

WORKING TOGETHER  
*Civil Society Working  
for  
Food Security in Canada*

*Edited by*  
Mustafa Koc and Rod MacRae

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# 1. Introduction

Working Together: Civil Society Input for Food Security in Canada was held on 15-17 June 2001, at Ryerson Polytechnic University, Toronto. This conference was a first in Canada, bringing together representatives of various civil society organizations and networks from every province and territory to develop strategies for increasing Canada's commitment to Food Security both domestically and internationally.

The conference aimed to:

1. develop a working plan for a civil society based national action plan for food security;
2. assess the contributions of the Canadian government to food security nationally and internationally;
3. make practical policy proposals to provincial and federal governments on achieving the goals of Canada's Action Plan for Food Security.

The conference was designed as an interactive event, where, besides a number of keynote speakers, participants were also involved in question and answer sessions and workshops on designated topics. Four day-long workshops on four key themes included contributions from some keynote speakers as well as active participation of workshop participants. These themes were:

- Right to Food and Social Justice.
- Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems.
- Community Health and Food Security.
- Food Security in Canadian Foreign Policy (Aid and Trade).

The proceedings of this conference was compiled by Mustafa Koc and Rod MacRae. We hope that this document will begin a discussion rather than ending it. We see this as a working document to be expanded reflecting our common concerns and the diversity of our special needs.

The conference also passed a resolution recommending the formation of a national Canadian Food Security Network. Information on the network can be found at:

<http://www.ryerson.ca/~foodsec/foodsec/fd.htm>

The Conference recognizes that food security requires adequate amounts of safe, nutritious, culturally acceptable food be accessible to all in a dignified and affordable manner; that food producers be enabled to earn a fair return on their labour and that food production methods sustain the environment. These basic elements of food security require a fundamentally new direction for Canadian and world food and health promotion systems.

## 2. The context for the event

Most of us have been doing our best in our communities, often not in touch with others who share similar concerns and struggle for similar objectives. Important changes are taking place in the global economy, and in international relations affecting the future of our agriculture and food system. As citizens we feel that we have limited input on the directions of these changes. We believe that there is an increasing need for informed citizen participation in important decisions dealing with food policy, food safety, health and welfare.

On June 6, 1999 several members of civil society met in Toronto to discuss the possibility of organ-

izing a Canadian Food Security Network: a network of citizens, as farmers, community organizers, practitioners, researchers, academics, policy makers, and consumers who view access to food as a basic human right and demand that the health and well being of people should be the first priority of the food system. Our communication led to the formation of the **Food-Democracy Network**.

Since then, dialogue across the country has supported and encouraged the need for a forum to discuss emerging issues in greater depth. At the same time, the Canadian Government was in the process of preparing a submission to the World Food Summit – Five Years Later (WFS-FYL) to be held in Rome in early November 2001. On March 9, 2001 several of us from every province and territory communicated by a teleconference to discuss issues regarding the upcoming World Food Summit FYL in Rome, development of a national food security network, holding a food security conference. Eileen Durand, from the Global Affairs Bureau of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, also took part in this teleconference. At the end of the teleconference we agreed to hold a conference in Toronto of civil society organizations working for food security in Canada, provided there would be funding support from the federal government agencies. Dynamic action by the Global Affairs Bureau, in partnership with CIDA, IDRC, Health Canada and Native and Northern Affairs Canada, made this event possible on such a short notice.

The conference was planned through the combined efforts of the Centre at Ryerson and a steering committee to work out an effective program and criteria for supporting participants. This process relied on existing regional networks from across Canada to identify possible participants and facilitate an open framework for selection. As planning progressed, interested candidates from all provinces and territories were encouraged to attend. Key players from governmental and non-governmental organizations were also invited, and close attention was paid to ensuring that all sectors discussing issues around food security were represented. Based on the strengths and experiences of each participant, and the goals of the conference, workshops were created around the issues of Right to Food and Social Justice, Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems, Community Health and Food Security, and International Aid and Canadian Trade.

Working Together: Civil Society Input for Food Security in Canada was held on 15-17 June 2001, at Ryerson Polytechnic University, Toronto. This conference was a first in Canada, bringing together representatives of various civil society organizations and networks from every province and territory to develop strategies for increasing Canada's commitment to Food Security both domestically and internationally.

#### THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT

*The World Food Summit took place in 1996, November 13-17 at the FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy. This Summit was called by the FAO in response to the continued widespread concerns regarding undernutrition and the questionable capacity of agriculture to meet future food needs. Approximately 10,000 participants were present at the World Food Summit including representatives from 185 countries. The purpose of the Summit was to achieve a renewed global commitment to the elimination of hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity in the world. The outcome of the World Food Summit was the adoption of two documents called the 'Rome Declaration on World Food Security' and the 'World Food Summit Plan of Action' by 112 Heads or Deputy Heads of State and Government, and more than 70 high-level representatives from other countries. The 'Rome Declaration' is a list of seven commitments that provide the foundation for achieving world food security, and the 'Plan of Action' provides details regarding the goals necessary to achieve these commitments. The following passage has been highlighted from the Rome Declaration on World Food Security: "We pledge our political will and our common and national commitment to achieving food security for all and to an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than 2015."*

#### Source:

FAO. *World Food Summit: 13-17 November 1996 Rome Italy.*

[http://www.fao.org/wfs/index\\_en.htm](http://www.fao.org/wfs/index_en.htm)

As an invitation only event, the Conference brought over 150 representatives of various Canadian food security organizations, food banks, social service agencies, farmers organizations, and representatives of various government agencies. Funding for the conference was provided by Agriculture and AgriFood Canada, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Department of Northern and Native Affairs, Health Canada, and the International Development Research Centre.

### 3. Objectives

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The Working Together: Civil Society Input for Food Security in Canada Conference was conceived by the Centre for Studies in Food Security at Ryerson University as the first stage of a 5 year research program to evaluate existing food security initiatives at the local, regional, national, and international levels in Canada, and to contribute to the policy making process.

The research program objectives are:

1. to facilitate discussion among the civil society organizations, policy makers at different levels of government, and academic researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of current food security initiatives;
2. to identify provincial and federal policy priorities and develop policy proposals for a food security program which will fulfill Canada's international and national food security commitments in the 21<sup>st</sup> century;
3. to identify local/regional policy priorities and develop action plans or local food system initiatives to match local/urban demand with local/agricultural supply in the 21st century;
4. to identify common points of agreement and contention among different sectors, institutions, and agents in the agri-food sector regarding food security and how to achieve it;
5. to develop a working plan for a "bi-annual food security monitor," a report which will integrate input from different segments of the agri-food system, nationally and internationally; this report will contain information on the extent of food insecurity and the best solutions to solve it.

#### Objectives of the Conference

The conference was the key first element of this process, and was designed to address the list of goals summarized above. As the first stage of this process, the conference aimed to:

1. develop a working plan for a civil society based national action plan for food security;
2. assess the contributions of the Canadian government to food security nationally and internationally;
3. make practical policy proposals to provincial and federal governments on achieving the goals of Canada's Action Plan for Food Security.

The conference was designed as an interactive event, where, besides a number of keynote speakers, participants were also involved in question and answer sessions and workshops on designated topics. Four day-long workshops on four key themes included contributions from some keynote speakers as well as active participation of workshop participants. These themes were:

- Right to Food and Social Justice.
- Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems.
- Community Health and Food Security.
- Food Security in Canadian Foreign Policy (Aid and Trade).

This event was organized on short notice to provide direction to governmental agencies and civil society representatives presenting Canada's viewpoint in Rome in November 2001. With our limited

budget, we tried to communicate with civil society representatives in all parts of Canada. We tried to bring as many representatives as possible from diverse regions, communities, sectors, and social backgrounds. We were only partially successful in our attempts. Some could not join us because of financial or time constraints, others were frustrated with consultations that felt had not produced concrete outcomes in the past and refused to attend. While we attempted to bring in representatives from diverse organizations and backgrounds, it is important to remember that participants were not elected or mandated by local committees to attend. In this way, they all made contributions as individuals, albeit of diverse experiences.

We believe that this Conference was a first step in bringing us together. Conference participants unanimously supported a resolution for the creation of a national **Canadian Food Security Network** and mandated the conference organizing committee to continue to explore ways of facilitating a network with a broad-based national membership. The Centre for Studies in Food Security has created a list serve for this on-going process and welcomes your voice. If you want to join, please check our web site at:

*Distribution of Conference Participants  
by province/country of origin*

Alberta	2
British Columbia	22
Manitoba	7
New Brunswick	3
Newfoundland	4
Nova Scotia	1
Nunavut	1
Ontario <sup>1</sup>	83
Prince Edward Island	2
Quebec	13
Saskatchewan	6
Yukon	1
<i>International:</i>	
Bangladesh	1
Italy	1
USA	2

*1 – This number includes local volunteers and organizers*

<http://www.ryerson.ca/~foodsec/foodsec/fd.htm>

## 4. Thanks

This event was a collective endeavor involving countless hours of communications, good will and cooperation. We would like to thank our sponsors for demonstrating once again their support of food security and the event. This event would not have been possible without their generous support, and willingness to listen to civil society viewpoints. We want to thank Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, CIDA, Health Canada, IDRC, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Eileen Durand has played a very important role in facilitating the dialogue between the conference and recognizes various government agencies, and Stuart Clark, the Canadian civil society representative to the World Food Summit/FYL was pivotal in the organization of this event and always an e-mail or phone call away when we needed his help or suggestions. Debbie Field was instrumental in pressing for a national agenda and action, and was a key member of the local arrangements committee. We thank FoodShare for nurturing us during the Conference.

Members of the organizing committee were always an e-mail or a phone call away from the conference coordinators, advised them on many issues, and communicated with other civil society representatives in their region.

Stuart Clark, Cathleen Kneen, Rod MacRae, Wayne Roberts, and Vida Stevens worked for many long hours as workshop moderators, identifying keynote speakers and summarizing workshop reports.

Dozens of volunteers whose names are too long to list here worked with the organizers, to evaluate local arrangements, help in registration, and take minutes during the conference and workshops. Mustafa Koc coordinated the planning and implementation of the conference. Without his tireless efforts, the event would have never happened. Tracey Lue, did an impeccable job in conference administration, working with Cecilia Rocha, and Jennifer Welsh to sort out the complicated post-conference accounts. The final report has been compiled by Mustafa Koc and Rod MacRae based on typed and taped conference minutes, and workshop reports prepared by workshop coordinators. Our deepest thanks to Murray Pomerance and The Media Studies Working Group—they made this publication a reality. We want to thank Micheline Beaudry, Neil Glauser, Anne Marie Hamelin, Maura Hanrahan, Graham Riches, and Beth Wilson for their assistance during this process. The final report was reviewed by the organizing committee and will be posted at the Centre for Studies in Food Security web-site at Ryerson. Despite our best efforts, we admit that this was not an easy task. If we missed your point in our summary please post your comments and observations to our electronic bulletin board at <http://www.ryerson.ca/foodsec/foodsec/worki.htm>. We hope to continue to work together for food security at home and globally.

## 5. The need to make progress on food security in Canada

The importance of food to human health and the economy is well understood and profound. As one of the vital elements of human existence, from production to consumption, food involves many of the most important cultural, social, and economic activities of human societies. Unfortunately, despite all the scientific and technological advances that have modernized food production and distribution, hunger and malnutrition are still threatening the health and well being of hundreds of millions of people around the world. Far from disappearing, hunger and malnutrition are on the increase even in advanced industrialized countries like Canada. As evidence of this, food bank use in Canada doubled in the decade of the 90s. The continuing reality of hunger and the questions about sustainability of the current practices, both locally and globally, make food security an essential concern. Food security is defined as the condition in which all people at all times can acquire safe, nutritionally adequate, and personally acceptable foods in a manner that maintains human dignity. This definition of food security requires the satisfaction of four components.

1. **Availability:** sufficient supplies of food for all people at all times.
2. **Accessibility:** access to food for all at all times.
3. **Acceptability:** culturally acceptable and appropriate food and distribution systems.
4. **Adequacy:** nutritional quality, safety, and sustainability of available sources and methods of food supply.

Food security at a national level does not indicate food security at a community, household, or individual level. In Canada, there certainly is not a problem with producing enough food; rather the issue of food insecurity arises at the community and household level because of the barriers to accessing food.

The Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action in 1996 called for each nation to develop and implement a national plan of action to achieve food security domestically and internationally. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada had the lead for the development of Canada's Action Plan on Food Security.

The Action Plan for Food Security is Canada's response to the World Food Summit (WFS) where 187 countries committed to reduce by half the number of undernourished people no later than the year 2015. The structure of Canada's Plan is based on the World Food Summit Plan of Action endorsed in Rome in 1996. In the context of Canada's obligations related to the Goal of the World Food Summit, this plan presents the Canadian perspective on the complex issue of food security and then sets out the actions themselves within the broad context of current challenges. It recognizes that food



security implies access to adequate food and sufficient food supplies and that poverty reduction, social justice and sustainable food systems are essential conditions.

This Action Plan involves all government levels and civil society organizations (CSO). It builds on Canada's international commitments and domestic economic, social and environmental programs and policies. This multi-sectoral approach constitutes the strength of Canada's Action Plan since it involves the federal governments, provinces and territories, CSOs and private institutions and groups. It comprises a combination of domestic and international initiatives and activities at home and abroad to address the many aspects of food security, including ensuring a safe and nutritious food supply for all, finding economically and environmentally sustainable ways to increase food production, and promoting health and education. This report of the Working Together Conference represents a preliminary civil society response to Canada's Plan of Action.

## 6. Key Messages from Sessions

### 6.1 Opening Plenary (13:00-14:30)

#### *Conference Chair and Welcome*

#### *Mustafa Koc, Centre for Studies in Food Security, Ryerson University*

In his introduction, Dr. Koc argued that in terms of diagnosing problems or offering solutions, this conference has little to add. Previous conferences and workshops have already offered ample insights. The main purpose of the conference was bringing civil society representatives together to find common strategies for action against hunger and food insecurity at home and abroad.

#### *FOOD INSECURITY IN CANADIAN HOUSEHOLDS*

*According to the National Population Health Survey (NPHS), released by Statistics Canada (August 15th) about 8% of Canadians, or just under 2.5 million people, had to compromise the quality or the quantity of their diet at least once in 1998/99 because of a lack of money. In the same period, an additional 0.5 million people worried that they would not have enough to eat because they were short on cash. In total, the survey found that an estimated 3 million Canadians, about 10%, were considered to be living in what is known as a "food-insecure" household at some point during 1998/99.*

*The report indicated that children aged 0 to 17 were the age group most likely to live in a food-insecure household (14%), and seniors aged 65 or older, least likely (4%). But children in such households were not necessarily undernourished. Adult caregivers tend to sacrifice their own diet so that children will not be hungry, the report claimed. One-third (32%) of all single-mother households were food insecure to some extent, and 28% reported their diet had been compromised.*

*The report proclaims that food insecurity in Canada is strongly associated with household income. More than one-third (35%) of people in low-income households reported some form of food insecurity in 1998/99. About 30% felt that their diet had been compromised.*

*The NPHS found that food insecurity was not limited to low-income households. About 14% of residents of middle-income households reported some form of food insecurity, and nearly 12% reported that their diet had been compromised. The existence of food insecurity at higher income levels, according to the report, may have to do with the calculation of annual income as a static measure which may not be sensitive to sudden economic changes that contribute to temporary bouts of food insecurity.*

#### *Source:*

*Health Reports, Vol 12, no 4, August 15, 2001 Catalogue No: 82-003-XIE*

*<http://www.statcan.ca:80/Daily/English/010815/d010815a.htm>*

Koc pointed out the great paradox – that even though we live in one of the wealthiest countries with one of the most efficient food systems in the World, farmers and fishers live in a chronic state of crisis while a significant percentage of Canadian households live in a state of chronic food insecurity.

Koc pointed out the historical role of civil society organizations in creating a democratic mechanism of checks and balances against state power in modern democratic societies. However, unlike the state which has legitimate political authority, civil society organizations lack the legitimacy that comes with electoral power. Civil society organizations are dismissed often as self-serving interest groups, operating with limited financial resources, highly fragmented among themselves, yet expected to replace the eroding functions of the welfare state in the age of restructuring.

Koc suggested that civil society organizations have a key role in food security by not only offering certain services that the market place and the state have not been undertaking, but also serving as the social conscience of the system while working with

- the federal, provincial, and local governments to identify their responsibilities and monitor their actions for food security;
- the industry and business sector, reminding them that good corporate citizenship means not just rights but also social responsibilities and commitment to communities;
- other civil society organizations locally, nationally, and globally for food security.

Koc argued that there is already a consensus on certain issues among most Canadian civil society representatives that:

- We need explicit and comprehensive food policies that guide us globally, nationally and locally.
- We need to eradicate hunger. All members of our society should have access to a quality, health-enhancing diet. Canada also needs to play a key role in ensuring food security globally.
- We need to eradicate financial crises in Canadian farming and the fisheries. We cannot continue the personal, family and community devastation associated with these crises.
- We need to search for sustainable forms of food production and distribution.

Referring to the Canadian Action Plan on Food Security as a useful public policy document, Koc concluded that “what is needed is not a new list of things to do, but a plan of action for when, how, and by whom this agenda will be carried out.”

#### CANADA'S ACTION PLAN FOR FOOD SECURITY

*Canada's Action Plan for Food Security was developed to follow up Canada's commitments made in 1996 at the World Food Summit in Rome. A Joint Consultative Group (JCG) was assembled consisting of civil society and government representatives to create this document. Canada's Action Plan for Food Security outlines several diverse initiatives to address domestic and world food security including ensuring an adequate food supply, promoting health and education, and achieving sustainable food production. This document is not intended to be all-encompassing or 'final'. Rather, the JCG sees this document as a work in progress that is "open-ended and flexible, adaptable to changing conditions and responsive to evolving needs."*

#### Source:

*Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. 1998. Canada's Action Plan for Food Security: A response to the World Food Summit.*

*Lessons from the World Food Summit*  
*David MacDonald, School of Community and Public Affairs, Concordia University,*  
*former Chair, Global Network on Food Security*

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David MacDonald, who was involved in the civil society consultations leading to the World Food Summit in 1996 and instrumental in drafting the Action Plan for Food Security in Canada reviewed the current state of food security in Canada and the World and raised his concerns about lack of clear policy on this issue. “In something as basic as food, and the right to food, both domestically and internationally, there is no policy. That is not to say we don’t have a whole bunch of people working on food policy but there is no food policy. I would say, it’s about time.”

According to McDonald the belief in the right for people to feed themselves is something that is so basic in our make-up in this country. For example during the 1980s Africa famine, 2/3 of Canadians ‘responded’ in a significant way to this crisis.

He pointed out that there were some key milestones that lead to the World Food Summit in 1996. In the post-World War era, attempts at fast economic recovery and a stable world system lead to the founding of the World Bank and the IMF, followed by the founding of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 1945. In 1994 the ‘50 year anniversary conference’ of the World Bank and the IMF took place, and many original members were present and they talked about the original vision. They created a seed that became the ‘Global Assembly on Food Security,’ a meeting of 200 people from 60 countries. This assembly set the stage for the NGO activity that led up to the World Food Summit one year later.

NGO initiatives allowed for the insertion of civil society dialogue and changes to some of the rhetoric that was fundamental in the Canadian government’s position at the World Food Summit.

David MacDonald suggested that to have an impact, we must have a sharply focused set of priorities. “This conference won’t really make a difference unless there is a commitment to work on a single achievable task,” he argued. “We have an Agricultural policy, but to my knowledge this is a country without a food policy, domestic or international. We need one. And we are not good at transforming policy into action, and that needs to change.”

*From Seattle to Rome, Civil Society and the World Food Summit/five years later*  
*Stuart Clark, Senior Policy Advisor, Canadian Foodgrains Bank and*  
*Canadian Civil Society Delegate to the World Food Summit/five years later*

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Stuart Clark reflected on his observations as the Canadian civil society delegate to the World Food Summit-FYL arguing that “Developing an action plan (i.e. Canada’s Action Plan for Food Security) without a political will behind it really goes nowhere.”

He claimed that there are lessons to learn five years after the World Food Summit:

1. Development of an action plan without political will has little impact.
2. The UN is not a strong voice on international affairs in comparison to the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO) and these agencies need to be held accountable for the consequences to food security of the economic development and monetary stability policies they advocate for, as well as their direct actions regarding food security.
3. We need to choose the right issues and focus on them: right to food, food sovereignty, models of agricultural production, access to resources (land, water, genetic resources).

Governance and policy making are the key questions we need to include in our discussion of food security.

The next World Food Summit will focus on:

1. Repeating the parallel process of the 1996 World food summit – focusing on the link between trade and food security;
2. Multi-sectoral dialogue (i.e. NGOs, the FAO, the private sector, and government) about why the results have been so poor for the last five years, and how we can move ahead.

### *Future Directions for the Canadian Association of Food Banks* *Marjorie Bencz, Canadian Association of Food Banks*

Marjorie Bencz spoke of how poverty and hunger have been constants in human societies since the beginning of time. Now we have the resources to overcome these problems, however, continuation of poverty and hunger in modern society is a serious anomaly that needs to be addressed.

Bencz talked about the experience of the Edmonton Gleaners' Association. The Edmonton Gleaners Association, commonly known as Edmonton's Food Bank was originally incorporated to glean surplus food from the food industry and to channel it to groups providing food to people in need. It is an association that works collaboratively with, and on behalf of, a network of social service agencies and churches regarding food gleaning, food drives, client referral and advocacy. While some individuals and families do access services directly from the organization, Edmonton's Food Bank is a central warehouse and referral center for a network of over 100 agencies, churches, soup kitchens and food depots in Edmonton and the surrounding area.

Bencz argued that while welfare in the 1980s was somewhat sufficient to meet the needs of Canadians, the situation dramatically worsened over the years requiring more and more involvement of food banks.

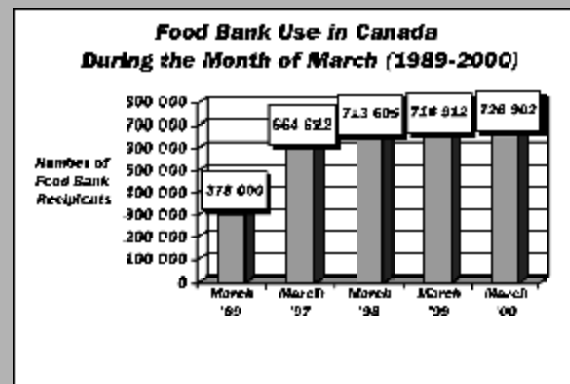
Bencz highlighted some of the dilemmas food banks face:

1. Genetically modified food – they receive a large amount of food from industry (GM foods) and therefore it is difficult to engage in discussion on this issue.
2. Food bank limitations – a lack of resources inhibits some of the work they can do.
3. Food banks can provide legitimacy to this discussion (food security) because the public understands what they do.

As the newly appointed Chair of the the Canadian Association of Food Banks (CAFB) she pointed out that their mission is short term hunger relief, but they also work towards long-term solutions for alleviating poverty and hunger.

#### TREND OF INCREASING FOOD BANK USE IN CANADA

*The first food bank in Canada was established in 1981. Since that time there has been an alarming increase in the number of people using food banks in Canada. In fact, the number of individuals requiring emergency food from food banks has risen to 726,902 in an average month (see graph below)<sup>1</sup>. That is nearly double the number of users in 1989. The graph presented right shows that increase in usage has been steady over time. Currently, at least 615 food banks and 2213 additional food assistance agencies/programs are operating in Canada<sup>1</sup> to try and meet the increasing demand.*



Source:

1. Wilson, B., Steinman, C. (2000) *HungerCount 2000: Canada's Annual Survey of Emergency Food Programs.*

*How Do We Feed the People, A First Nations Perspective*  
*Herb Naziel, Chief Samooh, Hereditary Chief of the Gilseyhu Clan (Big Frog)*

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*“We are in great trouble as evidenced by the continued physical, mental, and emotional ill health and social breakdown among Aboriginal people.”*

Referring to the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal People which had documented the continual physical, mental, and health degradation of the aboriginal people, Herb Naziel listed a number of serious problems the Aboriginal peoples of Canada are still facing.

- Unemployment rates are double digit;
- Families are living below the poverty line;
- Poor living conditions;
- Racism and low self-esteem.

Besides these social problems Aboriginal peoples are facing a number of serious economic and environmental challenges such as loss of the land base, unsafe water, pesticides and pollution, restraints on traditional fishing, trapping and hunting, loss of cultural and traditional knowledge of medicinal plants and loss of industry.

Due to the fact that most reserves are located in rural or remote areas, difficulties of transportation/travel also result in high food-costs, increasing the risk of food insecurity.

Naziel mentioned programs that the Wet’suwet’en people of Moricetown, BC have adopted to deal with food insecurity, including healthy babies, community kitchens, and community gardens. These activities target simple solutions to promote sustainable programs, lobby governments, develop regional strategies and achieve food security through public awareness.

**FOOD INSECURITY IN THE ABORIGINAL POPULATION**

*The aboriginal population is particularly vulnerable to food insecurity in Canada. Lower income and higher unemployment rates in this population appear to be the main contributors to this problem. Data taken from the 1996 census showed that the unemployment rate for aboriginals was double that of the general population (20% vs. 10%). In addition, the average income of aboriginals not living on a reserve was 34% below the national average (\$26,474) at \$17,382. The average income for aboriginals living on a reserve was even lower at \$14,055. Figures also showed that 44% of the aboriginal population not living on a reserve fell below the poverty line, compared to 17.8% of the general population.*

*Source:*

*Statistics Canada. 1996 Census of Canada.*

*(<http://www.statcan.ca/start.html>)*

*Healthy Communities: Visions for a Sustainable Food System*  
*Cathleen Kneen, BC Food Systems Network*

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*“No farmers, no food.”*

Cathleen Kneen argued that “to get rid of hunger, we need to look at the structure and context in which hunger exists.” Some of the contextual forces she mentioned were:

- de-population of rural areas and the commodification of food for export;
- the degree of control of the food system by a small number of powerful economic groups;
- the failure to recognize that the welfare of the individual is not the welfare of the community;
- reductionist solutions are dominant and they do not work.

In Kneen’s view, a sustainable food system’s goal is to provide food to the community. Sustainable food systems should be designed to meet the needs of consumers should not produce waste, and should generate producer/consumer co-satisfaction.

She believes the following are preconditions for a healthy and food secure community:

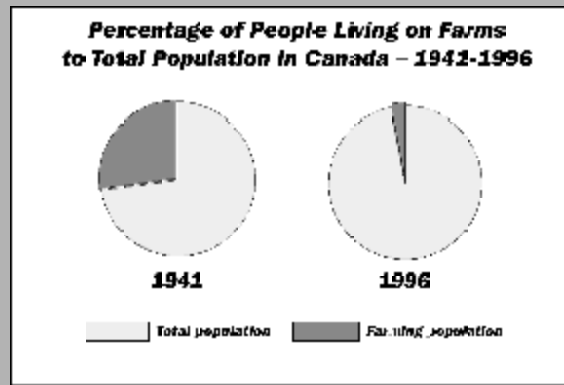
1. Farmers need to earn a living. She stated forcefully, “If you want to have sustainable

agriculture, farmers have to earn a living. You can't go on mining the people (farmers), the same way that we are mining the soil."

2. The rural community must be saved. The rural community requires infrastructure.
3. Reduce corporate control of inputs to farmers (seeds etc.).
4. Research the techniques of sustainability in agriculture.
5. Stop pollution of the environment, including GMO seeds.

#### *THE DECLINING FARMING POPULATION IN CANADA*

Since 1941, the number of farms in Canada has decreased from 732,800 to approximately 276,500 (as of 1996)<sup>1</sup>. The number of people who live on farms in Canada has dropped considerably from 3.2 million to 851,400 people<sup>1</sup>. When considered as proportion of our total population, the number of people living on farms decreased from being over a quarter of the total Canadian population in 1941, to just 3% of the population in 1996 (see chart below).



Source:

Statistics Canada. 1996 Census of Agriculture: Final Report.

(<http://www.statcan.ca/english/census96/agri.htm>)

### *The fundamental challenge of food security*

*Lise Bertrand, Direction de la santé publique de Montréal Centre*

Lise Bertrand pointed out that “building food security requires reducing social inequalities regarding food; in public health, this effort fits directly with reducing health inequalities.” The Montréal Centre Public Health adopted this approach and thus identified food security as one of its priority actions. As in all large urban centres, she argued, the people who live in less privileged districts are not getting the services they need regarding physical access, variety and cost of food. In these areas, urban development is more an add on than a priority. Before planning educational interventions for health behavioural change, we must be concerned with the many factors that affect food choices.

Bertrand proposed a multidimensional approach to food security. At the level of the individual, issues such as purchasing power and the cost of food, the absence of cooking skills, low self-esteem, the cost of housing, lack of food and the fear of it, social pressures are some of the elements that contribute to food insecurity in the household.

At the group, neighbourhood or community level, food security is affected as much by transportation systems as by the food distribution system, by the availability of community facilities (e.g. community gardens), by the resources available for community participation in the decisions that affect them.

On a societal level, argued Bertrand, policies as well as societal values that shape these policies, are important determinants of food security. All governments and branches of governments must consider the impacts of their decisions on existing patterns of inequalities. It is through engaging a diversity of actors working in partnership, she suggested, we will be most effective. Examples of structures for such collaboration include the Toronto Food Policy Council and Groupe des Partenaires pour le développement de la sécurité alimentaire dans la région de Montréal. In Montréal there is also support for local intersectoral dialogues at the neighbourhood level. Bertrand stressed the need for intersectoral approach at the provincial and national levels.

According to Bertrand, Canada's plan of action identifies interesting priorities, including poverty reduction, environmental protection, and food safety, albeit in the context of the global food economy. She suggested that we should ask the government to put more emphasis on nourishment than on the economic interests of the food industry. "Research must be based not only on increasing production, but on the long-term protection of the soil resource. Small scale production must be protected to put brakes on the ability of global firms to control domestic food production and distribution. Government support should be targeted to local production to permit available of diverse foods and local control over economic development."

Bertrand concluded that "transparency in the decision making process, raising awareness about the challenges of our food production system, about accessibility and the availability of foods, understanding of the effects of different food choices on health, on the land, on the environment, on well-being are key information priorities."

## 6. 2 Panel Discussion:

### Civil Society Organizing for Food Security (15:00-16:30)

*Chair: Marian Lucas Jefferies,  
Fredericton Diocese PWRDF, Fredericton, New Brunswick*

In this session, panelists from different regions in Canada shared their experiences of food security organizing. The session concluded with comments and questions from the floor.

*Building a Food Security Network on the 'Rock'  
Annette Stapenhorst, Newfoundland Food Security Coalition,  
St. John's, Newfoundland*

Annette Stapenhorst stated that the Action Plan was a very important document to them in Newfoundland and Labrador, providing legitimacy to the formation of a food security network. This has been critical because the context for food procurement has changed dramatically the past decade. "No longer," she said, "do our rural communities draw most of their resources from the fishery even though these resources were the reason most people settled in Newfoundland and Labrador." We have, she said, major food security issues in our rural communities, and we are facing a cultural transition that really diminishes the values of self-sufficiency.

#### *FOOD AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE NORTHERN COD*

*Newfoundlanders lost one of their main protein sources with the collapse of the Northern Cod stock and the subsequent moratorium ongoing since 1992. The codfishery had been the backbone of the culture and economy; it had generated 70% of the jobs on the island's Northeast coast. Technological changes such as factory freezer trawlers licensed by the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans ended a small-scale fishery that had been sustainable for centuries. The moratorium meant the loss of 40,000 jobs (as well as spin-off jobs); 65% of the total jobs lost were in Newfoundland and Labrador. Nova Scotia and eastern Quebec were also affected, as were PEI and New Brunswick to a lesser degree. Rural Newfoundland has suffered massive out-migration; the Great Northern Peninsula lost 11% of its population in a three-year period following the moratorium, and unemployment among those who remain continues to be very high.*

#### *Sources:*

*Statistic Canada, Newfoundland Statistics Agency.*

*For a good history of the fishery and its closure, see*

*<http://artciccicle.uconn.edu/NatResources/cod/mckay-html>*

In 1998, Dietitians Action Group called for the formation of a food security network in Newfoundland, coinciding with the release of Canada's Action Plan on Food Security. Several other events happened to bring people (churches, public health, social activists, etc.) together. Suddenly people asked, what is food security? "Canada's Action Plan for Food Security helped to legitimize the issue. We were able to insert the issue of food security into our discussions" said Stapenhorst. Food security indicators have been forced into government activities, and have they facilitated an interdepartmental perspective within government looking at food policy.

She concluded with an emotional call: "A few people can work together to bring about change."



## *National Anti-poverty Networking*

### *David Northcott, Winnipeg Harvest, Winnipeg, Manitoba*

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*“Hunger is not about poverty, it’s about power.”*

David Northcott, as a Canadian civil society representative at the World Food Summit-FYL talked about the experience of organizing a National Anti-poverty network. He argued that business, government and civil society operate in neighborhoods, so they cannot operate in isolation. He suggested that to be successful advocates for food security, we need to challenge three often repeated practices:

- individualism, what he called the John Wayne, rule that we can make a change as individuals;
- the perception that being polite and nice will bring just awards;
- the perception that Canada has no hunger/poverty issues that are serious.

Our power points, argued Northcott, are:

- Financial power – consumers can have a huge impact. The challenge is to bring consumers together.
- Political power – Grassroots communities have power.
- People power – All sectors (business, government, etc.) operate in neighborhoods where people live.
- Knowledge – Academic and life knowledge are equally valuable.
- Media power – we have the power to communicate.
- Spirit – the sense that together we will change the world.

Our success, Northcott claimed, depends in our ability to utilize these powers effectively to make a difference.

### *A ‘Chaordic’ Approach to Coalition Building*

#### *Herb Barbolet, FarmFolk/CityFolk, Vancouver, BC*

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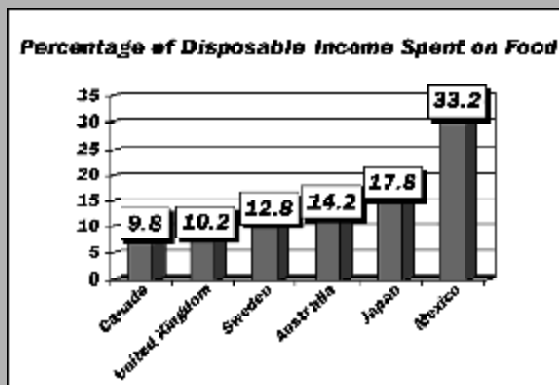
“Food is a wonderful metaphor. What’s happening in the food system is exactly what’s happening in so many other things: in education systems, in religious systems, in all other systems in terms of all of the large scale trends,” argued Herb Barbolet.

Referring to their experience at Farm Folk/City Folk which was created 8 years ago, he claimed that organizing for food security meant employing both order and chaos which he summarized as “a chaordic model.” This meant creating a network made up of networks and collaboration with diverse organizations.

“As people go into supermarkets and see all this incredible supply, of what they think is high quality ... amounts of ... food, they say there is no problem. And what we say to them, is that there are presently people who are hungry, but we are all in food jeopardy, we are all insecure in food, and what we have to do is redemocratize the food system.”

#### *DISPOSABLE INCOME AND FOOD*

*Canadians spend a relatively small amount of their disposable income (9.8%) on food in comparison with other countries in the world (see graph below).*



*Source:*

*Agriculture and Agri-food Canada. Facts on Food Freedom Day.*

*(<http://www.cfa-fca.ca/n01feb02.htm>)*

### FOOD POLICY ORGANIZATIONS

*Food policy organizations (FPOs) are coalitions, networks or councils that utilise policy initiatives in an effort to establish healthy community food systems. A common characteristic of FPOs is that they are groups comprised of representatives from various sectors and/or organizations that are linked directly to the food system. These various stakeholders work together to facilitate development of a community-based infrastructure that supports food security. Food policy development and/or efforts to change inadequate existing policies are a core part of this process. Food policy councils are somewhat different than coalitions and networks in that they are sanctioned by government and generally have a least one government agency involved. Food policy coalitions and networks may or may not have government representative participation. The number of food policy organizations in Canada is growing as it becomes evident that ‘thoughtful’ food policy is a critical part of enabling food security in Canadian communities.*

Barbolet concluded that food security advocacy needs to reach a broader public. “Anybody who is opposed to globalization and corporate concentration, and these trade regimens; anybody who is opposed to the absence of the sacred, the loss of the spiritual, and commodification of everything in life, is on our side.”

### *Building a Local Food Security Movement* *Debbie Field, FoodShare, Toronto, Ontario*

Debbie Field talked about her personal experience as an activist and community organizer in the food movement and shared her networking experience with the Toronto Food and Hunger Action Committee. She argued that this process could also offer a model at the federal level. “In 1996 we formed ‘HungerWatch’ and went to local government with concerns of food security. A committee of five politicians was formed (the Toronto Food and Hunger Action Committee), and as a result committed staff time to write a report (Toronto’s Food Charter). This document is much clearer than the federal plan of action.”

According to Field, “This approach addresses process strategies. Bring government representatives to the problems and force them to listen and observe. The division of community activist leads to no change in government.”

We need them, she stated, to understand that:

- hunger is created in a market economy where food is a commodity;
- all the diet related illnesses have a significant negative impact on the health system;
- that we need to address the structural causes of the agricultural crisis in Canada.

Field suggested that a “Royal Commission on Food” needs to be formed, listening to the concern of Canadians from coast to coast to coast. This process, she believes, will be effective in informing the government on the extent of food insecurity in Canada and in raising public awareness.

## Issues raised in open discussion

### *The Action Plan*

- The action plan was very useful in getting politicians to understand the concept of food security; the content may not be satisfactory, but it can be useful as a tool to move the process forward.

### *Role of Government*

- Why is there optimism that the federal government can do anything?
- We're worn out with government; we've talked and talked and government isn't listening.
- The Canadian government usually goes to international meetings and denies that domestic hunger exists; but two weeks ago in Rome, the Canadian government said that they had domestic issues in Canada, and committed to reduce by half food bank use by 2015.
- Statistics show that a lot of people, especially young people, have lost a lot of confidence in the government.
- Government has lost a lot of power to corporations through free trade agreements.
- How do you build confidence in the government and get people to participate in the parliamentary process?
- Reports have documented the decline of the family farm; government has not looked at this; a 1998 task force in the US on this subject led to changes in the US Department of Agriculture.

### *Role of a Royal Commission on Food Security*

- There is need for a national food policy; how does a Royal Commission relate to this?
- A people's process does not force politicians to come; we must force politicians to see the reality.
- A lot of people are not educated about food security – a royal commission brings attention to the issue and it is good for popular education.
- Let's go back to the People's Food Commission (PFC) [*Editors note: PFC toured the country in late 1970s and produced a report out of what it heard, called The Land of Milk and Money*].
- We don't need to go one way or the other—can do both—take useful things from people's food commission.
- Royal commissions often fail.
- Important to have a national presence to monitor the royal commission.
- A royal commission is not enough – we need a permanent national network.

### *About organizing and networking*

- Keep on the agenda the comment about how we recreate for all of us, especially young people, a desire to participate in the political process.
- Need to use as many streams, not just a food focus, as possible to get food security into the mainstream.
- The issue of food security has been studied to death, it is time to take action.
- We've got power, we just need to organize it and use it.
- The goal is the re-democratization the food system – we need to engage in the parliamentary process; civil society cannot have an impact unless involved in the political process.
- We have to look for ways to build confidence in the government and get people to participate in the parliamentary process.
- There are struggles in organizing and coming together, but there have also been successes; have a lot to learn from these successful examples.

### 6. 3 Key Note Addresses (18:00-20:00)

*Chair: Jennifer Welsh,  
Centre for Studies in Food Security, Ryerson University*

*Bill Graham on Behalf of the Honorable Lyle Vanclief,  
Minister for Agriculture and Agri-food*

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Bill Graham MP, Rosedale, read a message by the Honorable Lyle Vanclief, Minister for Agriculture and Agri-food. In his address to the conference Vanclief mentioned that “the federal government looks forward to hearing the ideas and recommendations coming from this conference on how Canada and Canadians can best contribute to increase food security both here and the world over. We will take very seriously the recommendations that will come out of this conference.”

Vanclief stated that the we are wrestling with the problems of food security on global and local levels. Solving the problems of food insecurity is shared from bottom to top; we need to bring government and community organizations together. Too many still suffer especially vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, women; strategies are needed at all levels to deal with malnourishment. The WFS goal was to reduce the number of malnourished by half by the year 2015, i.e., from 800 million to 400 million, however, at the current rate of reduction (8 million per year), this goal will not be reached until 2030.

The Minister believed this conference is an important step looking forward to November and Rome; the ideas presented here are important and will influence our final report adopted there. We need to learn from other countries. Canada supplies safe, reliable food and the Canadian farm sector needs a comprehensive approach to food policy and food safety: rules based, multilateral trading regimes, which eliminate distorting subsidies, the acquisition of technology, elimination of export subsidies, research and innovation in value added products and “functional” foods, are all important for maintaining our farm base.

We need, as well, to focus on Food Security in Canada, particularly proper nutrition for vulnerable groups: low income families, First Nations, children, the elderly, the sick and the homeless.

*Pam McConnell, Councillor, City of Toronto,  
Co-Chair Toronto Food Policy Council and the Task Force on Food and Hunger*

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Pam McConnell pointed out that hunger is a daily concern in Canada for too many people, including people in Toronto. She mentioned that she came to food security through working with children, being a mother, teacher, trustee, chair of the Toronto District School Board, and most recently a city councillor, representing one of the “poorest” communities in the country. School lunch programs have been a major part of Councillor McConnell’s work. She said that in the mid-1980s there was a lot of resistance; people were questioning if it was really a school’s responsibility to ensure children were adequately nourished for learning? Then teachers and parents got involved. School food programs have blossomed from 8 programs serving a few hundred children in the early 90s. After many struggles, today its 53,000 children served daily.

Pam McConnell stated that the national report card on child poverty provides harrowing numbers: 36% of children in poverty, 50,000 using food banks, 6,000 homeless, with 2,000 of those 6,000 under the age of 4. “Much credit is due to *HungerWatch* for helping city council understand the meaning of food security; to bring coherence to city programming for perinatal programs, kitchen

incubators, hot meal, congregate dining.” The first step according to Pam McConnell was to educate the civil service and politicians who needed to see and experience the problem, so the Task Force on Food and Hunger traveled across the city, guided by activists, looking for things that municipal government could do. These consultations offered new insights to the Task force:

- the Parks and Recreation department realized that it could support community gardens, congregate dining; the City Works department could engage in food reclamation to save money on landfill;
- we developed a report, “A Growing Season,” to set targets with commitments from staff and politicians, community groups; we insisted staff implementation be inter-departmental to address the problems of silo cultures in departments.

Councillor McConnell concluded that there was a need to for all levels of government to undertake a process similar to the City of Toronto’s. “We can all become advocates for food security ... if governments can just walk a mile in the shoes of others then this will make a difference.”

### *Dianne Spearman, United Nations World Food Program (WFP), Rome*

Dianne Spearman a Canadian who is currently serving at the United Nations World Food Program (WFP), Rome, stated that “chronic hunger is not going to go away until we collectively do something about it, directly and seriously ... food aid is part of that solution.” Referring to Canada’s 40 years of support for the WFP, Spearman defended the WFP’s people centered approach, in dealing with debilitating hunger, chronic and natural disasters, those recently displaced by violence, and vulnerable families. She stated that this was different than a political economy approach of trade or import/export.

The WFP provided 1.5 billion US dollars worth of food aid in 2000 in 83 countries, including East Timor, Sudan, Kosova, Serbia, Afghanistan, and West Africa. An important part of the mission was promoting development. According to Spearman, the WFP is not in the business of free hand outs; only in an acute phase is free food provided and families agree to participate in certain activities as part of that.

“What we see in the field challenges the conventional wisdom of food security” claimed Spearman. “One opinion is that hunger is caused by poverty, but we also see that hunger causes poverty, saps initiative, damages health of children, the struggle to feed the family doesn’t leave time for life activities, results in poorer nutrition, the capacity to work is undermined, less income is earned as labour is compromised. On a larger scale hunger results in overuse of land, especially fragile lands.

The poorest nations like Bangladesh are marginalized in other ways: low education, water problems, infrastructure deficiencies, lack of credit, and agricultural extension; they benefit least from programs like banks, donors. The fruits of economic growth don’t reach these people.”

Spearman offered examples of how the WFP helped to feed people for a short time and used food as a stepping stone with investments in small scale rural infrastructure to make long term impacts. She also mentioned that the WFP also supported supplementary feeding for infants.

### *Charles Riemenschneider, Director, North America, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)*

Charles Riemenschneider stated that “fighting hunger is not just a moral imperative ... it is also very clearly in our economic self interest.” “This meeting,” he added “is a key component for the meeting in Rome; to come up with a North American strategy strengthens input into the process.” He men-

tioned that 5 years ago leaders agreed to cut by half the number of hungry people by 2015; we are cutting now about 8 million per year instead of 20 million, but the goal is attainable even though some view it as a hopeless cause.

Riemenschneider claimed that civil society organizations were very important, because they could work globally and regionally. “Leaders emphasize the need to reduce poverty, but fighting it requires dealing with hunger first; education and agricultural development are really important since 70% of the world’s poor live in rural areas.” According to Riemenschneider, we need sustainable programs and we can achieve them with economic growth through agricultural development. He concluded his speech with a recommendation to Civil Society Organizations to use their power to mobilize the political will and resources needed to reduce levels of hunger.

### *Sheela Basrur, Medical Officer of Health, City of Toronto*

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Sheela Basrur claimed that “we have at least one piece of good news, and that is that there is a growing recognition that hunger and food insecurity are pervasive problems that are systemic in society. This is something that we can claim as a success.” Basrur mentioned that there are many opportunities for some creative solutions when we can see the root causes of hunger. We need to look at short and long term solutions. She stated that it was possible to make social and environmental changes when we have people at a local level doing good work; governments could facilitate community action or just get out of the way. She ended her speech with an optimistic note that there were plenty of opportunities for people working in various departments to get together and achieve so much more, by working in partnership and demonstrating tangible results.

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### **Questions and issues raised in open discussion**

- Trade liberalization is not a solution to food insecurity.
- The federal position has many contradictions.
- Value-added is not necessarily good for food security.
- Commitments to reduce food insecurity have been in place since the 80s yet food insecurity continues to grow.
- How do we make success stories, especially local ones, available?
- Do Canada and the US see eye to eye on food security issues?
- What concrete actions is the FAO taking to support the people who feed us – farmers?

## 7. Workshops

### 7.1 Workshop A: The Right to Food And Social Justice

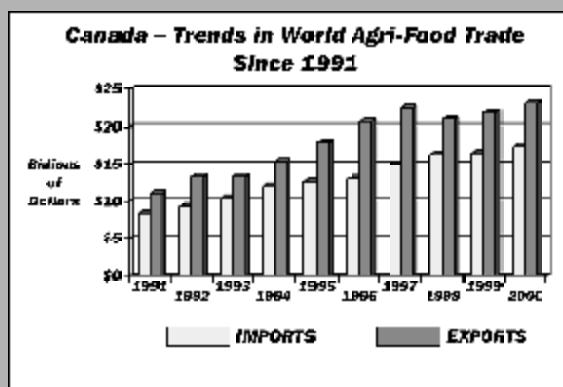
*Moderator: Wayne Roberts, Coordinator of the Toronto Food Policy Council*

#### *Background*

The right to food has been recognized in many United Nations declarations, including the touchstone International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The World Food Summit of 1996 was called by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization in order to renew the world community's obligation and commitment to end hunger, the most flagrant violation of the universal right to food. The Summit issued two documents: the Rome Declaration on World Food Security, and the World Food Summit Plan of Action. Both reaffirm the United Nations historic principle on the universal right to food. Objective 7.4 of the Plan of Action calls on United Nations members to "clarify the content of the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everybody to be free from hunger" and to "propose ways to implement and realize these rights."

Since the Rome summit, a number of international organizations, most notably the FoodFirst Information and Action Network (FIAN), an independent human rights organizations which champions the right to food, have lobbied for an International Code of Conduct on the Human Right to Adequate Food as a way of honouring Objective 7.4 of the 1996 World Food Summit. It is anticipated by FIAN that adoption of this voluntary code would provide fairly precise operational guidelines on the legal meanings and policy obligations that should weigh on both governmental and non-governmental (multinational corporations, for instance) organizations signing on to the Code. The FIAN has gained significant support for its campaign to codify the right to food. Support comes from many Non-Governmental Organizations that played an important role at the 1996 Summit, from a number of individual countries (Germany and Norway, for example) and from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. This assures a certain profile for issues related to the right to food at the World Food Summit of 2001.

#### CANADA -TRENDS IN WORLD AGRI-FOOD TRADE SINCE 1991



#### Sources:

1991-1998 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. *A Portrait of the Canadian Food System.*

<http://www.agr.ca/policy/epad/english/pubs/chrtbook/chrtindx.htm>

1999-2000 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. *Canada at a Glance: Canadian Agri-Food Trade.*

<http://atssea.agr.ca/factsheets/canada.htm>

NGOs played a crucial role at the 1996 World Food Summit, and it's likely that their prominence will increase at the Summit of 2001. NGOs have already designated the right to food as a strategic issue for talks at the next Summit. The NGOs are particularly keen to identify what happens to the right to food in the course of the U.S. and World Trade Organization's drive to deregulate trade, as well as to the pronounced trend among governments of industrialized nations to reduce social entitlements that have traditionally protected against poverty and hunger. NGO preparation for and participation at the next Summit will inevitably be coloured by the sense that ground has been lost to hunger, to poverty, and to the impoverishment of food producers since the resounding words of 1996. The 2001 gathering has already been named "The World Food Summit: Five Years Later," which will likely serve to underline the mood of those who look back in anger at five lost years. After five years of losing ground on both hunger and the income security of food producers, after five years marked by dramatic mass protests against trade deals that seem to give more rights to corporations than to people, there will be little tolerance for empty rhetoric. By the same token, however, there will be increased interest in ways of imbedding the universal right to food in the foundations of the domestic politics, international relations and trade deals conducted by United Nations members. In all likelihood, the level of appreciation for both the domestic and international consequences of declarations on the right to food will be unprecedented among community organizations in the NGO delegations.

Despite heightened levels of interest in and passion for giving real meaning to the right to food, it's far from assured that the 2001 World Food Summit will accept a code of conduct outlining obligations to implement programs supporting the right to food. The FAO itself is quite leery about implementation guidelines supporting the right to food. The United States denies the very existence of an international human right to food. On the other side of the political spectrum, supporters of a number of Non Governmental Organizations have grown weary of adopting rights declarations that produce little in the way of corrective action. An increasing number of food security advocates worry that talk about the right to food warps public understanding of the real issues behind food security, and thereby subtracts, rather than adds to, the political momentum of campaigns for food security; the very act of "framing" food as a rights issue encourages legalistic and individualist "discourses" which undermine political and community-based campaigns, these NGO activists believe.

The people who take part at the Working Together Conference understood the need to develop a capacity to respond intelligently to this global discussion. An all-day workshop dealt exclusively with this topic. A great deal of effort went into inviting participants who were engaged by both the theoretical and practical implications of differing approaches to recognizing the right to food. Three objectives were set for the workshop: to educate Canadian food security activists on the advantages and disadvantages of a legalistic or human rights-based approach to food security; to provide policy guidance to representatives of Canadian NGOs at the forthcoming Rome Summit; and to advise the Canadian government delegation to the Rome summit of the views of a representative gathering of food security leaders with experience in a wide range of food and hunger projects.

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## Discussing the Right to Food

Elaine Power, a doctoral candidate in the field of community nutrition at the University of Toronto and a well-respected advisor to many leaders of food security and anti-poverty groups in Toronto, led off with a review of her concerns about presenting food security as a rights issue. She worried that fighting for the right to food might not lead to the most strategic use of limited food movement resources, but was open to being convinced otherwise; she asked to speak first precisely so that those who disagreed would have ample time to respond to her critique.

Power identifies a number of sticky points in the precise meaning as well as the general context of rights to food. Who, what, where, when and how to decide what the right to food means? Does the



provision of food bank food satisfy the right to food? And how is the right enforced? Enforcement is fairly straightforward when it comes to the right to free speech or the right to sexual equality, because someone deliberately denying that right can be accused and charged, the facts of the story can be presented and a judgement made. That's not so easy when it comes to the right to food, which is usually denied as a result of systemic, often invisibly systemic, structures and policies, and rarely denied as a specific act of personal abuse. The judicial system is not well adapted to respond to systemic problems such as hunger, so the right to food may have questionable legal significance, Power argues. Assuming food security organizations can afford to mobilize significant resources behind a legal effort to accuse a government of denying the right to food, they will have trouble making the charges stick in courts where individuals are judged authors of their own destiny.

Power points out that both the UN's 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its 1966 Covenant On Economic, Social and Cultural Rights refer to the right to food as part of a list which includes clothing, housing and medical care; the right to food, in other words, is just one precondition of an adequate standard of living, and is not isolated as a specific right that stands apart on its own. The UN approach is true to the way people actually suffering from hunger work their way through the day, Power notes. They usually pay the rent before they feed the kids, for instance, especially in cities such as Toronto, where rents are very high and winters outside very cold. It makes little sense then, Power suggests, to focus on one right in isolation from a broader spectrum of basic needs. Otherwise, people who exercise their right to food might do so at the expense of their right to housing, a cure worse than the disease. Power cites several authors who believe that reducing the problem of income insecurity and inequality to one issue such as food ends up trivializing the problems and dilemmas of people enduring poverty – a far cry of uplifting and empowering them.

Power believes, much like the critics of Canada's Charter of Rights, that discussions about poverty and hunger belong in the political arena, not the courts, and that they need to be addressed in the context of our civic responsibilities to one another, not just our individual rights before the law. There is more to respect in a person than his or her rights as an individual, Power says, and the process of gaining that respect is not necessarily advanced by legalizing issues of social policy.

Graham Riches is a professor of Social Work from the University of British Columbia and has been working on hunger and food policy in Canada, presented his "opposing" point of view on right to food. Canada has already signed on to declarations about the right to food, Riches said. The question is: what does it mean, and how can it be used by food security advocates to advance food security measures.

For Riches, the right to food is not a right that exists in isolation; to the contrary, it is a common thread linking a variety of issues pertaining to sustainability of food systems, from environmental protection to distributional equity. The right to food is also fundamentally a social or community, not an individual, right, Riches said. Asserting the right to food asserts the right of communities and governments to treat human needs as a priority that ranks above the rights of trade deals, markets or corporations; to that extent, human rights in this era are precisely about collective rights to set community objectives, while market advocates premise their view of rights on an exclusively individualist basis.

Riches is drawn to the food-as-right approach precisely because he wants to politicize the public discussion on poverty and hunger. Talking about food as a right is just a way of engaging the public in the debate, he said, as well as a way of holding the politicians' feet to the fire: they have, after all, signed these declarations; why don't they honour their own commitments and why shouldn't they be held accountable for their promises?

While disagreeing on the use of "right" language as an effective food security strategy, Power and Riches agreed on the principle of elimination of hunger as a priority. Equally important, both attach equal value to the political process, and favour dealing with public policy issues through the democratic process of electing and influencing politicians, not through imposing views through the

judicial system. Further, both see the right to food as a spectrum of rights linked to living standards and quality of life, and both see the right to food as a right enjoyed by communities, not just individuals.

Don Buckingham, an associate professor at the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law presented a defense of the right to food debate from a legal view point.

The right to food was identified in the United Nations 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights, a legacy of the “four freedoms” including “freedom from want,” that inspired Allied nations during World War II. However, Buckingham noted, this declaration was not binding on any member states. When it came time to create ties that bind national governments to an international treaty, the Cold War left the right to food in deepfreeze. The once-seamless and indivisible civil and social rights enumerated in the Universal Declaration were divvied up as spoils of the Cold War; the “first world” championed the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which featured the individual rights and freedoms celebrated by the “free world,” while the “second world” championed the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which exposed the limitations of “bourgeois democracy.”

This breach between civil and social rights was only partly healed by the thawing of the Cold War and collapse of the Soviet Union, Buckingham noted. The legacy of bipolar disorder remains, partly because the cold war breach coincided with other ideas or stereotypes about different kinds of rights. Many rights theorists, for instance, thought some rights were “negative” and therefore cheap and easy to implement; all the government has to do is restrain from interfering in the right to free speech for instance, the argument goes. By contrast, social, cultural and economic rights were deemed “positive” rights that imposed proactive and expensive obligations on governments. This division between cheap and expensive rights doesn’t accord with reality, Buckingham notes. Setting up court systems guaranteeing rights to a fair trial doesn’t come cheap, for instance, while recognition of some cultural rights might just require governments to end discriminatory practices. Negative and positive, cheap and expensive, don’t describe the reality of any rights. However, the power of these legal stereotypes has delayed development of and support for the right to food, Buckingham said.

Progress has been made since the 1990s in putting the right to food on the table of national and international bodies. The 1996 World Food Summit affirmed the right to food, and the subsequent Plan of Action (Paragraph 61e) asked the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to define this right more precisely and to propose ways to implement these rights. The UN’s Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted Comment 12 on The Right to Adequate Food in response to the World Food Summit Action Plan; this Comment retrieves the UN’s original understanding about indivisible rights. The “right to adequate food is indivisible linked to the inherent dignity of the human person and is indispensable for the fulfillment of other human rights” as well as “inseparable from social justice” and policies designed to end poverty, the Comment argues.

Buckingham supports efforts to bolster this new dialogue around food rights. Rights-based approaches ring a bell with Canadians, who are familiar and supportive of rights language. And rights-based appeals have increased relevance in an era when states and trade treaties are spelling out extensive rights of corporations and of private property; if human rights aren’t spelled out with equal vigour and precision, the rights accorded to people will inevitably suffer. A rights-based approach provides anti-poverty and anti-hunger advocates an important toehold in their political efforts, Buckingham continued. A campaign to demand provincial food and nutrition policies, and in particular polices that respect the basic human need for and right to food, is just one example of what’s possible and timely, Buckingham suggests. Likewise, discussions on human rights that take priority over property and trade rights in international agreements deserve prominence in public discussions around trade deals, Buckingham maintains. But if this right is to come into prominence, he said, advocates must learn to advocate the right, and develop measures for monitoring implementation, including court cases that challenge government policies that don’t stand up to international obligations Canada has signed on to.

## Conclusions

The day-long workshop featured several other panels and provided many opportunities for everyone to participate in the discussion. But from this point on, focus shifted toward the major objective of this and all other workshops: preparation of a list of recommendations for the plenary sessions. The recommendations were grouped into three categories: recommendations for ourselves (food security advocates), recommendations for the Canadian government, and recommendations for the Canadian NGO delegation to the upcoming World Food Summit. By late-afternoon, there seemed to be common agreement on the following:

- Recommendations to Food Security Advocates represented at the Working Together Conference promote the right to food within the tradition of indivisible rights and with special attention to the needs, rights and sensibilities of all the diverse groups supporting food security;
- Maintain links through an electronic list serve, and through work on common projects, such as meetings honouring World Food Day and campaigns to involve municipal public health departments and Medical Officers of Health in support of Toronto-style food charters.

Recommendations to the Canadian government and its delegation to the World Food Summit, 2001:

- Develop a comprehensive, holistic, government-based (as distinct from department-based or fragmented) food policy;
- Monitor food security needs, review provincial social assistance standards for relevance to the right to food, enforce minimum standards of respect for the right to food;
- Either exempt food security from all trade negotiations (as is done for culture) or protect food security within trade agreements.

Recommendation to Canadian NGO delegates to the World Food Summit, 2001:

- Insist on inclusion of cultural, social and ecological – not just physiological and biological – dimensions of food security and the right to food;
- Build networks of mutual education, support and solidarity among international NGOs on such issues as women's and aboriginals' needs and rights for food security and ways to link the needs of food producers and eaters (consumers).

## 7.2 Workshop B: Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems

*Moderator: Rod MacRae, Ryerson Centre for Studies in Food Security*

This workshop was designed to produce concrete recommendations that would build on those contained in Canada's Action Plan on Food Security. The questions posed included: What needs to happen to make this action plan real? What is missing from the Action Plan as it relates to sustainable food and agriculture systems? What are 10 concrete initiatives that can be implemented by governments and civil society that will really advance adoption of sustainable agriculture in Canada? And what needs to be done to advance them?

Four panelists set the stage, each identifying three concrete policy/program initiatives involving government and civil society, that they believe will advance the adoption of sustainable food and agriculture systems. Many of these were based on current successes, others are currently untried. In presenting their 3 initiatives, they provided a brief but rich overview, only partially captured in the summaries below, of the conditions that generate the problem and what will be solved by implementing their proposals.

Abra Brynne, a foodshed animator with Action for Food Security in British Columbia, was particularly concerned about the struggle to maintain viable farms and rural communities, especially in regions of the country perceived by policy makers to be outside the mainstream of agriculture and global food trade. She told the stories of important people in her community, people who make key community contributions but are penalized by systems that do not recognize their value. She outlined the challenges of building local food marketplaces, of building new kinds of structures and relationships within local foodsheds. Farmers, she said, "must put the face back on food." They have to engage, she believes, with consumers in ways that help them build a fuller understanding of food and farming. "We have to address the lack of value that people place on their food."

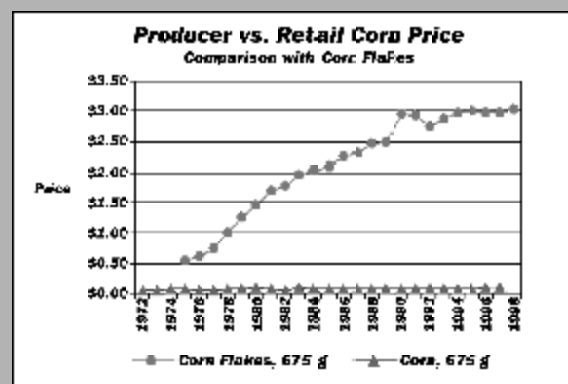
### THE WIDENING GAP BETWEEN PRODUCER AND RETAIL FOOD PRICES

*A widening gap is occurring between producer and retail sale prices for foods such as field crops (i.e. corn, wheat). There are two noted concerns that are expressed in regards to this trend. First of all, farmers are increasingly earning less for their commodities in proportion to average retail prices. This can be seen as a threat to the income of food producers. Illustrated in the graph to the right is a comparison of the average sale price of corn obtained from farmers to the retail price of Corn Flakes. Although the retail price for Corn Flakes has increased significantly (451%) from 1975 to 1998, the price that farmers receive for corn has increased only slightly (143%) during the same period. The second concern involves the fact that consumers are paying dramatically higher prices for some foods (i.e. processed) relative to the initial selling price of the food by farmers. For example, the retail price for 675 g of Corn Flakes in 1998 (\$3.03) is 3030% greater than a farmer's selling price for 675 g of corn (\$0.10). There is a strong sense that such a large gap should not exist between the cost to produce food and price that consumers ultimately pay.*

Source:

1. Martz D., Moellenbeck, W. (2000) *The Family Farm in Question: Compare the Share Revisited.*

<http://www.stpeters.sk.ca/crse/prod01.htm>



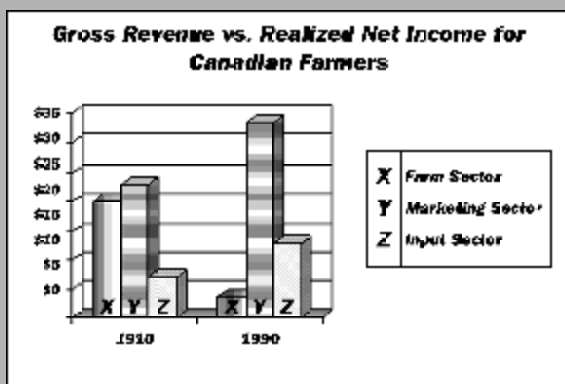
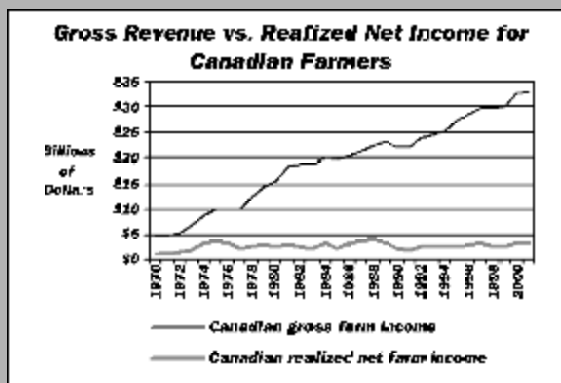
Celia Guilford echoed some of these concerns. She and her husband farm significant acres organically in Manitoba and are also affected by the failures of government agricultural and rural development policy. She described the changes in her community the past 15 years—loss of farmers, loss of community services and rural depopulation—brought on by low prices and a lack of appropriate supports for farming. “If we want to have food security, we have to have farmers ... there aren’t too many left out there that can afford to be farming.” Her work domestically and internationally with the Organic Food Council of Manitoba and CUSO has helped her identify the opportunities and the alliances needed to effect change. “Farmers have zero political clout. We need help from those of you who live in the cities ... to get government to support a rural development policy.”

Rupert Jannasch, now the director of Resource Efficient Agricultural Production (REAP) in Quebec, and active for many years in the sustainable agriculture movement in the Maritimes, decried the

### SHRINKING PROFIT MARGIN FOR FARMERS

Gross income from farming operations has increased by over 300% since 1975 (see graph right)<sup>1</sup>. However in this same period, realized ‘net income’ of farmers has actually decreased to depression-era levels<sup>2</sup>. What has happened to the farmer’s portion of the revenue?

Since 1910, the input and marketing sectors have been taking over much of the farmer’s revenue share. As illustrated in the graph below<sup>3</sup>, farmers’ share of agricultural economic activity was 40% in 1910. However, since this time, this share has been reduced to 7% (as of 1990). The input sector (i.e. companies that supply seeds, fertilizer, machinery, etc.) has nearly doubled its share (14%-26%) during this same period. The increasing prices in the input sector, which explains a significant part of this share increase, appears to be due to the fact that only a small number of companies control this market<sup>2</sup>. This has created less competition, and farmers have no choice but to pay the higher prices typical of a monopolistic style market. The input sector as a result, is reaping significant gains at the expense of the farmers. The marketing sector has also significantly increased its share from 46%-67% since 1910. The combined emerging dominance of these two sectors has created a considerable imbalance in the



distribution of wealth in the agricultural economic system. The resulting dramatic decline in profit margins for farmers has created a food system in which small family farms are no longer able to earn sufficient income. In an attempt to sustain an adequate livelihood farmers have not only been forced to dramatically increase their production levels, but also have had to frequently find alternative sources of income.

1. National Farmers Union (2001) *Record High Fertilizer and Diesel Fuel Prices and Their Relation to the Farm Income Crisis*, National Farmers Union Submission to the Annual Ministers of Agriculture Meeting.  
[http://www.wtwatch.org/library/admin/uploadedfiles/RecordHigh\\_Fertilizer\\_and\\_Diesel\\_Fuel\\_Prices\\_.htm](http://www.wtwatch.org/library/admin/uploadedfiles/RecordHigh_Fertilizer_and_Diesel_Fuel_Prices_.htm)
2. Qualman, D. (2001) *The Farm Crisis and Corporate Power*.
3. Clancy, S.A., Gardner, J.C., Grygiel, C.E., Biondini, M.E., Johnson, G.K. (1993) *Farming practices for a sustainable agriculture in North Dakota*: Northwest Area Foundation in co-operation with the North Dakota State University, Carrington Research Extension Centre, Carrington, ND; p. summary 4, 5.

Source:

Statistics Canada, *Agriculture Economic Statistics*, Cat# 21-603E

contradictions of government policies on sustainability. “There is a great preoccupation in Ottawa right now and at the provincial level with exports ... as long as it makes economic sense to ship our pigs to China and bring them back through Thailand ... then we’ll do it. This is extremely risky.” He wondered how such an approach builds environmental sustainability and food security. He also fears for the next generation of farms and farmers. In his view, too few resources are invested in bringing young people into agriculture, despite what he sees as widespread enthusiasm amongst youth. “We have to find a way to offer students something so that they can get involved in some way or another.”

Hart Haidn, a long time organic farmer and processor in the Peace Region of British Columbia, and now the central figure in the development of the Canadian Centre for Sustainable Agriculture in Saskatoon, addressed the institutional and psychological barriers to change. He described the tremendous fear of change that exists amongst those invested in the agricultural status quo. He sees an emerging openness within agricultural institutions that provides him some feelings of optimism, but this opportunity must be captured by civil society organizations. “The powers that are resisting change are incredibly powerful we have to keep this in mind without collective action we will not go anywhere we need an alliance with everybody that has a stake in food security.”

The proposals offered by the panelists stimulated a wide ranging discussion of their and other ideas. After several hours of identifying possible actions to advance sustainable food and agriculture systems, the proposals were organized into broad categories or themes and small groups assigned to examine each in more detail. The proposals were later organized within each category as requests to Rome or to the federal government. Any similarity or contradictions between recommendations of the different small groups were reconciled. One small group developed a detailed proposal to build a national food security network.

#### CANADA’S ORGANIC AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

*Organic products are foods produced without the use of chemicals, synthetic pesticides, irradiation and genetic engineering. Currently there are approximately 2000 organic farms in Canada, which cover an estimated area of 405,000 acres (165,000 hectares). In 1999, figures from Statistics Canada indicated that 4.9% of fruit and vegetable farms were producing strictly organic food. Most of these organic products are exported, particularly to the U.S., Europe and Japanese markets. The organic sector is showing signs of rapid growth in Canada. Retail sales are anticipated to increase to \$3.1 billion by 2005 (\$0.7 billion in 1997) and reach a retail market share of 10% by 2010.*

**Source:**

*Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. All About Canada’s Organic Industry, Fact Sheet.*

[http://www.agr.ca/cb/factsheets/2industry\\_e.html](http://www.agr.ca/cb/factsheets/2industry_e.html)

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## Theme 1: Support for farmers and intergenerational transfer

### *Requests to Rome*

1. Seeds are a resource for the planet and humankind; there is a necessity to conserve traditional and heritage varieties and a need to maintain the integrity of world seed banks and keep them in the public domain.

### *Requests to the Federal Government*

2. For every dollar the federal government spends on biotechnology R&D, it should spend a dollar on supporting forms of agro-ecological food systems, such as: organic and biodynamic farming; local “foodshed” initiatives; community supported agriculture; urban agriculture and the organizations, extension, and research related to the above.
3. Address the ills of the “cheap food policy” and its deleterious effects on farmers’ incomes by a variety of measures including a surcharge or tax shift related to specified products with

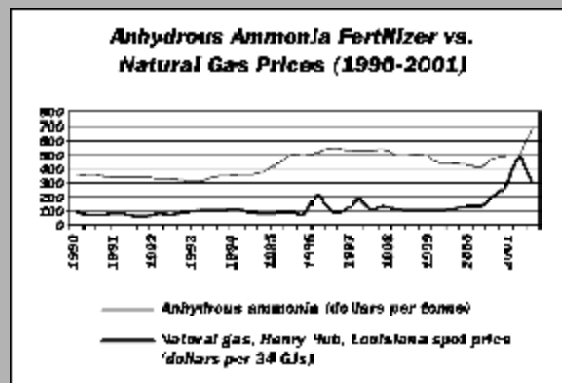
revenues earmarked for farm income programs; and/or a tax on junk food, again revenues earmarked for farm income programs.

### RISING FUEL PRICES

Some recent examples of increasing input costs have been linked to rising fuel prices. Not only do rising fuel prices (i.e. diesel fuel) increase costs of machine operation and transportation for farmers, but they also increase the cost of nitrogen fertilizer usage. For example, as natural gas is a significant input component in the production of nitrogen fertilizer, increases in natural gas prices are followed quickly by increases in nitrogen fertilizer prices (illustrated in graph right)<sup>1</sup>.

Source:

1. National Farmers Union (2001). *Record High Fertilizer and Diesel Fuel Prices and Their Relation to the Farm Income Crisis: National Farmers Union Submission to the Annual Ministers of Agriculture Meeting*



4. Using full-cost (environmental, social, economic) accounting methodology, carry out comparative analyses of agricultural technologies, methods and systems in both theory and practice. Civil society would carry out the work, partnering with appropriate support in universities, and in consultation with federal government, e.g. Agriculture and AgriFood Canada, business management people, and Statistics Canada.
5. Implement a Rural Environment Protection Program, based on models used in the European Union where farmers are paid for providing ecological services, in recognition of farmers as land stewards. Under the WTO, such programs are “green boxed.”
6. Implement consumer awareness and public education efforts regarding the true cost of food—what food is, where it comes from, what it really costs. The federal government would provide the financial support, civil society would do the work.
7. Extension Services – design programs to assist farmers and farm organizations with the transition to agro-ecological food/sustainable food production, including the following program elements: apprenticeships, mentoring, courses, and on-farm research into appropriate seeds and stock.
8. Federal legislation to create a framework for implementation at a provincial level of agriculture land trusts, land banks, alternative tenure arrangements. These enable options such as community-supported agriculture and (especially) to make it easier for young/new entrants into farming.
9. Mentoring programs for all farmers – older and younger, urban and rural; elders as teachers.
10. Youth development in agriculture – demonstration and training in an urban setting, with rural farmer mentors—could use devices such as school gardens, rooftop gardens and programs like Linking Land and Future Farmers (in BC), which links people with land who are not farming to people without land who want to farm.
11. Youth training in agriculture in technical schools, colleges, universities, short courses to include a wide diversity of methods – link training to practical skills taught on working farms; request federal support in the form of bursaries or through Canada Employment Program.

12. As supply management is dismantled, preserve equity principles and develop alternative design structures to deal with market stability and land use issues; overall, develop a broader concept of the food supply-demand equation.
13. Ensure that food safety and quality standards are appropriately “scaled” to small-scale, family, local farm operations and take advantage of community resources (e.g. get product or soil testing done locally), which will keep or create jobs in the community.
14. The vulnerability of human and animal populations has been intensified by the global interdependence of the food system. Foot and Mouth, Mad cow disease, resistant bacteria, toxic residues, antibiotics and growth hormones in food products have raised concerns about the life conditions of animal and about human food safety. Federal government resources through Health Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency must exercise precaution and advance planning through applied and direct research to ensure prevention planning and contingencies to reduce risk and ease public concern about food safety.

#### *Requests for Civil Society*

15. Carry out a national inventory of programs, courses, activities, training that are currently under way—resource for all civil society partners.
16. Include all stakeholders (especially First Nations) in all land trust or other public land and resource (e.g., fish, water) planning and decision processes.

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## **Theme 2: Support for rural development**

#### *Requests for Rome*

1. Agrarian reform – apply the approach recommended in the World Food Summit for international development here in Canada:
  - Infrastructure;
  - Means of production;
  - Recognize the need for farmers first to provide food for themselves, their communities, their country, then for export (vs. the “Canada feed the world” approach);
  - Sustainability of future resource base (stewardship, full cost accounting).

#### *Requests for the Federal Government*

2. Funding strategies to support rural enterprise within rural communities – lending circles, credit unions, barter, community-based investing, other options. Government provide seed money, then get out of the way.
3. Create a vehicle for sharing historical and indigenous knowledge and uses.

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## **Theme 3: Urban agriculture**

#### *Requests of the Federal, Provincial and Municipal Governments*

1. Research and educate all citizens to the advantages of urban agriculture:
  - Identify sources of food production and the risk factors if crops fail;
  - Develop local bioregional production;
  - Develop community gardens.
2. Identify all local/provincial/ federal zoning and other regulations/by-laws that impede:
  - Urban agriculture.
  - Develop action plan to reduce barriers.
3. Promote closed loop food production systems in urban areas through:
  - Reclaiming brownfields;
  - Composting (urban waste stream);



- roof-tops/greenhouses;
- intensive urban farms;
- small production entities (incubator kitchens).

### ROOFTOP GARDENS

*Rooftop gardens are becoming a topic of interest in urban agriculture discussions. Individuals and organizations are recognizing that beyond the already well-established benefits of gardening, there are additional economic benefits that arise from the use of rooftop gardens. For example, a benefit commonly cited is that foliage and soil have considerable insulating properties, which help to keep buildings warm in winter (estimated reduced energy cost is 10-20%)<sup>1</sup> as well as keep buildings cool in the summer. Also, reduced fluctuation in the temperature of the roof reduces expansion and contraction, which ultimately increases the lifespan of the roof membrane<sup>1</sup>. Protection from ultra-violet rays and additional wear and tear are other noted benefits<sup>1</sup>. Rooftop gardens can also improve the esthetic quality of buildings through their visual appeal. (For other benefits please see 'Community Gardens' information box) At first, rooftop gardening may seem like a novelty. However, when one looks at initiatives of some other countries it becomes evident that widespread rooftop garden strategies are quite possible. For example, in some areas of Germany new industrial buildings are required by law to have green roofs<sup>1</sup>. In Swiss cities, green space covered up by construction of new buildings must be relocated to the building's roof. There is an opportunity in here in Canada to learn from these examples, and create our own innovative rooftop gardening strategies that have environmental, social, health and economic benefits.*

1. Walker, N. (2000) *Burnaby Mountain Development Report*, Urban Agriculture.  
[http://www.sfu.ca/bmcp/geog4492000fall/pub\\_html/green/garden.html](http://www.sfu.ca/bmcp/geog4492000fall/pub_html/green/garden.html)
2. Meletis Z., Webster, B. (1999) *An Overview and History of Rooftop Gardening*.  
<http://felix.geog.mcgill.ca/other/environ/1998/group5/g5irp1.html>

## Theme 4: Proposal for a Civil Society National Network Structure

We need to create an Alliance for broadening our base to assist in the development of new politics in food security. We will create a national food democracy network, to address issues of : food security, nutrition and health, sustainable agriculture, sustainable fisheries, rural revitalization, fair trade.

The network will engage with like-minded networks of organizations to help them integrate, where appropriate, food security initiatives into their work. We also wish to foster the Citizen's Agenda by broadening the base and streamlining the actions. The network will provide information and resources to contribute to this comprehensive agenda. In doing so, we will join with like-minded organizations to build a national network of groups to provide alternatives to: Corporate concentration, Globalization and Free trade. The purpose is to strengthen democracy by utilizing our knowledge and resources more effectively, by avoiding duplication of efforts and by coordination of capacities and expertise.

The proposed network would use electronic communication and committee structures to address development of network policies, processes and activities, while allowing for timely actions and sharing and development of information (e.g. indicators, national inventory of current actions and activities).

As with the BC Food Systems Network, participants in the network, both organizations and individuals, can sign on or adopt actions as they see fit. The proposed network should include a capacity for global networking.

**Committees needed**

Structural Development/Basis of Unity Craft recommendations for Civil Society reps to Rome with grassroots input Organizing and fund raising for the next event.

**Process**

- The organizations present at this conference sign up as members of this network;
- Through the network we will develop the goals and objectives of the network;
- The network collects from the member organizations information about who we are, what we do, our successes, what alternatives do we offer, what can we offer other organizations through the network, research, information, media access, resource people (staff and associates);
- We sign up our networks in our regions.

Ryerson Polytechnic University to collect the information and develop the funding proposal.

Possible partners: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Council of Canadians, First Nations, Enviro's (WWF, Greenpeace), Health/nutrition organizations, Canadian Association of Ecological Economists, Unions.

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### 7.3 Workshop C: Community Health and Healthy Communities

*Moderators: Cathleen Kneen, BC Food Systems Network,  
Vida Stevens, Toronto Public Health*

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This workshop focused on such issues as:

- What are the determinants of food security?
- How do we build links or bridges between community and public health?
- How can we create effective food policy organizations?
- What priorities and attitudes do we need to restructure the food system?
- Promotion of access to safe and nutritious food including breastfeeding promotion and alternative methods of food access.

#### *THE GOOD FOOD BOX*

*The Good Food Box (GFB) program was initiated in 1994 by FoodShare (a Toronto anti-hunger organization) in an effort to develop a more comprehensive solution to the problem of urban food insecurity. The GFB project operates essentially as a large, non-profit, centralized buying club that distributes fresh fruits and vegetables to mostly low-income users. Generally food is provided at a cost 30-50% less than at typical supermarkets. This program is able to buy food directly from farmers as it has developed substantial purchasing power from its large user base. Current figures show that approximately 4000 'Good Food' boxes of fresh produce are distributed each month in the Toronto area. The benefits of this program so far have been numerous and include:*

- *Improved access to food for low-income population;*
- *Promotion of healthy eating;*
- *Support for local farmers;*
- *Encouragement for sustainable agriculture;*
- *Promotion of community development.*

*The success of the GFB program is reflected in the development of 20-30 programs across Canada modeled after its design and purpose. More GFB programs are currently emerging.*

**Source:**

*FoodShare. The Good Food Box.*

<http://www.foodshare.net/gfbox.htm>

- Food safety in terms of biotech foods.
- Traditional food acquisition methods of Aboriginal People.
- Peace as a precursor to food security in terms of child abuse and violence against women.

The workshop began with a roundtable inventory of programs and/or issues, led off by four people providing ideas for how their work illustrates the determinants of food security: Marcie Fofonoff, Healthy Communities, Chetwynd, BC spoke about healthy communities in a remote Northern community; Laura Berman, FoodShare, Toronto addressed urban agriculture in the context of food access; Ellen Desjardins, Community Health Department, Regional Municipality of Waterloo described the development of Food Link, a systems approach to food security; Barbara Flaherty, Saugeen First Nation Good Food Box, Health Unit spoke about their Good Food Box program.

Extensive discussion of the proposals, in large and small group work, occupied the rest of the workshop.

### *Framing principles*

Internationally, Canada is using an ecosystem approach to food (IDRC programs), including social, economic, and political factors. This international work is transdisciplinary, uses a gender analysis, and is based on community participation. These principles must be applied in Canada as well: our motto is, “*As In Rome, So At Home.*”

Community food initiatives depend on:

- **Financial support** for community programs—on a long-term basis, not project-by-project
- Promotion of increased **production and consumption of fruits and vegetables.**
- Baby-friendly initiatives which **support breastfeeding.**
- **Infrastructure**, including land, water, processing, marketing—in urban as well as rural areas. **First Nations communities** infrastructure needs include trading, treaty rights, access to land, government support for programs, networks and expertise, educational resources.
- **Research** into sustainable, appropriate methods for food production and processing for the local/regional market, and community-driven research into indicators of food security (numbers of food bank users is not adequate). Note that narrative and qualitative community based research to be accepted as legitimate as quantitative methodologies.
- The inclusion of **fisheries, hunting and other traditional methods** as critical elements of food security: Northern coastal First Nations communities have no agricultural production possibility; food security means fisheries development, clean drinking water, reduction in the cost of food (foods high in fat and sugar are lighter than protein and cheaper to transport—obesity is a big problem), action on contamination of traditional ‘country’ foods.

### *Broad recommendations*

1. We demand that governments at every level (local, national, international) ensure adequate funding and support for food policy and food security groups with full civil society participation.
2. Governments’ commitment to an Action Plan for Food security must be transparent. We note that there has been no civil society input into indicators for food security. A **food security report card** to monitor the state of food insecurity and the progress of food security initiatives should be issued every two years with full civil society participation and dissemination to all sectors concerned with food security.
3. Community food security must be recognized as a **determinant of health**, and government policy therefore must address the following determinants of health as they affect food security:
  - Affordable housing and heating;
  - Water supply and sanitation;
  - Adequate income;
  - Transportation;
  - Freedom from violence.

4. This means also that governments must:
  - Ensure affordable access to healthy and culturally appropriate foods for everyone at all life stages, including:
    - Infants: mandatory adoption of the World Health Assembly (WHA) resolution (54.2) on infant and child nutrition;
    - Universal infant/child nutrition programs;
    - Protection of indigenous or “country” foods and traditional food and medicine skills;
    - Financial commitment to education/skills development towards healthy eating.
  - Increase the proportion of funding to health promotion programs (cf. Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, 1996), recognizing the association between food insecurity/undernutrition and higher incidence of disease and health care costs, along with problems relating to learning ability, productivity and employability.
  - Use an ecosystem approach to health to assess the problem caused through industrial agriculture.
  - Recognize junk food as an addiction problem and apply the Health Canada tobacco strategy, including a ban on advertising of “highly processed/low nutritional value” food to children 12 and under, and focus on healthy eating and physical activity through development and support of a comprehensive healthy weights program.
5. Food must be produced in an environmentally responsible manner which protects biodiversity, eliminates toxic chemicals and GMOs and promotes sustainable and organic techniques.
6. Access must be ensured to land, water and infrastructure for community food systems (including urban and peri-urban agriculture as well as rural and remote). Infrastructure needs include transportation, storage, processing, marketing, education, information and training. This system must provide a fair return to the producer.
7. Community needs such as local employment, control over resource management decision making, and lack of food safety resulting from industrial processes can be addressed by emphasis on local food systems.

#### *FOOD INSECURITY IN CANADIAN HOUSEHOLDS*

*According to the National Population Health Survey (NPHS), released by Statistics Canada (August 15th) about 8% of Canadians, or just under 2.5 million people, had to compromise the quality or the quantity of their diet at least once in 1998/99 because of a lack of money. In the same period, an additional 0.5 million people worried that they would not have enough to eat because they were short on cash. In total, the survey found that an estimated 3 million Canadians, about 10%, were considered to be living in what is known as a “food-insecure” household at some point during 1998/99.*

*The report indicated that children aged 0 to 17 were the age group most likely to live in a food-insecure household (14%), and seniors aged 65 or older, least likely (4%). But children in such households were not necessarily undernourished. Adult caregivers tend to sacrifice their own diet so that children will not be hungry, the report claimed. One-third (32%) of all single-mother households were food insecure to some extent, and 28% reported their diet had been compromised.*

*The report proclaims that food insecurity in Canada is strongly associated with household income. More than one-third (35%) of people in low-income households reported some form of food insecurity in 1998/99. About 30% felt that their diet had been compromised.*

*The NPHS found that food insecurity was not limited to low-income households. About 14% of residents of middle-income households reported some form of food insecurity, and nearly 12% reported that their diet had been compromised. The existence of food insecurity at higher income levels, according to the report, may have to do with the calculation of annual income as a static measure which may not be sensitive to sudden economic changes that contribute to temporary bouts of food insecurity.*

*Source:*

*Health Reports, Vol 12, no 4, August 15, 2001 Catalogue No: 82-003-XIE*

## COMMUNITY GARDENS

*Community gardens in Canada have experienced sporadic waves of popularity over the last century<sup>1</sup>. Recent trends have shown that we have been experiencing a revival of interest in developing gardens in our community spaces for some time<sup>1</sup>. A significant reason for this is that there is a widening appreciation for the multiple benefits that community gardens can provide. For example, community gardens can:*

- *Provide healthy food at lower cost (i.e. less expensive than conventional gardens);*
- *Empower local citizens as well as provide social interaction and educational opportunities;*
- *Encourage and facilitate of community building;*
- *Reduce city temperatures in warmer months (smog antagonist);*
- *Improve air quality by reducing greenhouse emissions;*
- *Promote physical activity (promotes healthy lifestyle);*
- *Create healthier urban landscapes;*
- *Improve land value.*

*The number of community gardens in several major Canadian cities are increasing, but most coordinated programs are still in the early stages of development<sup>1</sup>. An exception to this is the community garden program in Montréal, which is considered one of the best in North America<sup>1</sup>. Reasons for this include the fact that this program is well organized with considerable municipal support. The city of Montréal itself currently boasts 72 garden sites (6400 plots)<sup>1</sup>. As there has been much success with this program, Montréal may serve as an excellent program model for other community garden initiatives elsewhere in Canada.*

1. Fairholm J. (1999) *Urban Agriculture and Food Security Initiatives in Canada: A Survey of Canadian Non-Governmental Organizations.*

[http://www.idrc.ca/cfp/rep25\\_e.html](http://www.idrc.ca/cfp/rep25_e.html)

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## More specific recommendations

*We call on the Federal Government to:*

1. Create a Federal inter-ministerial food policy and food security body to develop and implement a national food policy through all arms of government. Work with the civil society Food Security Network and ensure that we are consulted before any legislation be passed.
2. Develop systems of information sharing and networking on food security experiences globally.
3. Shift research emphasis and money from biotechnology to sustainable food production in partnership with producers and local communities. The Canadian Government should allocate at least as much money to this effort as it has spent on biotechnology and genetic engineering. Recognizing that liberalized trade does not contribute to food security, implement international agreements that place a priority on the protection of biodiversity over trade and intellectual property rights.
4. Take immediate steps to ensure access to adequate amounts of clean water for everyone.
5. Involve youth in policy deliberations and pay attention to their issues, including the link between personal and planetary health.
6. Students are graduating with skills and commitment in the community food security field but no jobs for them. A pilot Food Security Workers program is needed, funded by Health Canada, HRDC, and IDRC, which also includes practicum/internship programs and coop placements for students.

## 7.4 Workshop D: International Aid and Trade

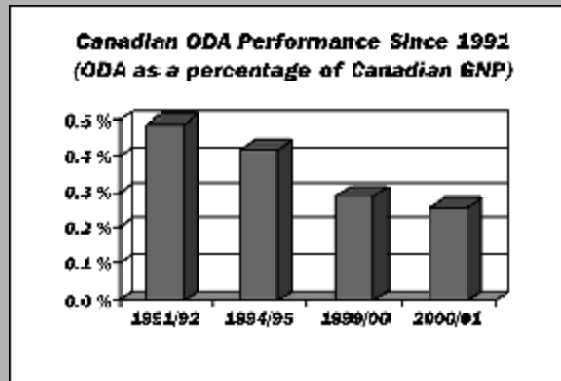
*Moderator: Stuart Clark Senior Policy Advisor, Canadian Foodgrains Bank and Canadian Civil Society Delegate to the World Food Summit / five years later*

### Introduction

The Food Security, Foreign Aid and International Trade Workshop (Workshop D) was added to the conference agenda when this agenda was expanded to prepare for Canadian civil society input to the World Food Summit/five years later Meeting in November 2001. This workshop was focused on the food security impact of Canadian foreign policy – notably in the areas of international cooperation and international agriculture trade policy. These areas were selected because they coincided with the work being done by the Canadian NGO Food Security Policy Group, a loose network of eleven Canadian international development and farm organizations collaborating on follow-up to the international commitments of Canada's Action Plan for Food Security.

### DECLINE IN INTERNATIONAL AID

Canada's official development assistance (ODA) has been on the decline since the early 1990's (see graph below). Although only a small portion of this aid is directly linked to food security initiatives, many components of this aid can also indirectly contribute to the reduction of food insecurity in recipient countries. This downward trend has raised concerns particularly as Canada's commitment in 1988 was to increase ODA to .7% of its GNP by the year 2000. The 2000 level of 0.26% of GNP falls considerably short of this goal.



#### Source:

*Renewing Canadian Aid: Excerpt from an in common and CCIC Fact Sheet.*

<http://www.results-resultats.ca/en/actions/background.htm>

The timing of this conference was particularly relevant to the issues covered by the workshop.

- Canadian international cooperation budgets devoted to common food security themes—food, agriculture and nutrition—have been cut dramatically during the past decades, much more rapidly than cuts in overall foreign aid.
- CIDA is undergoing a major reorientation of its work as Canada's principal foreign aid institution. Food Security is not among its priority themes (although it may be a minor part of the Health and Nutrition theme) nor is it seen as an explicit part of the 'aid effectiveness' discussions at CIDA.
- Canada is a very active participant in agricultural trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization and the Free Trade Agreement of the America's but does not yet have an official policy on the particular needs of developing countries.

These issues raise serious questions about Canada's commitment to the World Food Summit and our own Action Plan for Food Security.

## Presentation Summaries

### *Global Food Aid*

*Diane Spearman, Chief, Policy Service, World Food Programme, Rome*

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- Food aid is increasingly directed at emergency situations rather than being used to promote sustainable solutions to chronic hunger. During the 90s over 75% of the WFP food aid was directed to conflict situations, currency crises and weather induced disasters.
- Not even all emergencies have been given attention. Serious difficulties finding resources to meet needs in Iraq and southern Sudan.
- Increasingly ‘today’s’ emergency displaces ‘yesterday’s’ emergency in the battle for shrinking food aid resources so that post-emergency rehabilitation is severely underfunded.
- International efforts to ensure adequate reliable levels of food aid availability have not been very successful. The Food Aid Convention has effectively reduced international commitments. New promised commitments to meet the needs of Least Developed Countries and Net Food Importing Developing Countries engaging in trade liberalization have not been met.
- The alleged use of some food aid as an export promotion tool is now threatening the entire structure of international food aid geared to meeting human need.

### *Canada’s International Responses to the World Food Summit*

*Bill Graham, Chair, Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade*

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- International politics play an important role in hunger – conflict induced hunger in Macedonia, Sierra Leone, southern Sudan, Iraq.
- Canada too quickly runs out of the resources to respond to these and other emergencies.
- There is a problem of ‘coherence’ in the areas of Canadian trade and aid policy. The former seeks to develop markets for Canadian agricultural commodities while the latter has sought historically to help developing countries increase their own production.
- The World Food Day 2000 civil society presentations to the Standing Committees on Foreign Affairs and International Development and Agriculture pointed out that trade rules to govern the exchange of less than 15% of agricultural production impact up to 80% of the population (i.e. the farmers) in many developing countries.
- Agriculture is the most contentious aspect of international trade. Even in Canada, some farm organizations (National Farmers Union) promote reduced exports while other farm organizations promote increased access to foreign markets (Canadian Federation of Agriculture). Trade wars such as that over bananas end up pitting large corporations against small producer nations.

### *Foreign Policy Coherence and Food Security*

*Dominique Caouette, InterPares*

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- There is an ongoing global crisis for family farms driven by high and increasing input costs, low commodity prices and increasing corporate concentration in food and agriculture sectors. At the same time the public policy capacity to respond has been reduced by deregulation and the reduction of state capacities.

- In Canada the food security policy is seriously divided: Domestic vs. International, Foreign Aid vs. Trade, Rhetoric and Action
- Within CIDA there has been little sign of a coherent approach to food security.

<i>CIDA Long Term Strategy</i>	<i>CIDA Social Development Priorities</i>	<i>CIDA Corporate Guidelines for Agriculture, Food and Nutrition</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Driven by reworked 'Washington Consensus'</i></li> <li>• <i>No particular relevance to food security as a theme</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Only the Health and Nutrition theme includes food security where it is 'medicalized'</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Relatively weak influence in CIDA</i></li> <li>• <i>Unable to counter the 60% drop in aid for A, F and N</i></li> </ul>

- There is a need to refocus Canadian foreign policy if food security is to be given any priority.
  - Reverse the downward trend in aid percentage (now 0.24%—international target 0.7%)
  - Sustain the commitment to food security between high profile international conferences
  - Ensure that 'development/food security' considerations get a higher profile in Canadian trade negotiating positions.
- Proposed solutions
  - Parliamentary review of Canada's foreign policy.
  - Establish a 'Food Security Auditor' to monitor coherence in domestic and international (aid and trade) policies.
  - Adopt a 'Development Assistance Charter' rooted in the goal of poverty eradication and equitable sustainable development.

*Food Security at CIDA*  
*Bill Singleton, Director, Economic Policies, CIDA*

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- There is no 'food security champion' in the senior management at CIDA. Policy Branch has tended to take up such 'program orphans.' Food security is unlikely to gain any prominence at CIDA in the near future.
- A few projects have had a major food security emphasis (e.g. Ghana Sector Wide Approach to Agricultural Development and Food Security).
- The current move is towards allowing developing country governments to set the thematic priorities for Canadian aid. Canadian aid will increasingly be programmed along with that of other OECD countries.
- Within CIDA it is held that the key developing country trade priority is access to developed country markets, not protecting food security in their own markets.



## CIDA

CIDA (*The Canadian International Development Agency*) is the federal government agency primarily responsible for Canada's Official Development Assistance (ODA) program. The purpose of this agency is to "support sustainable development to reduce poverty and help create a more secure, equitable and prosperous world<sup>1</sup>." CIDA has six programming priorities that direct its strategies and use of resources:

- Basic needs
- Women in development
- Infrastructure services
- Human rights, democracy and good governance
- Private-sector development
- The environment

The basic needs component of CIDA's programs (which utilises approximately 25% of the ODA program resources) includes food security strategies such as food aid and reducing micronutrient malnutrition<sup>1</sup>. Resources used by CIDA in 1999-2000 for ODA was approximately \$1.7 billion<sup>2</sup>. Currently CIDA works in partnership with developing countries, Canadian and international organizations and agencies, institutions and businesses, to support assistance programs to over 100 countries.

### CIDA's Draft Action Plan on Health and Nutrition<sup>3</sup>

This action plan is devoted to CIDA's plans to contribute to international targets for health, nutrition, and water and sanitation throughout its policy and programming work, and describes how the proposed doubling in funding for health and nutrition to \$305 million a year by 2004-05 will be strategically spent. Specifically, the plan is based on the principles for reducing poverty, supporting developing countries as they lead their own development: promoting gender equality, safeguarding the environment, working across sectors.

Building on these principles, this action plan proposes a three-pronged approach to future programming in health, nutrition, and water and sanitation. This approach:

1. focuses on the priority problems of the poor;
2. aims to strengthen national health systems to better serve the poor; and
3. works to promote sound public policies that further meet the health, nutrition, and water and sanitation rights of the poor.

1. Canadian International Development Agency. Performance Report, March 31, 1998.

[http://www.agr.ca/review/eperformance\\_info.pdf](http://www.agr.ca/review/eperformance_info.pdf)

2. Canadian International Development Agency. Financial Control Over Projects.

<http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/reports.nsf/html/9928ce.html>

3. Canadian International Development Agency. Supporting developing countries as they lead their own development.

[http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/cida\\_ind.nsf/f1b522f51afeefda8525697d005cce33/849f06880142436285256a330069ad99?OpenDocument#Health%20and%20nutritiona%3Bo8ey](http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/cida_ind.nsf/f1b522f51afeefda8525697d005cce33/849f06880142436285256a330069ad99?OpenDocument#Health%20and%20nutritiona%3Bo8ey)

## Food Security and Nutrition

*Carolyn MacDonald, Nutrition Team Leader, World Vision Canada*

- WVC has been responding the CIDA's pressure to show measurable results in food security programming through its nutritional programming in Malawi.
- Project focuses on both diet fortification/supplementation, health education and dietary diversification to address anemia, goiter, and stunting. Funding for dietary diversification was severely limited.
- Measurable results were achieved. Stunting – 55.7%; 40.4% in under 5 children. Decreased prevalence of goiter and anemia as well.

- Indicators for success – consistent messages, multiple approaches to increasing nutrient intake and bioavailability.
- Ways to Improve – stronger emphasis on dietary diversification, scale up village level food fortification, include poverty reduction strategies in nutrition programming.
- There is a powerful synergy between improving overall food security and addressing specific nutritional needs.

*Can Agricultural Development Improve Food Security*  
*Farhad Mazhar, UBINIG, Bangladesh*

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- Concern was expressed about the notion that modern agriculture is needed to respond to food deficits in Bangladesh. Even now Bangladesh is usually near food self sufficient. Food insecurity is a result of poor distribution of food and poor management of biodiversity.
- 17-20% of Bangladeshi households (the very poorest) are dependent on uncultivated crops, either to sell or to consume. The introduction of monoculture will destroy this type of lifestyle.
- The boundary between cultivated and un-cultivated foods is thin and dynamic.
- Food should not be reduced to a consumer item since it is of cultural and social importance.
- The critique of the Human Right to Food is that it does not protect the right to produce food nor to choose the production method.

*International Development Research Centre (IDRC)*

*The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) is a public corporation created in 1970 to help developing countries find long-term solutions to the social, economic, and environmental problems they face. IDRC's aims to initiate, encourage, support, and conduct research into the problems of the developing regions of the world and into the means for applying and adapting scientific, technical, and other knowledge to the economic and social advancement of those regions. IDRC programs focus on many aspects of food security in the developing world, including programs such as:*

*The Cities Feeding People Program initiative is examining ways to bridge that gap by supporting research and development activities to improve the food security and income needs of the poor while maintaining public health and a clean urban environment. Cities Feeding People has been a leading force in promoting urban agriculture and its interaction with (ground)water protection and reuse initiatives.*

*The Sustainable Use of Biodiversity Program initiative looks at ways to conserve biodiversity by promoting its sustainable use by indigenous and local communities. It emphasizes research approaches that are sensitive to gender issues and inclusive of indigenous knowledge and culture, and seeks ways to inform policies with these approaches.*

*The Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health Program initiative aims to identify the web of ecologically based factors that influence human health – acknowledging that economic, societal, and environmental components play equally important roles.*

*The Micronutrient Initiative supports nutrition programs in developing countries, working with development agencies, governments, non-governmental organizations, research institutions, and the food industry to increase people's access to essential micronutrients and to enhance their health and well-being.*

*Source:*

*<http://www.idrc.ca>*

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*Trade and Poverty/Hunger, an uneasy partnership*  
*Wendy Phillips/Gauri Sreenivasan, CCIC*

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- The roots of hunger are complex. Trade arrangements are a growing factor for both good and bad.
- Trade promotes growth and, with appropriate provisions, can also reduce hunger and poverty.
- Canada committed to the WFS goal and has seen agricultural trade liberalization a positive factor by definition. Yet FAO and others report that main effects of WTO agricultural trade liberalization has been to increase food insecurity.
- There are many ways to ensure that trade rules maximize benefits to those who are poor and/or hungry but getting these changes to current rules is our challenge.

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*WTO Agreement on Agriculture and Food Security*  
*Wendy Cymbal, AAFC*

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- Supports the notion that trade is not an end in itself but must serve larger issues. The benefits of trade are to be shared by everyone is a basic goal.
- Trade encourages local production by encouraging areas of comparative advantage.
- Canada has responded to WFS Commitment 4 by encouraging the monitoring of the impact of agricultural trade liberalization.
- Canada has responded to the Marrakech Decision by increasing its commitments to the Food Aid Convention.
- Excessive domestic support levels prevent non-subsidized developing countries from taking advantage of their comparative advantage.

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*Are Canada's Food Security Commitments being TRIPPed up?*  
*Marion Meyer, MCC Canada*

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- Commitment 3 of Canada's Action Plan relates to intellectual property rights (IPRs) and addresses Canada's commitments to the Convention on Biodiversity and the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources for Agriculture (IU), but makes no reference to the TRIPS article 27.3 (b).
- The WTO Trade Related Intellectual Properties Agreement (TRIPs) was to have been reviewed at the end of 1999. All countries were to implement US style patent legislation or their own versions ('sui generis') by 1 January 2000.
- Mennonite Central Committee's interest in the issue of IPRs as it relates to food security is rooted in concern about access to resources and technology and how they restrict access to seeds and germplasm which should be the common property of humanity and are essential to the maintenance of food security.
- The results of MCC's research in India, Bangladesh, Kenya, Ethiopia and Brazil was referred to. In all these countries concern was raised about IPRs with concern ranging from the impact on cultural practices to what monoculture does to biodiversity.

## Report from Discussion Groups

### *Context and Opportunities*

- The upcoming World Food Summit/five years later in November provides an excellent opportunity to raise the profile of food security:
  - Focusing on the actions for which federal government is accountable, comparing Canadian commitments to actions;
  - Mobilizing political will and resources.
- Also important opportunity to link WFS/fyl and the WTO Ministerial in Qatar (back to back meetings).
- May 2002 is the Earth Summit/ten years later provides another opportunity as it will focus on sustainable agriculture.
- It is important now to emphasize the links between the domestic and international contexts around food security issues. The social impact of globalization are becoming increasingly clear both in Canada and in developing countries and are similar: growing poverty, increasing food insecurity, disappearance of farming families, GMOs, deregulation, privatization of social services, etc.
- International trade agreements are undermining food security, food safety and family farms both in Canada and internationally.

### *International Trade, Foreign Aid and Canada's Action Plan for Food Security*

- Canada's Action Plan is focused too much on trade as the solution and not enough on the role of aid. We should instead encourage more local production, support for sustainable agriculture, transfer of expertise, rural roads, etc.
- Canada's Action Plan has been quite weak because there is no strong mechanism to push and monitor its implementation;
- As Farhad suggested, it might be more important to look at agriculture in a new way and not just argue for increases in aid; can we map out indigenous practices that have sustained cultures not necessarily involved in trade and that have been lost in the Green Revolution? But also recognize that these are indigenous technologies that work;
- Agricultural diversity is more sustainable than mono-cropping; locally produced food has many positive aspects; food should not be commodified, it does not belong in the WTO. Trade on food should be based on priorities that reflect the value of food as food, not simply as an economic commodity. We need to develop ethical trade organizations and rules around food;
- We need to integrate the issue of food sovereignty (the freedom to make local decisions about the food supply) into the discussion of agricultural food policy and trade;
- Developing countries people are concerned that if trade agreements rooted in a drive for economic growth alone are signed, they will not be able to protect their local producers. For example, if they produce wheat at high costs, will they be able to maintain tariffs to protect local producers.
  - Recommendation: Developing countries should be able to protect their traditional staple food crops from both biopiracy and unfair competition from subsidized foreign producers.
  - Recommendation: We should advocate for more equitable access to richer markets (the European Union just announced that there would be no tariffs for developing countries except for agricultural products!). We might want to advocate "everything but arms."
  - Recommendation: CIDA should review the commitments and actions on foreign aid made in the Action Plan and make this available to civil society.

- Recommendation: CIDA concentration on nutrition without a strong emphasis on food security represents a very limited view of sustainable development. CIDA was established for poverty eradication and food security is critical for this and it should be clearly stated.
- Recommendation: Support local rural production for local consumption in developing countries in terms of agricultural extension, seeds, land tenure, irrigation, agrarian reform. At the same time, use local labour, local knowledge and materials in a sustainable way.
- Ideas to bring forward the issue of food security within CIDA:
  - Identify Food Security “Champions” at both the political and bureaucratic levels;
  - Increase ODA levels, especially food security programming;
  - Place food security at the centre of the Health and Nutrition Action Plan;
  - Develop food security indicators;
  - Best practices emphasis needs to be balanced by a bottom-up approach.
- Emphasize access to land, water and genetic resources to obtain food. Frequently an increasing emphasis on exports limits access to these resources (at the same time, we need to be careful about making generalization, Ghana might represent a successful case of export-driven model);
- Emergency food aid is necessary but needs to be better targeted. It is also an expensive way of providing aid and in Canada 90% is tied aid;
  - Recommendation: We should look more closely at untying food aid.
- There is a need to look at what are the most appropriate foods to help people achieve optimal growth potential (perhaps local traditional food are best suited). Are large corporation undermining local producers by changing food tastes? Are they responding to local requests?
- Is all of bio-technology bad? Technology can be used to improve health (for example, drought resistant crops). Green Revolution has not been all good or all bad. It has helped feed an additional 3 billion people.
  - Recommendation: Canadian government should fund public research on agriculture here and abroad to help give more equitable access to resources and avoid simply focusing on higher profits.

*Canada: Agriculture, Farming Families, Mobilizing Political Will and Coherence*

- How are Canadian farmers affected by international markets and how do they affect food security and local stability? For example, in Saskatchewan, they can’t co-exist. What you see are larger farms producing for export and these are changing rural life. You can’t compete with large farms, so many farmers have to leave the land and move to city where they become food insecure.
- How do you reconcile what is happening in rural areas and the growing number of food insecure in the cities?
- We are in a situation where there is a lot of instability in agriculture in Canada, large agribusiness corporations are making huge profits and many farmers are making at best small gains or are losing their farms. At the same time, there is an erosion of safety nets and income supports.
- A Standing Committee on Food Security might be a forum where Canadians can talk about food security. The Committee would be answerable to Parliament and it would need to engage civil society on this issue.
- The current inter-departmental committee with CSOs participation has no teeth, it is a forum for discussion and analysis only.
- Link elections and food security, that is make food security an electoral issue.

## 8. Reports from the Workshops (9:00-10:30)

*Session Chair: Cecilia Rocha, School of Nutrition, Ryerson University*

Representatives from each workshop met Saturday night to examine what each workshop had produced, to identify complimentary, contradictory and overlapping themes, and identify common strategic directions. See Appendix C for the materials circulated to participants Sunday morning. These materials represented a first attempt to identify the larger issues that had emerged from the Saturday sessions, including principles, some general recommendations, and some proposals on how a national food security network might be built. The package did not include all the detailed recommendations because the task of integrating everything into one coherent package could not be accomplished in the time available. The organizers proposed that the more detailed integration would be the responsibility of the editors of the conference report, based on comments provided in this Sunday morning session. As well, since most conference participants did not officially represent their organizations, it was clear that no formal approvals of the conference recommendations could be offered at that time. The organizers proposed that participants take the draft conference report back to their organizations for feedback, and out of that feedback they might be able to draft a more formal statement that reflected the work of the conference.

The floor was opened for comments on the circulated materials and the following were the main themes that emerged:

### *Opposition to GMOs*

- Please don't have increased funding for GM research as an outcome of this conference.
- Sustainable agriculture in Alberta means biotech and heavy chemical use, therefore we must add the word 'non-toxic'; we need to say 'halt' in reference to the government's support for genetic engineering.
- Lets be clear that we are against genetic engineering, as opposed to just biotech.
- We should call for increased research that is not focussed on biotechnology.

### *The right to food*

- We need to add in what we mean by the 'the right to food', a 'value' statement in the underlying principles section; the language of the "Italian Committee for the NGO Forum" which was circulated by some members clearly states our position on this point (See Appendix).

### *Export oriented production*

- We did not have enough discussion on challenging the monocultural chemical dependant export production practices; we must think of how we connect to other groups (i.e. environmental).

### *The importance of farmers to food security*

- We have not stressed strongly enough the importance of farmers in food security – farmers feel that urban people are colonizing us.

### *Sustainable fisheries*

- Please, make sustainable fisheries a strategic food security issue.

### *Representation in the future food security network meetings*

- In future meetings, we want increased representation by of marginalized groups such as poor, visible minorities.
- We want representation that reflects the realities of the communities that farm in Canada.

### *Making strong statements for Rome*

- A civil society statement with U.S. civil society will result in a stronger message in Rome.
- NGO community in Canada is quite different than the U.S. NGO community, we need to formulate our national stance for Rome independently.

## 9. Working Together (11:00-12:30)

*Session Chair: Cecilia Rocha, School of Nutrition, Ryerson University*

The last session of the Conference was designed to identify ways of creating a national food security network. It featured panelists with different observations on models for organizing.

*Civil Society Networking in South Asia*  
*Farhad Mazhar, UBINIG, Dhaka, Bangladesh*

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Farhad Mazhar opened the session by forcefully underlying the importance of seeing food in its fullest and organizing people around those broad themes. “Food is an ethical issue,” he stated, “it is not a production issue.” He emphasized that food must be localized, that agriculture is not a factory, nor a supermarket. He believes that we need to bring spirituality back into food.

As well, agrarian culture is a viable, important, necessary culture. We need to fight against the monoculture that not only exists in agriculture, but is resident in all aspects of society. “We have to enjoy our life. We are not here simply to live as a consumer, someone to simply produce, to make money we want to produce our own food to enjoy what food is we have lost that enjoyment.”

He closed with a call to create more awareness, for more farmer linkages, for giving producers the honour and dignity that they deserve. Let us converge the interests of farmers of the North and the South, he said. Let’s create a global farmers’ alliance.

*Old Friends, New Tactics*  
*Brewster Kneen, The Ram’s Horn, and BC Biotech Circle, Sorrento, BC*

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Brewster Kneen concentrated his remarks on the successes of organizing against food biotechnology. “The whole problem of biotechnology is that the policy was never democratically formed we believe that this is a major public policy issue that belongs in the public domain.”

Seven years ago, he stated, a group of us tried to block the development of a pro industry Ontario biotechnology policy. We organized a group called ‘Biojest’ (a very diverse group of people/organizations) and were able to stall the Biotech industry from getting what it wanted from the government for 6 years.

The issue of rBGH brought out food policy activism in Canada starting around 1990 and showed what you could do when you have a really clear common objective. There was little formal structure to the campaign; various organizations played different roles, and there was no demand for a uniform position against rBGH. This permitted a stoked but largely spontaneous opposition to rBGH that spread into numerous sectors with little previous involvement in agriculture, including public health, seniors’ organizations, schools and urban municipal governments. Their work prevented the government/industry from being able to isolate the opposition. Instead the issue became a political liability.

Kneen believes this kind of organizing can continue to be successful. “Monsanto’s dictatorship on transgenic wheat has succeeded in uniting the right wing western Canadian wheat growers, the Farmers Union and everyone in between against them, and the government is still backing them. Like rBGH, GE wheat and labeling of GE foods can become political liabilities.”

*Lessons from the Last Food Summit – Keeping the Heat on the Government*  
*Sue Cox, Daily Bread Food Bank, Toronto*

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Sue Cox provided an overview of efforts by civil society to influence the writing of Canada's Action Plan on Food Security. Food banks got involved at a reasonably early stage, and they found it a very frustrating process. They were trying to convince government representatives that income inadequacy was most likely the major cause of food insecurity in Canada. Their comments, she believed, managed to have only a small impact on what was put in the final document.

She concluded her cautionary tale by saying, "Let us continue to hold the government responsible by holding their feet to the fire. Let's go forward with hope, with a renewed commitment, but let's not pretend that what we agreed with today is going to be that easy to get."

*Building a National Food Security Movement*  
*Debbie Field, FoodShare, Toronto*

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"We are a social movement," stated Debbie Field with conviction. People are tired of a government that doesn't pay attention to our issues. Millions of people have a government that does not fulfil their needs around food.

She encouraged participants to embrace the soccer team analogy – not everybody plays the same position, not one of us can score that goal by ourselves, and we must instead work together as a team. In her view, you win social change based on a consensus of somewhere between 60-75% of the population. The women's movement is a successful example. We want to change policy, and we want to change the nature of food in Canada. We can recognize the breadth of potential allies knowing that "the enemies of our enemy are our friends."

*Keep Talking, Keep Listening*  
*Mustafa Koc, Centre for Studies in Food Security, Ryerson University, Toronto*

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Koc reiterated the need for continuing dialogue among civil society representatives nationally and globally. In a globalizing economy, "civil society is key in creating a mechanism of checks and balances, protecting the rights of the marginalized, protecting appropriate policies that respond to local needs."

Cautioning against an approach that only blames industry and governments for the problems in the food system, Koc stated that "what government and industry are doing is really reflective of our dominant value system." Civil society organizations have a key role in questioning prevailing values about basic rights and economic development strategies.

Pointing out the fragmented nature of agencies working for food security federally, provincially and locally, Koc defended the need for a comprehensive food policy and a Department of Food working towards reaching the objectives stated in the Canadian Plan of Action for Food Security.

Koc concluded that universities should also work together with other civil society organizations in providing the research and training facilities as well as creating a platform for dialogue among governments, industry and civil society.



## Issues raised following presentations

### *The centrality of income security*

- We need a strong affirmation of the centrality of income security in this whole process.

### *Destruction of the fisheries*

- The dominant type of farming has immediate and destructive impacts on the fisheries industry; it is the current state of trickle down economics that you see how what happens on the land destroys the livelihood of the sea.

### *On the loss of farmers*

- Lives of the farm families changing radically. We feel like there is a movement that is about to eliminate the farmers, forcing to move them off the land. Farming is not just business but a way of life.
- We have serious concerns about seed accessibility. We are afraid of losing it to biotech.
- Food insecurity is not just an urban concern. Some farm families are going hungry and going to food banks in Ontario.

### *On next steps*

- “We have to get home and get organized. A national community won’t work unless we get our own communities going. We need to be strong locally in order to build global solidarity. We need to continue talking and telling stories farm suicides in Canada are on the rise we need to take this pain, transform it into rage, which needs to be the fire that informs our action.”
- More urban agriculture creates more urban citizens, who will understand and support farmers.
- There is a need to develop a mission statement—the goal of a national network. I’m suggesting “Building a movement that educates, mobilizes, services, and incorporates a diverse and broad based popular constituency that will promote community based, democratic, self-sufficient food security structures.”

## 10. Resolution

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*Proposed by: David Rhin*

*Seconded by: Don Kossick*

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The Conference resolves that there is need for a national Canadian Food Security Network and that the organizing committee has the temporary mandate to explore ways of facilitating this and opening it up to a broad-based national membership.

*Approved: Unanimously*

## 11. Cathy Campbell’s Call

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The conference ended with a call from Reverend Cathy Campbell, who has been an inspiration for most of us as a teacher, community organizer, and as a model citizen:

I invite us all to take a moment of silence; to recall the voices, stories, comments that had been heard; to look around the room, see and remember each of the people gathered and then hold all that happened as sacred; honour all that has been shared, created and dreamed as a gift: treasured and special.

# Working Recommendations of the Working Together Conference

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The Working Together Conference was designed to provide proposals for priority actions to the federal government and to the WFS-FYL process in Rome. In this summary, we have synthesized the diverse issues raised by various conference participants, eliminating overlapping recommendations and drawing linkages where appropriate. The working summary is to be circulated to all food security networks for feedback and the conference committee agreed to try to incorporate all the feedback into a final document which would truly reflect civil society on a wider base than the 150 people who were able to attend in Toronto. In this sense, as presented in this report, the proposals represent working recommendations. They are organized according to the main implementation body (delegates to Rome, federal government, civil society), with a sub-level of categorization based on the main workshop themes.

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## Preamble

Food security requires that adequate amounts of safe, nutritious, culturally acceptable food be accessible to all in a dignified and affordable manner; that food producers be enabled to earn a fair return on their labour and that food production methods sustain the environment. These basic elements of food security require a fundamentally new direction for Canadian and world food and health promotion systems.

At the last World Food Summit in 1996 in Rome, a commitment was made to reduce the number of hungry people in half by 2015. Currently, the number of people in a permanent situation of hunger is estimated to be more than 800 million. Yet, even that commitment is considered unattainable by FAO itself as it prepares to host a new World Food Summit this November to evaluate the past five years. This failure to significantly reduce hunger signals the inadequacy of the current policies applied by many institutions and governments in guaranteeing this basic human right to food. If serious action is not undertaken, we are headed for a major food security crisis – both in the North and the South.

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## Principles Guiding Action on Food Security

We believe systems of food security have to honour the following principles:

1. The right to food is all-encompassing and indivisible. Access to nutritious diets and healthy well-being is an essential human right. This right is fully integrated with the rights to fulfilling jobs, adequate income, and housing. Security of income and the means to afford basic necessities are central to ensuring food security.
2. There must be democratic protection of the conditions that make these rights possible.
3. We have the right to protect sovereignty over our food security and this takes priority over the rights of the market (free trade).
4. The right to food has to be conceived in terms of access to food, ability to produce food, which requires protection of the environment for future generations. For indigenous peoples who seek to maintain traditional diets based on environmentally secure habitats this is particularly an important concern.
5. Food security can only be achieved when all groups within civil society are informed, empowered and enabled to participate in policy development.

## **Recommendations to the World Food Summit in Rome**

To Canadian NGO delegates to the World Food Summit, 2000:

1. Insist on inclusion of cultural, social and ecological—not just physiological and biological—dimensions of food security and the right to food.
2. Build networks of mutual education, support and solidarity among international NGOs for achieving food security. Demand national and international action for realization of goals recognized by the World Food Summit 1996, the Draft International Code of Conduct for the Human Right to Adequate Food (FIAN International), and the Canadian Plan of Action for Food Security.
3. Seeds are a resource for the planet and humankind. Take steps to ensure that traditional varieties are conserved, and that the integrity of world seed banks is maintained and they are kept in the public domain.
4. To effect agrarian reform domestically, apply here in Canada the approach recommended for international rural development in the World Food Summit document. This means providing infrastructure, ensuring access to the means of production, recognizing the priority for farmers to provide food for themselves, their communities, their country, then for export (vs. the “Canada feed the world” approach), and ensure the sustainability of the future resource base (stewardship, full cost accounting).
5. Support policies encouraging local production for local consumption.
6. Food security at the global levels is also related to income and financial issues. Include other key multilateral actors and agencies as responsible and accountable agencies for food security to extend the World Food Summit process beyond the limited mandate of the FAO.
7. Create a national food security auditing function with a food security report card to monitor the state of food insecurity and the progress of food security initiatives every 2 years with full civil society participation and dissemination. Monitor food security needs, review provincial social assistance standards for relevance to the right to food.

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## **Recommendations to the Canadian Government**

1. Develop a comprehensive, holistic, government-based (as distinct from department-based or fragmented) food policy.
2. Identify roles and responsibilities of different levels of governments and their branches for food security. Increase cooperation among these agencies for coordinated action to alleviate hunger and poverty.
3. Enforce basic standards of respect for the right to food.
4. Either exempt food security from all trade negotiations (as is done for culture) or protect food security within trade agreements.
5. Increase Canada’s contribution to global food security by:
  - Making food security a key pillar of CIDA’s Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development Strategies;
  - Increasing the flexibility to purchase food for food aid in the locale or region where it is needed;
  - Providing duty free access for all products from Least Developed Countries;
  - Developing systems of information sharing and networking on food security experiences globally;
  - Ensuring adequate funding and support for food policy organizations at every level (local, national, international) with full civil society participation.

6. Recognize food security as a determinant of health, so government policy therefore must address the following determinants of health as they affect food security:
  - Affordable housing and heating;
  - Water supply and sanitation;
  - Adequate incomes including social security benefits;
  - Transportation;
  - Freedom from violence.
7. Ensure affordable access to healthy and culturally appropriate foods for everyone at all life stages, including:
  - Mandatory adoption of the WHO resolution on Infant and Young Child Nutrition and breastfeeding;
  - Development of universal infant/child nutrition programs;
  - Protection of indigenous and traditional food and medicine skills;
  - Financial commitment to education / skills development towards healthy eating;
  - Increased of funding to health promotion programs (cf. Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, 1996);
  - Recognition of the association between food insecurity/ undernutrition and higher incidence of disease and health care costs, along with problems relating to learning ability, productivity and employability;
  - Use of an ecosystem approach to health to assess the problems caused through industrial agriculture; and
  - Recognition of highly-processed/value-added, empty-calorie foods (junk food) as an addiction problem and apply the Health Canada tobacco strategy, including a ban on advertising of “highly processed/low nutritional value” food to children 12 and under, and focus on healthy eating and physical activity through development and support of a comprehensive healthy weights program.
8. Create a national food security auditing function with a food security report card to monitor the state of food insecurity and the progress of food security initiatives every 2 years with full civil society participation and dissemination. Monitor food security needs, review provincial social assistance standards for relevance to the right to food (Also included in the recommendations to the WFS).
9. Take immediate steps to ensure access to adequate amounts of clean water for all Canadians.
10. Develop a pilot Food Security Workers program, funded by Health Canada, HRDC, and IDRC, which also includes practicum/internship programs and coop placements for students who want to gain skills and contribute to the community food security.
11. Ensure that food is produced and distributed in a safe and environmentally responsible manner which protects biodiversity, eliminates toxic chemicals and GMOs and promotes sustainable and organic techniques.
12. Access must be ensured to land, water and infrastructure for community food systems (including urban and peri-urban agriculture as well as rural areas and remote regions). Infrastructure needs include transportation, storage, processing, marketing, education, information and training. Community needs such as local employment, control over resource management decision making, and lack of food safety resulting from industrial processes can be addressed by emphasis on local food systems.
13. Ensure that food safety and quality standards are appropriately “scaled” to small-scale, family, local farm operations and take advantage of community resources to provide food safety and quality services which will keep or create jobs in the community. For example, have product or soil testing done locally, rather than sent to centralized locations.

14. For every dollar the federal government spends on biotechnology R&D, it should spend a dollar on supporting forms of agro-ecological food systems, such as: organic and bio-dynamic farming; local “foodshed” initiatives; community supported agriculture; urban agriculture and the organizations, extension, and research related to the above.
15. Address the ill effects of the “cheap food policy” and its negative impact on incomes of farmers and fishers by a variety of measures including a surcharge or tax shift related to specified products with revenues earmarked for farm and fishing income programs; this could include a tax on junk food, again revenues earmarked for health, environmental, and farm and fisher income programs.
16. Implement consumer awareness and public education efforts regarding ingredients, country of origin and true costs. Offer support for civil society based public education programs.
17. Using full-cost (environmental, social, economic) accounting methodology, carry out comparative analyses of agricultural technologies, methods and systems. Civil society would carry out the work, partnering with appropriate support in universities, and in consultation with federal government, e.g. Agriculture and AgriFood Canada, business management people, and Statistics Canada.
18. Implement a Rural Environment Protection Program, based on models used in the European Union where farmers are paid for providing ecological services, in recognition of farmers as land stewards. Under the WTO, such programs are “green boxed.”
19. Design extension services to assist farmers and farm and fishery organizations with the transition to agro-ecological, and sustainable production techniques including the following program elements: apprenticeships, mentoring, courses, and applied research.
20. Create Federal legislation to construct a framework for implementation at a provincial level of agriculture land trusts, land banks, alternative tenure arrangements so as to facilitate options such as community-supported agriculture and (especially) to make it easier for young/new entrants into farming.
21. Develop mentoring programs for all farmers, especially for younger ones. Elders should be as teachers.
22. Encourage demonstration and training in an urban setting for urban agriculture, with rural farmer mentors. Use devices such as school gardens, rooftop gardens and programs like Linking Land and Future Farmers (in BC), which links people with land who are not farming to people without land who want to farm could be used.
23. Include youth training in agriculture in technical schools, colleges, universities, short courses to include a wide diversity of methods. Link training to practical skills taught on working farms. This requires federal support.
24. Preserve equity principles and develop alternative design structures to deal with market stability and land use issues; overall, develop a broader concept of the food supply-demand equation in sectors where supply management is being dismantled.
25. The vulnerability of human and animal populations has been intensified by the global inter-dependence of the food system. Foot and Mouth, Mad cow disease, resistant bacteria, toxic residues, antibiotics and growth hormones in food products have raised concerns about the life conditions of animal and about human food safety. Federal government resources through Health Canada and the Canadian Food inspection Agency must exercise precaution and advance planning through applied and direct research to ensure prevention planning and contingencies to reduce risk and ease public concern about food safety.
26. Implement funding strategies to support rural enterprise within rural communities – lending circles, credit unions, barter, community-based investing, other options. Government should provide the seed money, then remove obstacles to implementation.

27. Create a vehicle for sharing historical and indigenous knowledge and uses of food.
28. Research and educate all citizens to the advantages of urban agriculture:
  - Identify sources of food production and the risk factors if crops fail;
  - Develop local bio-regional production;
  - Develop community gardens;
  - Identify all local/provincial/federal zoning and other regulations/by-laws that impede urban agriculture.
29. Promote closed loop food production systems in urban areas through:
  - Reclaiming brownfields;
  - Composting (urban waste stream);
  - Roof-tops/greenhouses;
  - Intensive urban farms;
  - Small production entities (incubator kitchens).
30. Revise food labeling rules to reflect the right of citizens to have full information about their food. This includes devising systems for identifying foods of environmentally friendly farming systems and mandatory labeling of GE foods.

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### **Recommendations to Food Security Advocates represented at the Working Together Conference**

1. Promote the right to food within the tradition of indivisible rights and with special attention to the needs, rights and sensibilities of all the diverse groups supporting food security.
2. Each organization should consider endorsing the 1996 NGO statement (see Appendix E).
3. Coordinate a dramatic event or series of events to coincide with the opening of the World Food Summit in November to publicize issues of food security. Where possible these can be integrated with local World Food Day events in October.
4. Encourage medical officers of health in each municipality or district to collaborate in declarations on food and food security.
5. Carry out a national inventory of programs, courses, activities, and training that are currently under way a resource for all civil society partners.
6. Include all stakeholders (especially First Nations) in all land trust or other public land and resource (e.g., fish, water) planning and decision processes.
7. Work to create an alliance for broadening our base to assist in the development of a new politics of food security, to provide alternatives to corporate concentration, globalization and free trade. The purpose is to strengthen democracy by utilizing our knowledge and resources more effectively, by avoiding duplication of efforts and by coordination of capacities and expertise. We begin by collecting and sharing information through the network including the resources we can offer such as research, media access, resource people.

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## Appendix A: Names of the Conference Participants by Province/Country of Origin and Organization

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### ALBERTA

Marjorie Bencz, Edmonton Gleaners Association/Edmonton Food Bank

### BRITISH COLUMBIA

Ruth Whyte, Lifecycles

Graham Riches, School of Social Work and Family Studies, UBC

Herb Naziel, Office of the Wet'suwet'en

Rev. Cathy Campbell, Diocese of New Westminster, Anglican Church of Canada

Abra Brynne, Action for Food Security

Alejandro Rojas, Agricultural Sciences, Agroecology Program UBC

Brewster Kneen, The Ram's Horn, BC Biotech Circle

Herb Barbolet, FarmFolk/CityFolk Society

Jennifer Coulson, Vancouver Food Policy Organization

Jodi Koberinski, AgraRoots Network

Kathleen Gibson, Capital Region Food & Agriculture Initiatives, Roundtable (CR-FAIR)

Marina Buchan, Peace River Organic Producers Association (PROPA), Four Creeks Ranch

Martha McMahan, SOIL Stewards of Irreplaceable Soil

Mary Swendson, Bulkey Valley Communities

Alice Padgham, Tillicum Haus Native Friendship Centre

Cathleen Kneen, BC Food Systems Network

Corinne Eisler, Vancouver/Richmond Health Board

Joanne Houghton, Northern Health Region, and Prince George Food First

Laura Kalina, Kamloops Food Policy Council

Pat Burns, B.C. Foodbanks

Stephanie Powell, University of Northern British Columbia

Cheryl Milton-Prepчук, Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society

### MANITOBA

David Northcott, Winnipeg Harvest

Jackie Skelton, University of Brandon, Manitoba

Celia Guildford, Organic Food Council of Manitoba

Thi Ly, The Nutrition and Food Security Network of Manitoba

Jim Cornelius, Canadian Foodgrains Bank

Marion Meyer, MCC Canada

Stuart Clark, Canadian Foodgrains Bank

### NEW BRUNSWICK

Dan Weston, Fredericton Anti Poverty Organization

Marian Lucas Jefferies, Fredericton Diocese PWRDF

Carolyn Van Dine, New Brunswick Partners in Agriculture

### NEWFOUNDLAND

Mildred Keefe, Labrador Metis Nation

**Joanne Cag**, Food Security Network of Newfoundland & Labrador  
**Maura Hanrahan**, Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University  
**Annette Stapenhorst**, Newfoundland and Labrador Food Security Network

*NOVA SCOTIA*

**Patricia Williams**, Nova Scotia Nutrition Council

*NUNAVUT*

**Topsey Nakoyak**, Kitikmeot Health and Social Services, Nunavut

*ONTARIO*

**Fatuma Ahmed**, Toronto Public Health  
**Jennifer Welsh**, School of Nutrition, Ryerson University  
**Maria Yusuf**, Toronto Public Health  
**Mustafa Koc**, Department of Sociology, Ryerson University  
**Pam McConnell**, Toronto City Hall Ward 28 Toronto Centre-Rosedale  
**Rick Ciccarelli**, Urban Development Services and City Planning  
**Sheela Basrur**, Toronto City Hall  
**Beth Wilson**, Canadian Association of Food Banks  
**Bob Frankford**, Toronto Food Policy Council  
**Bridget King**, FoodShare, Toronto  
**Chris Slosser**, Daily Bread Food Bank  
**Cindy Johnston**, LIFE\*SPIN  
**Donald Buckingham**, University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law, Common Law Section  
**Elaine Power**, University of Toronto  
**Ellen Desjardins**, Community Health Department, Regional Municipality of Waterloo  
**Jim Russell**, Daily Bread Food Bank  
**Kathryn Scharf**, FoodShare, Toronto  
**Loren Freid**, North York Harvest Food Bank  
**Maryrose Reyes**, Ontario Association of Food Banks  
**Wayne Roberts**, Toronto Food Policy Council  
**Zoe Cormack Jones**, Second Harvest  
**Angela Foresythe**, Toronto Public Health (Peer Nutrition Program)  
**Bob Spencer**, Ontario Association of Food Banks  
**Ewan Atto**, Second Harvest  
**Gerda Wekerle**, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University  
**Mary Lou Morgan**, Foodshare, Toronto  
**Rod MacRae**, Centre for Studies in Food Security  
**Rosalind Hobart**, Toronto Food Policy Council  
**Tasmin Rajotte**, Ottawa Food Security Group  
**Tony Winson**, University of Guelph  
**Victor Hetmanczuk**, Daily Bread Food Bank  
**Anan Lololi**, Afri-Can Foodbasket  
**Anne Balding**, Community Development Council of Quinte  
**Annie Hui**, Toronto Public Health  
**Ava Morgan**, Toronto Public Health  
**Charna Gord**, Toronto Public Health



Connie Uetrecht, Ontario Public Health Association  
Deb Barndt, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University  
Fiona Knight, Ontario Food Security and Nutrition Network  
Fred Hill, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada  
Gale Elliott, OPHA Food Security Workgroup  
Jean Michel Labatut, IDRC, Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health  
Julia Faulkner, Ottawa Food Security Network  
Kim McGibbon, Thunder Bay Health Unit, Thunder Bay Food Action Network  
Laura Berman, Foodshare Toronto  
Moe Garahan, Sandy Hill Community Health Centre  
Nancy Cheng, South Riverdale Community Health Centre  
Susan Shepherd, Ontario Public Health Association  
Vida Stevens, Department of Public Health, City of Toronto  
Jane Ross, Second Harvest  
Carol Suschnigg, Department of Sociology, Laurentian University  
Carolyn MacDonald, World Vision Canada  
Cecilia Rocha, Ryerson University  
Cindi Foreman, CUPW Local 612  
Daryl Shandro, Sudbury Global Justice  
David Rain, USC Canada  
Debbie Field, FoodShare, Toronto  
Dominique Caouette, InterPares  
Dwayne Hodgson, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC)  
Eileen Durand, Multilateral Affairs, Global Affairs Bureau, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada  
Hon. Bill Graham, Government of Canada, House of Commons  
Kathy Nelson, Toronto Public Health Caribbean Diabetes Chapter  
Lisa Burley, International Development Research Centre (IDRC)  
Marsha McEachrane, Office of International Affairs, Ryerson University  
Michael Trenholm, USC Canada  
Ross Reid, Global Affairs Bureau, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
Sosana Hau, Toronto Public Health  
Sue Cox, Daily Bread Food Bank  
Tina Conlon, Oxfam Canada  
Wendy Cymbal, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
Wendy Phillips, World Vision Canada

*PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND*

Marie Burge, Cooper Institute  
David Daughton, Eastern Co-operative Health Organization

*QUEBEC*

Blaise Koffi, KPONOUME, FIAN Canada  
Carlos Hoyos Tello, Food First Information and Action Network (FIAN) - Montréal  
Chantal Thiboutot, Centraide du Grand Montréal  
Marcel Cajelait, Ville de Montréal, Service des sports, des loisirs et du développement social,  
Section du développement social  
Zev Tiesenbach, Peoples Potato

**Lise Bertrand**, Régie régionale de la santé et des services sociaux, Montréal Centre  
**Rupert Jannasch**, Resource Efficient Agriculture Production (REAP) Canada  
**Delphine Marot**, Eco-initiatives  
**Judith Lawn**, Dialogos Educational Consultants Inc.  
**Martine Pageau**, Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux  
**Bill Singleton**, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)  
**Darquise Lalonde**, Oxfam Québec  
**David Macdonald**, School of Community and Public Affairs, Concordia University

*SASKATCHEWAN*

**Don Mitchell**, Saskatchewan Food Security Network  
**Don Kossick**  
**Hart Haidn**, Canadian Centre for Sustainable Agriculture  
**Kathleen Hangs**, Food For All Coalition  
**Darrin Qualman**, National Farmers Union  
**Michelle Beveridge**, Oxfam Canada

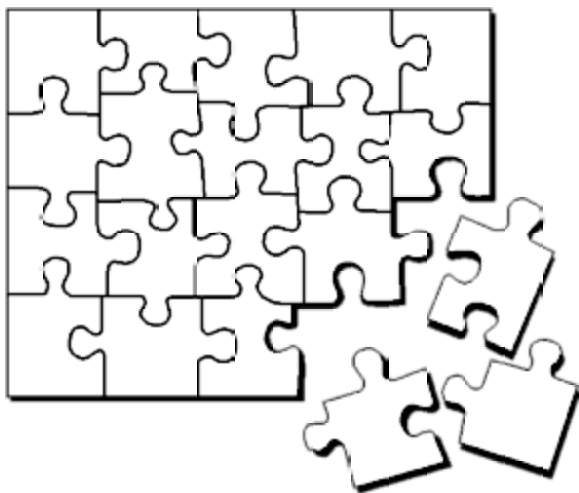
*YUKON*

**Michael Dougherty**, Paz y Pan

*INTERNATIONAL DELEGATES*

**Farhad Mazar**, UBINIG, Dhaka, Bangladesh  
**Dianne Spearman**, World Food Program  
**Richard A. Hoehn**, Bread for the World Institute  
**Charles Riemenschneider**, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

## Appendix B: Call for the Conference



### Working Together: Civil Society Input for Food Security in Canada

June 15-17 2001,  
Ryerson University,  
Toronto

#### *CALL FOR PARTICIPATION*

We invite you to take part in a Conference to be held at the Ryerson Polytechnic University on June 15-17, 2001.

This Conference will be a first in Canada bringing representatives of civil society organizations and networks together to develop strategies for Working Together and increasing Canada's commitment to Food Security both domestically and internationally.

In November 2001 Canada will be participating in the "World Food Summit Five Years Later" (WFS-FYL), a meeting of heads of states to step up the pace of reducing hunger to meet the goal of halving the number of hungry people by 2015. The Working Together Conference will bring together Canadian civil society organizations that have been active since the World Food Summit (1996) to report on progress and draw up plans to meet Canada's goals on food security.

In its own right, this Conference will also be a first in Canada, bringing together representatives of various civil society organizations and networks from every province and territory to develop strategies for increasing Canada's commitment to Food Security both domestically and internationally. As recognized in Canada's Action Plan, food security implies access to adequate food and sufficient food supplies; and that poverty reduction, social justice and sustainable food systems are essential conditions.

As an invitation only event, the Conference will bring over 180 representatives of various Canadian food security organizations, food banks, social service agencies, farmers organizations, and representatives of various government agencies. Funding for the conference is provided by Agriculture and AgriFood Canada, Canadian International Development Agency, and the International Development Research Centre.

#### *Objectives of the Conference*

The conference is the key first element of this process, based on the list of goals summarized above. As the first stage of this process, the conference will:

1. develop a working plan for a civil society based national action plan for food security;
2. assess the contributions of the Canadian government on food security at home and abroad;
3. make practical policy proposals to provincial and federal governments on achieving the goals of Canada's Action Plan for Food Security.

#### *Conference Themes*

1. Right to Food and Social Justice.
2. Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems.
3. Community Health and Food Security.
4. Food Security in Canadian Foreign Policy (Aid and Trade).

### *Conference Outcomes*

1. input from civil society organizations into the second progress report on Canada's Action Plan
2. better understanding of effective programs and policies;
3. new programs and policies to implement in different regions of the country;
4. a first draft of the annual report on state of food security in Canada reflecting input of the civil society organizations
5. discuss ways in which civil society organizations can cooperate for food security

### *Organizing Committee*

*KAREN ARCHIBALD*, Child Hunger Education Project (CHEP), Saskatchewan

*MICHELINE BEAUDRY*, Département des sciences des aliments et de nutrition, Université Laval, Québec

*MARJORIE BENCZ*, Executive Director, Edmonton Gleaners' Association, Edmonton, Alberta

*MARIE BURGE*, Cooper Institute, Charlottetown, PEI

*STUART CLARK*, Policy Manager, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, Manitoba

*SUE COX*, Executive Director Daily Bread Food Bank, Toronto, Ontario

*ELSIE DEROOSE*, Nutrition Consultant, Dept. of Health and Social Services, Yellowknife, NT

*DEBBIE FIELD*, Executive Director, FoodShare Toronto, Ontario

*ANNE-MARIE HAMELIN*, Centre de recherche de l'Hôpital Douglas, Université McGill, Verdun, Québec

*CARLOS HOYOS*, FIAN-Montreal, Québec

*MARIAN LUCAS JEFFERIES*, Assistant Coordinator for the Fredericton Diocesan, New Brunswick

*CATHLEEN KNEEN*, Coordinator, The Community Based Food Policy Project, Sorrento, BC

*MUSTAFA KOC*, Coordinator, Centre for Studies in Food Security, Ryerson University, Toronto, Ontario

*FRANCOIS MARCHAND*, Executive Director, Moisson Basses-Laurentides, Blainville, Québec

*WARNER NAZIEL*, Program Director, Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Smithers, BC

*DAVID NORTHCOTT*, Executive Coordinator Winnipeg Harvest, Winnipeg, Manitoba

*DARREN QUALMAN*, Secretary, National Farmer's Union (NFU), Saskatchewan

*GRAHAM RICHES*, Director, School of Social Work and Family Studies, Univ. of British Columbia

*MELODY ROBERTS*, Cancer Care Ontario, Toronto, Ontario

*WAYNE ROBERTS*, Coordinator, Toronto Food Policy Council

*ANNETTE STAPENHORST*, Newfoundland and Labrador Food Security Coalition

*VIDA STEVENS*, Department of Public Health, City of Toronto, Ontario

*DIANNE SWINEMAR*, Executive Director, Metro Food Bank Society-Halifax Regional Municipality, NS

*ELIZABETH WALKER-ROWLANDS*, Community Nutrition Consultant, Whitehorse, Yukon

### *For further information Please Contact:*

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## Appendix C: Written Materials Circulated to Participants for the Sunday Morning Session

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### CONFERENCE REPORT SUMMARY

Toronto, June 17, 2001

#### PREAMBLE

Food security requires that adequate amounts of safe, nutritious, culturally acceptable food be accessible to all; that food producers be enabled to earn a fair return on their labour and that food production methods sustain the environment. These basic elements of food security require a fundamentally new direction for Canadian and world food systems.

*See Workshop D Report: International Aid and Trade*

#### PRINCIPLES

We believe systems of food security will honour the following rights and principles:

1. The right to food is all-encompassing and indivisible (includes rights to jobs, income, housing, et cetera).

##### HUMAN RIGHTS

2. Human rights to food security and democratic protection of the conditions that make these rights possible (i.e. support for transition to local/organic production).

##### DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES &

##### ECONOMIC JUSTICE

3. The rights of both producers and eaters of food can and must be linked; in turn, protection of the environment is critical to food security, especially for indigenous peoples who seek to maintain traditional diets based on environmentally secure habitats.

##### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

##### CULTURAL & BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

4. Food security can only be achieved when all groups within civil society are empowered and enabled to participate in policy development.

##### DEMOCRACY, EQUALITY &

##### FULL PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY

#### *Therefore:*

To enact these principles and rights, we call on local, provincial, federal governments to work toward implementation of the following:

*See Workshop C Report: Community Health Workshop*

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### Workshop A: The Right to Food

#### *Process*

1. Listserve.
2. National Dramatic Event.
3. Can we get the medical officers in each city to rally around major declarations around food?

#### *Purpose*

Educate ourselves in broader movement and express solidarity with others around world versus influencing government.

1. Right all encompassing and indivisible.
2. Right to food security and sovereignty take priority over rights of the market (free trade).
3. Right of producers and eaters together, includes environment (e.g. aboriginal food).

We have the right to protect our sovereignty over our food security

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## Workshop B: Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security

### *Preamble*

The mandate is to create an alliance for broadening our base to assist in the development of new politics in food security.

Many other organizations and networks are working toward a Citizen's Agenda for a sustainable future. We wish to foster these initiatives by broadening the base and streamlining the actions.

### *Action*

We will create a national food democracy network, to address issues of:

- Food security;
- Nutrition and health;
- Sustainable agriculture;
- Sustainable fisheries;
- Rural revitalization;
- Fair trade.

The network will provide information and resources to contribute to a comprehensive citizen's agenda.

We will join with like-minded organizations to build a national network of groups to provide alternatives to:

- Corporate concentration;
- Globalization;
- Free trade.

The purpose is to strengthen democracy by utilizing our knowledge and resources more effectively, by avoiding duplication of efforts and by coordination of capacities and expertise.

### *Process*

1. The organizations present at this conference sign up as members of this network.
2. Through the network we will develop the goals and objectives of the network.
3. The network collects from the member organizations information about
  - Who we are;
  - What we do;
  - Our successes;
  - What alternatives do we offer;
  - What can we offer other organizations through the network:
    - Research;
    - Information;
    - Media access;
    - Resource people (staff and associates).
4. We sign up our networks in our regions.
5. Ryerson collects the information.
6. Possible partners:
  - Centre for Policy Alternatives;
  - Council of Canadians;
  - First Nations;
  - Enviro's (i.e. WWF, Greenpeace);
  - Health/nutrition organizations;
  - Canadian Association of Ecological Economics;

- Unions;
- Farm organizations;
- Teacher's Federations.

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## Workshop C: Community Health Workshop Summaries

### *Process*

1. To ensure adequate funding and support for food policy organizations at every level (local, national, international) with full civil society participation.
2. A food security report card to monitor the state of food insecurity and the progress of food security initiatives every 2 years with full civil society participation and dissemination.
3. Narrative and qualitative community based research needs to be acceptable as legitimate as quantitative methodologies.

### *Health*

That community food security be recognized as a determinant of health, and that government policy therefore address the following determinants of health as they affect food security:

- Affordable housing and heating;
- Water supply and sanitation;
- Adequate income;
- Transportation;
- Freedom from violence.

To ensure affordable access to health and culturally appropriate foods for everyone at all life stages, including:

- Mandatory adoption of the World Health Assembly (WHA) resolution (54.2) on infant and child nutrition;
- Universal infant/child nutrition programs;
- Protection of indigenous or “country” foods and traditional food and medicine skills.

Increase the proportion of funding to health promotion programs recognizing the association between food insecurity/undernutrition and higher incidence of disease and health care costs, along with problems relating to learning ability, productivity and employability.

### *Food Supply*

Food must be produced in an environmentally responsible manner which protects biodiversity, eliminates toxic chemicals and GMOs and promotes sustainable and organic techniques.

Ensure access to land, water and infrastructure for community food systems (including urban and peri-urban agriculture as well as rural and remote). Infrastructure needs include transportation, storage, processing, marketing, education, information and training. This system must provide a fair return to the producer.

Community needs such as local employment, control over resource management decision making, and lack of food safety resulting from industrial processes can be addressed by emphasis on local food systems.

### *Global Information*

Sharing Develop systems of information sharing and networking on food security experiences globally

## Workshop D: Foreign Aid and International Trade

### *Preamble*

We are headed for a major food security crisis – both in the North and the South (e.g. collapse of rural societies, climate change induced crop failures).

We therefore urge:

### *To the WFS/fyl in Rome*

1. The increase of all types of support for strengthening local production for local consumption.
2. The extension of the World Food Summit process beyond the limited mandate of the FAO to include other key multilateral actors – the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organization.

### *To the Canadian Government*

1. Make food security a key pillar of CIDA's Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development Strategies.
2. Increase the flexibility to purchase food for food aid in the locale or region where it is needed.
3. Provide duty free access for all products from Least Developed Countries.
4. Increase funding to public institutions in Canada for agricultural research (including bio-technology).
5. Create a formal government process to study and report on national policies towards food security, both domestically and nationally.
6. Create a national food security auditing function.



## Appendix D: Call for Action and Mobilization at the World Food Summit: Five Years Later in Rome

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Let the hunger-debate be the human bridge between Rome and Qatar

*Interested organizations should contact one of the Regional Focal Points in the list at the end of this document with copy to the International Focal Point*

### 1. Why Should You Come?

The World Food Summit is part of a series of international processes to halve the misery of the world within 20 years. These processes are proclaimed to be a new international consensus. But is it more than a collection of old medicines?

The cure is built on trust in market liberalization, private investment and modern technologies like genetic engineering and high intensity confined animal production. The result is an increasingly industrialized agricultural system, which is also resulting in some failures to produce safe and high quality food.

**We do not believe** in the cure or the consensus. Today for a huge number of people living all over the world, the most fundamental right, **the right to food, is denied**. Food continues to be used as a political tool. Moreover, inequality is increasing between countries in North and South and inside countries everywhere.

**The core of the problem is that the majority of those who are hungry world-wide are peoples and families who live as farmers and producers of food.** The current system of agricultural policies is destroying the livelihoods of these farmers. These people become hungry when they do not have or are losing their possibility to produce food. Displacement from the land, growing problems of farm debt, poisoning and new diseases are all aspects of these growing difficulties for farmers. The children of farmers do not see a future in farming, rural cultures are being destroyed, and with the loss of local agricultural economies and ways of farming, agriculture becomes socially, culturally and environmentally unsustainable. Further, the migration of rural people to urban areas adds to the growing numbers of hungry people already there.

Five years ago the heads of States and governments gathered in Rome at the occasion of the World Food Summit and set up an agenda of cure and change. Lofty commitments, some weak promises and a list of 182 actions were to bring long term change to halve the hungry world-wide before 2015. NGOs and farmers' organizations were already very critical at these parallel gathering in 1996. Now after five years the official plea is for more political will and more resources ... but the problem is the proposed cure itself.

Furthermore the World Food Summit process is handicapped. **Other global processes related to trade and debt are driving increasing hunger at the same time and they are not linked at all with the WFS.** Moreover the concerns for hunger and agriculture are increasingly marginalized both in northern aid budgets and in developing countries' domestic policies.

We believe that the WFS/fyl can be a **positive** step towards achieving the WFS goal provided that there can be real dialogue on key issues focused on what works and what doesn't. There is a very good chance that the WFS/fyl will host a genuine multistakeholder dialogue **including strong civil society participation**. Good preparation by civil society offers a new opportunity to make a positive contribution to the WFS process.

At the same time as governments prepare for Rome, the same governments are preparing for the **WTO Ministerial in Qatar** and new trade rules which **will increase** the number of *'unneeded'* farmers. The search for 'lowest cost' producers is already driving many farmers of the North and the South from the land. Further the dumping of cheap imported food causes the destruction of their local markets. Many of these *'unneeded'* farmers in developing countries, for lack of alternative sustainable livelihoods, will be displaced and become part of tomorrow's growing number of hungry.

The conversion of food from a core principle of human life to purely a trade commodity threatens the foundation of many cultures. Current patterns of trade liberalization create food insecurity. They **have a destructive effect on food sovereignty** and on the majority of those who face hunger, the rural poor, and are key elements to consider in any serious attempt to achieve the World Food Summit goal.

**We call upon all NGOs and civil society organizations from around the world to join us in Rome at the time of the World Food Summit/five years later and immediately before the Qatar WTO Ministerial.** This will be an urgent moment because the outcome of Qatar can destroy the potential achievements in Rome.

Let us act now and together say 'NO' to the old medicines, 'NO' to the separation of trade negotiations and hunger concerns and 'YES' to the demand that food security be a global priority under which all international processes must fit.

## 2. Who is making this Call?

We are representatives from about 25 non-governmental and civil society organizations (NGO/CSO) and networks representing indigenous peoples, women, youth, thematic and regional networks, farmers' organizations and development NGOs, all deeply engaged with food security and sustainable agriculture issues.

## 3. Objectives

The objectives of the NGOs/CSOs initiatives related to the WFS/fyl are to:

- **Mobilize** a public opinion and participation to demonstrate the need for urgent changes in the WFS/fyl process;
- **Assess the causes** of hunger in the world today and identify strategic priorities among the many activities recommended in the WFS Plan of Action and any currently ignored issues;
- **Review action** taken by governments and multilateral organizations, such as the World Bank/IMF, WTO and international development aid agencies, to implement the WFS Plan of Action, and **to review** the impact of their activities on food insecurity;
- **assess what** NGO/CSOs have done to reduce food insecurity and present relevant case studies of effective field programmes and policy advocacy activities;
- **make practical policy proposals** to FAO and member states and other international institutions to achieve the WFS goal.

In 1996 NGOs/CSOs formulated principles and concepts of food security—such as food sovereignty—that are now beginning to be accepted by some official policy makers. Today we want to go one step further and present successful demonstrations and alternative proposals.

## 4. Strategic Issues

We have identified five strategic issues on which to focus because we feel they are the keys to attaining world food security:

- **Right to Food** – in relationship to international arrangements (e.g.trade), other relevant policies and domestic social policies;
- **Food Sovereignty** – the right of the peoples of each country to determine their own food policy;

- **Agricultural Production Models** – agro-ecological, organic and other sustainable alternatives to the current industrial model including their impact on food safety;
- **Access to Resources** – land, forests, water, credit and genetic resources; land reform and security of tenure;
- **Democracy and civil society involvement** – community empowerment and the national institutional arrangements to foster its capacity and legitimacy are essential. At the same time, it is crucial that governments acknowledge their full responsibility and take effective action towards obtaining food security for all. The existence of international mechanisms should aim to support economic, social and political processes of democratization at the country level, rather than encouraging their marginalization.

A major cross cutting issue will be how to protect the livelihoods of the rural poor and indigenous peoples in the context of globalization, with attention to issues of discrimination including gender, caste and class, and ethnicity.

*(Guidelines have been prepared for the presentation by civil society of case studies to illustrate an alternative vision based upon these five strategic issues.)*

## 5. The Process of Preparation

At the national level

NGOs/CSOs are urged to:

- Assess the hunger situation (domestically and internationally);
- Assess their government commitments and actions (case studies);
- Assess foreign cooperation and other interventions (case studies);
- Assess NGO/CSO commitment and actions (case studies);
- Highlight the need for action and provide policy proposals;
- Reinforce efforts to build political will, also linking proposals to national preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable development (JOHANNESBURG SUMMIT 2002).

To achieve this they could:

- Mobilize NGOs/CSOs, and traditional councils or assemblies;
- Organize national meetings and debates;
- Organize consultations with governments in connection with their official preparations for WFS-FYL;
- Inform public opinion and media, etc.

*At the subregional and regional level*

We plan to undertake a regional synthesis of national experience and proposals, including the contributions of regional thematic networks. This should be accompanied by regional dialogue between CSOs and governments. The help of FAO's regional offices will be sought.

To achieve this NGOs/CSOs could:

- Organize regional meetings;
- Organize e-conferences at the regional level;
- Sponsor strategic dialogues on core issues between stakeholders.

*International level*

**5.3.1 BEFORE THE EVENT** – Civil society should take any opportunities to engage the process of the preparation for the WFS/fyl Draft Declaration.

A preparatory meeting with NGOs/CSOs attending the parallel NGO/CSO FORUM will be held just before the start of WFS-FYL event with the aim of consolidating regional contributions strategizing for both mobilization of public opinion and effective dialogue with governments and other stakeholders.

**5.3.2 DURING THE EVENT – A parallel NGO/CSO Forum will provide an opportunity for groups and organizations which are not attending the official event to discuss and debate the full range of food/hunger related issues including those of the trade negotiations to be held in Qatar immediately afterwards.**

**Strategic dialogues between NGOs/CSOs and governments and representatives of other international organizations will be organized by NGOs/CSOs FORUM in the context of the official WFS-FYL event.**

NGO/CSO activities regarding the WFS-FYL will be coordinated with efforts to put food and agriculture issues high on the agenda of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in JOHANNESBURG IN 2002.

## **6. Coordination Structure**

The NGOs/CSOs who make up the Core Planning Committee for the WFS/fyl follows.

### ***International Focal Point:***

Antonio Onorati, Coordinator of the Host NGO Committee (mc2535@mclink.it)

### ***Coordinator of case study preparation:***

Jean Marc Von der Weid, CGIAR/NGO Committee (aspta@ax.apc.org)

### ***Regional Focal Points:***

***Africa:*** Ndiogou Fall, Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs agricoles de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (fongs@telecomplus,cncr@cncr.org) , and Mercy Karanja, Kenya National Farmers Union (knfu@arcc.or.ke)

***Asia-Pacific:*** Roel Ravanera, ANGOC (angoc@angoc.ngo.ph), Biblap Halim, IMSE/SANFEC (bipimse@cal.vsnl.net.in) and Sarojeni Rengan, PAN (panap@panap.po.my); Yoshitaka Mashima, NOUMINREN ( mashima@nouminren.ne.jp)

***Near East:*** Mutaz Hussein, Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee (pr@pal.arc.org; mutaz@pal-arc.org); Burhan Bencharif, AREA (area@wissal.dz)

***Europe (EU and East and Central Europe Countries):*** Daniel Van Der Steen, Liaison Committee of Development NGOs to the EU (daniel.vandersteen@csa-be.org) and Annemarija Slabe, Federation of Organic Farmers of Slovenia (anamarija.slabe@attglobal.net).

***Latin America:*** Alberto Ercilio Broch, CONTAG (alberto@contag.org.br); Rosaura Rodriguez, Union estatal de organizaciones económicas y mujeres productoras de Guerrero (uestatal@hotmail.com); Ana Maria Acevedo, FOVIDA (aacevedo@fovida.org.pe); Mario Ahumada, MAELA (maa@ctcreuna.cl); Karin Nansen, REDES/FOE URUGUAY (urusust@redes.org.uy)

***North America:*** Stuart Clark, Co-Chair Canadian Consultative Group on Food Security (s\_clark@foodgrainsbank.ca)

### ***Major Constituency Group Focal Points:***

***Farmers:*** David King, IFAP (david.king@ifap.org) and Joao Viera/Paul Nicholson, Via Campesina (cpe@cpefarmers.org)

***Indigenous Peoples:*** Carol Kalafatic, International Indian Treaty Council (iitcny@mindspring.com)

***Sustainable Agriculture/Food Security NGOs:*** Linda Elswick, Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development Working Group/NGO SAFS Caucus (ipsa@igc.org)

***Trade Unions:*** Peter Hurst, IUF, Geneva (peter.hurst@iuf.org)

***Ad Hoc Group of International NGOs in Rome:*** Francesca Ronchi-Proja (basili.c@tiscalinet.it)

***Youth Organizations:*** Marita Wiggerthale, MIJARC (International Movement of Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth) (world@mijarc.org)

**Thematic Focal Points:****Right to Food:** Michael Windfuhr, FIAN International (windfuhr@fian.org)**Food Sovereignty:** Paul Nicholson, La Via Campesina (pnicholson@ehne.org); Steve Suppan, Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy (ssuppan@iatp.org)**Agricultural Production Models:** Jean Marc von der Weid, AS-PTA, CGIAR/NGO Committee (aspta@ax.apc.org)**Access to Productive Resources:**

- **Genetic Resources:** GRAIN (henk@grain.org); RAFI (rafi@rafi.org)
- **Water:** Anil Agarwal, Centre for Science & Environment (cse@cseindia.org)
- **Land:** Peter Rosset, FOODFIRST (rosset@foodfirst.org)

**Democracy and civil society involvement:** Elena Mancusi-Materi/Franck Amalric, Society for International Development, (elenam@sidint.org, francka@sidint.org)

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**ANNEXES**
**1. NGO Forum 1996 Declaration (full text)****PROFIT FOR FEW OR FOOD FOR ALL**

Food Sovereignty and Security to Eliminate the Globalization of Hunger

A Statement by the NGO FORUM to the World Food Summit

Rome Italy 17 November 1996

**PREAMBLE**

In the next few minutes the diverse voices of civil society will speak as one. We are representatives of more than 1,200 organizations from some 80 countries, from all regions of the world. We seek to bring the message of the more than one billion hungry and malnourished people of the world, most of them children and women. Through regional and global consultations we have discovered and affirmed our mutual solidarity. Our collective vision derives from our knowledge that food security is possible. We regret that we will have but four minutes to share this vision with you.

We affirm first and foremost the basic human Right to Food. Everyone has the right to secure access at all times to safe and nutritious food and water adequate to sustain an active and healthy life with dignity.

Neither food nor famine can be used as a national or international political weapon. Access to food cannot be denied to any nation, ethnic or social group for political, economic, religious or other reasons. Economic embargoes or international sanctions affecting populations are incompatible with food security. Those currently in place must be terminated.

The shame of global hunger and malnutrition compels action by all. At the same time, we insist that governments have the primary and ultimate responsibility to ensure national and global food security.

The representatives of civil society gathered at the NGO Forum are in full agreement on some of the fundamental causes of food insecurity.

The globalization of the world economy, along with the lack of accountability of transnational corporations and spreading patterns of overconsumption have increased world poverty. Today's glo-

bal economy is characterized by unemployment, low wages, destruction of rural economies, and bankruptcy of family farmers.

Industrialized agriculture, intensive animal husbandry methods, and overfishing are destroying traditional farming, poisoning the planet and all living beings. Subsidized exports, artificially low prices, constant dumping, and even some food aid programmes are increasing food insecurity and making people dependent on food they are unable to produce. The depletion of global grain stocks has increased market instability, to the detriment of small producers.

Family farmers and vulnerable people are forced under International Monetary Fund and World Bank policies to pay the price of structural adjustment and debt repayment. National policies too often neglect these same groups. Official corruption erodes all efforts to achieve food security.

The proliferation of war, civil conflict, and environmental degradation is a growing source of hunger and food insecurity. Hunger and malnutrition are most severe in cases where these combine with natural disasters.

### ***CIVIL SOCIETY PROPOSALS TO ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY***

We propose a new model for achieving food security that calls into question many of the existing assumptions, policies and practices. This model, based on decentralization, challenges the current model, based on a concentration of wealth and power, which now threatens global food security, cultural diversity, and the very ecosystems that sustain life on the planet.

We highlight six key elements of this alternative model, along with steps toward its development and implementation. An integrated approach is required, thus simultaneous action is needed in each of these areas.

1. The capacity of family farmers, including indigenous peoples, women, and youth, along with local and regional food systems must be strengthened.
  - 1.1 All aspects of food and agriculture must be reoriented in favour of family farmers. This should include technical, managerial and financial support, credit, and direct access to markets for farmers' associations. It also should include a greater emphasis on safe and sustainable urban agriculture.
  - 1.2 Women play a central role in food security and must be guaranteed the right to productive resources and equal opportunities to use and develop their skills.
  - 1.3 Resources must be shifted in favour of local and regional food producers and food systems. Investment resources should be made available through debt exemption and debt relief, through a reallocation of existing international cooperation and allocation of additional resources by rich countries who should fulfill their commitment to appropriate 0.7 percent of Gross National Product to official development assistance.
  - 1.4 Family farmers must be assured access to information and communications systems.
2. The concentration of wealth and power must be reversed and action taken to prevent further concentration. In particular:
  - 2.1 Agrarian reform in favour of rural poor people who will work the land must be implemented immediately and priority placed on integrated rural development.
  - 2.2 Genetic resources are essential to food security and must never be subject to intellectual property rights. Farmers' and community rights and the rights of indigenous peoples must be self-defined and implemented nationally and globally.
3. Agriculture and food production systems that rely on non-renewable resources, which negatively affect the environment, must be changed toward a model based on agro-ecological principles.
  - 3.1 National and international research, education and extension services must be reoriented to integrate the agro-ecological paradigm, which incorporates the knowledge and experience of men and women farmers. Agro-ecological mapping should be carried out to detail areas of

- partial and total environmental degradation.
- 3.2 To prevent and reduce the impact of drought and desertification, access and sustainable management of water resources, rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable use of natural vegetation must be ensured.
  - 3.3 Policies and practices that favour organic agricultural production should be adopted, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of pesticides and other agro-chemicals.
  - 3.4 Environmental and social costs of industrial agriculture should be included in the prices of products in order to avoid unfair competition with sustainable agriculture.
  - 3.5 A diversified, culturally acceptable, well-balanced diet and safe, high quality food for all must be ensured.
4. National and local governments and States have the prime responsibility to ensure food security. Their capacity to fulfill this role must be strengthened and mechanisms for ensuring accountability must be enhanced.
    - 4.1 National policies to overcome poverty by guaranteeing means for sustainable livelihoods, employment opportunities for all, and an equitable income distribution must be implemented to improve the access of poor and vulnerable people to food products and to resources for agriculture.
    - 4.2 States must guarantee the political and economic rights of those within their borders, including consumers' rights. States also must ensure a climate favourable to development and democratic processes, with efforts to protect the environment and prevent violence, terrorism, and discrimination of all kinds. States should respect international law.
    - 4.3 Current structural adjustment programmes imposed by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank should be suspended. Future economic reforms and plans for debt repayment must be formulated with the participation of civil society.
    - 4.4 States must make greater efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts peacefully; together with donor agencies, they must guarantee food for vulnerable populations, including displaced persons and refugees.
  5. The participation of peoples' organizations and NGOs at all levels must be strengthened and deepened.
    - 5.1 The right to free association must be guaranteed, including the right of family farmers, consumers, women, indigenous peoples, youth, and others to organize themselves.
    - 5.2 Civil society should monitor the impact on food security of policies, programmes, and actions of international financial and trade organizations and should participate in the formulation and monitoring of national policies and programmes.
    - 5.3 Civil society organizations also should participate in the efficient implementation of projects for food and agricultural development.
  6. International law must guarantee the right to food, ensuring that food sovereignty takes precedence over macro-economic policies and trade liberalization. Food can not be considered as a commodity, because of its social and cultural dimension.
    - 6.1 Each nation must have the right to food sovereignty to achieve the level of food sufficiency and nutritional quality it considers appropriate without suffering retaliation of any kind. Market forces at national and international levels will not, by themselves, resolve the problem of food insecurity. In many cases, they may undermine or exacerbate food insecurity. The Uruguay Round agreements must be reviewed accordingly.
    - 6.2 All countries and peoples have the right to develop their own agriculture. Agriculture fulfills multiple functions, all essential to achieving food security.

- 6.3 Negotiations should be carried out to develop more effective instruments to implement the right to food. These instruments should include:
- A Code of Conduct to govern the activities of those involved in achieving the Right to Food, including national and international institutions as well as private actors, such as transnational corporations.
  - A Global Convention on Food Security to support governments in developing and implementing national food security plans and to create an international network of local, national, and regional food reserves. Such a convention must be signed to ensure that the Right to Food will have precedence over any other international agreements such as the World Trade Organization.
- 6.4 Structural food aid must be replaced progressively by support to local agriculture. When aid is the only alternative, priority should be given to local purchase and triangular aid, in which food is purchased in one country for distribution in the country of need in the same region.

### ***FOLLOW UP***

Civil society organizations are committed to ensuring follow-up to this World Food Summit, particularly in monitoring the Food Summit commitments and active participation in the Food for All Campaign. In addition to the Global Convention on Food Security and the Code of Conduct, the Food for All initiative should become the basis for broad-based, participatory implementation at the local, national, and international levels of efforts to ensure the legal right to food. We also call for an expansion of the Committee for World Food Security to include all actors of civil society in the follow-up tasks assigned to the Committee.

Finally, hunger and malnutrition are fundamentally a question of justice. Unless we agree that the right of every human being to the sustenance of life comes before the quest for profit, the scourge of hunger and malnutrition will continue. Our message is simple:

*“Queremos una tierra para vivir en paz.”*



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