

UAE set to establish first regional centre of excellence for food security

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The UAE's Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCA), in collaboration with the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), recently organised an interactive workshop in Dubai. A key highlight of the event was the announcement that the UAE will host the first Regional Centre of Excellence for Transforming Food Systems. This initiative marks a significant step toward driving innovation and strategic transformation in regional food systems.

The workshop aimed to strengthen cooperation between the UAE and FAO, particularly in advancing the UAE's efforts toward sustainable national food security. It also sought to address challenges in the sector, aligning with the goals of the FAO Subregional Office for the Gulf Cooperation Council States and Yemen.

Attendees included representatives from FAO, MOCCA, local authorities, academic institutions, and private sector experts in food and agriculture. The discussions focused on aligning the expectations between the Ministry and FAO regarding the structure and objectives of the FAO Subregional Office. Key areas of partnership were identified, as well as the necessary resources for effective collaboration. Participants reviewed the common challenges faced by the region in food security and agriculture and explored potential solutions.

Dr Mohammed Salman Al Hamadi, Assistant Undersecretary for Food Diversity at MOCCA, underscored the importance of strengthening food security by supporting a resilient agricultural sector driven by modern, climate-smart technologies. He highlighted two major national initiatives: the "Grow in the UAE" program and the launch of the "National Agricultural Centre." Both initiatives aim to engage all stakeholders in finding solutions to agricultural challenges, offering extensive support to local farmers, and leveraging smart technologies to boost local agricultural production while enhancing its quality and competitiveness.