



FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

*Join the local, national
and international movement
to regain control of our food and farm system*

Food Sovereignty: Putting People First

ALL PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO DECIDE WHAT THEY EAT and to ensure that agriculture in their community is fair and healthy for everyone. This is the basic principle behind food sovereignty, a concept that family farmers celebrate and practice around the world. If you want to support domestic food security through the production of healthy food at a fair price, and you believe that farmers should have the first right to local and regional markets, then food sovereignty is for you.

The global food and farm system is broken. In the middle of one of the most productive agricultural periods ever, farmers can't earn a fair price for what they raise. Meanwhile, more than 850 million people around the world go hungry every day. As corporate controlled agriculture spreads across the globe, the social and the environmental costs weigh heavy on our own communities.

Profits for a few seed, agrichemical and food processing corporations outweigh the needs of all of the rest of us. The system no longer values healthy, delicious food, productive and sustainable rural communities, or the people's right to make decisions about how to run their communities and their farms.

The National Family Farm Coalition, an advocacy group that represents family farm organizations nationwide, is a member of La Via Campesina, the largest international movement of family farmer, fisher, farm worker, forester and indigenous groups in the world. Together, they are working on local, national and international initiatives to defend food sovereignty, the right of all people to choose where and how their food is produced.

“We’re not just a little group in Wisconsin or D.C., we’re part of a global movement that’s going to have a say in setting fair food policy at the international level.”

—JOEL GREENO, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN RAW MILK PRODUCERS PRICING ASSOCIATION; EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, NFFC

Food Sovereignty Starts With You

NAME: Joel Greeno, Greeno Acres

HOMETOWN: Kendall, Wisconsin

OCCUPATION: Family farmer—dairy (raw milk)

FARMING: 15 years. The Greenos were farming in Scotland before emigrating more than 100 years ago.

ORGANIZATION: American Raw Milk Producers Pricing Association



“FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IS ABOUT FAIR TRADE, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY, ENERGY INDEPENDENCE, ALL THAT, BUT IT REALLY STARTS WITH YOU—WHERE YOU BUY YOUR FOOD, HOW YOU TAKE CARE OF YOUR NEIGHBOR. IT’S THAT SIMPLE.”

Earning a fair price

Joel works to secure a fair price for raw milk producers in addition to facilitating seminars on sustainable bio-fuel and rotational grazing for farmers.

How food sovereignty helps

Joel helped found Scenic Central Dairy Cooperative which has grown from 16 to 200 farmers in 10 years. Scenic Central secures a price that is 25-40 cents more per hundredweight than the nearest competitor. For a dairy farmer with 50 cows this could mean an additional \$3,600 a year.

Farmers Helping Farmers

NAME: Ben Burkett, B&B Farm

HOMETOWN: Petal, Mississippi

OCCUPATION: Family farmer—collard greens, okra, squash, cabbage, watermelon and timber



FARMING: 33 years. 4th generation farmer.

ORGANIZATIONS: Mississippi Association of Cooperatives; Federation of Southern Cooperatives

“I’VE BEEN A FARMER FOR 33 YEARS. I’VE MADE A GOOD LIVING AND I NEVER WANTED TO DO ANYTHING ELSE.”

Gaining access to land and local markets

Ben increases access to nutritious and affordable food of low-income Mississippians by creating local market opportunities for family farmers. Cooperatives also work to keep minority farmers on the land.

How food sovereignty helps

A Hurricane Katrina survivor, Ben works with farmers across the country to provide relief to people affected by the storm. When Katrina hit farms along the Gulf Coast a network of farmers responded with supplies and volunteers within three days.

Local Food for Local Markets

NAME: Dena Hoff, Sand Creek Farm

HOMETOWN: Glendive, Montana

OCCUPATION: Family farmer—sheep, cattle, alfalfa, corn, beans, sugar beets, okra, apples, berries



FARMING: 27 years. “I always knew I wanted to be a farmer.”

ORGANIZATION: Northern Plains Resource Council

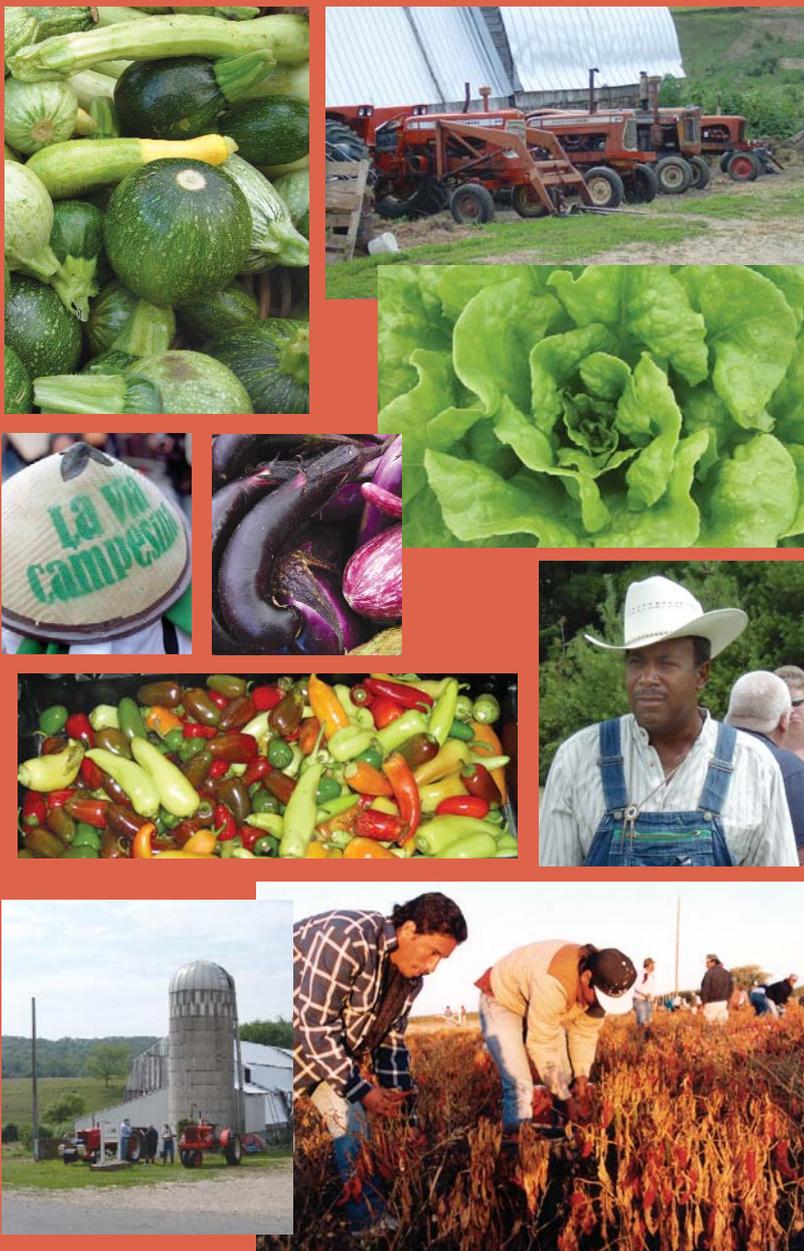
“MY FIRST RULE OF FARMING IS TO FEED YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY. FORGET NATIONAL PRODUCTION, FORGET ABOUT PRODUCTION FOR EXPORT. ALL THAT MEANS NOTHING IF YOU CAN’T FEED YOURSELF AND HELP FEED YOUR NEIGHBORS.”

First right to markets

Dena works to put local food in its rightful, exalted place by starting a community kitchen and a farm-to-table restaurant. She is putting into action the concept that local farmers should have the first right to local and regional markets while providing healthy, nutritious food to consumers.

How food sovereignty helps

The community kitchen will provide space for making, processing and marketing local food, adding value for farmers and helping break corporate control over the market.



Mobilizing Farm Labor and the Landless

NAME: Carlos Marentes

HOMETOWN: El Paso, Texas

OCCUPATION: Farm labor organizer

EXPERIENCE: Organizing farm workers for almost 30 years

ORGANIZATION: Border Agricultural Workers Project



“THE CURRENT AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM DESTROYS RURAL COMMUNITIES IN THE SOUTH, FORCING MILLIONS TO MIGRATE, RISKING THEIR LIVES AT THE BORDER. FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IS OUR ALTERNATIVE. INSTEAD OF BUILDING WALLS, WE SHOULD FIGHT FOR HEALTHY RURAL COMMUNITIES, SO PEOPLE CAN STAY ON THEIR LAND, AND PRODUCE THEIR OWN FOOD.”

Protecting the rights of farm workers and families

As the director of a farm labor center on the border, Carlos organizes and advocates on behalf of farm workers on the local, national and international levels.

How food sovereignty helps

Border Agricultural Workers Project organizes thousands of workers to ensure them a living wage and fair working conditions. The tensions on the border underline the connection between displaced farmers in the south and exploited workers in the north. Food sovereignty respects the rights of all people working in agriculture.

Farmers Around the World Working Together

NAME: Mariam Sissoko

HOMETOWN: Samé, Mali, West Africa

OCCUPATION: Family farmer—garden vegetables, millet, okra, goats and cattle

FARMING: “I was born a farmer and my family has been farming forever.”



ORGANIZATIONS: Coordination of Women of Samé, Mali;
La Via Campesina International

“I COULD NOT IMAGINE THAT FARMERS IN THE U.S. HAVE PROBLEMS LIKE US. IN A WAY, THIS GIVES ME GREAT HOPE. THEY WANT US TO BELIEVE THAT WE CAN’T WORK TOGETHER BECAUSE WE’RE TOO DIFFERENT. NOW I KNOW THE OPPOSITE TO BE TRUE.”

Unity

Mariam organizes women farmers in northern Mali to plant crops for healthy food and an independent source of income. She has planned national and international forums on food sovereignty.

How food sovereignty helps

Mariam works with women whose husbands had to leave them and village life in search of work. Food sovereignty helped her recognize that the problems of her community were not isolated incidents, but affecting farmers and rural communities everywhere.

Organizing and Advocating

NAME: George Naylor, Naylor Farm

HOMETOWN: Churdan, Iowa

OCCUPATION: Family farmer—corn, soybeans, apples

FARMING: 30 years, 3rd generation farmer

ORGANIZATION: Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement



“A SIGN IN IOWA READS, ‘IOWAN FARMERS FEED THE WORLD.’ IT REALLY MEANS ‘IOWAN FARMERS FEED CORPORATE PIGS.’ WE NEED REAL SOLUTIONS THAT DO NOT GIVE CORPORATIONS CONTROL OVER OUR FOOD SUPPLY AND PRODUCE FOOD DAMAGING TO OUR HEALTH. THE WHOLE FABRIC OF RURAL LIFE—AND OUR ENTIRE SOCIETY—IS AT STAKE.”

Making farm policy work for farmers

George advocates at home and abroad for farm policy that strengthens diversified family farming and respects every country’s food sovereignty.

How food sovereignty helps

George’s voice at trade and agriculture meetings elevates the need for a fair price and a farmer’s bill of rights in international policy discussions.

EVERY FARMER CAN BE PART OF THE SOLUTION



What You Can Do

Farmers around the world see firsthand the disastrous consequences of our current agricultural system. They also lead the way in finding better ways to do things. From learning healthier ways to farm their own land to participating in the reform of national and international food and farm policy, there is an opportunity for every family farmer to be a part of the solution.

Building farm to cafeteria projects to bring locally-grown food into school lunch programs: It encourages children to eat healthily while buying from independent, small-scale farmers.

Creating an alternative U.S. Farm Bill: The NFFC's proposed Food from Family Farms Act is designed to ensure fair prices for family farmers and healthy food for rural communities here and around the world.

Neighbor to neighbor: Farmers responded to Hurricane Katrina by sending tractors, volunteers and thousands of pounds of food and medicine to communities on the Gulf Coast.

Each one teach one: U.S. farmers travel across Africa, Europe, South and Central America, Asia and the Middle East and host family farmers from abroad to share organizing, policy and farming techniques.

Farmers' voices shaping international trade debates: Farmers and farm workers are demanding trade and agricultural policies that respect their rights and value their contributions to the food system.

Join the movement for food sovereignty—call the National Family Farm Coalition at 202.543.5675 or email nffc@nffc.net

NFFC FOOD SOVEREIGNTY VISION STATEMENT

We envision empowered communities everywhere working together democratically to advance a food system that ensures health, justice and dignity for all...

Farmers, farm workers, ranchers, and fishers will have control over their lands, water, seeds, and livelihoods [and] all people will have access to healthy, local, delicious food.

For more information about how you can be a part of making this vision a reality, contact the NFFC at:

110 Maryland Avenue, NE Ste 307
Washington, DC, 20002
phone 202.543.5675



nffc.net

