



## **Report on the Egyptian Efforts to Enhance the Right to Food On the Occasion of World Food Day October 16, 2021**

Since 1981, the world has celebrated World Food Day on October 16 of each year. Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights stipulates the right to adequate food as one of the components of the right to an adequate standard of living. The right to food includes the fundamental right of all human beings to be free from hunger through the improvement of methods of producing, preserving and distributing food as well as securing the distribution of available food.



### **WORLD FOOD DAY**

On this occasion, the SSCHR Technical Secretariat issues, for the second year in a row, this report on national efforts to enhance the right to food. The report reviews efforts to develop the agricultural sector, increase livestock, fish and poultry wealth, increase food subsidy, especially for the most vulnerable groups, and improve the quality of foods items through strengthening food safety controls.

COVID-19 pandemic posed challenges to the realization of the right to food worldwide d, in terms of increasing the level of hunger and the prevalence of undernourishment, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The policies adopted by the Egyptian Government, however, before the pandemic towards achieving food security and providing healthy and safe food for citizens, as well as the strategic reserve of basic food commodities, Egypt's strong network of supply and supply chains for food commodities, and the fairness and efficiency of distribution contributed to overcoming the challenges posed by the pandemic on enjoyment and realization of the right to food.

#### **First: The Right to Food within the Framework of the National Strategy for Human Rights**

- The National Strategy for Human Rights (September 2021-September 2026) identifies strengths and opportunities in connection with the right to food, foremost of which is the constitutional and legal framework's guarantee for the right of every citizen to healthy

and adequate food, the State's commitment to securing food resources for all citizens, protecting and increasing agricultural land, and the State's efforts towards reclaiming one and a half million acres as a first phase of a target of four million acres. The constitutional and legal framework also guarantees State's efforts towards increasing agricultural manufacturing projects, achieving high rates of food security from strategic commodities, and reforming the bread subsidy system to target the most vulnerable groups in need. State efforts also include the implementation of the national project of silos, which includes the establishment of 50 giant silos to store wheat and grain, and availing basic food commodities at reduced prices through a disciplined and regular distribution network.



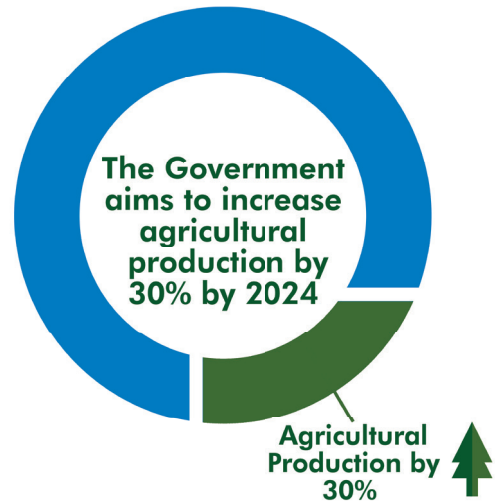
The Strategy identifies a number of targeted results to enhance the right to food, represented in enhancing the provision of reserves of strategic goods, supporting the bread system in all governorates by improving the information infrastructure through the creation of accurate databases, validating the data, , building confidence among citizens in automated services, the upgrading of the electronic system for bread and enhancing citizens' awareness of information technology. This is in addition to strengthening the system of ration cards



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- The Strategy also aims to adopt the appropriate plans to achieve the growth of local agricultural production, providing the necessary water to expand the agricultural land, enhancing innovations, agricultural scientific research and modern technology, expanding agricultural industrial projects, increasing farmers' awareness of best agricultural practices, reducing encroachments on agricultural lands, reclamation of degraded lands, enhancing the legalization of squatter lands in accordance with the law. The Strategy also targets the development of livestock, poultry and fisheries resources , reducing food wastage rates, strengthening market regulation and combating monopolistic practices, updating the legislation and regulations governing the safety and quality of local and imported food products, developing quality standards for agricultural products, strengthening the capabilities and role of the National Food Safety Authority, and increasing the number of active civil society organizations working in the field of food safety and consumer protection.

## Second: The Development of the Agricultural Sector

- The Government aims to increase agricultural production by 30% by 2024 and this being achieved through working on two components where the first is the horizontal expansion targeting the increase of agricultural and crop areas. Government efforts have resulted in increasing the crop areas to reach more than 17 million acres and expansion is underway in making inventory of and classification of new lands in the northern coast south of the Dabaa axis, Toshka, south of Lake Nasser, and the lands of the new Valley. More than 2 million new acres are expected to be added to the agricultural area. In this context, the State has launched a number of major national projects for the reclamation and cultivation of new lands, the most recent of which is the New Delta project, which was launched in January 2021. The project is scheduled to be completed within two years and includes the northwestern coast and the Dabaa axis area and aims to cultivate one and a half million acres. A project for the reclamation and cultivation of 485,000 acres in Toshka area, south of Aswan, was launched in January 2021.



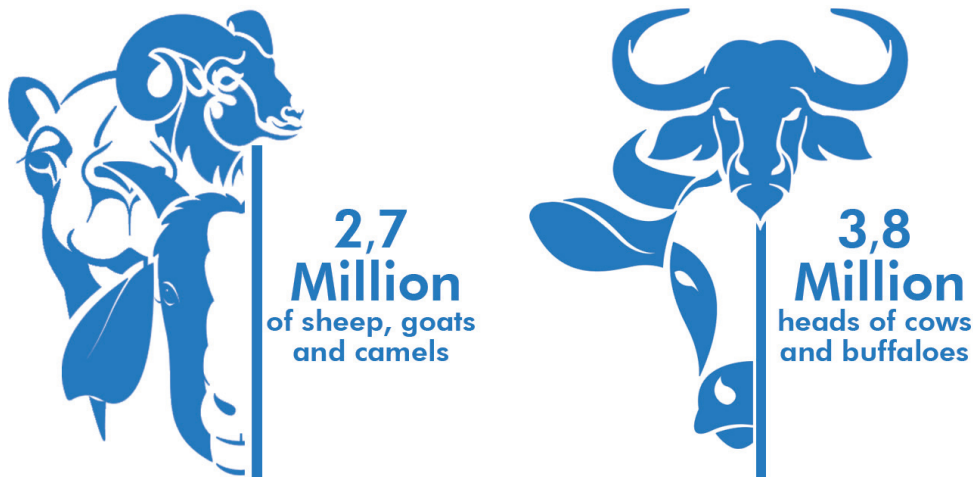
**in the northwestern coast and the Dabaa axis area within two years**



- The second component includes vertical expansion through the development of new crop varieties with high productivity, early maturity and low water requirements. . A number of new varieties were developed during the past three years for a number of strategic crops, including wheat, rice, yellow corn, fava beans, barley, onions and fodder crops and peanuts. Accordingly, the Ministry of Agriculture prepared the varietal map of strategic crops (wheat - corn - rice - cotton - fava beans) which suits the conditions of the farming areas in terms of soil nature, climatic conditions and water requirements.

### Third: Increasing Livestock, Fish and Poultry Resources

- **Regarding the development of animal livestock production**, the State implements a number of programs to increase livestock, whereby counting, numbering and creating a database for animal production, reviving the national project for veal, nationalization of breeds and genetic improvement, as well as support and development of dairy collection centers. Livestock wealth was also counted for the first time in the field in all governorates and showed that the numbers reached about (3.8) million heads of cows and buffaloes, and (2.7) million heads of sheep, goats and camels. The projects implemented for the development of livestock production as well as the national project for veal and genetic improvement resulted in a decrease in imports, an increase in the local production of meat which led to an increase in the self-sufficiency rate to 57%. The National Project for Veal Revival aims to reduce the meat gap, reduce imports, and achieve balance and stability in meat prices. The total funding available for the project since 2017 to date reached about 4.1 billion pounds.
- **Support and Development of Milk Collection Centers.** The implementation of the project started, alongside development efforts during the last quarter of 2020, by conducting a count of these centers in all the governorates, the identification of the development requirements, including the initiative of the Central Bank of Egypt with an interest rate of (5%), to reduce the burden on young breeders.



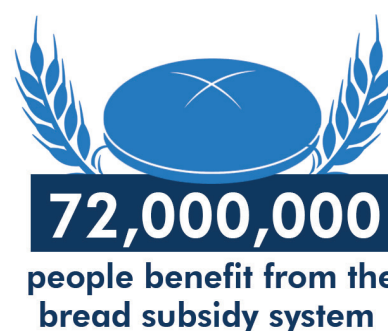
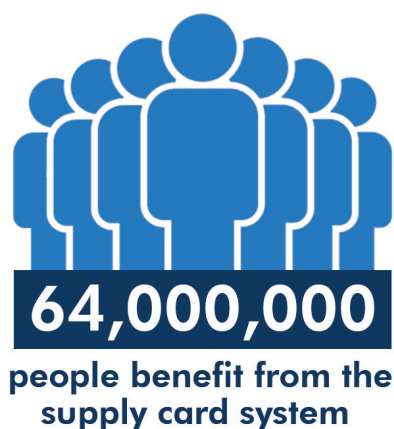
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- **Regarding poultry wealth**, the volume of production from broilers is 1.4 billion birds (about 1.7 million tons), with a self-sufficiency rate that is more than 95%. The production volume of eggs reached about 13 billion eggs, with a self-sufficiency rate of 100%.

- **Regarding fisheries development**, and as a result of the expansion of fish farming, Egypt became the first in Africa and sixth in the world in the field of fish farming.

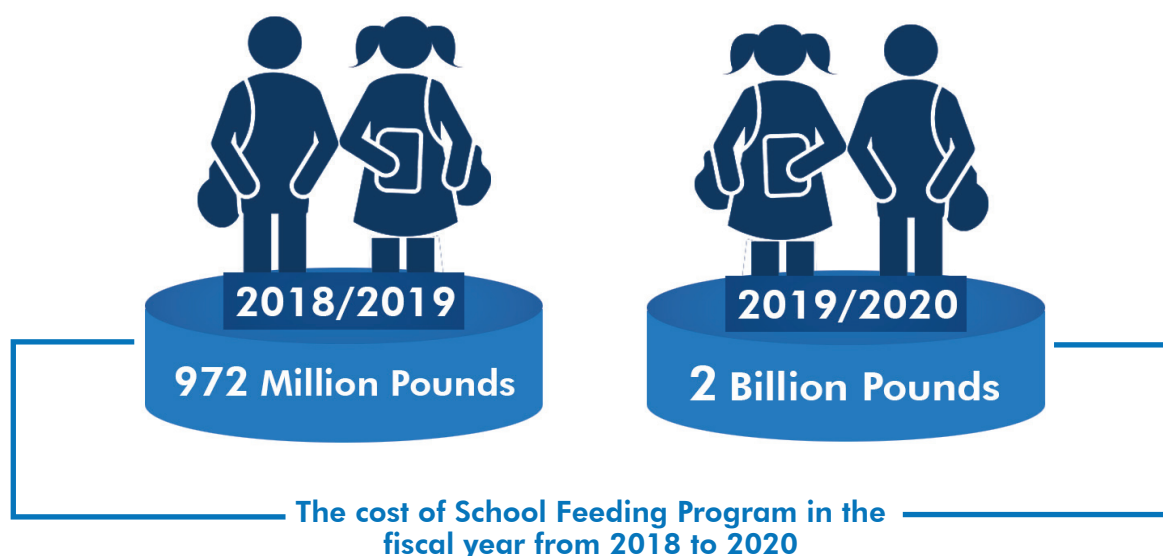
#### Fourth: Supporting and Providing Food to the groups most-in-need

- Approximately 64 million people benefit from the supply card system in Egypt, while nearly 72 million people benefit from the bread subsidy system and spending on both items represents almost 6% of the General Budget Spending. The subsidy for supply commodities witnessed a remarkable development; it amounted to 84.5 billion pounds for the fiscal year 2020/2021, after it was 16.8 billion pounds in the 2009/2010 fiscal year. The new system redistributes the subsidies to those who deserve it in an efficient and equitable manner. The system allows the freedom to choose the types of commodities (from more than 26 commodities) and their quantities that the eligible citizen wishes to obtain, within the limits of the value of the food subsidy he or she receives, and which is registered on the citizen's smart supply card. A new mechanism is being developed to filter supply cards from the ineligible, allowing flexibility in entering and exiting the system according to changes in economic and social conditions, based on eligibility criteria. This mechanism is based on the integration of Government databases in formulating State's public policies.



- **The National School Feeding Program:** It is one of the social protection networks that provides a sustainable investment in human capital, as it contributes to enhancing the ability of poor children to continue in education, as well as enhancing their learning. The cost of the program in the fiscal year 2018/2019 amounted to about 972 million pounds, covering nearly 11 million and 200 thousand students, with a rate of up to 81% of the students enrolled in the basic education stage in general and Azhar education. In the budget for the fiscal year 2019/2020, about two billion pounds were allocated for the program; 70 million meals were produced for that program during the 2019-2020 school year.





- The Government contributes to the provision of basic food commodities at reduced prices, as the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade runs a network of fixed and mobile outlets amounting to about (40) thousand supply outlets (supply exchange - Gamaaty outlets - consumer groups - mobile cars). The Ministry has the largest regular and disciplined distribution network at State level. The number of bakeries is approximately 30,000 across the country, producing 250-270 million loaves per day. This network consists of 1172 outlets for branches of companies affiliated with the Ministry, covering all governorates. This is in addition to the projects implemented by the Government such as the “Gamaaty” project with a total number of 6,200 commodity distribution outlets, as well as the projects of outlets and mobile services with a total of 2,414 mobile cars in various governorates. Furthermore, 1,000 cars are scheduled to be added by 2022, besides many seasonal exhibitions.

#### **Fifth: Strengthening Food Safety Control Efforts**

- The National Food Safety Authority (NFSA) issued a decision in 2021 banning the import of any foodstuffs without obtaining a license from the Authority.
- To complement the system of binding technical rules issued by the authorities to limit food contamination with different types of pollutants, the NFSA issued for the first time a decision in 2021 on the Egyptian binding technical rules for the maximum permissible limits for pesticide residues in and on food products of plant and animal origin. The aim of this decision is to detect 1200 pesticide residues in food products to protect public health and increase Egypt’s ability to expand agricultural exports.
- The NFSA issued a set of new rules on food safety requirements in establishments with the

aim of regulating the circulation of food commodities at various stages. Based on these rules, the operators of food establishments and food handlers are obliged to license food handling by the NFSA before the product is released for circulation. In addition, the Authority obligated operators of food establishments and food handlers to withdraw and retrieve any food from the market if it did not comply with safety and quality requirements, and to notify it about that.

- The NFSA issued a guide with advices for food handlers during the Covid-19 pandemic, with the aim of shedding light on additional measures to maintain the integrity of the food chain, provide adequate and safe food supplies to consumers, and educate workers in the fields of nutrition about important information and ways to prevent infection with Covid-19.