



Anna Loveday-Brown

## who we are

In the last years hundreds of organisations and movements have been engaged in struggles, activities, and various kinds of work to defend and promote the right of people to Food Sovereignty around the world. Many of these organisations were present in the *International Nyéléni Forum 2007* and feel part of a broader **Food Sovereignty Movement**, that considers the Nyéléni 2007 declaration as its political platform. **The Nyéléni Newsletter wants to be the voice of this international movement.**

Organisations involved: Development Fund, ETC Group, FIAN, Focus on the Global South, Food First, Friends of the Earth International, GRAIN, Grassroots International, IPC for food sovereignty, La Via Campesina, Marcha Mundial de las Mujeres, Oxfam Solidarity, Real World Radio, Roppa, The World Forum Of Fish Harvesters & Fish Workers, VSF-Justicia Alimentaria Global.

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## editorial: food sovereignty now!

*“Every struggle, in any part of the world for food sovereignty is our struggle.”*

Nyéléni Declaration on Food Sovereignty

At the *World Food Summit* in 1996, La Via Campesina (LVC) launched a concept that both **challenged the corporate dominated, market driven model of globalised food production and distribution, as well as offering a new paradigm to fight hunger and poverty by developing and strengthening local economies.** Since then, **food sovereignty** has captured the imagination of people the world over - including many governments and multilateral institutions - and has become a global rallying cry for those committed to social, environmental, economic and political justice.

*Food sovereignty* is different from *food security* in both approach and politics. Food security does not distinguish where food comes from, or the conditions under which it is produced and distributed. National food security targets are often met by sourcing food produced under environmentally destructive and exploitative conditions, and supported by subsidies and policies that destroy local food producers but benefit agribusiness corporations. Food sovereignty emphasizes ecologically appropriate production, distribution and consumption, social-economic justice and local food systems as ways to tackle hunger and poverty and guarantee sustainable food security for all peoples. It advocates trade and investment that serve the collective aspirations of society. It promotes community control of productive resources; agrarian reform and tenure security for small-scale producers; agro-ecology; biodiversity; local knowledge; the rights of peasants, women, indigenous peoples and workers; social protection and climate justice.

In 2001, delegates from peasant, fisher-folk, indigenous peoples, civil society, and academic organisations met in Havana at the *World Forum on Food Sovereignty* to elaborate the different elements of food sovereignty. From 2000 onwards, campaigners against the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture demanded public support for sustainable, family based food production and called for *Priority to Peoples' Food Sovereignty* and *WTO out of Food and Agriculture*.

*The International Forum on Food Sovereignty* in 2007 in Mali was a defining milestone for food sovereignty and brought together more than 500 people from 80 countries to pool ideas, strategies and actions to strengthen the global movement for food sovereignty. The **Declaration of Nyéléni** encapsulates the vision of the movement and asserts:

*Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. It defends the interests and inclusion of the next generation... Food sovereignty prioritises local and national economies and markets and empowers peasant and family farmer-driven agriculture, artisanal-fishing, pastoralist-led grazing, and food production, distribution and consumption based on environmental, social and economic sustainability... Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social classes and generations.*

Food sovereignty makes sense for people in both, rural and urban areas, and poor and wealthy countries. It is as much a **space of resistance** to neoliberalism, free market capitalism, destructive trade and investment, **as a space to build** democratic food and economic systems, and just and sustainable futures. Its transformative power has been acknowledged by the Special Rapporteurs to the Right to food, Jean Ziegler and Olivier de Schutter, and in key policy documents such as the IAASTD (International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development).

**The majority of the world's food is produced by over one billion small-scale food producers, many of who, tragically, are hungry themselves.** We will not find lasting solutions to catastrophic climate change, environmental deterioration and economic shocks unless we amplify their voices and capacities.

The story of food sovereignty is a story of *struggle and hope*. This edition of the Nyéléni newsletter is dedicated to the struggles that help us to hope for a better world. **Now more than ever is the time for food sovereignty.**

**Focus on the Global South**

## Sisters' Garden Plot of the Korean Woman Peasants Association

The *Sisters' Garden Plot* (SGP) seeks to achieve greater food sovereignty in South Korea by using a **communal approach to the production and consumption of Korean agricultural products**. The healthy, locally grown, seasonal produce that women peasants throughout the country harvest is sent directly to subscribers on a regular basis. Founded in March 2009, SGP believes in *sustainable, organic farming, in protecting and preserving biodiversity, in safeguarding native seeds, and in realizing peasants' rights*. By operating on principles of food sovereignty, Korea's women peasants not only can help protect the environment and reduce carbon emissions, but also ensure that food remains affordable to the general public.

A significant moment in SGP's history occurred in 2005, when women peasants started a public campaign to achieve greater unity among themselves. Around the same time, the *Korean Women Peasants Association* (KWPA) became a member of the biodiversity committee of La Via Campesina and initiated a campaign to protect and preserve native seeds. In 2008, the KWPA started a project called *Guardians of Food Sovereignty*, in collaboration with the *Korean National Women's Alliance*. The latter boasts a broad membership that includes organizations of women workers, women students, and communal women's associations. Project participants studied concepts and principles of food sovereignty with consumers, took part in the campaign to protect and preserve native seeds and searched for other alternatives to unsustainable agricultural practices and policies.

Since March 2009, the Ministry of Employment and Labor has recognized SGP as a social enterprise and supported the salaries of its participants. The term of government support lasts for five years. SGP also receives membership fees from its members. Each SGP community prepares food packages every Tuesday and - with the exception of Naju and Hamahn communities, which deliver directly - uses a delivery service to send packages to consumers. Consumers receive their packages every Wednesday. *In each of the farming communities throughout the country, there are about 7-15 women producers, most of whom are Korean but some of whom have immigrated from the Philippines, China, and Vietnam. As a result of their efforts, women peasants in these communities have gained pride as women peasants and have achieved greater social recognition in their homes and villages.*

# in the spotlight

# 1

## Peasant Farmers' Markets in Colombia

Since the late 1940s Colombia has had a long string of what may arguably be the most anti-peasant governments in the world. Between the army, paramilitary death squads, armed drug traffickers, and the cross-fire between the various guerilla movements and government forces, several hundred thousand peasant farmers have been killed and many times more are now internally displaced peoples. Decades of anti-communist government propaganda have led city dwellers to virtually equate the word "*campesino*" (peasant farmer) with "*subversive*," in a climate where the extra-judicial killing of subversives is "normal."

How then did Colombian peasant organizations – some of whom are members of La Via Campesina, and others that are allies – together with nuns who promote ecological farming, and academic researchers in the city, win a very good public policy in the capital of Bogotá to promote peasant farmers' markets?

In the mid-2000s, the mayor's office wanted to restructure the distribution of fresh produce in the capital by creating a series "inter-nodal" transfer point markets between rural agribusiness and giant super-markets chains. It looked like the peasants who had traditionally supplied Bogotá's wholesale markets with produce were about to be squeezed out of business. But the rural-urban coalition alluded to above put forth a counter-proposal, by which the city government should open and support ten new peasant farmers' markets. The mayor's office balked, saying that the peasants would turn the city's beautiful plazas into "shanty towns." But pressure tactics got them to accept one trial market. Much to their shock, the peasants were orderly and well organized, and urban consumers, starved for quality fresh produce, loved it. Between these good results and new mayoral elections, the city government reversed its position and agreed to open various markets. By 2010, some 2,500 peasant families were doing more than USD 2 million in annual business.

## Building Food Sovereignty under difficult conditions

The most interesting aspects have to do with the goals, organization, and other achievements of the peasant movement. **One goal was to have markets in neighborhoods of all social classes**, and to always have agreed upon prices that are lower than supermarket prices, yet still very profitable for farmers because of the lack of middlemen. They have achieved that. **Another goal was to change the stigmatization of peasants in eyes of city dwellers** as subversives to be eliminated to that of valued and trusted producers of healthy and affordable food. Surveys have shown that this change of image is indeed taking root. They wanted to use the markets to **organize peasants and give them political training**. So when they come to sell in Bogota they receive seminars on the public policy process, and have returned to their rural townships to demand farmers' markets there as well, and they have organized themselves in associations to share the cost of transport, which have in many cases successfully pressured rural municipalities to provide trucks to bring produce to market.

**Finally, the markets helped promote the transition to ecological farming.** This has been done in a very clever way. All ecological farmers sell under a big green tent, with an agreement that their prices will be no higher than those of the conventional farmers in the other tents. Not surprisingly, the consumers flock first to the green tent, and only begin to buy in the other tents when everything "green" is sold. The other farmers get curious pretty fast. When they finally express interest in agroecology and ecological farming (which nobody pressures them to do), they are directed to the nuns who set them up with other peasants who become their agroecology mentors.

*Today the peasant markets in Bogotá are contributing mightily to food sovereignty, providing peasants from four provinces with a very profitable market option, have given political training that is dynamizing the struggle for food sovereignty policies in home municipalities, are changing Society's perception of peasants in a very positive way, and are using a gentle touch to promote the transition to agroecology.*

In many of our own countries we feel a sense of hopelessness with regard to ever achieving policies to promote food sovereignty. Our governments just seem too hostile to peasants and too much in bed with agribusiness and supermarket chains like Walmart and Carrefour. When we feel that way, we should reflect on the experience of Bogotá. Surely if that's possible in Colombia, of all places, we should be able to do something anywhere.

More information on the Bogotá peasant farmers' markets is available in Spanish at [www.ilsa.org.co](http://www.ilsa.org.co)



## Food Sovereignty, a solution based on realities

If a politician told you that there was a single policy that would address hunger, climate change and financial crisis, you would call them a liar. And you'd be right. There could never be a magic bullet that might address these things. The trouble is that this is a time of magical thinking, and our politicians have only one spell they want to cast – *the magic of the free market*. During international meetings in the last years we have always heard about how to feed the world and end climate change. We have heard that the existing market system needs to be deepened, free trade needs to be unshackled, GM crops can save the planet and that if we simply put a price on carbon in the air and on the soil, the markets will innovate and create change.

One of the most pointed examples of capitalist development thinking is *land grabbing*<sup>1</sup> – when a foreign company buys land from beneath the feet of local users. It is a grab for control over resources. For financiers, grabbing land means that there is a new chip in the global casino game of hunger, a new investment vehicle and object of speculation for the gamblers. Many of the investment projects also involve biofuels, which means they both contribute to higher food prices – and therefore hunger – and to unsustainable models of energy use. **This is the kind of agriculture that excludes the very poorest people – the hungriest people.** In every land-grabbing case in Africa examined by the World Bank, women were worse off. And around the world today, 60% of undernourished people are women or girls.

## Because techno-fixes can't solve political problems

Our leaders dream of technical fixes to solve problems of climate, hunger and financial crisis. But **there are alternatives**. To see them, we need to recognize that **there's no quick technical fix**, because the problems of hunger, climate change and financial crisis aren't technical problems. **They are political problems.** They are problems that emerge when a few powerful people avoid the consequences of their actions, and make us suffer them instead.

**Food sovereignty** is the opposite of this. It's hard to give a short definition of what food sovereignty is, but most people think of it as **"the process of a democratic conversation about our food system"**. The most important idea here is that it's democratic, that it requires that **everyone can fairly and equally engage in politics**. That, as we've seen, is the opposite of our current food system, which prevents politics and goes for technical fixes that silence the poorest. For real food sovereignty to happen, we need a world in which we end the things that prevent equal participation in politics. That means, for instance, an end to the unequal power that some governments and corporations have through the World Trade Organization. It means an end to the political support of large land-owners and processors domestically. It means an end to the subsidies that banks get from society.

## Our world, our communities, on our terms

*This opens the door to sustainable farming, the kind of agriculture that builds ecology and sequesters carbon, rather than destroying ecology and contributing to climate change. But it also means other changes.* One of the ways to think about food sovereignty is in the slogan **"food sovereignty is about an end to all forms of violence against women"**. Food sovereignty is about political equality, and that means an end both to physical violence against women, and also the structural violence that prevents women from selling their produce in the market because of foreign dumping, of being unable to send daughters to school, of being denied equal participation within the home and in society. **Food sovereignty can't happen without equality.** But even after equality, there's no magic bullet. Genuine food sovereignty is about a community's right to make democratic decisions about its food system. *That means it gives us the right to make mistakes, and to set up systems to catch us when we fall.*

*That means that there can be no promises.* After all, how can you both guarantee the freedom to make mistakes, and promise there won't be any? But that's what food sovereignty offers most of all. **It offers an end to magical thinking, and the beginning of a real alternative.** *Food sovereignty offers the power for all of us to see the challenges in the world today, turning to the power of communities to develop, to learn, to exchange and to thrive on terms that, for the first time, we get to set by ourselves.*

## We can no longer wait

Ibrahim Coulibaly, Mali (Via Campesina) – [www.viacampesina.org](http://www.viacampesina.org)

[...]The collapse of our economies and the growth of the public debt in the 1980's led the *World Bank* and the *International Monetary Fund* to subject our countries to structural adjustment. We were told that the state was inefficient and that we needed to make more room for the private sector. [...] *We were told to cut all support to sustainable family farming, which was termed unsuccessful* [...].We were told to produce even more cash crops for export, such as cotton, coffee and peanuts, at very low prices that were set abroad. With these slogans we were told to buy rice from Asia, or flour and dried milk from Europe, all of which are now so volatile. The descent into hell had begun for farming families and for our over-indebted states that were incapable of paying. Then we were told to become competitive according to the criteria of international financial institutions, and also that our states were no longer authorized to protect us. Our customs tariffs were dismantled and our markets liberalized. Food products from elsewhere were unloaded onto our markets, making us even more vulnerable to price volatility. [...] *And yet none of these "solutions" imposed on us pulled us out of poverty. On the contrary, we became even more vulnerable.* [...] Today, we are subjected to new challenges: Climate change, financial speculation, unpredictable international markets, new policies by developed countries that grab our land to produce fuels. [...] **In spite of all of this, and without any aid, sustainable family farming has not disappeared.** Unfortunately we had to suffer the current crisis for our governments to become once again aware of *the necessity for food security based on food production at the national level.*

**To solve the problem of price volatility, we the sustainable family farmers, with the support of other actors in civil society, believe that it is necessary:**

- To give priority to our *local markets and regional integration*[...].
- To *halt all forms of competition* between farmers and production modes with a very large disparity in productivity [...]
- To *stop the policies* which are destabilizing our systems of sustainable family farming. In times of overproduction we suffer from dumping, in times of shortage we suffer from restrictions on the export of food we have been told to no longer produce.
- Our governments must aspire to *policies that will support us* so that we can invest to feed our populations.
- *Instruments exist to stabilize prices:* appropriate customs tariffs, strategic stocks at different levels, regulations against speculators,...
- *Sustainable family farmers, women and vulnerable groups in rural areas must be granted real access to the funds mobilized in their name so they can finally begin to live with dignity from their work.*

1 - To know more about land grabs read the Nyéléni newsletter No.0 and No.9, [www.nyeleni.org](http://www.nyeleni.org)





# voices from the field



short stories of resistance and alternatives

## Food sovereignty a way of life of Indigenous Peoples

*Rocío Cachimuel Alfusi, president of the Chijallta Fici, Ecuador*

In Ecuador food sovereignty is one of the main issues for indigenous and peasant organizations. Since 2002 food sovereignty is also a constitutional right, therefore it is the duty of the State to develop policies and laws that promote it. However for Indigenous peoples, Montubios, Afroecuadorians and peasants, food sovereignty is a way of life. Vegetable production is performed by applying ancestral and appropriate techniques and practices, by regenerating and reusing seeds, by respecting the lunar cycles according to the agroecological calendar and by diversifying products to guarantee a healthy diet for our families and our communities. We pass on to our sons and daughters these skills and the knowledge of our *taytas* and *mamas* (sages), primarily the care for our Mother Earth. We counteract the excessive consumption of foods produced by the agrifood sector, which promotes monoculture and GM products and that is concentrated in few hands. We promote new initiatives to assess family farming. We seek alternative markets through solidarity fairs where we offer fresh produce and build supportive relationships between producers and consumers. When we speak of food sovereignty is important to consider the need for policies that ensure the redistribution of resources such as land and water - which currently are concentrated in few hands - and the financial and technical support to producers. It must also value the role of women, who have created organizational forms that allow an income and a better management of the household economy, and at the same time recognize the work done in the field.

## Right to access

*Cairo Laguna of the Nicaraguan Artisanal Fisherfolk Federation*

We artisanal fishers must be given increased consideration and recognition by local authorities in all countries as we reclaim our rightful space in the agenda that social movements are building to achieve Food Sovereignty. In my region, 95 per cent of the production of the fisheries sector is exported. This means that our population doesn't have access to this food, as the prices are unaffordable. Now in Nicaragua we are seeing the emergence of transnational companies in the fishing sector, as the case of *Pescanova*, which in less than five years has concentrated 70 per cent of shrimp production areas in the country into its hands and taken over concessions that were in the hands of small fishery communities. *Pescanova* quietly began partnering with a company that already existed and began acquiring concessions directly from the communities, which had the areas but had no funding and resources to develop activities. Now all profits leave our country and fishermen are left without work and are forced to carry out fishing illegally to ensure the livelihoods of their families. This situation has led to violent confrontations with the death of some comrades. These territories have to be returned to the communities and the government should help in this. We, artisanal fishers, must support the struggle for food sovereignty. The peasants' way of life, the artisanal fishers' way of life and the way of life of indigenous communities should be our main battle flag to ensure an effective fight against hunger and poverty. To hear the full interview in Spanish <http://www.radiomundoreal.fm/Saliendo-a-flote?lang=es>

## Food Sovereignty in Europe

*Ludwig Rumetshofer, Young Farmer, OBV – Via Campesina Austria*

As a young farmer, I am convinced that farming forms the backbone of our society. It defines the way we eat, shapes our landscape and forms a great part of our relation with nature. Because of that farming is, at least partially, responsible for the way we live. Taking this into account we should rethink the direction *AgriCULTURE* is heading. When we think that a quarter of European farms have vanished since 2007 and that exported agricultural products are destroying farms and therefore livelihoods in other regions of the world we have no choice but search for alternative paths. I found mine within the European Food Sovereignty Movement – *Nyeléni Europe*. Different organisations (farming, consumer, environmental, social justice,...), collectives and individuals from all over Europe were already working in a Food Sovereignty framework before the *Nyeléni Forum 2011* in *Krems*. There we defined together what Food Sovereignty means in a European context and we formed a Europe-wide movement towards Food Sovereignty, recognizing the strength in our diversity and the great potential to transform our food cultures and societies when we build common actions and objectives.

For more information on *Nyeléni Europe* and to read the declaration and action plan, check the website [www.nyelenieurope.net](http://www.nyelenieurope.net)

## Nomadic communities are part of their territory

*Houshang Naderpour, Qashqai Tribal Confederation, Iran*

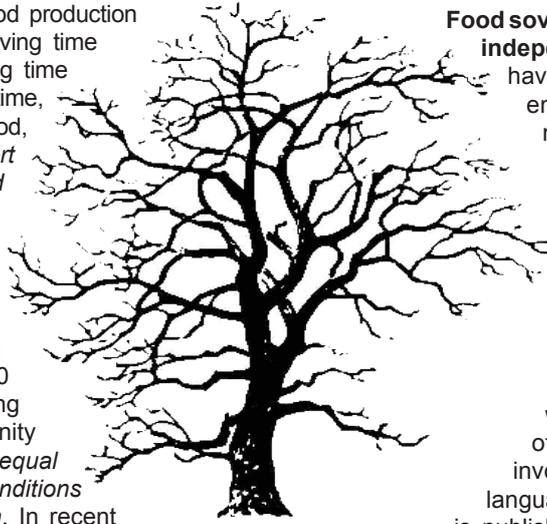
I have heard the term "food sovereignty" even if it is not very common in our language. What we know is that our way of life and our use of the rangelands is sustainable, but then rich or powerful groups started to monopolise the land. The best lands were taken first, usually by formally changing the permission for land use and land was essentially privatised. Livelihoods and traditional systems were disrupted. It was the nationalisation of the rangelands which forced a lot of nomadic pastoralists in Iran to abandon their way of life. Also the diet, and the physical well-being of the nomads was endangered. There are many people in our community who can't digest modern and industrial foods. Those of us who have been forced to settle in one place, especially on the outskirts of large cities, are suffering many physical illnesses. Everything changed when the land was taken away and we couldn't control our own destiny anymore, not even what we ate. Nomadic communities, who have lived for generations on the pastures felt that they were a part of it and that the landscape was part of them, so they cared for it and for its future. The old contracts (when communities used to exchange access to land) used to refer not only to the land, but to the trees and wildlife on the land. Communities saw the land, the wildlife, everything as connected and part of each other. What is needed is to give back the management of the lands to the nomadic communities. It is difficult but not impossible. At the same time everywhere we have to recover our traditional foods. This needs investment and the support of the UN and of the governments. There is local and indigenous knowledge which is being lost and needs to be recovered.



# women building food sovereignty

The current economic system – *which is a capitalist and patriarchal system* - separates production and reproduction. In contrast with this division, feminist economy broadens the notion of labor once again in order to include the biological and social reproduction tasks such as housework, community work, care. Enjoying Food Sovereignty means changing both the food production and consumption model. This implies having time to cook, eat and share as well as having time for themselves. In order to have more time, we need neither fast-food nor canned food, but we do need public policies that support reproduction, such as food in schools and popular restaurants and distributing work (including housework and care) among all!

The principle of food sovereignty increasingly recognizes the contribution of women in food production from farming (women farmers produce between 60 and 80% of food production), to preparing meals for their families, or in community premises. It also includes the need for equal redistribution of land, means and conditions of production between women and men. In recent years, it is estimated that at least a quarter of rural households have women as heads of the family. Nevertheless, there remains the challenge for women to achieve the same level of power than men, that is, participation in politics and decision making processes. In practice, the increasing market economy tends to exacerbate the already existing inequalities, both as regards to labour exploitation associated with agribusiness



and to differential access to land between men and women. As land is sold and it becomes less available, the male members of the families reduce access to land that women used to have, especially in the case of widowed and divorced women.

**Food sovereignty is only possible with women's independence.** For that, it is necessary to have collective processes of women's empowerment, even within the social movements themselves. Some ideas that stimulate women self-organization mechanisms are: the creation of groups of women within organisations; the application of quotas to guarantee the equal participation of women; avoiding the identification of women or men with a specific task (an example from agriculture: men use machineries – women pick berries); the presence of women in leadership roles; the provision of child care facilities to enable the involvement of mothers; the coherence in language and content of the material which is published and/or used by the movement; the implementation of training for women and men on this issue to stimulate reflection, and more...

**Make it happen within your organisation!**

Read also *Gender and the right to food*, the report of the UN Special Rapporteur, Olivier De Schutter, February 2013 . [http://www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20130304\\_gender\\_en.pdf](http://www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20130304_gender_en.pdf)

## get active!

### What you can do.

All movements and organisations involved in the struggle for food sovereignty share the same objectives, but in every country it flourishes in a different way. Diverse initiatives are rising from local levels everywhere to regain control of our food system and to transform society. Join your local movement or get organised with your community and help to build a better food and agriculture system!

## Help to shape Food Sovereignty around you!

### Creative proposals for a more egalitarian system and society

*Join struggles for changing policies and regulations and support projects that:*

- \* Promote food produced locally and in an ecologically sound way by family farmers, artisanal fishers, pastoralists and local entrepreneurs. Different type of localized solutions exist everywhere such as food cooperatives, CSAs and farmers markets;
- \* Stand up for the role of women in food production and in society;
- \* Back fair wages for small-scale food producers and for food and farmworkers, especially for migrant workers;
- \* Defend and sustain traditional knowledge and the control of local communities over their **territories**;
- \* Promote real agrarian reform, that consists of the redistribution of good quality land and other resources to landless, land-poor peoples and food producer communities, and of the restitution or defence of the **territories** of indigenous peoples;
- \* Encourage a more sustainable and egalitarian urban society, where the right to housing is guaranteed and where Urban ad Peri –Urban Agriculture are used to help feed cities.

### Acts of resistance against the current neoliberal system

*Join actions and campaigns in your area against:*

- \* Dumping of food in other countries at prices below the cost of production;
- \* Risky technologies and practises, such as genetically modified crops, industrial bio-fuel monocultures, industrial agriculture based on the use of pesticides and fertilizers, industrial aquaculture and fisheries or intensive animal breeding;
- \* The privatisation of food, public services, traditional knowledge, natural resources and genetic resources;
- \* Development projects (such as infrastructures or tourism) and extractive industries that displace communities and destroy the environment;
- \* All patriarchal values that marginalise women, indigenous peoples, pastoral and fisher communities and diverse agriculture.

*For indigenous peoples their **territory** is the basis of their social organization, economic system and cultural identifications. The concept of territory includes not only the productive function of land, but also the natural environment, water, forests, subsurface minerals, the air above, and other productive resources.*

From the Nyéléni Forum 2007...

## the six pillars of food sovereignty

**1. Focuses on Food for People:** Food sovereignty puts the right to sufficient, healthy and culturally appropriate food for all individuals, peoples and communities, including those who are hungry, under occupation, in conflict zones and marginalised, at the centre of food, agriculture, livestock and fisheries policies; and rejects the proposition that food is just another commodity or component for international agri-business.

**2. Values Food Providers:** Food sovereignty values and supports the contributions, and respects the rights, of women and men, peasants and small scale family farmers, pastoralists, artisanal fisherfolk, forest dwellers, indigenous peoples and agricultural and fisheries workers, including migrants, who cultivate, grow, harvest and process food; and rejects those policies, actions and programmes that undervalue them, threaten their livelihoods and eliminate them.

**3. Localises Food Systems:** Food sovereignty brings food providers and consumers closer together; puts providers and consumers at the centre of decision-making on food issues; protects food providers from the dumping of food and food aid in local markets; protects consumers from poor quality and unhealthy food, inappropriate food aid and food tainted with genetically modified organisms; and resists governance structures, agreements and practices that depend on and promote unsustainable and inequitable international trade and give power to remote and unaccountable corporations.

**4. Puts Control Locally:** Food sovereignty places control over territory, land, grazing, water, seeds, livestock and fish populations on local food providers and respects their rights. They can use and share them in socially and environmentally sustainable ways which conserve diversity; it recognizes that local territories often cross geopolitical borders and ensures the right of local communities to inhabit and use their territories; it promotes positive interaction between food providers in different regions and territories and from different sectors that helps resolve internal conflicts or conflicts with local and national authorities; and rejects the privatisation of natural resources through laws, commercial contracts and intellectual property rights regimes.

**5. Builds Knowledge and Skills:** Food sovereignty builds on the skills and local knowledge of food providers and their local organisations that conserve, develop and manage localised food production and harvesting systems, developing appropriate research systems to support this and passing on this wisdom to future generations; and rejects technologies that undermine, threaten or contaminate these, e.g. genetic engineering.

**6. Works with Nature:** Food sovereignty uses the contributions of nature in diverse, low external input agroecological production and harvesting methods that maximise the contribution of ecosystems and improve resilience and adaptation, especially in the face of climate change; it seeks to heal the planet so that the planet may heal us; and, rejects methods that harm beneficial ecosystem functions, that depend on energy intensive monocultures and livestock factories, destructive fishing practices and other industrialised production methods, which damage the environment and contribute to global warming.

Synthesis Report – Mali 2007

## when and where

### Food Sovereignty has been included

(from *Food Policy for People: Incorporating food sovereignty principles into State governance*, 2009)

In the past ten years, countries have begun incorporating food sovereignty into their constitutions and national legislation. Countries that have shown the most success and actual implementation of food sovereignty, however, are those that have followed up with legislation that puts food sovereignty into action through concrete programs, support for small scale producers, and agroecological efforts.

\* 1999 – Venezuela approves by popular referendum the Bolivarian Constitution of Venezuela. Article 305, Article 306, and Article 307 address portions of the food sovereignty framework.

\* 2001 – Venezuela's Law of the Land addresses agrarian reform

\* 2004 – Senegal's National Assembly passes the LOASP, inclusion of food sovereignty principles are influenced by peasant organization, CNCR

\* 2006 – The National Assembly of Mali approves the Law on Agricultural Orientation (LAO). This lays the groundwork for future implementation of food sovereignty framework in Mali.

\* 2007 (15 January) – Nepal approves the interim constitution which recognizes food sovereignty as a right of the Nepalese people to be implemented by the next administration.

\* 2008 (July) – Venezuela enacts legislation to further support food sovereignty: the Law of Food Security and Food Sovereignty; the Law for Integrated Agricultural Health; the Law for the Development of the Popular Economy; the Law for the Promotion and Development of Small and Medium Industry and Units of Social Production.

\* 2008 (28 September) – Ecuador approves a new constitution recognizing food sovereignty.

\* 2009 (25 January) – Bolivia's newly approved constitution recognizes the rights of indigenous peoples as well as rights to food sovereignty.

\* 2009 (17 February) – Ecuador's Food Sovereignty Regime approves the Organic Law on Food Sovereignty.

\* 2009 (18 June) - Nicaragua National Assembly adopted Law N° 693 on Food and Nutrition Security and Sovereignty. Nicaragua has several national food programs related to food sovereignty and the right to food. These include: Zero Hunger, Zero Usury, and Food Sovereignty and Security for Life.

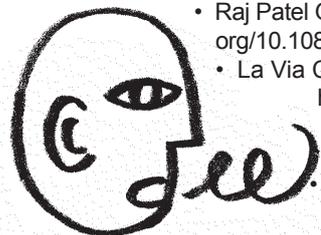
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For more information on *Food Sovereignty* and the *International Forum Nyéléni*, check the website [www.nyeleni.org](http://www.nyeleni.org)

Read the **Declaration of Nyéléni**, from the Nyéléni Forum 2007 at <http://www.nyeleni.org/spip.php?article290>

Read the **Synthesis Report** and the **Action Plan** of the Nyéléni Forum 2007 at <http://www.nyeleni.org/spip.php?article334>

- Michel Pimbert, *Towards Food Sovereignty*, IIED 2009 - <http://www.iied.org/towards-food-sovereignty-reclaiming-autonomous-food-systems>
- Peter Rosset, *Food Sovereignty - Global Rallying Cry of Farmer Movements*, 2003 - <http://www.foodfirst.org/en/node/47>
- Raj Patel Guest Editor, *Food sovereignty*, Journal of Peasant Studies, (2009) 36: 3, 663 – 706 - <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03066150903143079>
- La Via Campesina et. al., *Our World is not for sale: Priority to Peoples' Food Sovereignty*, 2001 - <http://www.voiceoftheturtle.org/library/2001-11-1%20Peoples%20foodsovereignty-en.htm>
- National Family Farm Coalition and Grassroots International, *Food Sovereignty*, 2010 - <http://namanet.org/files/documents/Food%20Sovereignty%20Booklet%202010.pdf>
- Margaret Ellinger-Locke, *Food Sovereignty is a gendered issue*, 2010 [http://works.bepress.com/cgi/view-content.cgi?article=1000&context=margaret\\_ellingerlocke](http://works.bepress.com/cgi/view-content.cgi?article=1000&context=margaret_ellingerlocke)
- More information on the European Nyéléni Forum held in 2011 at <http://www.nyelenieurope.net/en/>



**one does not sell the earth upon which the people walk** Tashunka Witko, 1840 –1877