

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

In March 2012, members of the National Farmers Union in Prince Edward Island gathered to discuss Food Sovereignty, and what it means to farmers and others both locally and globally. This pamphlet has its origins in those discussions.



Six Pillars of Food Sovereignty

Focuses on Food for People: The right to sufficient, healthy and culturally appropriate food for all people is at the centre of food, agriculture, livestock and fisheries policies. Food is NOT just another commodity.

Values Food Providers: The rights, including the right to a decent income, of all women and men who grow, harvest and process food, are respected. Policies and actions that undervalue them or threaten their livelihoods are rejected.

Localises Food Systems: Food providers and consumers are connected and are at the centre of decision-making on food issues. Policies and practices that promote unsustainable and inequitable international trade and give power to unaccountable corporations are rejected.

Puts Control Locally: Control over territory, land, grazing, water, seeds, livestock and fish populations rests with food providers; their right to use and share them in socially and environmentally sustainable ways is respected. Natural resources are not privatized.

Builds Knowledge and Skills: Food providers pass on their skills and local knowledge to future generations.

Works with Nature: Food Sovereignty promotes agro-ecological methods of food production and rejects methods that harm ecosystems, are energy intensive or depend on monocultures, destructive fishing practices and other industrialized production methods.

International Forum for Food Sovereignty, 2007

Nyeleni Village, Mali

What is food sovereignty?

La Via Campesina proposed the concept of Food Sovereignty at the World Food Summit in 1996.

In its broadest sense Food Sovereignty is about the right of nations and peoples to control their own food systems, including their own markets & methods of production. It provides an alternative to current models that treat food as a commodity to be traded for the benefit of large corporate interests.

The terms *food security* and *food sovereignty* are sometimes confused or used interchangeably. The basic concept of food security – ensuring that all people have access to healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food – is included in the definition of food sovereignty. Most organizations working on food security would accept that their work goes beyond advocating for the right of all people to sufficient food – they would also see as their responsibility the promotion of sustainable production and distribution methods, fair compensation for food producers and transparent trade agreements.

Food sovereignty builds on the concept of food security, with the recognition of the right of food producers and harvesters to manage lands, territories, waters, seeds, and livestock.

Even more fundamentally, Food Sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, social and economic classes and generations.



For more information about Food Sovereignty:

<http://foodsecurecanada.org>
<http://www.nfu.ca>
<http://nyeleni.org>
<http://viacampesina.org>

To connect with local organizers:

<http://peifoodsecurity.wordpress.com>



This pamphlet was produced by Cooper Institute with support of the National Farmers Union.

The goal of the **National Farmers Union** is to achieve agricultural policies that ensure dignity and security of income for farm families, and enhance the land for future generations. For more information contact PEI District Directors:

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Or go to our website:
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A Vision of Food Sovereignty for PEI

Fair compensation for producers: Farmers receive their costs of production and more. Farmers in the global North and South live in security with a viable income.

Zero Hunger: Everyone can afford to buy good quality, locally produced food. Nobody is hungry.

Local markets: PEI-produced food is available at locally owned and operated grocery stores.

Fair trade: People know where their food comes from. There is good communication between producers and consumers.

Producer Control: Seed is saved. Corporations have less control. Middlemen are gone.

Workers' Rights: Everyone working in the food system is working in safe conditions and for fair wages.

Animal Welfare: Animals are treated with respect.

Small-scale Farming: Small-scale producers are supported.

Healthy Communities: Farmers are thriving and contributing to their communities.

Sustainability and a Healthy Environment: Organic production and environmental management practices are supported and in use. Land is valued, is worked sustainably and available to future generations. Genetic diversity is maintained.

Actions to promote food sovereignty

→ **Connect producers and consumers:** Build partnerships to provide markets for farmers and affordable food for consumers

→ **Influence government:** Work with all levels of government to make food sovereignty a priority

→ **Be strategic in purchasing:** Support smaller, local businesses when purchasing inputs and selling products

→ **Place value on natural resources:** Use practices that promote healthy ecosystems and do not harm land, water and natural resources

→ **Increase food skills:** Partner with schools to promote learning about how to cook healthy meals using local ingredients and with summer youth programs to include learning about food production

→ **Create public awareness:** Organize workshops and use social media to draw attention to issues affecting food sovereignty

→ **Promote fair trade:** Build on consumer interest in fair trade (international) products and apply principles to domestic products

→ **Develop and maintain partnerships:** Support and collaborate with provincial food security networks