

# Hunger News & Hope

...a Seeds of Hope publication

## Miracle Tree in Senegal

*a Special Report from Church World Service*

*by Lowell Fuglie*

Malnutrition in its various forms (kwashiorkor, beriberi, anemia, scurvy) is a major factor in the often high rates of infant mortality in West Africa. Many previous approaches that have attempted to address the problem of malnutrition have had a common, major drawback: the "solution" was dependent on imported goods and outside personnel, neither of which are sustainable over the long-term. Additionally, new foods are often difficult to introduce in West Africa, and many seemingly exotic imported foods and other non-local nutrition supplements were not accepted by families and incorporated into their diets.

Poor nutrition is an extremely important factor in children's vulnerability to diseases. In the Ziguinchor region of southern Senegal, for example, nearly one in ten infants dies before the age of five from parasites, diarrhea, or malaria.

But there just may be a local, sustainable solution to the problem of malnutrition and associated diseases that is within reach of everyone in the region—something indigenous and familiar to the people of Senegal, in particular—the Moringa tree.

### The "Never Die" Tree

Native to India, the tree was imported to Africa from Asia by people who used it as a source of food and for medicinal purposes.

The tree has many names. In English, it is known as the Ben Oil Tree; in Swahili as *Mzunze* or *Mlonge*; *Malunggay* in the Philippines; *Benzolive* in Haiti; Horseradish or Drumstick tree in India; *Yoruba* in Nigeria;

and in Senegal, it is known as *Nebeday*, which is thought to mean "Never Die," because the tree is extraordinarily hearty.

The Moringa tree thrives in sunshine and can withstand drought conditions. It grows quickly from seed or cuttings, can reach a height of 12 feet within the first year, and regenerates itself even after the most severe pruning. Two harvests of seed pods can be produced in one year (a mature tree can produce 1,000 pods annually), and the Moringa leaves tend to appear toward the end of the dry season when few other sources of green leafy vegetables are available.

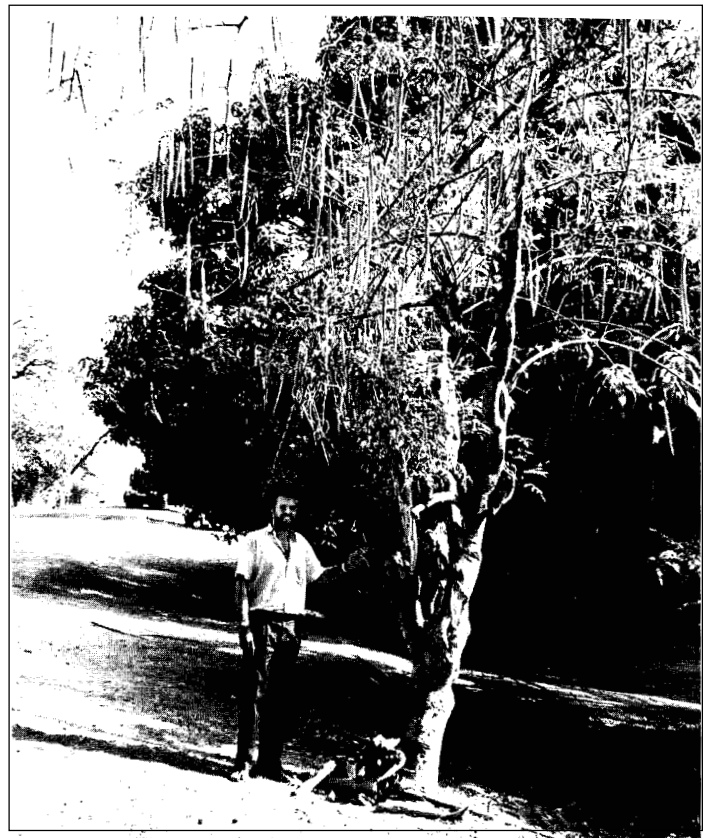
### A Cornucopia of Nutrients and Uses

The Moringa tree has many other uses as well. The leaves and the young, green pods can be eaten as vegetables. The leaves can be prepared as one prepares spinach and are low in fats and carbohydrates, but contain a very high

content of protein; calcium; minerals; iron; and vitamins A, B, and—when raw—vitamin C. As a source of nutrients and vitamins, Moringa leaves rank among the best of perennial tropical vegetables for the following reasons:

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*Moringa leaves are of virtually ideal nutritional value as a food as well as a nutritional supplement.  
Photo courtesy of Church World Service.*



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## Miracle Tree

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- Eight ounces of fresh Moringa leaves contain the daily requirement of vitamin A for up to ten people.
- The addition of two raw Moringa leaves to a child's daily food (or mixing two or three teaspoons of dried Moringa leaf powder into sauces) will provide significant protection against vitamin, protein, and calcium deficiencies to children in high malnutrition risk areas.
- For both infants and nursing mothers, Moringa pods can be an important source of fiber, potassium, copper, iron, choline, vitamin C, and all the essential amino acids.

Moringa flowers can be fried and are said to have the taste and texture of mushrooms. The flowers may also be used to make a tea that is useful for treating colds.

Seeds in the green pods can be prepared in the same way as green peas, or they can be roasted and eaten like peanuts. The taste of young pods has been compared to asparagus. They can also be sliced up and cooked

**Increased consumption of Moringa leaves and pods by children and child-bearing women could completely eradicate malnutrition, especially since the tree produces its leaves toward the end of the dry season when few other sources of green leafy vegetables are available.**

as a substitute for okra in some typical Senegalese recipes.

When the pods turn brown, the seeds can be crushed to obtain a high-grade oil comparable to olive oil. The oil can be used for cooking, making soap, for burning in lamps, and for treating skin infections like scabies. A little coating of Moringa oil on the top of a water tank will also help kill mosquito larvae and thus reduce the threat of malaria and other deadly insect-borne diseases.

The press cake left over

## Senegalese Mothers Relate Nutritional Recoveries

No one expected Awa to survive—not even her mother. Awa Diedhiou was two months premature when she was born. A very tiny baby, she weighed only 3 pounds, 5 ounces. Her mother, 22-year-old Maissata, also had problems.

*"After the childbirth, I had no hope for my baby's life. She was so thin! And I was having problems myself. I was very weak and suffering from dizziness, and I was not producing enough milk for my baby."*

Maissata was counseled to add Moringa (called Nebeday locally) leaf powder to her meals. Just a few months later, when Awa was five months old, she weighed 11 pounds! She is still a small baby, but appears to be quite healthy. Her mother Maissata has no doubts about the reason why:

*"It was Nebeday! After I started eating it, my dizziness went away, and I started producing enough milk. I felt healthier, and both the baby and I began gaining weight."*

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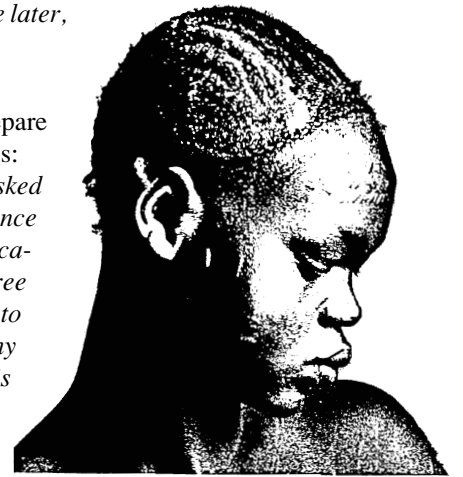
Mrs. N'Deye Sakho is a nurse in charge of pediatrics at the hospital in Bignona, Senegal. She goes out regularly to collect Moringa leaves and keeps dried leaf powder on hand to give out to mothers of malnourished children.

*"When women bring their children here, we weigh the child and give medicines for any disease the child has. Then we explain to the mothers the importance of Moringa and advise them to put a little bit of leaf powder in the child's food every day. From what we've seen so far, it really is an excellent product. When the women bring back their child some time later, we hardly recognize them!"*

...

Mothers share different ways to prepare foods with Moringa. One mother proclaims:

*"My son really liked the sauce. He asked me where I had learned how to make it! Since then, we have had the sauce on several occasions, and I have prepared the pods three times. I no longer feel the fatigue I used to suffer from all the time. Since the first day, my children and I have seen the virtue of this plant."*



from crushing seeds to obtain oil can be used as fertilizer, fuel for cooking, and to clear dirty water.\*

*—Lowell Fuglie, is a West Africa Representative for Church World Service. For more information on the Moringa tree, contact Church World Service; P.O. Box 968; Elkhart, Indiana 46525; 800/297-1516; www.churchworldservice.org.*

*\*Exodus 15:23-27 describes what may be the earliest known reference to the use of Moringa to purify water. (This was probably Moringa peregrina, another tree species in the same family that can be found today in Egypt and in Israel's Rift Valley as far as the southern shore of the Dead Sea).*

My pilgrimage toward the poor has been painfully slow. Despite years of seminary and graduate education, I never quite got the picture. The gospel was always about *me*: my salvation, my insecurity, my guilt, my quest for “higher knowledge.” Even though some of this self-centeredness eventually gave way to the gospel’s relentless call to servanthood, I did not appropriate this call in such a way that my life was oriented toward the poor and hungry.

When I joined the staff of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission in 1977, a light began to shine. One of my first assignments was to relate to Bread for the World, then a relatively new organization of Christians who advocated public policy initiatives on behalf of the poor. One of the things I was required to do in this new relationship was to get familiar with BFW and with hunger awareness literature. In the process I was exposed to many Scripture passages and Bible studies. I encountered no passages that I had not seen before, but I started to see every passage differently in at least three ways.

First, I began to discover that the Bible is literally full of accounts of God’s people’s responsibilities toward the poor. Second, I slowly began to see the communal orientation of Scripture, that the Bible is very much about *us* as opposed to *me*. Third, I began to appreciate the importance of the community of faith in the interpretation of Scripture.

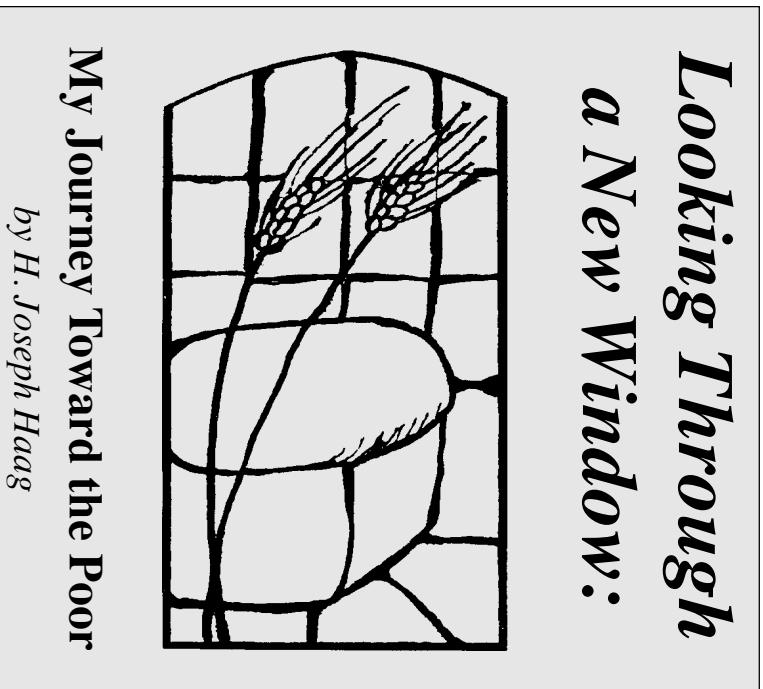
Each of these discoveries deserves a little amplification. I was impressed with the volume of Scripture related to the poor and hungry until I ran across Ron Sider’s book *Cry Justice*. Then I was *really* impressed. In a little less than 200 pages, Sider attempted to compile all of the Bible references on hunger and poverty.

I read through the gospel of Luke again and was moved by the constancy of Jesus’ outreach to the poor and hurting people who surrounded him. I looked at the Psalter again and saw how often this theme appears in the poetry of Israel. It was as if I had been given a window of understanding through which I had not looked before.

When I looked through this window, I began to see clearly what was there all along, that the Bible is the story of God calling out a people and not just a bunch of individuals, and that they were called as a people to manifest God’s character in the world. Among the many things this calling means, it centrally means that we are called to invite all manner of people into God’s Kingdom and into our midst, especially those whom the world has forgotten: the poor, the dispossessed, the vulnerable, the alienated. In so doing we follow the pattern of Jesus, who did this sort of inviting all the time.

Last, I have come to understand that this interpretive window came to me as a gift not by chance, but by necessity. I had to receive it as a gift or not at all, and I had to receive it from the community of faith. Private person that I was and will probably always tend to be, I preferred direct revelation to mediated revelation. I wanted to hold and dispense the truth instead of receiving it from others. I wanted God to tell me, and then I’d tell other folks. I wanted folks to be beholden to and dependent upon me, not the other way around.

Of course, what I received this way was only what I wanted to hear, a mirror image of my individual needs. The saving message of God finally came to me, as it must come to all who hear it, as a gift from the community of faith. Only then could I hear the very call of God which my own needs would never allow me to hear, that God



had come in Christ for the poor and weak—and that until I numbered myself among them, I could never assume my proper seat in the sacred assembly.

I suspect that most of us resist this call with all of our might, for it makes us admit our dependence and need of grace. God has not finished hammering this message home, but I will never forget the central blow. I was holding my infant son during a middle-of-night feeding. The only thing on television was a documentary on hunger. Somehow the images of the starving children fused with the image in my lap. I could not separate what I wanted for my son from what God wanted for the starving children.

For just that moment, the most private and paternal interests were engulfed by the larger interests of God’s Kingdom. This moment occurred not because of personal insight, but as God’s gracious gift through a child I called my own and through children revealed to be mine as well.

As I said, my journey to the poor has been slow. For every moment of insight, there are hours of forgetfulness. For every conviction, there are a half-dozen compromises. For every right action, there are twenty unfulfilled good intentions. For now, I must press on one step at a time, following a few guiding lights.

One is the Bible. The more I read it in the right spirit, the closer I am aligned with God’s purposes. Another is the community of faith. The more I worship in the community with alertness and expectancy, the more keenly I sense what God wants to do through the community. The last light is my checkbook and calendar. This, of course, is the most searing light of all, for overwhelmingly my checkbook and calendar reveal how far I have to go instead of how far I’ve come. But I must watch them nonetheless, because they unflinchingly and truthfully report that God has not finished calling me along the Way. For a slow learner, this is the most hopeful news of all.

—Joe Haag is associate director of the Christian Life Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

# Hunger Site Makes it Easy to Donate

by Stephen Schmeltekopf

Imagine being able to help people less fortunate than yourself without having to leave suburbia or spending a dime. I recently found a way to do that. What I found is called The Hunger Site, at <http://www.thehungersite.com>.

If you can surf the web, then you can feed the less fortunate—at the expense of The Hunger Site's corporate sponsors.

When you share information like this with people, skepticism typically follows. When you add the "www" part, people *really* start getting nervous. "Are they going to ask for my Visa number?" they begin saying. "Is my name going to end up on someone's data base?"

I was skeptical, too, even though the site had been mentioned favor-

The site went active on June 1, 1999, and, at press time, had received 3,630,000 hits. Each hit on the site has resulted in a donation of one quarter of a cup of staple grains—given by each sponsor of the site for that day. The number of sponsors may vary daily. My first visit resulted in one and one-quarter cups of food. There were five sponsors at the time—each giving one-quarter of a cup of food.

Two of the largest sponsors of the web site have been NOVICA and Proflowers. NOVICA is a company that sells art created in Brazil, Africa, Peru, and many other countries around the world, returning the profits back to the local economies.

Donated food from The Hunger Site is distributed through the World Food Programme (the United Nations hunger relief organization). The Hunger Site accepts absolutely no cash donations from the public. The site is privately funded and all the donations received from sponsors go directly to pay for food and its distribution costs.

"We think of ourselves as just being a web site whose goal is to help alleviate hunger. We run this site for free," Breen said. "This way one hundred percent of the money that sponsors pay goes directly to the hunger relief organization for food."

The Hunger Site also includes learning resources to stimulate hunger awareness, as well as hunger-related links. For more information—and to give a free donation—please visit the Hunger Site at [www.thehungersite.com](http://www.thehungersite.com).

—Stephen Schmeltekopf is a senior economics student at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

ably by reputable publications. But I checked it out. Believe it or not, no data records are kept at The Hunger Site, and no unwanted solicitations of any kind result from your visit there.

It really is as simple as one click of the mouse. John Breen, founder and president of The Hunger Site, said that he developed the original idea for the site with the idea of providing educational materials to children in developing nations. However, he soon concluded that malnutrition was more of an obstacle for children attempting to learn than were inferior school materials.

## Update: Jubilee 2000 Ideas for Action

### Wear a Chain—to Break the Chains of Debt!

Show your support for the Jubilee 2000 Campaign by wearing the "Break the Chains of Debt" lapel pin. Cost: \$2.50 each, includes shipping (bulk discounts available) specify #ED 9920. Order/Checks payable: Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515; 800/297-1516; [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org).

### Organize an Offering of Letters in Your Church

U.S. Baptists can join Bread for the World in their Offering of Letters Campaign. Each year this group chooses a particular area of the world to spotlight in a campaign of letters from churches across the U.S. to Congress members and Senators. This year's focus is Jubilee 2000. For a complete Offering of Letters kit—which includes Congressional addresses, bill numbers, sample letters, policy analysis, and inspirational material—contact BFW at 1100 Wayne Ave., Suite 1000; Silver Spring, MD 20910; Phone: 301/606-2400; Web: [www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org).

### Join the 100-Day Rolling Fast

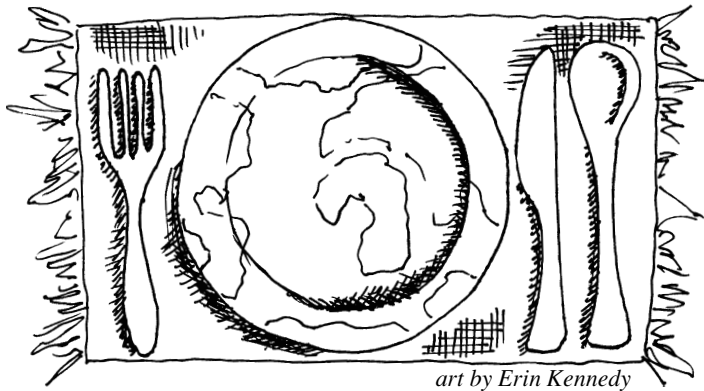
As a show of solidarity with people made hungry by debt, Jubilee 2000 supporters across the U.S., including representatives of a number of faith groups, have engaged in a "rolling fast" during the last 100 days before the new millennium. Participants have signed up to fast for a day (or longer). For more information about how to join the fast or help in other ways, visit the Jubilee 2000 USA website ([www.j2000usa.org/j2000](http://www.j2000usa.org/j2000)) or call Witness for Peace's Steve Bennett, the rolling fast coordinator, at 202/588-0241.

—For more information about the Jubilee 2000 campaign, see the Spring 1999 issue of Hunger News and Hope (Volume 1 Number 2).



**When you tell someone information like this, skepticism typically follows. When you add the "www," people really start getting nervous. "Are they going to ask for my Visa number? Isn't my name going to end up on someone's data base?"**

# Resources



art by Erin Kennedy

## Getting Food on the Table:

### An Action Guide to Local Food Policy

This new publication, which provides community organizations, food advocates, and government staff with the tools for developing innovative policy solutions, is available from the Community Food Security Coalition and the California Sustainable Agriculture Working Group. The guide is designed to support local efforts to promote community food security by helping readers understand the breadth of policies affecting their local food system, evaluate policy barriers and opportunities, develop innovative policy solutions, and identify useful resources. This guide brings together a range of valuable information not available from any other single source—including an inventory of relevant local government programs, case studies of local food policy work, organizing tips, and an extensive resource guide. To obtain a copy, contact the Community Food Security Coalition at 310/822-5410.

## Sharing the Harvest:

### A Guide to Community Supported Agriculture

This resource by Robyn van En and Elizabeth Henderson provides detailed information on how to start and sustain Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) projects. In addition, the publication gives an insightful view of how CSAs are able to bring together local farmers and the communities they serve. Cost is \$24.95 from Chelsea Green Publishing. Call 800/639-4099 for more information.

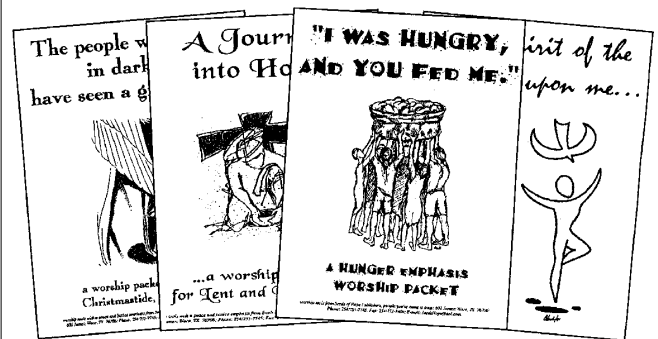
## Exploring Healthy Eating

This unique curriculum, designed to educate parents and providers of preschool children about nutrition and its role in learning, has been updated by Tufts University's School of Nutrition Science and Policy. Two units, one for babies and one for toddlers, were added, and the entire set has been translated into Spanish. For more information on the Center's nutrition programs, call Lori Marcotte at 617/627-3956.

## Who Is My Neighbor? Economics As If Values Matter

Economics plays a crucial part in all of our lives, say the editors of *Sojourners*, yet few people realize the extent to which money separates and divides us, often in deceptive ways. *Who Is My Neighbor? Economics As If Values Matter* examines economic issues in a meaningful, user-friendly way and explores how we can create structures that provide necessities for all people. This resource contains an extensive directory of organizations, resources, and regional contacts—and includes nine study sessions with helpful discussion questions. \$10 plus handling from *Sojourners*: 800/714/7474.

*Here's what you need:*  
**Worship tools for the church year, with a peace and justice emphasis, from Seeds of Hope.**



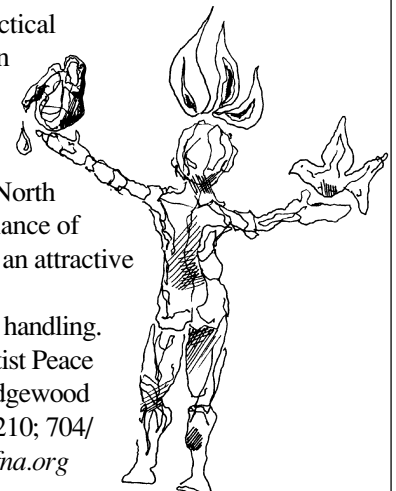
Four 20-page packets each year filled with prayers, litanies, sermons, activities, art, and more. \$50 per packet or \$120 for all four. To order, call 254/755-7745; fax 254/753-1909; write 602 James, Waco, TX 76706; or e-mail [seedshope@aol.com](mailto:seedshope@aol.com).

**NEW!**

## Pursuing Justice

### A Social Justice Curriculum for Churches

Ten powerful and practical sessions (148+ pp.) on vital issues of social justice, published jointly by the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America and The Alliance of Baptists. Available in an attractive looseleaf notebook. US\$15 plus postage & handling. To order, contact Baptist Peace Fellowship, 4800 Wedgewood Dr., Charlotte, NC 28210; 704/521-6051; [bpfna@bpfna.org](mailto:bpfna@bpfna.org)



# News Briefs

art by Erin Kennedy



compiled by Sharon R. Rollins

## How Well Are States Managing Social Assistance Funds?

- Jason DeParle, a reporter for *The New York Times* has written an in-depth front-page article detailing how states do (or do not) use welfare reform moneys to reduce poverty. Under recent federal mandates, the number of people on welfare has decreased dramatically. Some states such as Wisconsin, have used the funds to support not only those leaving welfare, but also the working poor. Wisconsin expanded job-placement services, hired new counselors, and provided guarantees of child care, community service jobs, and additional benefits for welfare recipients. Wisconsin also has used the additional funds to provide services for needy non-welfare families, including child care support, subsidized health care, and annual wage supplements.

But many states “have more money, literally, than they know how to spend,” according to DeParle. He reports that the “pool” of idle anti-poverty money totals more than \$7 billion. This amount does not include the funds that the states have used to replace state spending without bringing services to the poor. DeParle’s report provides detailed information on New Mexico and Texas and summary information on many other states, including New York, Idaho, and Mississippi. (For more, see [www.nytimes.org](http://www.nytimes.org).)

- The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities released a census-based report on August 22, 1999 which revealed sobering statistics on the incomes of poor families. The study shows the average incomes of the poorest 20 percent of female-headed families with children fell by \$580 per family from 1995 to 1997. The incomes of the poorest 10 percent of these families fell an average of \$810 per year. This leaves these families with incomes that are only 30 percent of the poverty line. For a family of one adult and one child, this is about \$3,318 per year.

Sharp reductions in government cash and food assistance are cited as the basis for the drops in income. Many of the working-poor families that qualify for food stamps and health insurance do not appear to be receiving them. (For more information, see “The Initial Impacts of Welfare Reform on the Economic Well-Being of Single Mother Families” by lead author Wendell Primus; [www.cbpp.org](http://www.cbpp.org).)

- The Urban Institute issued a report in August 1999 on a study authored by Pamela Loprest titled “How Families That Left Welfare are Doing: A National Picture.” The report, which compares former

welfare recipients’ wages and monthly earnings with those of other near-poor and low-income mothers, concludes that in certain respects “public policy might be wise to focus on near-poor and low-income families generally rather than directing services specifically to former welfare recipients.” The study also found that “considerable” proportions of poor families do not receive all of the government benefits to which they may be entitled. (See [www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org).)  
—reported by *Call to Renewal*, a faith-based anti-poverty movement in Washington, D.C.

## Reforming Welfare Reform

The U.S. federal government was recently faulted for failing to measure the impact of welfare reform adequately in an interim report released by the National Research Council. Although some states have chosen to evaluate their programs, data is generally not found to be comparable across the country. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) officials have protested, saying they have no authority to instruct states regarding evaluation programs.

Many states have refocused their programs on moving people into employment rather than signing them up for monthly cash assistance. These changes, made in times of strong economic growth, have been accompanied by a 45 percent decline in the number of families receiving welfare—from 5 million in 1994 to fewer than 3 million in 1998.

However, this reduction may not prove that the goals of welfare reform have been met. Seven state evaluations found that most of the adults who left welfare were eventually employed, often in low-paying jobs. Since former welfare recipients are rarely tracked, little evidence details the economic status and well-being of these families nationwide.

HHS has been given access to \$5 million each year—only enough to fund a few projects. In a move to create, improve, and implement state evaluations systems, US Rep. Tony Hall, D-Ohio, recently introduced legislation which would “finish the job of reforming our welfare system.” Hall’s bill, which is based on Senator Paul Wellstone’s approved amendment, will reward states which not only for helping former welfare recipients get a job, but will also keep former recipients in the workplace and protect children from hunger. “Ensuring that families who are eligible for food stamps, Medicaid and child health insurance are getting their benefits, and helping working families meet their child care needs are proven ways to make sure work pays; my bill will add these to current measures of excellent performance that now focus narrowly on work-related criteria,” says Hall. The legislation is designed to add incentives for states to make it a priority to reduce poverty—not just cut welfare rolls.

—from “Evaluating Welfare Reform,” *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Food Journal, the newsletter of TAACA (Texas Association of Community Action Agencies)*

## Moynihan-Levin Bill to Restore Legal Immigrant Benefits

More than 70 U.S. House of Representatives co-sponsors are promoting the Moynihan-Levin “Fairness for Legal Immigrants Act” (S. 792, H.R. 1399), which would provide food stamp, health, and disability benefits to many vulnerable legal immigrants.



The Urban Institute analysis explained the need for such a move in *All under One Roof: Mixed-Status Families in an Era of Reform* saying, "When Congress barred non-citizens from food stamps, citizen children remained eligible but their non-citizen parents did not. Food stamps, though, are provided on a household, not an individual basis....Thus, mixed-family households, along with the citizen children in them, receive fewer food stamps than they did before the cuts and presumably have less to eat."

—from *Food Journal*, the newsletter of TAACA (Texas Association of Community Action Agencies)

### Post-Sandinista Nicaragua: Heavily Indebted

Although Nicaragua has moved from a ranking of 126 to 121 on the latest United Nations Human Development Index, UN officials estimate that 50 percent of the population still lives beneath the poverty line and that 12 percent of Nicaraguans will not live to be 40 years old. UN economic adviser María Rosa Renzi noted that, while Nicaragua's economy has gradually grown over the past five years, limited access to education and widespread malnutrition have perpetuated the reality of poverty. She reports that 46 percent of children never reach the fifth year of primary school and 12 percent of children under five are substantially underweight due to chronic malnutrition.



Further, the UN Poverty Index ranks Nicaragua as the 48th poorest nation in the world. With a foreign debt of over \$6 billion, the country carries one of the highest per capita debts in the world. The HIPC [Highly Indebted Poor Countries] Initiative admitted Nicaragua in July 1999 thus making it eligible for consideration by the International Monetary Fund [IMF] debt relief plan. Optimistic estimates predict that 80 percent of Nicaragua's foreign debt will be canceled, which would enable the government to redirect funds into the critical sectors of health, education, and housing. Critics warn that such action will only cancel two percent of Nicaragua's foreign debt and that the poorest sectors will suffer enormously. They caution that eligibility may be limited only to certain categories of debt or to specific time periods. Further, there is no guarantee that redirected funds will ever reach these impoverished sectors.

Both the government and grassroots activists agree that debt reduction is desirable, and Jubilee 2000 activists advocate for complete cancellation of the debt. Unfortunately, money alone will not resolve the problems of these poor sectors. Political will, greater cooperation between governments, financial transparency, and the inclusion of those in need in decision-making processes must also be achieved if Nicaragua is to see a substantial level of improvement. —from *The CEPAD Report* (newsletter of the Council of Evangelical Churches of Nicaragua)

### Second Harvest to Begin Food Reclamation Project: Harvest Center of Metrolina to be National Pilot

On May 12, 1999 Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina embarked on a plan to make a greater quantity of donated products

available for distribution available to Food Bank agencies. Harvest Center, USA—a subsidiary of Second Harvest in Chicago—hopes to establish a network of food bank-run reclamation centers. The Harvest Center of Metrolina will process unsaleable product collected from store locations and will move through several stages to ensure efficient and productive distribution.

—from the *Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina*

### Land Stewardship Project, Heifer Project Put Stock into "Farm Beginnings"

Farm Beginnings, a program created by the Land Stewardship Project (LSP), offers prospective, beginning, and experienced farmers a "new beginning." Members learn low-cost, sustainable farming methods and goal-setting and management skills which will help them establish economically and environmentally sound farms. The participants will also be invited to engage in mentorship, networking, seminar, and training conferences. Heifer Project International adds support to Farm Beginnings by offering a revolving, long-term, no-interest, livestock loan program.

For more information, contact: Land Stewardship Project, ATTN. Farm Beginnings, PO Box 130, 180 E. Main, Lewiston, MN 55952, 507-523-3366, Email: stettler@landstewardshipproject.org. —from *Land Stewardship Project*



### Monsanto Biotechnology: Food—Health—Hazard?

Concern has recently been raised over the Monsanto Company's latest slogan "Food—Health—Hope." Monsanto sets out to biotechnically revolutionize food and fiber production by "developing a way to use Mother Nature to modify organisms to serve us better."

As the leading manufacturer of Agent Orange and the producers of the recently controversial sugar substitute, aspartame, (NutraSweet and Equal), Monsanto may already be on shaky ground. Critics warn that genetic seed sterilization technology will prove devastating for sustainable agriculture and for resource-poor farmers who often rely upon farm-saved seed. Other protesters add that Monsanto's new artificial growth hormone (recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone, or rBST), has been linked to cancer and has been banned throughout Europe.

Although it has been taking tremendous strides towards becoming the dominate force in worldwide agricultural biotechnology, questions are now being raised about the potential dangers of what people are calling "Frankenfoods," and about the sometimes manipulative and controlling methods which are reportedly used to produce and distribute such products.

—from *Food First Institute for Food and Development Policy*

