

Hunger News & Hope

... a Seeds of Hope publication

Who's Hungry in the World?

Profiles of Greece & North Korea

by Stormy Campbell

Five-Year Recession Throws Many Greeks into Poverty

While all of the European Union has felt the effects of the European financial crisis, it may be that Greece has suffered the most. The homeless population in Greece has soared in the last two years, rising 25 percent between 2009 and 2011, and 27 percent of the country is currently classified as either living in poverty or being at severe risk of poverty.

The economic condition of Greece has steadily declined over the past five years. Greece's national spending problem can be traced back to a time before the country joined the European Union. However, after joining the European Union and the adoption of the euro, public spending in the country soared even higher than before. Within eight years, public wages had increased by 50 percent.

Public spending was increasing and wages for citizens were rapidly rising, Greece became unable to support itself. The country also faced widespread tax evasion, a practice commonly accepted in Greece. Estimates put the amount of money Greece annually loses through tax evasions between US\$14 billion and US\$30 billion.

Even at the most modest estimate, the money owed in taxes could potentially finance a large portion of the nation's debt, but the Greek government has had difficulty collecting the money.

Between the swift rise of wages and the lack of public money, the country soon spiraled into massive debts. Greece found itself unable to repay its loans, and was forced to seek help from the International Monetary Fund and the rest of the European Union. Under the bailout agreement between Greece and the rest of the European Union, the country needed to show it could cut €11.5 billion in spending within two years, causing crises in businesses throughout the country.

These conditions have forced Greece into a five-year recession, causing many businesses to lay off employees and lower salaries, leading to an unemployment rate of 20 percent. Many Greek citizens have lost their jobs, depleting their savings accounts paying for basic needs before they were able to find new employment.

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These citizens, so affected by the recession, have been labeled as a class of “new homeless.” Soup kitchens are serving double the number of meals they did two years ago, and several hostels, particularly in Athens, have filled their beds with these new homeless people. In 2009, the average age of regular guests at the soup kitchens in Athens was 60 years. As of 2012, that age is now 47 years.

This shift in age indicates how severely Greece’s economic state is affecting its citizens. The new homeless are often well-educated and formerly held respected jobs that allowed them to afford housing, transportation and basic living needs. After the economic crises hit, many of them lost their jobs, as employers could not afford their salaries. Unable to find new work, these citizens were left with nothing.

Greece does not officially recognize the homeless population as a social group that needs assistance. Therefore, no government-supported homeless shelters exist. All shelters, soup kitchens and other agencies seeking to provide resources are independently run and operate without government support.

—Sources: New York Times, BBC World News, Athens News, The Guardian, The Wall Street Journal.

North Korea: Food Supplies Go from Bad to Worse

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, more commonly known as North Korea, is a country known for its closed and secretive state, its harsh ruling dynasty, and perpetual turmoil. A recent change of ruling, resulting from Kim Jong-il’s death in late 2011, led to Kim Jong-un’s rising as the leader of the nation. Under its new leader, North Korea may face changes.

While Kim Jong-un speaks of economic reform to repair a broken economy, rice prices have risen, making the grain—the main staple food for the country—unattainable for many. Some of the country’s citizens who could afford to do so seized the opportunity to gain a profit while publicly talking of reform, and started hoarding rice, leading to a decrease in the amount

of food available to the general public. The price of a month’s supply of rice is thought to be around one month’s salary.

Even without rising costs, the food situation in North Korea seems grim. A long-term problem has been keeping crop production high enough to feed the population, as the mountainous regions of the country force agriculture to be confined to a small area of the country. Only 20 percent of the land in North Korea can be used for agriculture. The country also is also situated in a climate prone to natural disasters, causing food production to be even more challenging.

In May of 2012, North Korea faced the possibility of a severe drought, which would wither the crops and lead to another shortage in food supplies. Just two months later, in July, the situation had shifted completely, as the country faced wide-scale flooding that took out several crops, once again decreasing food supplies.

The small amount of food that is available is often given to government officials and military members as a first priority, leaving the majority of the population severely lacking in resources. Around 16 million North Korean citizens are thought to be chronically food-insecure and dependent upon a public distribution system to have enough food to sustain them on a long-term basis.

As of March 2011, a United Nations survey found that over 6 million people in North Korea were at risk of outright famine without international food assistance. Nongovernmental organizations in South Korea have begun to report deaths from starvation and other hunger-related causes among their neighbors to the north.

North Korea has received the most aid from the United States and South Korea in the past, but both countries have recently withdrawn their agreements to supply food because the North Korean government has taken actions that have been interpreted as being in direct conflict with the terms of the food deals. This has worsened an already bad situation.

—Sources: Human Rights Watch, BBC World News, New York Times, United Nations 2012 Report.



Stormy Campbell, a native of Yoakum, in the Texas coastal region, is a Professional Writing student at Baylor University and a Seeds of Hope intern.

Special Section: An Introduction to Food Sovereignty

Just What Mother Earth Ordered: *A Juicy Slice of Food Sovereignty*

by Stephen Bartlett

As the record-breaking heat waves of 2012 continue to crash on the shores of the Ohio and Kentucky Rivers, the question of where the next crop, meal, or nourishing bite to eat will come from becomes more, shall we say, *poignant*. I am someone who has spent years walking, tool in hand, in the fields, forests and agro-forests of my dreams, observing the effects of weather on soil and communities of flora and

It is becoming very clear that, in order to save ourselves as a species, we have to show a lot more respect for the ecology of our biosphere. And, in order to accomplish this, we need to somehow transform, or at least restrain, the predatory food economy being imposed upon us and our neighbors.

fauna. The issue of feeding our communities inclusively while cooling the planet has become a central theme of my life and livelihood.

It is becoming very clear that, in order to save ourselves as a species, we have to show a lot more respect for the ecology of our biosphere. And, in order to accomplish this, we need to somehow transform, or at least restrain, the predatory food economy being imposed upon us and our neighbors.

And so I have to ask myself daily: Just what does Mother Earth require of us as part of the food justice and sovereignty movement in Louisville, Kentucky? And the answer that comes to me—after an afternoon harvesting, peeling and eating fresh apples, and cooking delectable dishes from apple sauce to apple pie—is this: What Mother Earth needs from us is a juicy slice of Food Sovereignty!

The concept and practice of *Food Sovereignty* is overarching and covers matters spiritual as well as economic and political—not to mention sweet, crispy and delicious. Food Sovereignty is the banner of struggle lifted up in the 1980s by the planetary family-farmer movement known as Via Campesina (www.viacampesina.org), in the context of the fight for local control of markets and against the predations of corporate-driven trade regimes.

Liberalized trade regimes have wiped out millions of small-scale farmers, whether they are victims of the original

Uruguay Round/GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade Agreement, 1949) that morphed into the so-called “free” trade treaties such as NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement) and the United States’ bilateral agreements with countries like Chile, Colombia and Peru.

These treaties allowed the flooding of markets in the Southern Hemisphere by the massive commodity exports of the US and the European Union at subsidized prices below the cost of production. At the same time, the World Trade Organization (WTO) lowered tariff barriers to the entire world and required certain levels of imported food, causing massive displacement of family farmers.

One victory along the way for social movements was the defeat of the ambitious Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) that would have further empowered these regimes. This real victory was achieved by media-friendly mass mobilizations, peoples’ summits and firm assaults on the barricades and militarized zones of Quebec, Quito and Miami, along with protests in nearly every country of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Farmers on the ground in Kentucky, such as members of the Community Farm Alliance (CFA), have pushed effectively since the 1980s for the democratization of the food system.



art courtesy of World Hunger Relief, Inc.

With the passage of KY House Bill 611, more than a decade ago, farm policy and decisions about funding for agricultural diversification (using proceeds from the tobacco settlement¹) were grounded in county councils where real farmers could debate—and, if necessary, veto—proposals by the Kentucky Agricultural Development board.

By this means, many of the proposals of “biotech” and agribusiness companies to monopolize tobacco settlement funds were resisted, and many good projects were funded and investments made that benefit small-scale family farmers.

The successful local family farmers we see at local markets are arguably the strongest, most persistent and intelligent people in society.

What we are calling Food Sovereignty today was originally dubbed “LIFE” (Locally Integrated Food Economy) by the CFA.² Much progress was made during more than a decade of organizing and local farming, so that, today, the “foodie” movement of Louisville has adopted much of the language and concepts of LIFE and Food Sovereignty.

The local food movement in Kentucky (and in most places across the country) has made significant strides. The amount of food being marketed or directly consumed from local farms has steadily risen—in farmers’ markets, in restaurants, from community gardens, and from the efforts of ordinary household gardeners.

On the macro level, it remains a huge challenge to make a living as a family farmer, and we know, from friendships with local farmers, that this way of making a living is certainly not a career path for the slow-witted or faint of heart.

On the contrary, the successful local family farmers we see at local markets are arguably the strongest, most persistent and intelligent people in society. There is little help from the government for “scaling up” family farming. Most small-scale farmers receive little or no commodity subsidies, while large-scaled spreads of corn, soybeans and wheat do receive them.

More wholesome food, produced organically or utilizing fewer chemicals and smaller economies of scale, is finding its way, however sporadically and slowly, into supermarkets. But too little of it is locally produced or produced by small holders.

The price differential remains a divide for most people of low incomes who, in some cases, even with a higher awareness, simply cannot afford to invest in quality produce. This kind of produce, also, is typically available at an inconvenient distance from their homes.

Nevertheless, despite the odds stacked against them, marginalized and oppressed communities—even though they are suffering from horrendous chronic and epidemic diet-related diseases associated with obesity and poor nutrition—are beginning to organize themselves to access healthy local foods and re-learn and re-teach the arts of cooking.

The root problems that plague our health and future well-being, and that continue to fuel global warming, remain daunting and limit the gains to be made through the local food movement.

This problem can be summarized as *the systematic, policy-driven abandonment of local agricultural production, processing and marketing of foods across the national landscape in favor of industrial-scale production based on hyper-mechanization, land concentration and chemical inputs.*

To reverse several decades of that policy framework will likely take several decades of (1) building an alternative agricultural, processing, distribution and financial system and ethos, and (2) somehow cutting away the undue influence of corporations on the political process, as well as the national and international financial institutions that impose this framework.

One essential strategy and value of the effort to reverse the harm done by agribusiness is that of solidarity and collective work.

We at Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville (SAL) are inspired by the indigenous and peasant cultures across the world, which remain a bulwark against the wholesale removal of peoples from the means of agricultural production: land, water, seeds and marketing infrastructure.

Like these indigenous and peasant movements, SAL is working toward an ethic of collective thought and action.

Politically, we call this effort “movement building.” It means that when we consider what to do, we try to envision our work as part of a horizontal, inclusive collective effort. This means that individual persons or organizations see beyond their own particular benefit and make decisions with a broader “social movement” lens and consciousness. It means encouraging collective organizing and farming.

We are involved in a collective farming effort in Prospect, KY. On this land, provided by a politically and socially-conscious landowner, more than 10 families or work groups share the work and the production of a few acres of land. Each family decides upon the three or four crops they will grow each season, with the understanding that the surplus will be shared with others.

This means that each group does not have to grow all the things they like to eat, but can specialize in one crop—like potatoes—while their neighbors are growing peas or sweet potatoes, while THEIR neighbors are growing beans or melons. And all of them enjoy the fruits of their diverse efforts.

It also means we do work collectively on overall land management, fencing, water and composting. And it means that, if someone needs help with a task—such as weeding, watering or harvesting—the labor can be supplemented by others in the collective.

Related to that is seed-saving and crop-sharing for biodiversity. Indigenous farmers in Oklahoma have entrusted to SAL some of their traditional corn varieties for two seasons, to lessen the risk of losing those crop varieties in the face of the crop-destroying heat and droughts recently suffered in that region.

Each spring, we send and receive seed corn through the mail and grow those varieties, as a hedge against a threatened loss of crop-seed diversity. This is another form of solidarity farming.

Providing access to land, compost, seeds and water to refugee families is another big success for the Louisville food sovereignty movement. More than 90 families of recent refugees from Bhutan, Burundi, Burma, Sudan, Tanzania and Congo produce substantial quantities of crops on four plots of land amounting to five or six acres—saving at least \$1,000 per family on grocery purchases and improving the family diet by avoiding much of the “fast food” the US media entices them to consume.

These crops also supply their families with traditional food stuffs important for their cultures and are bartered and exchanged among extended family and neighborhoods.

Admirable efforts have been made by Grasshoppers, Inc.—a farmer-owned, local food-distribution company—to expand the markets available to farmers in the Louisville area. Having a place to sell surpluses of a given crop or meat/dairy product, and to expand the acreages producing food, greatly benefits the local small farmers.

The Farm to Table marketing program has also expanded market access for many Kentucky farmers, as well as the many restaurants and caterers who buy local produce and meats. Synergies are created through the diverse efforts of many people.

Teaching children about food is yet another aspect of re-creating a state of “food sovereignty.” The Food Literacy project located on Field Day Farm brings gardening and cooking directly to the minds and bodies of children from the public schools and other programs.

With their added outdoor kitchen facility, food preparation has become a

popular activity for the field trips and classes. These activities for children and adults from various backgrounds are hosted on a farm wedged between an interstate highway and a country club golf course.

SAL just completed its 10th year of summer gardening day camps, which, through experiential learning in the garden, in food processing and cooking, as well as storytelling, has created a way of being and thinking that will transmit to future generations.

What does all this work attempt? To recover humanity’s birthright: *a healthy diet from the land where the community dwells through their shared work and knowledge—in other words, to recover Food Sovereignty.*

Food is so much more to society than a price-per-pound label at the supermarket or a price item on a restaurant menu. Today the prices paid to farmers for their crops have virtually no relationship with the ultimate retail price of their food.

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What IS Food Sovereignty, Anyway?

(It sounds kind of abstract.)

by Stephen Bartlett

In a nutshell, food sovereignty is *food democratization*; it is *self-determination*. It is democratic control at all levels, so that on the ground at the local level, where food is produced and where it is eaten, farmers, gardeners, policy makers, families and communities—individually and collectively—determine what foods to grow. They also determine how food is grown, and how, and by whom, foods are produced, processed and distributed. Finally, they see that fair compensation is provided for that work.

For eaters, it is the right to know where your food comes from, how the food was produced, and therefore how safe and healthy the food is, as well as who benefited from that economic and ecological activity.

Food sovereignty is a principle whose time has come, to guide us as we *dismantle the transnational corporate system known as agribusiness*, and reign in the greed and exploitation that has led to often unhealthy foods being produced in a way that causes unemployment, labor abuses, landlessness, loss of biodiversity, soil erosion and contamination of the water.

—For information on the social movements fighting for food sovereignty and how you can contribute to this work, contact the US Food Sovereignty Alliance, www.usfoodsovereigntyalliance.org or email Stephen Bartlett, sbartlett@ag-missions.org.

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Therefore, I would argue that the logic of capitalism, as regards the means of production, as well as the product itself, is failing humanity.

The industrialization and commodification of food are anathema to the goal of food sovereignty. Compensation for farmers ought to meet and surpass the costs of

Many analysts assert that the food riots and toppled governments of the last four years are the result, in part or entirely, of the volatility of rising prices of the deregulated futures market.

production, no matter what the market dictates. After all, the market is really governed by real people, not invisible hands. Workers, whether the farmers themselves or the farm laborers they employ, must receive a decent livable wage.

For most US farmers, this means a fair price for their products. The implementation of concrete policies would move us toward greater equity for farmers.

For example, supply-management approaches to stabilizing crop prices for farmers were successful following the policies of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. They led to decades of prosperity for family farmers, by guaranteeing a fair price by limiting production in an orderly and collective way.³

The rebuilding of nonprofit, farmer-managed grain reserves would be a huge boon to the family farmer movement in the US and help wipe out price volatility and a plethora of predatory financial instruments that have plagued commodity futures markets. Re-regulation of the financial markets of Wall Street is also essential, if hunger is to be avoided for masses of people across the planet.

We need to prohibit the participation of pure speculators in futures commodities. We need to re-establish the firewall between investment banks (such things as hedge funds, and derivatives investors), and those who are actually going to receive the grain (such as farmers, warehousemen, wholesalers, processors and distributors). This firewall will help stabilize grain prices. This was the original intention of commodity futures.

Many analysts assert that the food riots and toppled governments of the last four years was the result, in part or entirely, of the volatility of rising prices of this deregulated futures market. This was especially true for impoverished people.

There is also need for the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) to reverse their actions of the recent past and allow (and dare I say *encourage*) governments needing credit to re-establish their national agricultural councils, their grain reserve programs and their government-regulated agricultural credit banks. The IMF also needs to re-invest in national educational institutions, such as departments of agronomy and agro-ecology.

At local levels, municipalities and cities can greatly encourage thriving local food economies by leading in the establishment of agriculture-friendly policies regarding land use in urban areas—policies that favor food production close to home.

Once communities take back democratic control of their local food economy, they can do things such as taxing or banning nutritionally harmful foods, as well as foods with excessive packaging waste, from the public sphere (in places like schools). Then they can limit access to foods grown in ways that harm the land, the farmworkers or farmers.

And they can put into place land-use policies that reverse the plague of "suburban sprawl" in order to preserve land and water resources near the concentration of eaters who rely on that food.

When we have done that, we will accelerate the movement toward Food Sovereignty. The fact is we need to change nearly everything at the same time to achieve it. Ironically, changing *everything* becomes more likely when we begin changing *something*.

I believe we will reach new thresholds for more dramatic progress once the many small changes converge with a broad change in consciousness—about the need to humanize our economic system and to act on a basis of the fundamentally "cooperative" potential of humanity.

A thoughtful look at our current reality requires nothing less. Faced with the grave threats of global warming and ecological meltdown, the time has come for some serious cooperative spirit, a shrinking of our carbon footprints and a re-"greening" of small-scale family farming, both in terms of soil fertility and in terms of economic viability.

As Via Campesina members and spokespersons say to whoever will listen: *Family farmers feed the hungry and cool the planet.*

Who better to return excess atmospheric CO₂ to the land than farmers and foresters practicing agro-ecology? In fact, if farmers don't do the work of sequestering CO₂ in the fertility of land and forest, I have trouble imagining who will do it.

And—considering that three out of four hungry people in the world live in rural areas⁴ and at least 50 percent of humanity are rural peoples who still rely on locally-produced food—who will feed the hungry, if not the hungry themselves? They can only do it if they

are activated upon the land, or in partnership with those who cultivate the land.

Let's wrap this up then with a word from our sponsor—Mother Earth's Pending Order: A Juicy Slice of Food Sovereignty. Here it comes:

*A juicy slice of homegrown apple pie a la mode!
Coming right up! Land for all who work it. No
privatization of living things (including seeds).
Globalize struggle! Globalize hope!*

—Stephen Bartlett, a tropical and temperate agriculturalist, works for Agricultural Missions, an 82-year-old ecumenical organization dedicated to defending the culture and economy of people of the land in diverse ways.

Endnotes

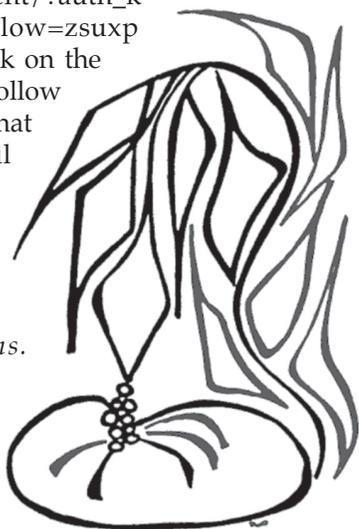
1. The 1998 Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement was a legal settlement between the four largest US tobacco companies and the Attorneys General of 46 states, including Kentucky.
2. CFA is a member of the National Family Farm Coalition, which is a member of Via Campesina.
3. "Facts behind King Corn," National Family Farm Coalition (www.nffc.net).
4. United Nations World Food Programme

Useful websites for more information:

www.familyfarmdefenders.org
www.usfoodsovereigntyalliance.org
www.viacampesina.org
www.communityfarmalliance.org
www.nffc.net
www.foodfirst.org
www.agriculturalmissions.org

For a PREZI slideshow introducing Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville, go to: http://prezi.com/p-kljfcqpnx2/present/?auth_key=sziycyw&follow=zsuxp3_12oec. Just click on the "play" icon and follow the presentation that includes colorful photos.

(If you have trouble with the link, contact Stephen Bartlett at sbartlett@ag-missions.org.)



art by Susan Daily

The Ups and Downs of Fighting Hunger

Three United Nations agencies—the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) report hunger and malnutrition as the biggest health risks in the world. The number of deaths from hunger-related causes are greater than those from AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined. The main causes of hunger in the past few decades have been poverty, natural disasters, armed conflict (and the accompanying displacement of people) and global climate change.

In the final quarter of the 20th century, humanity was winning the war on hunger, its oldest enemy. From 1970-1997, the number of hungry people dropped from 959 million to 791 million. This was mainly the result of dramatic progress in reducing the number of undernourished people in China and India.

In the second half of the 1990s, however, the number of chronically hungry people in developing countries started to increase at a rate of almost 4 million per year. By 2001-2003, the total number of undernourished people worldwide had risen to 854 million. This included 820 million in developing countries, 25 million in countries in transition and 9 million in industrialized countries.

In 2007-2008, one in seven people did not get enough food to be healthy and lead an active life. But the worst was yet to come. The petroleum crisis of 2008, brought on largely by the war in Iraq, caused food prices to spike and set the anti-hunger movement back a decade or more. The condition was exacerbated by floods, hurricanes, earthquakes and extended droughts across the globe. That year saw a number of riots in countries where the scarcity of food grew as the prices of food skyrocketed.

Although fewer people have died from hunger-related causes in the past few years, more and more people are at risk for food insecurity and undernourishment. In its most recent reports, the WFP reported that 925 million people do not get enough nutrition to maintain healthy lives. And, unless the global community responds in a dramatic way, global climate change could increase the world's number of undernourished people by between 40 million and 170 million.

—From the *Seeds of Hope* staff. Sources: World Food Programme (www.wfp.org), World Health Organisation (www.who.int), Food and Agriculture Organisation (www.fao.org), UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (www.ipcc.ch)

Why Food Sovereignty Is So Important?

by Andrew Kang Bartlett

In a world plagued simultaneously and perversely by hunger and obesity, rational policies are overdue for governing the way food is grown, processed and traded, and how the benefits of the world's food systems are shared.

Most food in the world is grown, collected and harvested by more than a billion small-scale farmers,

Food sovereignty is fast becoming recognized as the most important food and agriculture policy consensus for the 21st century.

pastoralists (those engaged in the raising of livestock) and artisanal (skilled in manual labor) fisherfolk. This food is mainly sold, processed, resold and consumed locally, thereby providing the foundation of peoples' nutrition, incomes and economies across the world.

At a time when reducing world poverty by half and eradicating hunger are at the forefront of the international development agenda [see the sidebar about the Millennium Development Goals on page 9], reinforcing the diversity and vibrancy of local food systems should also be at the forefront of that agenda.

Yet, the rules that govern food and agriculture at all levels—local, national and international—are designed to facilitate not local, but international trade.

This reduces diversity and concentrates the wealth of the world's food economies in the hands of ever-fewer multinational corporations, while the majority of the world's small-scale food producers, processors, local traders and consumers—including, crucially, the poor and malnourished—are marginalized.

A policy framework would start by placing the perspective and needs of the majority at the heart of the global food policy agenda. It would embrace not only the control of production and markets, but also the Right to Food, peoples' access to and control over land, water and genetic resources, and the use of environmentally-sustainable approaches to production.

Accordingly, food and development policy must refocus on the control of food production and consumption within democratic processes rooted in localized food systems.

Now, at a time when there is intense debate about how the world will halve poverty and eradicate hunger, the policies that govern the way food is produced, con-

sumed and distributed, how it is processed and traded, and who controls the food chain, need to be looked at comprehensively.

Food sovereignty is fast becoming recognized as the most important food and agriculture policy consensus for the 21st century.

Proponents of Food Sovereignty require that governments:

1. Prioritize local, regional and national needs, based on agriculture that consists of small farmers, indigenous peoples, fisherfolk and other local communities;
2. Protect local and national markets of basic food stuffs to give priority to the products of local farmers;
3. Promote and enforce farmer's rights including access to land, water and seed;
4. Promote sustainable peasant agriculture which is more productive and protects our biodiversity;
5. Promote a direct, shared and decentralized relationship between food producers and the rest of the community;
6. Enforce genuine land reform to ensure redistribution of land;
7. And lastly, design a new farm economy which should be the centerpiece of the country's economic development model.

—Andrew Kang Bartlett has been the Associate for National Hunger Concerns for the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Church USA, since 2001. He works with a number of local food justice groups in Louisville and serves on the Interim Coordinating Committee of the US Food Sovereignty Alliance.



A Guide to Food Sovereignty

from the National Family Farm Coalition and Grassroots International

All people have the right to decide what they eat and to ensure that food in their community is healthy and accessible for everyone. This is the basic principle behind food sovereignty.

If you want to support domestic food security through the production of healthy food at a fair price, and you believe that family farmers and fishers should have the first right to local and regional markets, then food sovereignty is for you.

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Food sovereignty is essential because our current food and farm system is broken. Small farmers in the US and around the world cannot earn a fair price for what they raise, despite their high productivity. Meanwhile, more than 1.2 billion people around the world go hungry every day.

As corporate-controlled agriculture spreads across the globe, the social and environmental costs weigh heavily on our communities. Driven by big corporations, the agricultural system no longer values healthy, delicious food, productive and sustainable rural communities, or people's right to make decisions about their communities and their farms.

Fortunately, an alternative exists: Food sovereignty for all. The National Family Farm Coalition and Grassroots International have joined together to build US support for a growing international food sovereignty movement—one that seeks to guarantee the human right of communities to choose where and how their food is produced and what food they consume.

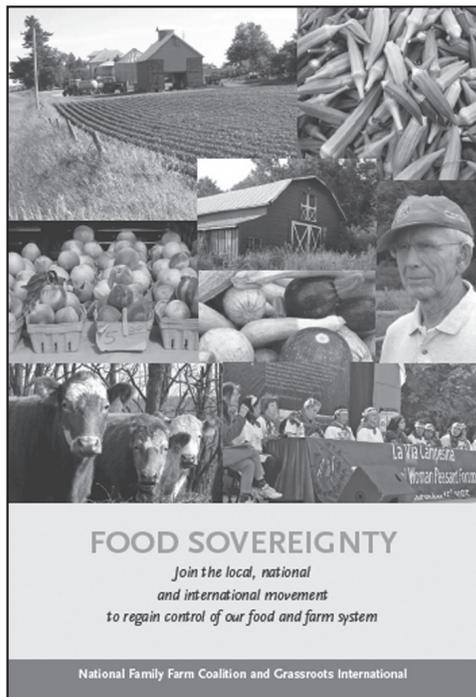
The vision undergirding the movement is a food system that ensures health, justice and dignity for all—and in which farmers, ranchers and fishers have control over their lands, water, seeds and livelihoods.

Food Sovereignty, a booklet from the National Family Farm Coalition and Grassroots International, explores how small producers, environmentalists and social justice activists around the world are embracing food sovereignty.

It proclaims the right that all people have to decide what they eat and to ensure that that agriculture in their community is fair and healthy for everyone and to fix the broken food and farming system.

The booklet is posted at www.grassrootsonline.org/publications and is available for no charge in English, Spanish, Portuguese and French.

—Special thanks go to Andrew Kang Bartlett of the Presbyterian Hunger Program for this information.



The Millennium Development Goals

At the Millennium Summit in the year 2000, all 193 United Nations member-states and 23 international organizations agreed to strive for eight development goals, to be achieved by 2015. They are:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
2. Achieve universal primary education;
3. Promote gender equality and empower women;
4. Reduce child mortality;
5. Improve maternal health;
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases;
7. Ensure environmental sustainability;
8. Develop a global partnership for development.

—For more information about the MDGs, go to www.un.org/millenniumgoals.

A Hunger Glossary for 2012

Feeding Program: a federal, school or private program or agency that serves prepared food to hungry people.

Food Desert: a district, usually a low-income area, where healthy, nutritious food is difficult to obtain. The Economic Research Service of the USDA defines a food desert as a low-income census tract where a substantial number of residents has low access to a supermarket or large grocery store. The residents are often much closer to fast-food restaurants and convenience stores.

Food Rescue: the practice of obtaining prepared food from restaurants, packaging it according to health codes, and making it available to feeding programs.

Food Security: having enough food to be healthy and productive. The World Food Summit of 1996 defined food security as existing "when *all people at all times* have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life." According to the UN World Health Organisation, food security is built on three pillars: food availability, food access and appropriate food use. Census workers in the US use the terms "high food security," "marginal food security," "low food security" and "very low food security." According to the USDA, a household has very low food security if the food intake of one or more household members is reduced or disrupted at times during the year because the household lacks the money or other resources for food.

Food Sovereignty: a movement that seeks to establish the rights of those who grow food to determine what foods to grow, how food is grown, and how and by whom foods are produced, processed and distributed. It also seeks to provide fair compensation for those involved in bringing food to our tables. For those who eat (which is everybody), it is the right to know where your food comes from, how the food was produced, how safe and healthy it is, and who benefits from the food's production and distribution. (See pages 3-9 for more about Food Sovereignty.)

Foodies: People who spend a significant amount of energy on gaining information about the ingredients, nutritional value and origin of food dishes. (See the story on page 11 of this issue.)

Hunger: the body's way of signaling that it is running short of food and needs to eat something. According to the United Nations World Food Program (WFP), the average person needs 1,200 calories a day to lead a healthy life.

Malnutrition/Undernutrition: a state in which the physical function of an individual is impaired by lack of nutrition, to the point where he or she can no longer maintain natural bodily capacities such as growth, preg-

nancy, lactation, learning abilities, physical work and resisting and recovering from disease. The term covers a range of problems: being dangerously thin (see "Underweight"), too short for one's age (see "Stunting"), being deficient in specific vitamins or minerals, or being obese. A person can be obese and still be malnourished.

Protein energy malnutrition: a form of malnutrition measured not by how much food is eaten but by physical measurements of the body, such as weight, height, or age (see "Stunting," "Wasting," "Underweight").

SNAP: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly the Food Stamp Program), a federal program in the US administered by the USDA.

Stunting: a condition that reflects shortness-for-age. This is an indicator of chronic malnutrition and is calculated by comparing the height-for-age of a child with a reference population of well-nourished and healthy children.

Undernourishment: the status of people whose food intake does not include enough calories to meet minimum physiological needs. The term is a measure of a country's ability to gain access to food and is normally derived from Food Balance Sheets prepared by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Underweight: a state measured by comparing the weight-for-age of a child with a reference population of well-nourished and healthy children. It is estimated that the deaths of almost 4 million children aged less than five are associated with the underweight status of the children themselves or their mothers.

Urban Gardening: also known as urban horticulture or urban agriculture; the process of growing plants of all types and varieties in an urban environment. Some types of urban gardening include container gardening (the use of all kinds of containers for growing plants in city balconies or on patios), indoor gardening, community gardening, "guerilla" gardening (a somewhat subversive effort to grow plants in public spaces like vacant lots or highway medians), and roof gardening.

Wasting: a state reflecting a recent and severe process that has led to substantial weight loss, usually associated with starvation and/or disease. Wasting is calculated by comparing weight-for-height of a child with a reference population of well-nourished and healthy children. This measurement is often used to assess the severity of emergencies because it is strongly related to mortality.

WIC: The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, a federal program in the US administered by the USDA. The WIC program has been shown to save \$5 in future social services for every \$1 it spends. ■

All about Foodies

(In Case You Were Wondering...)

by Stormy Campbell

A “foodie” (sometimes spelled “foody”) can be defined as someone who takes a unique interest in food, including its taste, preparation and cooking. Most foodies are strictly amateurs without formal culinary training.

The term *foodie* became popular as people with an interest in food wished to differentiate themselves from other labels such as “gourmet” and “epicure,” because those terms convey a sense of elitism. A foodie may be just as inclined to try a new food from a taco stand as from a five-star restaurant, and think that both have the potential to be fantastic dining experiences.

Foodies explore food in all its aspects. They study the idea of food, try to recreate the dishes they are served by others or at restaurants, and may take a profound interest in food production. Foodies are knowledgeable about flavors and experiment with blending different spices and herbs in order to create the perfect flavor combination.

Some foodies focus on buying local produce, frequenting farmer’s markets, and committing to not buy anything that is not produced within a 100-mile radius of their home. Others prefer to focus on the preparation of food, taking amateur cooking classes offered in the community and studying the history and development of popular flavors.

Not all foodies desire to eat local or organic, but many decide to as they take an interest in the ethical issues surrounding food and study the history and climate of food production and preparation. Recently, the influence of foodies

has become so great that there has been an increased interest from the general public for more accessible farmer’s markets and organic food.

The greatest influence of foodies can be found on the Internet, with a rise in the activities of food blogging—foodies document their meals, post recipes and review dishes on

Not all foodies desire to eat local or organic, but many decide to as they take an interest in the ethical issues surrounding food and study the history and climate of food production and preparation.

personal blogs—and food photography. Foodies may also use their blogs to explore sensitive and ethical food issues, or write about new food experiences.

On social media sites, foodies can easily share photographs of recent eats and exotic finds. Discussion boards exist for the sole purpose of sharing information with other foodies about topics such as the best place to eat on vacation or finding the perfect blend of spices for a new recipe.

The rise of this Internet presence has also given rise to a certain animosity towards those who self-identify as “foodies.” The term, to some, has come to represent a new form of snobbery.

Despite the fact the term was originally embraced to move away from feelings of elitism, critics of foodies claim that only the term, not the idea of superiority, has changed. As the number of foodie blog posts continues to rise on the Internet, perhaps as many have been written against foodies, stating that the rise of foodies is a sign of unhealthy, wide-scale obsession with food.

While “foodie” may be a divisive term, it is a powerful one. Through the rise of online blogging and photography, foodies have risen in prevalence. Foodies seek to be influential in the food landscape, working to return others to an appreciation of food and, in many cases, to explore ethical issues surrounding the food that is consumed.

—Stormy Campbell, a native of Yoakum, in the Texas coastal region, is a professional writing student at Baylor University and a Seeds of Hope intern.



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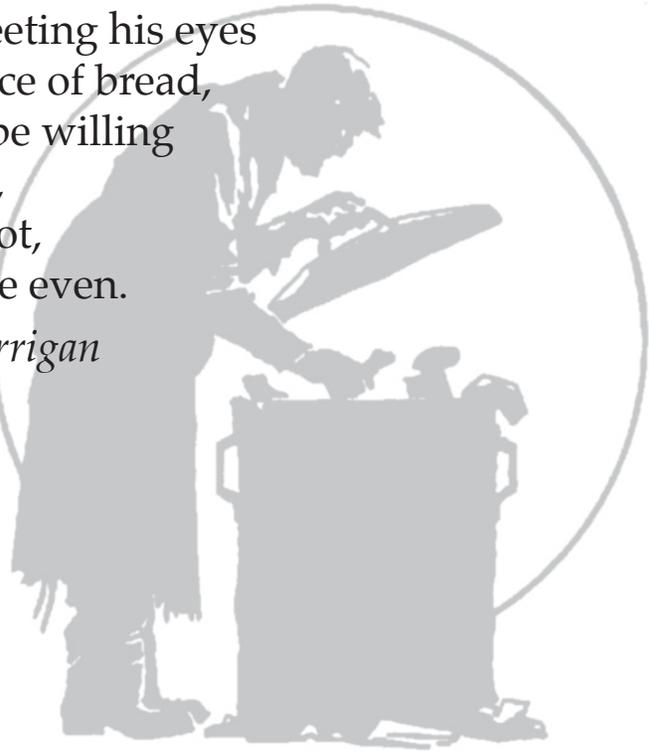
Seeds of Hope is a private, independent group of believers responding to a common burden for the poor and hungry of God's world, and acting on the strong belief that biblical mandates to feed the poor were not intended to be

quotes, poems, & pithy sayings

Communion

Sometime in your life,
hope that you might see one starved man,
the look on his face when the bread
finally arrives. Hope that you
might have baked it or bought it
or even kneaded it yourself.
For that look on his face,
for your meeting his eyes
across a piece of bread,
you might be willing
to lose a lot,
or suffer a lot,
or die a little even.

—*Daniel Berrigan*



optional. The group intends to seek out people of faith who feel called to care for the poor; and to affirm, enable and empower a variety of responses to the problems of poverty.

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