food security requires us to take the long view—to set a course now that stretches beyond this period of economic recession and to stay the course. As economic growth resumes, more will be possible in terms of financial support for the recommendations laid out in this paper. We must not let our present problems deter us from setting the framework and persuading G8 member states to make agriculture development and food security a priority now and moving forward.

This paper draws upon four defining characteristics of U.S. success:

- **Public policy and investment**—the enabling role of government in capacity building, especially in creating the physical and institutional infrastructure and the human capital to support agricultural development and attendant rural economies

- **Innovation**—the critical importance of technological change based on public and private research to increase productivity and incomes

- **Markets**—the ability of markets to alleviate poverty and function efficiently, consistently, and transparently to facilitate trade and hedge risk

- **Private sector**—the essential role of private initiative to bring about growth

Building on these principles this white paper provides specific, actionable, result-oriented, and monitorable recommendations to guide the administration and G8 member states as they prepare for the upcoming G8 summit. These recommendations are organized around four primary objectives:

I. Sustain the financial commitment to global agricultural development at the current level or higher.

II. Launch a major, long-term international research initiative to develop new seed and plant varieties resistant to weather extremes, water scarcity, disease, and related risks.

III. Spur innovation and engage the private sector by reducing regulatory barriers, helping to build in-country technical and institutional capacity, and strengthening intellectual property protections.

IV. Adopt and implement policies to increase global trade in agricultural commodities and food.

The following sections of this paper expand upon each of these objectives and offer specific actions the G8 can take to advance the agenda for promoting agricultural development and ensuring long-term food security. Examples of current or proposed initiatives that may serve as models are also included.
I. SUSTAIN THE FINANCIAL COMMITMENT TO GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE CURRENT LEVEL OR HIGHER.

Many G8 member states have faced constraints in meeting their obligations under the L’Aquila commitment, particularly in funding for the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), the trust fund created through the World Bank to assist in channeling G8 pledges at L’Aquila to country-led agriculture development and investment plans. A core nucleus of members, however, have not only fulfilled—or are on the path to fulfilling—their pledges, but have leveraged the commitment to bring agricultural development and food security to the forefront of their national foreign assistance strategies.7

Despite tight budgetary constraints, the United States is on track to nearly fulfilling its L’Aquila commitment of $3.5 billion over three years, with $3.26 billion committed as part of the fiscal year 2012 budget. In 2009 the United States launched the Feed the Future program to complement the L’Aquila commitment and ensure that aid to the global agricultural sector focuses on building capacity for long-term growth. Today, the Feed the Future initiative has developed comprehensive, country-led strategies in twenty countries. In Ethiopia, where the United States has traditionally focused on short-term humanitarian relief, the initiative has helped improve administrative efficiency and assisted the government in leveraging private-sector investment for long-term infrastructure improvement. In Bangladesh, a country-led strategy has complemented an eightfold increase in agriculture aid outlays with long-term initiatives to help the country improve the nutritional status of women and coordinate research on improving agricultural productivity.

L’Aquila has also given momentum to the “Maputo Commitment,” a pledge by twenty African states to commit 10 percent of their national budgets to agriculture development.8 Most recent data suggest several African countries—Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mali, and Niger—have met this goal.9 GAFSP’s ability to help channel and augment G8 financial support with commitments from donor organizations like The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation as well as G-20 member states—including a $50 million pledge from the Republic of Korea—is another success story.10

The G8—and the United States specifically—has an opportunity to highlight these successes and demonstrate the important progress that has been made in implementing the L’Aquila commitment. International awareness of both the immediate threats to food security—such as those we have seen in the famine in the Horn of Africa—as well as the core, long-term challenge of nearly doubling food production by 2050 has been increasing and bolster the case for putting financial support for agriculture development back at the top of the G8 agenda. As Bill Gates wrote recently in his 2012 annual letter, “We can discover new approaches and create new tools to fundamentally transform farmers’ lives. But we won’t advance if we don’t continue to fund agricultural innovation.”11

The G8 Agricultural Development Working Group recommends the following actions:
1. **Sustain investment in agricultural development.** Reaffirm the commitment to achieving food security through country-developed and country-led plans focused on smallholder farmers and the improvement of local technical and institutional capacities. Investments should target smallholder farmers, particularly the women and girls that make up approximately 43 percent of the world’s agriculture workforce,\(^1\) to improve their practices and productivity through education, extension, financing, market access, and property rights. Making a renewed commitment to this goal in Camp David is critical to ensuring progress toward the Millennium Development Goals, due for review in 2015.

2. **Better monitor commitments.** Press for completion of the L’Aquila commitments and for internal accounting of existing and new commitments. Internal accounting will help support external monitoring efforts such as the ONE Campaign’s L’Aquila commitment tracker, which drives both greater transparency and accountability across governments. Efforts by the L’Aquila Food Security Initiative working group to improve transparency would send a powerful signal that the G8 members intend to fulfill their pledge to address food security through agricultural development.

3. **Bring forward ample emergency and humanitarian food assistance through local purchase** whenever and wherever possible. The OECD estimates that 74 percent of food aid is tied to the donor country at a cost that is 33 to 50 percent more than buying food from regional or local markets, respectively. Food purchased in the United States can take four to five months to reach the recipient country. Sourcing locally is not only more economically efficient—quicker and cheaper—it allows for the development of local markets by lessening the displacement of local producers.\(^1\)

4. **Increase support for the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program** (GAFSP) and encourage public and private investment in rural projects such as roads and irrigation systems to facilitate agriculture and market development. Financial assistance to GAFSP is critical to helping countries—that otherwise lack targeted and coordinated support—create and implement their agricultural development investment plans. Such assistance is also critical to reaffirming the value of partner country cofinancing.

5. **Call upon non–G8 member states to contribute** to the L’Aquila Initiative and GAFSP, specifically. Already, much of GASFP’s nearly $1 billion in funding has come from non–G8 members—Australia, Ireland, South Korea, and Spain—as well as nongovernmental institutions. The G8 cannot and should not fund agricultural development alone. The G8 members should set the standard by renewing investment while also asking others to join in bilateral and multilateral support mechanisms.
II. LAUNCH A MAJOR, LONG-TERM INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH INITIATIVE TO DEVELOP NEW SEED AND PLANT VARIETIES RESISTANT TO WEATHER EXTREMES, WATER SCARCITY, DISEASE, AND RELATED RISKS.

At the same time that the global food supply must double to meet growing demands, new climate-related challenges—including weather extremes, water scarcity, and increasing infectious disease and related health challenges associated with flooding and drought—further complicate the already formidable task of achieving food security. The productivity cost to the agricultural sector from climate change is already estimated to be 5.6 percent, with more than one-quarter of nations experiencing losses greater than 7 percent.14 Much of this loss occurs in Africa and other developing regions. The good news is that we have already proven our ability to adapt to and overcome many of these changes through innovative research, from new varieties of drought-tolerant maize to deep-placement fertilizers.

Unfortunately, despite such advances, investment in science-based research for agricultural development has not kept pace with growing food demands. The United States Department of Agriculture estimates that public expenditures on research and development for agriculture grew just 0.7 percent per annum from 1970 to 2008. While public investment in research stalls, research and development in the private sector continues to grow.15 By 1980 the private sector began to outspend countries in terms of total agricultural research investment. Today, private sector spending on research for basic food staples in developing countries is almost equivalent to that spent by all public entities combined—$1.2 billion and $1.5 billion, respectively.16 While critically important, private sector investments are not enough and may not be focused on areas of greatest need. Simply put, filling the research gap not only requires renewed public investment, but innovative partnerships that not only draw in private-sector resources, but also build capabilities within states and country-based research institutions to respond to localized productivity and adaptation challenges.

The G8 Agricultural Development Working Group recommends the following actions:

1. **Leverage communication and cooperation among G8 public and private research organizations**, including universities, government and international institutes, private companies, and international organizations. G8 members should utilize existing channels such as the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and support new vehicles as appropriate. The incremental costs should be minimal, especially at the outset, and many examples of effective cooperation already exist. The International Research Initiative for Wheat Improvement (IRIWI) adopted by the G20 in Paris, for example, is already looking at new ways to transfer knowledge between public and private breeders to improve nutritional value and crop variety.17 The Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases includes 32 member countries working together to increase crop productivity while restricting greenhouse gas emissions.18
a. **Prioritize collaborations that will increase productivity for smallholder farmers by solving local challenges.** The greatest total upside productivity potential in the world is on small holdings in Sub-Saharan Africa. Collaborations should emphasize the importance of a step-change in production through increased hybrid introduction, improved agronomic and land management practices, access to advanced research technologies (such as native trait breeding, molecular marker breeding, and doubled haploids) and biotechnology, and optimized use of fertilizer and irrigation. For example, the West Africa Seed Alliance is a public-private partnership that brings together a diverse group of organizations committed to developing a competitive and sustainable seed industry by improving smallholder access to and quality of appropriately tested seed and traits in West Africa. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) recently created the Grand Challenges for Development program that brings together scientists, technologists, and social scientists to spark innovations in areas such as smallholder farming, including off-grid power and water solutions for local farmers.

b. **Build capacity for local adaptive research in developing countries** through increased investment and exchange with universities and institutes in developed countries. Collaborations such as DROught-Tolerant Plants (DROPS) Research Consortium, which brings together experts from around the world to share information and research that will quicken the development of innovative and location-specific drought-tolerant maize varieties, should be encouraged and replicated.

c. **Encourage developed countries to pursue improved technologies** in areas such as drought and flood resistance, pest and disease control under extreme weather conditions, animal health, and water conservation such as drip irrigation and micronutrient uptake technologies. The Improved Maize for African Soils Project (IMAS) is focused on developing higher-yielding maize varieties that require limited fertilizer, even when grown on poorer soils. These new varieties will allow production increases for farmers living in more tropical areas of Africa.

2. **Promote and support partnerships between universities and research institutions** in developed countries and their counterparts in developing countries. Such partnerships can help identify needed technologies and practices and strengthen education and extension in areas such as increased nutritional content and durability of crops to environmental stress. Many developing country research institutions such as the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation’s (EMBRAPA) are already leading the way in innovative tillage and crop management systems that maximize soil nutrients and build environmental stress resistance. The National Science Foundation (NSF) and USAID have teamed together in Partnerships for
Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER) to build collaborations between scientists in the United States and developing countries.\textsuperscript{24}

3. \textit{Support the diffusion and adoption of new agricultural technologies} by encouraging shared scientific assessments among the G8 of any risks associated with new agricultural technologies such as disease-resistant seeds or varieties. Currently, scientific organizations provide independent, science-based risk assessments around the world. A shared global scientific assessment would support more rapid acceptance, transmission, and diffusion of technologies.

Collaboration among the national science academies of the G8 countries should be supported to leverage shared scientific language and accepted analytical processes to identify and monitor biosafety risks (to health, food, and the environment). This information can be presented to G8 and developing countries to proactively address questions and concerns. The risk analysis should be developed independently by groups of scientists chosen and appointed by existing professional scientific organizations such as national science academies and international science associations. Organizations with a consistent process and reputation for sound science include the National Science Foundation, the American Society of Plant Biologists, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the International Life Sciences Institute, the Royal Society, the German Academy of Sciences Leopoldina, and the Research Directorate General of the European Union.

4. \textit{Create new systems for open data and information sharing} to foster the growth of technical skills, innovation, and business development for agricultural productivity in developing countries. A centralized platform for data sharing across sectors and borders could draw from and leverage existing collaborations, technical infrastructure, and financing. While protecting intellectual property, these systems should:
   \begin{itemize}
   \item Include methods for both information storage and retrieval;
   \item Be accessible to multiple end-users, from researchers to farmers;
   \item Improve the quality of information available in public data depositories used by academics and industry scientists alike for sequence, protein structure, genetic, and other similar data. Contracts should be modified to support access and innovation. Examples of these depositories include the International Rice Research Institute, Genbank, MaizeGDB, GrainGenes 2.0, and the various Arabidopsis databases necessary for ongoing research and development.
   \end{itemize}

Many countries and businesses are developing platforms for data sharing for a variety of end users. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), for example, has begun to mitigate weather risks and improve production by using mobile technology to modernize extension services and disseminate timely information to farmers.\textsuperscript{25} At a more technical level, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Research Service has launched the Germplasm Resources
Information Network-Global, a user-friendly, web-based platform to share information on gene sequencing. In 2009, DuPont, Monsanto, and Ceres shared corn-sequencing data in a common depository (MaizeSequence) housed at the Danforth Center for Public Access, which has become the foundation of many university studies.
III. SPUR INNOVATION AND ENGAGE THE PRIVATE SECTOR BY REDUCING REGULATORY BARRIERS, HELPING TO BUILD IN-COUNTRY TECHNICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY, AND STRENGTHENING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTIONS.

The private sector plays a critical role in developing and applying know-how to help increase agricultural productivity, provide access to affordable food, and improve nutrition around the world. To take full advantage of these capabilities, however, barriers to private sector participation must be reduced and cooperation must be increased. Many countries and development agencies—including USAID—have integrated public-private partnerships as a key component of their strategy for in-country capacity building. The Southern African Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT), supported by multiple G8 member states, brings together several of the world’s largest agribusinesses under a state-supported program to attract nearly $2.1 billion of investment to revitalize Tanzania’s agricultural value chain. This effort is generating nearly a half million new jobs and creating $1.4 billion in new income.28 The eagerness of private sector leaders to engage in issues of agriculture development was echoed this year through the World Economic Forum’s New Vision for Agriculture—an initiative of seventeen global industry leaders and several national governments to “simultaneously advance economic growth, global food security, and environmental sustainability through market-based approaches.”29

For these efforts to scale and succeed, however, these private sector catalysts need predictable national and international policy frameworks and supportive in-country technical capabilities. The most significant role the G8 can play in ensuring the creation of such an environment would be working towards the creation of a harmonious and science-based regulatory framework that operates seamlessly across international boundaries. Today, every new biotech crop is subject to a separate regulatory review process in each country in which the crop will be cultivated or imported for food and feed. It is understandable that individual countries wish to maintain sovereignty over new plant varieties. However, inconsistent regulatory environments delay innovation and result in a complicated global grain trade and redundant scientific studies.

A harmonized regulatory framework that operates across international boundaries would facilitate a more rapid introduction of improved plant varieties to increase agricultural productivity in food insecure regions. International frameworks such as Codex Alimentarius are critical to developing and diffusing new technologies and to mobilizing private-sector know-how and investment in agriculture.30 Research advancements must not be slowed or even blocked by an unnecessarily burdensome and incongruous array of regulatory policies.

The G8 Agricultural Development Working Group recommends the following actions:

1. **Adopt regulatory policies that encourage consistent, science-based standards in evaluating new technologies and products, timely review, and the facilitation of trade.** Policy should emphasize the following principles:
- **Coexistence**—G8 national policies should recognize and support the acceptance of different forms of agricultural production, including organic, conventional, and biotechnology.
- **Synchronicity**—G8 national policies should encourage the timely and simultaneous regulatory review of new technologies in agriculture to enable companies and consumers to plan accordingly.
- **Harmonization**—The G8 should endorse the goal of establishing a global regulatory framework by 2015 that encourages consistent standards and timelines to evaluate new innovations in food production and food safety.

2. **Assist developing countries to assess regulatory matters based on sound science by creating and strengthening in-country technical capacity.** Country-by-country progress is slowly being made to inform local scientists and policymakers about new agricultural technologies and to assist in developing appropriate regulatory policies and structures to build confidence in local communities for new and existing technologies. This process is hampered by weak financial commitment to build scientific bridges and partnerships that are recognized as independent of private-sector interests and that fully recognize local needs and constraints. Governments can incite innovation and growth by ensuring necessary regional infrastructure, pragmatic regulatory oversight, and predictable market access. By sharing information and expertise and by following best practices to foster scientific reviews, developing countries can work with existing bodies (private sector, associations, and science-based organizations) to broaden the base of entities conducting research and development and to train local experts in the safety and stewardship of new products. For example, this approach has helped Malawi introduce higher-yielding hybrid seeds to local farmers and has helped the Philippines develop a science-based regulatory framework for reviewing biotech crops.

3. **Agree on policies and processes that will strengthen and align intellectual property (IP) protections** consistent with the World Trade Organization’s Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). This will help foster innovation and adoption of new agricultural technologies, benefit local farmers, and encourage trade and development.

4. **Support partnerships with the private sector to increase local food production in both developed and developing economies.** Existing activities such as the World Economic Forum's New Vision for Agriculture need to be supplemented with new ways for governments and the private sector to cooperate around the goals of sustainably increasing agricultural productivity and improving nutrition. Increasingly, there are examples of productive collaborations between businesses, foundations, local governments, universities, and research institutes to develop and disseminate these types of technologies. Africa Biofortified Sorghum (ABS) is an African-led public-private partnership focused on improving the nutrition and digestibility of sorghum for human consumption in Sub-Saharan Africa. It involves
foundations, multinational corporations, and research institutes partnering with local universities and researchers to develop and promote adoption of more nutritional sorghum.\textsuperscript{31} Virus Resistant Cassava for Africa (VICRA) is a similarly organized partnership that targets reduced losses from severe virus diseases affecting cassava in Uganda and Kenya.\textsuperscript{32} The International Center for Research in the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)'s African Market Garden program is another public-private partnership that encourages African farmers to adopt low-pressure drip irrigation to mitigate uncertainties in rainfall and improve productivity.\textsuperscript{33}
IV. ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT POLICIES TO INCREASE GLOBAL TRADE IN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES AND FOOD.

As events in recent years have shown, high commodity prices and food price volatility have become major threats to progress in achieving food security, economic growth, and political stability. Today, the average African household spends nearly half its income on food, compared to only six percent in the United States.\textsuperscript{34} Everywhere in the world, market distortions can lead to shortages and price spikes that cause major economic and political disruption. While certainly not the only cause of market volatility, trade policies are one source of market distortions and price volatility that the G8 can help address when it meets in Camp David this May.

Current trade policies give G8 members, other developed economies, and many major emerging economies an advantage while inhibiting economic growth in developing countries. Agricultural products, the largest export commodity for many developing countries, face significant import tariffs and export constraints on the global market. These obstacles have only increased—the legacy of skyrocketing food prices in 2008 that drove a quarter of the world’s governments to institute protectionist policies to safeguard domestic production. At the same time, wealthier nations—including all G8 member states and some emerging economies—continue to provide both broad and targeted subsidies to producers that undercut competition with producers in developing countries. Research suggests that removing trade distorting agriculture subsidies and tariffs would provide significant benefit to developing countries and the world’s poor.\textsuperscript{35}

As it is now clear that these distortionary trade policies will not be addressed in the World Trade Organization’s Doha Round, at least in the near-term, the G8 is well positioned to take a leading role in the global effort to reverse these policies, while protecting their domestic agricultural sectors through vital safety nets and insurance programs. In the United States this process has already begun in the lead-up to the 2012 Farm Bill, which is likely to reflect tighter budgetary constraints as well as rising farm incomes. Still, countries like the United States could go further than expected in replacing the entire array of agricultural support programs with a non-trade-distorting, whole-farm revenue insurance program and signal recommitment to a rules-based international trading system. G8 member states, including the United States, are also well positioned to advance regional agreements among both developed and emerging economies for lowering trade barriers such as the Trans Pacific Partnership.\textsuperscript{36}

The G8 Agricultural Development Working Group recommends the following actions:

1. \textit{Reduce barriers to agricultural imports, and urge other countries, both developed and developing, to do the same.} During a time of dramatic projected population growth and concern about the impact of more extreme weather conditions on food production, it is critically important to facilitate international trade. To continue to reduce uncertainty and barriers to innovation, the G8 should
support a smooth transition for products with off-patent traits so as not to disrupt the grain trade and support continuous innovation.

2. **Commit to not impose export restraints on agricultural commodities, and ask all major agriculture-producing countries to do the same.** As the world witnessed in 2008, the impulse of many governments in times of food insecurity and price volatility is to impose export restrictions, thereby exacerbating or even creating food shortages and price spikes.

3. **Reduce or eliminate trade-distorting agricultural subsidies**, while recognizing the need for legitimate farm safety nets, and lay the groundwork for expanded trade in agricultural commodities among developed and developing countries. New realities provide an opportunity for policy change that must be seized. High commodity prices have already decreased agricultural subsidies in many developed countries. Eliminating subsidies will also contribute to development and productivity in the least developed countries.

Continued G8 leadership on food security serves fundamentally human goals. The ability to feed one’s family and live in a stable and productive environment rests on affordable access to nutritious food. All G8 member states share responsibility for the historic neglect of agricultural development over the past few decades as well as the promising return of coordinated international action over the past few years. Today, we are in a delicate moment—a “golden hour” of opportunity—in which G8 nations are called to lead and renew commitments that could transform proposals into concrete progress for reducing acute, immediate, and recurrent food crises over the next decade. Now is the time to build on institutional, technological, and market foundations to permit the poorest, most vulnerable 925 million to gain control over their most basic human needs.

4. Full text of G8 commitment available at [http://www.g8italia2009.it/static/G8_Allegato/LAquila_Joint_Statement_on_Global_Food_Security%5b1%5d%2c0.pdf](http://www.g8italia2009.it/static/G8_Allegato/LAquila_Joint_Statement_on_Global_Food_Security%5b1%5d%2c0.pdf).
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21 Additional information available at http://www.drops-project.eu/.
22 Additional information available through International Center for Maize and Wheat Improvement
(CIMMYT) at http://www.cimmyt.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=502%3Aabout-
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36 Full text of Trans Pacific Partnership agreement available at
http://www.sice.oas.org/Trade/CHL_Asia_e/mainAgreement_e.pdf.