



COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY *news*

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Restoring the Balance to U.S. Food and Farm Policy

For the past 30 years, America's food system has left an unfortunate legacy of fewer farmers, lost farmland, unhealthy and hungry children, and polluted water and air. Failed national food and farm policies have fostered this legacy by encouraging our food and farming systems to move in the wrong direction while neglecting the future health and productivity of children, rural communities, urban neighborhoods, and the environment.

We are convinced that this is not the legacy most Americans want. Through its work with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation funded Farm and Food Policy Project (FFPP) and its hundreds of partners, the Community Food Security Coalition is working to restore the balance between policies that help farmers and those that promote a healthy people, communities, and environment. The FFPP, CFSC, and partner organizations will bring these policies into the debate over the next farm bill, which Congress must act on in 2007.

To this end CFSC has coordinated the Healthy Food and Communities work group—one of four work groups organized under the FFPP—to generate several new policy initiatives as well as wider support for existing programs that currently address its core

(See *RESTORING* on back cover)



Participants in a SARD Initiative event in Kenya. Photo: Jennifer Lanier, Humane Society International

SHARING A COMMON STRUGGLE: Bridging Borders toward Food Security

Christina Schiavoni and Peter Mann, *WHY International*

As the CFSC Conference moves for the first time outside U.S. borders into Canada, the U.S.-based community food security movement is increasingly realizing: we are part of a global struggle. Decisions made in trade talks thousands of miles away affect the ability of people throughout the world to feed their children safe, healthy, food. Artificially low crop prices devastate producers in the Global South and drive our own farmers out of business. A handful of

corporations control a vast share of the world's food industries, from seed supply to retail outlets, undermining the ability of communities to build local food security.

It is clear that we are connected to our sisters and brothers across the world through an increasingly globalized food system. At the same time, we are connected in our resistance to this predominant system and in our work towards just, sustainable, and healthy

(See *SHARING* on pg. 12)

EDITORS' NOTE

This special issue of CFS News on international aspects of the community food security movement was edited by the International team at WHY (World Hunger Year): Peter Mann, Christina Schiavoni, Siena Chrisman, and Maureen Kelly, with assistance from intern Brea Collier and volunteer Catherine Ponte. Many thanks to them for their hard work. Thanks also to the following members of the CFSC International Links Committee for conceptualizing and contributing to this issue: Linda Elswick, Bob Gronski, Elizabeth Henderson, Aley Kent, Victoria Mesa, Ken Meter, Jac Smit, and Rasa Zimlicki.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Fall 2006

CFS News is a quarterly publication of the Community Food Security Coalition. The CFS Coalition's mission is to promote comprehensive systems-oriented solutions to the nation's food and farming problems. It conducts policy advocacy; provides technical assistance to organizations implementing food security related programs; organizes regional coalitions; maintains a clearinghouse and database; conducts research and publishes reports; and educates the public and professionals through the media, conferences, and newsletters.

Community food security (CFS) is defined as "all persons obtaining at all times a culturally acceptable nutritionally adequate diet through local non-emergency sources." A CFS approach emphasizes the need to build community institutions to ensure access and availability for community residents. Thus, food security must be seen as a question of community development and empowerment which complements and extends the traditional view of addressing hunger issues at the individual level.

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Letter from the President



Sharon Thornberry

Over a decade ago I met Andy Fisher at a gleaning and food banking conference in Arizona. He was of course giving a presentation on community food security. I was intrigued by the concepts, but quickly told Andy that the presentation was too academic. I knew then that we would need to take CFS from the theoretical to the practical and make it accessible to grassroots activists.

When I joined the CFSC Board five years ago, I was clear that I wanted to see this movement continue to grow in communities everywhere. As I reflect, we, all of us, have done so much to make that happen. Community Food Project Grants have funded organizations all over the country in both rural and urban areas. CFSC trainers have taken the message to hundreds of communities, Farm to School programs are taking the food system message to classrooms and the Senior Farmers Market Program is reconnecting seniors to their agricultural roots and better nutrition. The Coalition and its

members have helped make all of this happen.

The Food and Farm Policy Project is providing us with new opportunities for partnership and to engage agriculture and nutrition community partners in new ways. It also provides us with new challenges in making sure that we connect these efforts to our grassroots membership and their constituents. The Building the Bridge partnership with World Hunger Year is helping us connect with food banking. We have a great deal to celebrate and yet so many unmet challenges still face us.

This year in Vancouver will bring us into a truly international realm with participants from around the world participating in our conference. The Dismantling Racism process will move forward through a two day training at the end of the conference. The Board has been engaged in an organizational analysis and will be moving towards strategic planning in the coming year. We will be looking to all of you, our members and constituents, to help shape the future of our organization.

It has been a distinct privilege and a pleasure to serve as the President of the Community Food Security Coalition for the past three years. I want to thank the Coalition Staff and Board for their support, patience and hard work. I especially want to thank all of you for your support and your input during my service. I look forward to seeing what we will accomplish together in the next ten years.

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FOOD SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Global Cooperation Requires New Approach by U.S.

Ken Meter, President, Crossroads Resource Center; Author, "Finding Food in Farm Country" (www.crcworks.org/ff.pdf)

The collapse of WTO trade talks late in July shows the need for the U.S. to rethink its food trade position. We'll only be able to build effective cooperation with the developing world if we are more honest about our global role.

The U.S. has been reluctant to admit that its farm subsidies hurt developing economies. By holding grain prices low, U.S. (as well as European) commodity policies have undermined food sovereignty in developing nations. When it is cheaper to import corn into Mexico, or wheat into Africa, than for local farmers to produce for nearby markets, developing economies are weakened.

Yet U.S. farm supports also turn back to haunt us. Our subsidies extract resources from rural communities, creating a "Third World" inside our borders, by encouraging farmers to take on external debt. Though our poor farmers have greater spending power than those in Latin American or African villages, they are caught in the same structures of dependency.

As a result, the U.S. may have lost more than we gained from "free trade." Once the dominant world producer, we are now poised to become a net food importer on a permanent basis. For the four months ending in May, 2006, our food trade balance hovered at zero. Nearly \$8 billion (62%) has been shaved off the trade surplus we enjoyed three years ago. We import large quantities of fruit and vegetables—and, more troubling to our historical strength, meats and grains. As we become more dependent on others for food, we will be forced to be more honest in our trade dealings.

Some folks say imports are good for the U.S. We should admit, they argue, that our high labor and land costs make producing food too expensive. We should allow others to

supply us. Nations like Brazil and China are certainly stepping up. The trouble is, this view fails to take into account the fact that commodity markets work best for the middlemen, not the farmer.

For example, U.S. farmers doubled productivity over the past 35 years, but they earn \$40 billion less producing crops and livestock (in inflation-adjusted dollars) than they did in 1969. The benefits of farmer efficiency have gone to others in the economy—commodity traders, feed lots, and food manufacturers—who buy grains at artificially low prices. Meanwhile, farmers take on new debt to pay for new machinery and rising land prices, while commodity prices fall.

Through interest payments, farmers actually subsidize the mainstream economy. Since 1913, U.S. farmers have paid \$595 billion more in interest on farm loans *than they received in federal subsidies*. They spend billions more buying inputs from distant sources. This draws capacity and wealth away from rural communities. In much the same way, Third World debt makes it impossible for developing nations to build wealth for themselves.

When mainstream economic structures extract wealth from rural communities, the antidote is for farmers to connect directly to consumers. Without market power, as economist Richard Levins points out, farmers won't benefit from new technologies or new policies.

Consumers, for their part, have to be loyal to producers they know—which may be a cooperative in Guatemala, an *appellation* in France, or the dairy down the road. Already, U.S. consumer groups buy coffee directly from Latin American producer coops at fair prices. Coops like Organic Valley pay such a premium for



Consumers, for their part have to be loyal to the producers they know. Photo: Ken Meter ©2004

organic milk that the commodity milk market is upset. The Federation of Southern Cooperatives trains West African farmers to raise crops and build local market power. These domestic and international initiatives begin to build new "fair trade" infrastructure (see p. 9, "Keeping Social Justice in Organic Agriculture").

Ultimately, however, to go to scale, these pioneering efforts will need support from federal policy. We need *food* policies in the U.S.—not farm policies—that invest in communities rather than subsidizing extractive commodity markets. We will also require strong allies abroad—something we can only build by coming clean about our own trade dilemmas. Only then can we write fair trade policies.

*Dr. Richard A. Levins' book **Market Power for Farmers: What It Is, How to Get It, How to Use It** is available from the Institute for Rural America at 1-800-858-6636. For more on Dr. Levins, visit his web site at www.apec.umn.edu/faculty/dlevins/*

FOOD SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE**Free Trade vs. Food Security: NAFTA at 12**

Robert Gronski, Policy Coordinator, National Catholic Rural Life Conference

In 1994, Canada, Mexico, and the United States signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)—a giant step in global trade policy. Its supporters praised the agreement as extraordinarily comprehensive, covering not only merchandise trade but investments, labor markets, and environmental policies. According to an International Monetary Fund report, NAFTA spurred a dramatic increase in trade and financial flows among its three partners and contributed to making North America one of the most economically integrated regions in the world.¹

But after 12 years, whose interest has NAFTA mainly served? While the agreement has allowed large corporations to thrive, its effects on small farmers and food security in each of the North American nations have been negative—and similar across borders: loss of small farm income; loss of land; increase in migration (domestically and across borders); corporate consolidation of farm inputs and food processing; corporate control of plants and seeds; spread of genetically modified organisms; and environmental degradation.

A vivid example is the damage to the Mexican maize sector wrought by NAFTA. Mexico is the center of diversity of maize, and the crop has long been

(See *FREE TRADE* on pg. 5)



Photo: Fair Trade Foundation

NO to FTAA; YES to Food as a Basic Human Right

Victoria Mesa, CFSC International Links Committee

The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) would expand the NAFTA model throughout the western hemisphere, enveloping 34 countries into the largest free trade zone in the world. Like NAFTA—but even more so—the FTAA has been drafted in the context of unfair and asymmetric trade. It would undermine many fundamental human rights, including the right to food and adequate nutrition (UN Human Rights Commission, 2001). For instance:

- The FTAA would enable the U.S. and other major exporters such as Brazil to flood the markets of other countries with excess agricultural commodities. This would ravage domestic agricultural sectors; decrease countries' abilities to meet their own food needs; and encourage dependency on foreign markets.
- The FTAA would displace many

more family farmers from their land, depriving them of the resources and wages to grow or purchase adequate food.

- The FTAA would favor large-scale, industrialized agriculture—such as the soybean monocultures already wrecking havoc in parts of Latin America—over small-scale, sustainable, diversified agriculture.
- The FTAA would further the spread of genetically modified crops, such as GM soy. Studies have found increased consumption of GM soy to cause health problems such as miscarriages and infertility. (Plataforma Latinoamericana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo)
- The FTAA would undermine the cultural and nutritional importance of traditional foods by replacing them with processed foods from multinational corporations. This

occurred in India when free-trade agreements led to soybean oil replacing the traditional mustard oil in many Indians' diets, causing a cascade of negative health and socio-economic effects.

The good news is that, despite aggressive attempts by the U.S. government and big business to enact the FTAA, opposition groups are building diverse alliances throughout the Americas and have successfully prevented its passage to date. However, anticipating a possible collapse of the FTAA, the U.S. is pursuing measures such as direct bilateral agreements with Peru, Colombia and Ecuador as stepping stones to a larger free trade zone. Now is the time to show the U.S. Congress that we will not support any deal that threatens communities, lives, and livelihoods. NO deal is better than a bad deal!

FOOD SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

FREE TRADE (continued from page 4)

central to its culture, economy and diet, yet NAFTA opened Mexico's maize sector to the dumping of millions of tons of cheap U.S. corn by multinational agribusinesses. This caused the price paid to Mexican corn farmers to drop by 70%, contributing to the loss of over 1.5 million Mexican farm livelihoods in the first 10 years of NAFTA alone.² During that same time, the price of corn tortillas—the most important staple food in Mexico—rose by 50% and higher.³ Dumping of U.S. corn into Mexico—including GM corn—has also had serious environmental implications.

According to Mexico's National Union of Autonomous Regional Farmers Organizations (UNORCA), "The relentless opening of Mexico's borders to agricultural imports, the cancellation of many governmental support programs and the privatization of public enterprises that are part and parcel of the neoliberal model of free trade all over the world, have created an explosive social situation in the countryside, and in the country in general." As NAFTA continues to drive the Mexican countryside into deep crisis, it is having similar effects in U.S. and Canada. A study conducted by the National Farmers Union of Canada after 10 years of NAFTA found family farm incomes to be near an all-time low while agribusiness profits were at an all-time high.⁴

The encouraging news is that organizations around the region—including UNORCA and many CFSC members—are aligning in compatible campaigns for sustainable futures for farmers and eaters alike. The driving force is to promote global trade policies that ensure food sovereignty. This means coordinated work with partners in other countries to protect essential food sectors from trade liberalization as expressed within NAFTA and other regional agreements. The U.S. community food security movement is also advocating for a fair and just Farm Bill at home as we consider the implications of U.S. trade policies on our partners abroad. Our end is to assure access to adequate and nutritious food for all people, throughout the hemisphere and around the world.



Photo: Fair Trade Foundation

Citations:

¹ International Monetary Fund. IMF Working Paper 04/59. www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2004/wp0459.pdf

² Public Citizen. The Ten Year Track Record of the North American Free Trade Agreement: US, Mexican and Canadian Farmers and Agriculture. http://www.citizen.org/documents/NAFTA_10_ag.pdf

³ *ibid*

⁴ National Farmers Union. The Farm Crisis and Corporate Profits: A Report by the National Farmers Union, November 30, 2005. http://www.nfu.ca/new/corporate_profits.pdf

Resources on Trade Issues

Agribusiness Accountability Initiative:
www.ncrlc.com/aai.html

Citizens Trade Campaign:
www.citizenstrade.org/

Crossroads Resource Center:
www.crcworks.org

Data on Foreign Agricultural Trade of the U.S.
www.ers.usda.gov/Data/FATUS/

Food First:
www.foodfirst.org/issues/trade

Global Exchange, primer on the global economy:
www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy:
www.iatp.org

La Via Campesina:
www.viacampesina.org

National Family Farm Coalition:
www.nffc.net

National Farmers Union:
www.nfu.org/

National Union of Autonomous Regional Farmers Organizations:
www.unorca.org.mx/ingles/

Oxfam America:
www.oxfamamerica.org/whatwedo/campaigns/make_trade_fair

Public Citizen:
www.citizen.org/trade/

Gender Equity and Food Security:

EMPOWERING WOMEN BY CHALLENGING INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY

Rasa Zimlicki, *Oxfam America*

Around the world, women are more vulnerable to chronic poverty than men. Because of cultural norms, lack of control over resources, “gender-neutral” international trade policies, and many other factors, women worldwide struggle with life’s basic needs—particularly how to feed their families and themselves.

Global issues such as international trade policy are generally assumed to be gender-neutral—but in reality, women are disproportionately affected by the results of these policies. Predominant trade policies favor large- and medium-sized farmers over small-scale farmers, many of whom are rural women. U.S. farm policy, for instance, encourages U.S. farms to overproduce and dump their surplus on international markets (see pg.3 “Global Cooperation Requires New Approach by U.S.”), lowering prices and making it impossible for small-scale farmers to compete.

International loan programs to developing countries can devastate rural areas, family structures, and women’s and children’s health. Lending policies of the International



Pastoralist woman and child, Kenya
Photo: Jennifer Lanier, *Humane Society International*

Monetary Fund often dictate that a country slash its social service spending and convert its subsistence farmland into commodity crops. Women bear the brunt of the effect of these Structural Adjustment Programs; with the simultaneous loss of food crops and any social services, many previously self-sufficient women and families have fallen into poverty.

Even seemingly gender-neutral metrics can disempower women. Poverty is often measured according to *household* income or meals eaten per day by *the family unit*. The situation of each member of the household may be quite different—fathers and sons may be eating well, while mothers and daughters go hungry. UNICEF research has showed that gender is a primary root cause of hunger. Studies show, for example, that the subjugation of women in South Asia is the only reason that child malnutrition rates in that region have been twice as high as those in sub-Saharan Africa.

Around the world, women are striving for gender equality by empowering themselves to build their household and community food security. In Kenya, Nobel Peace Prize-winner Wangari Maathai led women to begin replanting their forests in the Greenbelt Movement, providing building materials, energy, and food through agro-forestry. In Bolivian villages, women build their own irrigation systems. In Bangladesh, women increase household assets and food self-reliance through microcredit and microenterprise programs. Around the world, gender mainstreaming programs promote the involvement of women and girls in food security, water, and sanitation projects.

It is essential to create international food policies that improve gender equity. We must advocate for policies that recognize the important contributions rural women make,



Woman at market, Mozambique
Photo: R. Zimlicki, *Oxfam America*

and support them as the primary providers for their families and larger communities.

**** For more at the conference:
* *Global Food Issues theme:
Women’s Role in Food Security***

Resources on women and food security:

UN FAO, Gender and Food Security Initiative:
www.fao.org/Gender/gender.htm

Greenbelt Movement:
www.greenbeltmovement.org
International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI):
www.ifpri.org/themes/gender/genderresearch.htm

“Gender Research in Development,” IFPRI:
www.ifpri.org/pubs/ftppractice/sp2/sp2.pdf
Navdanya, founded by Dr. Vandana Shiva:
www.vshiva.net/

Oxfam America (see “Equality for Women” under “What We Do”):
www.oxfamamerica.org

Women, Food & Agriculture Network:
www.wfan.org

WHY Speaks (see articles on Women & Water and on Microcredit):
www.worldhungeryear.org/why_speaks

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Bridging Borders

THROUGH FOOD

SOVEREIGNTY

Food sovereignty—which will be a key theme of the CFSC Vancouver conference—is the right of peoples, countries, or states, to define their own agricultural and food policies. It calls for agricultural policies founded on the rights and needs of populations and for mutually supportive international trade. The food sovereignty platform prioritizes local agricultural production, the right of farmers and peasants to produce food, and the right of consumers to decide what to consume and how it is produced. A key plenary and several workshops at the conference will address fair trade, immigrant farmers, farmworkers, and other issues related to this international movement.

Nevertheless, for many of us working in the local food movement, the idea of ‘food sovereignty’ is still new. Food sovereignty takes us across borders into the international struggles for an alternative food system—one that is socially just, sustainable and democratic. I encountered this movement for the first time at the World Food Summit in Rome in 1996, where the international peasant movement Via Campesina launched its groundbreaking manifesto, “Food Sovereignty: A Future Without Hunger.”

Food sovereignty began as a movement of marginalized peoples demanding that their voice be heard in the official world of UN agencies and governments. The strategy of the Via Campesina was twofold: powerful analyses, declarations, and speeches, but also demonstrations, chants, and processions with banners. In 1999, I marched with the Via Campesina in the anti-WTO meetings in Seattle, and in subsequent years attended the World Social Forum meetings in Porto Alegre and Mumbai, where this twofold strategy of political action and street theater was fused. Now, 10 years after the Via Campesina declaration in Rome, food sovereignty has expanded into a global movement—challenging policymakers, influencing governments, and included in the constitutions of countries such as Venezuela and Mali.

Food sovereignty bridges borders, also, in bringing together individual social movements. Initial campaigns were against the globalization of agriculture and called on farm communities to organize in favor of farmer-centered people’s agriculture. The food sovereignty movement has grown to include small-scale farmers, farmworkers, landless workers, fisherfolk, pastoralists, animal herders, seed-saving networks, artisans, and all those working towards just, healthy food systems worldwide. We can learn from the food sovereignty activists and practitioners at the Vancouver conference, both to inform ourselves and to get involved in social movements that can help us in our own struggles at home.



A banner calling for food sovereignty on display in the Via Campesina tent of the 2006 World Social Forum in Caracas, Venezuela. Photo: Christina Schiavoni



An indigenous Andean farmer speaks out at the 2006 World Social Forum in Caracas, Venezuela. Photo: Christina Schiavoni

**** For more at the conference:**

- * *Tuesday, October 10, Plenary: “A Vision for Food Sovereignty: Farmers Speak Out”*
- * *Food sovereignty will be featured in the **Global Food Issues** theme of the conference, and in several other workshops.*

Resources on food sovereignty:

La Via Campesina: www.viacampesina.org
National Family Farm Coalition: www.nffc.net
WHY Speaks: www.worldhungeryear.org/international

INTERNATIONAL OPPOSITION TO GMO

From Mysore, India, to Oaxaca, Mexico, farmers and consumers are fighting the spread of genetically engineered crops and reclaiming traditional agricultural practices that promote genetic biodiversity. They are uniting against profit-driven multinational corporations that often work hand in hand with national governments to advance agricultural biotechnology. Here, Brewster Kneen, a prominent Canadian author and specialist on food system issues, reveals the intimate connections between the biotechnology industry and the Canadian government.

Biotech Makes Strange Bedfellows

Brewster Kneen; writer, farmer, publisher of *The Ram's Horn* newsletter



Genetically engineered grain
Photo: Jack Dykinga, ARS Image Library

Canada, with a strong adherence to the North American ideology of Progress and devotion to technology as its means, has been a real pushover for the *biotechnology* industry. The sires of genetic engineering capitalized on this by making the shrewd choice to name their new baby "bio-technology," joining faith in technology with the "goodness" of biology.

Canada had canola—the product of a highly-skilled, publicly-funded process of traditional seed-saving and plant breeding methods that transformed the rapeseed plant into canola in the 1960s and 1970s. No private company would have embarked on such a financially risky venture. But here it was, western Canada's "Cinderella crop," ready to become the plaything of the genetic engineers.

In addition, the regulatory environment in Canada was inviting to the biotech industry. When regulations

for the development and commercialization of transgenic crops were established in 1987, Canada adopted the term "novel foods" from the international Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), masking "genetic engineering" for public relations purposes, and carefully avoided any effective regulation of the field. Instead of real, effective rules to govern this new field, the federal Departments of Agriculture, Environment, and Health agreed that regulation of genetic engineering would build on existing legislation (in place long before genetic engineering was a reality) and regulate the product, not the process (ignoring the effects of the process of genetic engineering itself on the organism).

At that time, biotechnology was promoted as being fast and precise. Fast it was—time was not taken for long-term trials and assessment of the consequences of genetic engineering. The attitude of the corporations and the government was, "Don't want to know." Critics put it as: "Don't look, won't find."

It would be a mistake to think that Monsanto and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency did not know what they were doing when Roundup Ready canola was released for commercial growing in 1996. They had to know that genetic engineering is neither precise nor stable. They had to know that once released, transgenic canola would spread and contaminate all prairie canola, just as it has done.

Was this, then, Canadian official policy? Look at Canada's record in the Codex Alimentarius Committee on

Food Labeling, where it has been a faithful lapdog to the USA and the biotech industry in blocking any steps toward the labeling of GMO foods. Look at its domestic record in going to extreme lengths to avoid labeling, in spite of the wishes of 85% of the Canadian people. Look at its role in the Convention on Biological Diversity and its attempt to eliminate the unofficial moratorium on Terminator technology. It is hard not to conclude that Monsanto and the Canadian Government have been working together to enable Monsanto to contaminate and control not only canola, but every major food crop around the world.

Still, all is not lost. With the renewed opposition to genetically engineered crops and foods both within Canada and internationally, it seems that Monsanto has not yet succeeded in contaminating our minds.

Resources on genetic engineering:

Action against genetically engineered sterile seeds:

www.banterminator.org

ETC—Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration (formerly RAFI):

www.etcgroup.org

Ram's Horn Newsletter: www.ramshorn.ca

Seeds of Deception:

www.seedsofdeception.com

Keeping Social Justice in Organic Agriculture

Elizabeth Henderson; CSA farmer and author, *“Sharing the Harvest: A Guide to Community Supported Agriculture”* (Chelsea Green, 1999)

Living wages for farmers, dignified working conditions, respect for indigenous knowledge, protection of the local economy: these are essential to the common understanding of organic agriculture. In the United States, many of the consumers who have contributed to the recent boom in organic agriculture expect the organic label to mean social justice and fairness as well as ecological production practices. They are startled to realize that U.S. organic standards leave out any mention of these points. However, a task force of 40 organic farmers and researchers convened by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) included social justice as one of the key points in the 2005 revision of its Principles of Organic Agriculture, and around the world, there are many exciting efforts underway to guarantee that fair and ethical trade is part of the meaning of organic.

- The Soil Association, the respected British organic agriculture organization, has a long-term project to implement “Ethical Organic” standards in England. When these standards are fully in effect, every ingredient of every product that bears the organic label will have been created under fair working conditions and fairly traded up and down the entire food chain.
- In Thailand, Green Net has organized over 1,000 farming families into local groups producing rice, silk, coconut, and fruit. Green Net provides technical support for the groups’ conversion to organic methods and markets produce as both certified organic and fair-trade. To join Green Net, farmers must agree to attend monthly

meetings, convert their fields to organic, grow at least three vegetables for their own subsistence, and produce some value-added product such as fabrics, dried fruit, or honey.

- Recognizing that a great majority of the people doing organic farming around the world cannot afford organic certification fees, IFOAM has teamed up with Movimiento Agroecológico de Latina America y el Caribe to create guidelines and work towards the recognition of Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS). The goals of PGS are to empower farmers, provide education for farmers and non-farmers, improve local marketing networks, and set the conditions for fair trade while providing a credible organic guarantee.
- An outstanding example of PGS is Rede Eco-Vida, a network of farms, small-scale processors, food coops, farmers’ markets, and organic agronomists in Brazil. In Porto Alegre, a city of one and a half million, Eco-Vida sponsors two farmers’ markets where over 400 farms sell their products. Instead of an inspection, a group of other farmers, consumers, and an agricultural professional visits each farm to have a conversation about all the interrelated issues the farmer faces. Even farms as small as two acres can afford to belong to this network. Other PGS projects are underway in New Zealand, Uganda, India, Japan, and other countries of Central, South and even North America, where a movement for domestic fair trade is beginning.



Photo: Fair Trade Foundation

Resources on social justice and organic agriculture:

SEI Comité de Apoyo a Los Trabajadores Agrícolas/Farmworker Support Committee:
www.cata-farmworkers.org

Equal Exchange:
www.equalexchange.com

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements: www.ifoam.org

Organic Consumers Association:
www.organicconsumers.org

Organic Valley Cooperative:
www.organicvalley.coop

Rural Advancement Foundation International:
www.rafiusa.org

Soil Association:
www.soilassociation.org

These efforts around the world are getting to the heart of organic agriculture—they are reaching beyond standards to a model of agriculture in which sustainability and justice are inextricably linked.

Youth Creating Food Security the World Over

Anim Steel, Director of National Programs, The Food Project; and Dylan Fitz, Food Project Fellow

In 1991, twenty teenagers from the Boston area began work on a farm. It was an unusual summer job for inner city and suburban kids—weeding, harvesting, running a farmers' market—but that experiment, called The Food Project, was the beginning of a movement with echoes all over North America and, increasingly, the world.

In St. Lucia, a Caribbean nation of 168,000 people, Catalyst Organic Gardens is transforming the local food system by growing organic herbs and vegetables, selling them to local restaurants, and inspiring others to do the same. A youth-driven organization, Catalyst illustrates the impact that young, innovative individuals can have on our societies. Two young entrepreneurs created and run Catalyst, and many unemployed youth currently volunteer on the farm because of the lack of other available opportunities. With strong leadership and delicious food, Catalyst is already a huge success. Local businesses and individuals are asking Catalyst how they can learn to grow such excellent food and Catalyst's impact is already extending beyond the rows of its farm. To learn more, email co-founder Ratoya Pilgrim at rp0333@hotmail.com.

In South Africa, Tshediso Phahlane and his neighbors started the Indali Agricultural Communal Property Association in 1996. Tshediso presently spends much of his time traveling to more than 80 schools in his region teaching students about farming. Over 125 families farm the Indali land to ensure their food security and create new opportunities for economic development. In addition to his work with Indali, Tshediso created an engaging curriculum that teaches students about food and farming while creating school gardens. Now 32 years old, Tshediso is already a leader who has transformed his community and served as a model for others hoping to do the same. To contact Tshediso, email tphablane@gmail.com.

Three years ago, The Food Project observed groups like these all over the world and recognized the collective impact that we can have when people are brought together to transform our food systems. Building upon this realization, The Food Project's BLAST Initiative (Building Local Agricultural Systems Today) was started to link and support efforts like these, as well as ones in the United States, Australia, Ghana, Mexico, Nigeria, and many other countries. You, too, can join the movement, share ideas, or ask questions at blast@thefoodproject.org.

**** For more at the conference:**

* *Global Food Issues theme: "Our 40 Year Plan to Change the World: Youth and the Global Food System"*

* *Food and Communities theme: "Youth Creating Sustainable Food Systems"*



Youth from Catalyst Organic Gardens, St. Lucia.



Youth visiting Indali Farm, South Africa.

Resources on global youth movements:

Environmental Youth Alliance: www.eya.ca

Freechild Youth Movement
Mapping Project:
www.freechild.org/movementmap.htm

The Food Project:
www.thefoodproject.org

Global Youth Action Network and
takingITglobal:
www.takingitglobal.org

Global Youth Connect:
www.globalyouthconnect.org/index.htm

UN Food and Agriculture Organization's
Rural Youth Development:
www.fao.org/ruralityouth

Links, history, and an overview of present
youth movements:
www.youthmovements.org

FARM TO SCHOOL GOES GLOBAL

**TUTTO PER QUALITÀ:
INNOVATION IN ROME'S
SCHOOL MEAL SYSTEM**

Toni Liquori, EdD, MPH; Program in Nutrition, Teachers College, Columbia University

Imagine sitting down to a school lunch of pasta and lentil soup, local chard with lemon, and freshly baked bread. In the U.S. and around the world, communities are rethinking what we feed our children. The recent changes to the school meal system in Rome, Italy, are arguably the most far-reaching, addressing the social and nutritional health of the child, along with taste and a clear philosophy of environmental stewardship. If it is not organic, most food served in Roman schools is seasonally and locally/regionally sourced and/or fairly traded, and is always cooked from scratch—140,000 lunches every day, plus a midmorning snack. This truly green—and delicious—revolution in Rome's school meal system was brought about in 2001 by School Food Director Silvana Sari, with support from Rome's Mayor and the Counselor of Education.

Recognizing that there are differences in regulations and contracting between the U.S. and Italy—not to mention profound differences in food culture—Rome's transition is still an important one to watch. Sari negotiated a major change in how contracts are arranged with school food providers and a strict system of compliance monitoring to create the *Tutto per Qualità*—All for Quality—procurement principles.

School food contracts are not awarded simply to the lowest bidder, but to the provider offering the “best value.” Low purchase price is emphasized, but food quality and food service infrastructure are also important criteria. Food quality considerations include place of origin, food miles traveled, organic production, fair trade, and products from specially-designated

regions (e.g., Parmesan cheese must be exclusively from the *parmigiano reggiano* region). Infrastructure improvements include kitchen and dining room upgrades, training and education for staff and teachers, and a well-organized and fully qualified food service staff.

By combining the multiple criteria of purchase price, food quality, and infrastructure in its “best value” approach to meals, Roman schools are able to offer nutritious, culturally-appropriate meals for its children. All children are able to enjoy these meals thanks to state subsidies to low-income families. At approximately five dollars per child, Rome's daily purchase price is almost double what the U.S. spends on school lunch. However, when we include the U.S. school breakfast reimbursement as well—considering that Rome's five

dollars also includes a midmorning snack—the cost difference between the two models shrinks tremendously.

But what are we including when we consider “cost”? Many of the costs of school meals are currently borne by society in the U.S., in the form of indirect costs such as long-term health-care for rising rates of childhood obesity. When we factor in these very real but externalized costs, the U.S. *lowest purchase* price model certainly costs more than the Italian *best value* model. School lunch is a huge investment—more than \$7 billion in the U.S.—why not direct this money to programs that promote child health, strengthen local economies, and protect the environment? Perhaps Rome's experience will help to open up some new ways of thinking—and the possibility of our children truly enjoying their school lunch.

**Typical Menu Items
in Rome's Schools**

A typical mid-morning snack may include...

- a banana
- jam tart
- chocolate on bread
- yogurt
(banana and chocolate are fair trade products)

A typical school lunch...

First course of either pasta, rice, soup or pizza, e.g.:

- orzo primavera
- parmigiana rice
- vegetable soup with pearl barley
- pizza margherita

Second course of either meat, fish, eggs, lentils, cheese, or cured meats, e.g.:

- chicken breast with olives
- cod fillet au gratin
- an omelette
- mixed sheep cheese

and

- Vegetables—cooked or raw
- Fresh bread
- Seasonal fruit
- Water

**** For more at the conference:**

- * *Mini Plenary, Tuesday, October 10: “From the Neighborhood to the Nation—Policy Issues in Farm to Cafeteria”*
- * *School meals are a hot topic this year! Look for workshops on farm to cafeteria in the **Global Food Issues, Food and Institutions, and Food and Communities** themes.*

Resources on innovative school meal programs:

CFSC Farm to School and Farm to College Programs:
www.foodsecurity.org/farm_to_school.html;
www.foodsecurity.org/farm_to_college.html
 Cornell University Farm to School Program:
www.farmtoschool.cce.cornell.edu
 National Farm to School Network:
www.farmtoschool.org
 Rethinking School Lunch:
www.ecoliteracy.org/programs/rsl.html
Slow Food in Schools:
www.slowfoodusa.org/education/index.html
 WHY's Food Security Learning Center, Farm to Cafeteria topic:
www.worldhungeryear.org/flsc/



Photo: Fair Trade Foundation

SHARING (continued from page 1)

alternatives. As more and more centers of resistance emerge throughout the world—from trade agreement resistance to land reform, from community gardens and farm-to-cafeteria initiatives to immigrant farmer and farmworker campaigns—we must learn from each other and connect to form a strong, unified movement. If corporations can attempt to globalize our food system, then we can and *must* globalize our resistance.

An increasingly important rallying call for our diverse movements—and a strong theme of this year's conference—is that of food sovereignty (see pg.7, "Bridging Borders through Food Sovereignty"). Food sovereignty encompasses food security issues while addressing the right of people to define their own food and agricultural policies. Those of us in the U.S. and other wealthy countries arguably have a special charge when it comes to food sovereignty. We must work towards achieving domestic food sovereignty while challenging current policies and practices that impede the food sovereignty of others.

CFSC, Food Secure Canada, and their partners have taken a monumental step in organizing the "Bridging Borders Toward Food Security" conference, set to take place October 7-11th in Vancouver, Canada. The conference will explore issues that transcend national borders, and it will have a 'global' track specifically dedicated to the intersection of domestic and international issues. CFSC's International Links Committee has put together this edition of *CFS News* to reflect the global theme of the Vancouver conference. The articles, which cover a spectrum of issues from trade to school food to youth movements, refer the reader to additional links and to corresponding workshops of the Vancouver conference when appropriate.

The International Links Committee looks forward to continuing this important dialogue beyond Vancouver, building upon new developments related to food sovereignty and cross-border cooperation launched at the conference. Our goals are to strengthen CFSC's involvement in global movements and to serve as a springboard for collaboration among CFSC members on international issues.

For more information on the International Links Committee and to get involved, check out www.foodsecurity.org/committees.html or stop by the International Links Committee meeting in Vancouver.

New Initiatives for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development

Linda Elswick, SARD Program Manager, Humane Society International

The UN Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD) Initiative, launched at the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, is focused on empowering people to shape their local food systems to achieve food security. It is a multi-stakeholder undertaking, based on the premise that collaborative action by all—community, government, development organizations—is essential to scale up successful regional SARD initiatives. There are new SARD projects underway around the world, such as:

- In Kenya, a group of farmers, pastoralists, slaughterhouse workers, businesses, and local and international NGOs is developing community-based infrastructure and skills to bring better returns from livestock production, a key source of livelihoods in Eastern Africa. The Kenya Livestock Working Group works with counterparts in other regions as part of the nascent Global Livestock Working Group.

- The Canadian government is coordinating a web-based SARD Resource Facility to identify sustainable agriculture practices and successful SARD efforts. The resource facility will draw on the community experience of grass-roots organizations around the world.

- SARD will undergo a global review at the UN in 2008 and 2009. Communities across the globe will have the opportunity to use this event to reiterate the call for people-centered SARD initiatives that work toward food security for all.

For more information about the SARD Initiative, please visit www.fao.org/SARD/en/sard/2001/index.html, or email lswick@hsius.org.

AGRICULTURE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Immigrant Farmers: Building Food Security and in the U.S. and “Back Home”

Tony Machacha, Program Associate, National Immigrant Farming Initiative (NIFI)



As America's farming population steadily shrinks, many immigrants and refugees come to the U.S. with extensive agricultural experience and a passion for working the land. The National Immigrant Farming Initiative (NIFI), a collaborative effort of Heifer International and other partners around the country, strengthens the capacity of immigrants to farm successfully and to advance sustainable farming and food systems.

In this photo, Mr. Visoth Kim, an immigrant from Cambodia and a member of the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project in Massachusetts, takes part in a NIFI-sponsored workshop held at Growing Power in Milwaukee, WI. Mr. Kim grows over a dozen kinds of vegetables for ethnic and mainstream markets. He has shared his knowledge with other farmers in the U.S., as well as those in Cambodia during a recent visit home. For more on NIFI, visit www.immigrantfarming.org.

**** For more at the conference:**

* *Global Food Issues* theme: **“Immigrant Farmers and Farm Laborers: Building Local Food Systems in the U.S. and ‘Back Home’”**

Food for 21st Century Cities

As cities expand, so do the food needs of urban families. In the year 2000, over two billion people lived in cities, and by 2030 this figure will have doubled. In the majority of the world's cities, one in four people—and two in five children with single parents—live in poverty and food insecurity. Feeding 21st century cities and meeting the food needs of urban families will present a great opportunity—and challenge—for urban and peri-urban agriculture. The CFSC's North American Initiative on Urban Agriculture has been exploring the huge potential of urban farming since 2000, and will be featured at the Vancouver conference.



*Urban agriculture in Caracas, Venezuela.
Photo: C.Schiavoni*

**** For more at the conference:**

* *Food and Cities* theme: including **“Building a North American Initiative on Urban Agriculture”**

Resources on urban agriculture (UA):

Growing Better Cities: Urban Agriculture for Sustainable Development. Luc Mougeot, et al. (Ottawa: IDRC, 2006.)

Urban Agriculture: Food, Jobs and Sustainable Cities. Jac Smit, Annu Ratta, and Joe Nasr. (New York: UNDP, 1996.)

American Community Gardening Association:
<http://communitygarden.org/>

City Farmer: <http://www.cityfarmer.org>

CFSC's Urban Agriculture Committee:

http://foodsecurity.org/ua_home.html

IDRC, Growing Better Cities:

http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-92997-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture & Food Security (RUA): www.ruaf.org

UN FAO, Food for the Cities:

<http://www.fao.org/fcit/index.asp>

Urban Agriculture Blog:

<http://www.cityfarmer.org/deskSmit.html>

Jac Smit, The Urban Agriculture Network President, looks at UA in the context of hunger, climate change, and refugees.

WHY's Food Security Learning Center—Community Gardens:

<http://www.worldhungeryear.org/fslc/>

GLOBAL CONVERGENCES

Terra Madre 2006

Siena Chrisman, International Program Assistant, WHY

The Slow Food movement, founded by Carlo Petrini in Italy in 1986, is an antidote to the global fast food addiction. Slow Food defends food and agricultural biodiversity worldwide, and can help communities recover their culinary riches and artisanal skills. Slow Food promotes food that is “Good, Clean, and Fair”: food that tastes good and is culturally appropriate, grown and produced in an environmentally sound way through fair labor practices, and equally available to all.

To promote these values, Slow Food is hosting the second meeting of **Terra Madre, a World Meeting of Food Communities**, in Turin, Italy, October 26-30, 2006. Terra Madre is a forum for all those who grow, raise, catch, cook, and produce food in ways that respect the environment, defend human dignity, and protect the health of consumers. Terra Madre 2006 will focus on strengthening food networks; on agroecology; and on market access for small-scale producers. Representatives from the CFSC will join over 6,000 food producers, cooks, and academics from five continents at Terra Madre 2006.



Two cheesemakers from southern France exhibit goat cheeses at Salone de Gusto in Turin, Italy, 2004. Terra Madre occurs at the same time as this international food festival. Photo: Ken Meter ©2004

To learn more, visit: www.slowfoodusa.org, www.slowfood.com, www.terramadre2006.org

World Social Forum 2006: Food Sovereignty in Venezuela and Beyond

Christina Schiavoni, International Coordinator, WHY

Food sovereignty was a prominent theme of the 2006 World Social Forum/Second Social Forum of the Americas, held in Caracas, Venezuela, this past January. This mass convergence brought together progressive movements for change from across the Americas and other parts of the world, including strong representation from Via Campesina and a delegation of food and farm leaders from the U.S.

The location of this year's Forum was of special significance, as food sovereignty is a key objective of the Venezuelan political process known as the Bolivarian Revolution. Venezuela's current efforts towards food sovereignty include agrarian reform; rural development programs; subsidized grocery stores; urban agriculture initiatives; and creation of cooperatives and infrastructure for increased domestic food production. Venezuela has taken a strong stance against free trade agreements, presenting alternative agreements for regional cooperation that respect each nation's right to food sovereignty. Additionally, Venezuela has a ban on GMOs and has launched efforts to support and protect the agro-ecological knowledge and genetic resources of its small-scale producers.

Live reports from the 2006 World Social Forum:

www.worldhungeryear.org/international

In Motion Magazine series on agroecology initiatives in Venezuela:

www.inmotionmagazine.com



A display of native seeds and crops brought by Via Campesina members from their home regions to the World Social Forum.

Photo: Christina Schiavoni

WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY COALITION?

The CFSC is a national network of organizations forging new ground in developing innovative approaches to food and farm needs for communities across America. Started in 1994, it is at the forefront of building a national movement around community food security.

WHY SHOULD I BECOME A MEMBER?

Becoming a member is a way to strengthen your connection to the Coalition and other related organizations and individuals across the country. Your membership helps build a dynamic national movement, and provides important support for innovative CFS initiatives. Membership also comes with certain benefits: a subscription to the quarterly CFS News newsletter, voting privileges (for organizations), and discounts on Coalition publications.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:

Please join at the organization member level. By doing so, it demonstrates your organization's commitment and lends us greater political strength.

- \$35 Individuals
- \$50 Small organizations, with less than \$100,000 budget
- \$100 Large organizations, with more than \$100,000 budget
- \$500 Individual life time membership
- \$_____ Low income individuals, students, or seniors (sliding scale—\$1-\$25)

PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER MERCHANDISE:

- \$12 Healthy Farms, Healthy Kids: Evaluating the Barriers and Opportunities, for Farm to School Programs. 2001.
- \$15 Full Color, original artwork, T-shirts. (100% organic cotton shirt) – Circle one: S, M, L, XL
- \$10 Feeding Young Minds, 2005.
- \$30 Seeds of Change: Strategies for Food Security for the Inner City. 1993.
- \$18 What's Cooking: A Guide to Community Food Assessments. 2002.
- \$22 Evaluation Toolkit and Handbook. 2004.
- \$10 Linking Farms with Schools. 2004.

Name: _____ Organization: _____

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RESTORING (continued from page 1)

concerns. These initiatives and programs will address hunger and food insecurity, promote a better connection between healthy food, obesity prevention, and farming, and strengthen local and regional food systems.

While not intended as a final list of initiatives and programs that CFSC and its partners will bring before Congress, the following policy items provide a good sense of what we will support:

- To strengthen food assistance programs we want to broaden Food Stamp eligibility to include all legal immigrants, streamline and simplify the Food Stamp application process, and encourage greater consumption of fruits and vegetables by food stamp recipients
- Increase funding for the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) including both the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) and senior versions

- Expand the size and scope of the USDA Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program (CFP)
- Strengthen community food security approaches to nutrition education
- Encourage nutrient-dense food distribution in emergency and food assistance programs to align commodity programs with regional food system development
- Expand Farm to Cafeteria by appropriating funds for the “Access to Local Foods and School Gardens” program authorized in the 2004 Child Nutrition Act
- Expand the Fruit and Vegetable Pilot Program to all 50 states
- Institute a pilot project to scale up food policy councils for local and regional food system development
- Provide additional support for marketing, planning, and financing to promote retail food outlets in urban and rural “food deserts.”
- Renew and initiate federal

support for the various forms of community-based urban agriculture

Other FFPP work groups are addressing new market opportunities for farmers, conservation and stewardship of agricultural lands, and rural communities and businesses. More information about these initiatives can be found at www.farmandfoodpolicy.org. It is expected that the FFPP will issue a declaration of principles in late November that identifies the direction and initiatives that are required to restore the balance in national food and farm policy. At that point the whole process will accelerate rapidly through 2007 to secure passage of a farm bill that that promotes healthy eating, protects the environment, eliminates hunger and food insecurity, strengthens communities, and builds robust local and regional farms.