

**Statement of H.E. Arefaine Berhe
Minister of Agriculture to the State of
Eritrea**

**On National Pathways for Food Systems
Transformation in Eritrea**

27 July, 2021

Greetings / Protocols

As the head of Eritrea's delegation, let me first express Eritrea's gratitude to the organizers of this important Pre-summit which will have a positive contribution in consolidating and fine-tuning our messages ahead of the main Food System Summit in September 2021.

According to the FAO's 2022-2031 strategic Framework, Food System is expressed in four major categories i.e. Better Production, Better Nutrition, Better Environment which leads to Better Life. As this by itself, addresses 12 of the 17 SDGs, let me package my message in line with these main pillars.

Better Production

As Eritrea is found in the Sahel region, lack of water is the main limiting factor for food production. Hence the number one priority of the Government is to

Better Nutrition

Until recently enough emphasis was not given to nutritional aspect of food security. Under the influence of global approach which focuses on “cereal security” even on cereals, the world in general and Africa in particular has lost its crop diversity to wheat and rice. For the small-holder farmers our flagship project,

a life-time use right, which has a better influence on land productivity as it creates a sense of ownership and incentives farmers to more investment on their land and follow sustainable agricultural practices.

However, our effort in the food chain is not going to be sustainable if we do not