

# 40 Food Security Trailblazers Recognized by World Food Prize Foundation in Top Agri-food Pioneers List

---

*The third-annual cohort features awardees from 30 different countries across six continents*

DES MOINES, IA, UNITED STATES, June 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A total of 40 scientists, policymakers, community builders and innovators transforming food systems across the world have been named the 2026 Top Agri-food Pioneers (TAP), announced today by the World Food Prize Foundation.

Now in its third year, the TAP list honors individuals driving bold and innovative solutions to the most pressing challenges in global food security. This year's awardees span 30 countries and six continents — from Australia to Uzbekistan. The Pioneers range in age from 16 to 81 and represent a diverse mix of expertise from crop and livestock research, child nutrition, natural resources management and methane emissions reductions as well as novel areas like 3D and 4D food printing, AI applications and more.

The 40 Top Agri-food Pioneers also reflect the celebration of the World Food Prize Foundation's 40th anniversary. All awardees will be formally recognized during the 2026 Norman E. Borlaug International Dialogue, taking place October 20–22 in Des Moines, Iowa.

"Amidst the overlapping crises facing our food systems today, stabilizing global food and nutrition security is as urgent as it has ever been," said Mashal Husain, President, World Food Prize Foundation. "The 2026 TAP cohort recognizes innovators who are delivering practical, science-driven solutions across a range of existing and emerging disciplines to build the resilient, sustainable and food secure planet we all deserve."

Among the awardees are:

- Chiedozie Egesi (Nigeria), 55 – a leading cassava breeder whose work has accelerated the development and dissemination of improved cassava varieties across Africa, including pro-vitamin A cassava.
- Wanjiru Kamau-Rutenberg (Kenya), 47 – who has helped build the capacity of hundreds of African agricultural scientists and innovators, particularly women, and whose leadership has expanded investment in climate-resilient agricultural research
- Hayden Montgomery (New Zealand), 47 – whose efforts have helped shape practical pathways for methane reductions in livestock and farming systems without compromising on productivity

or sustainability

- Anandharamakrishnan Chinnaswamy (India), 52 – whose research focuses on food processing, preservation and value addition technologies, improving methods for extending shelf life, reducing post-harvest losses and enhancing the quality and safety of processed foods
- Ibrokhim Abdurakhmonov (Uzbekistan), 51 – Uzbekistan’s Minister of Agriculture and a pioneer in crop genomics now building his country’s genomics research capacity
- Uta Paszkowski (Germany), 61 – An internationally recognized plant scientist whose research has transformed understanding of beneficial relationships between crops and soil fungi, providing foundations for reducing dependence on synthetic fertilizers while improving nutrient uptake and crop productivity
- Donald MacKenzie (Canada), 70 – A global regulatory expert who has led partnerships that deploy improved crop varieties with enhanced nutrition, disease resistance and productivity for smallholder farmers in low- and middle-income countries
- Josselyn Vega (Ecuador), 29 – An emerging leader focused on strengthening local food systems and creating opportunities for more inclusive and resilient agricultural value chains, particularly for younger generations and underserved communities

“This recognition is not a personal accolade but an affirmation that effective deployment of science and innovation and purposeful leadership can transform lives when translated into action,” said 2026 TAP honoree Chiedozi Egesi, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the National Root Crops Research Institute in Nigeria. “Research achieves its highest purpose when it transforms farms, feeds families and builds nations. It also honors the resilience of African farmers who, against all odds, continue to feed communities, strengthen economies and secure the continent’s future. Food security is not a dream but a deliberate choice.”

The announcement also comes ahead of the World Food Prize Foundation’s DialogueNEXT event taking place in Nairobi, Kenya, on June 30, bringing together food systems stakeholders from around the world to find solutions for global hunger.

Harvey Presence

Marchmont Communications

+44 7582 195497

[email us here](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/920167246>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.