



March 2009

Editorial

Slow Food e Terra Madre

Slow Food and Terra Madre

"As soon as an idea begins to take shape, it begins to die" wrote the Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman. Yet without organization, even the most compelling ideas fade away. They remain abstract suggestions far removed from people's everyday life and experience.

Slow Food's ideal aspiration is Terra Madre. Our association has no intention of keeping it in check. We want it to grow and propagate as an uncontrolled network comprising thousands of different parties (producers, cooks, students, musicians...), proposals, cultures and languages... But at the same time we want to avoid seeing its thousands of expressions become dispersed, weakening the effectiveness of their message.

Slow Food wants to be the thread holding the Terra Madre network together.

Our association will draw on the ideals of Terra Madre, highlighting its activities and practical solutions. It will help to stimulate new projects, promote opinion campaigns and organize support.

We will try to do this without imposing or curbing enthusiasm. We are sure it is possible for pleasure to be compatible with social commitment, the table with the land.

This newsletter is in a new enhanced form and each month will bring the joint voices of Slow Food and Terra Madre to people's homes, to associations, and convivia. It will speak in eight languages, describing the daily lives and achievements of those who enable us to make progress towards a cleaner, more sustainable and pleasant world, richer in diversity and local cultures. A Slow world.

Carlo Petrini

President of Slow Food International

Slow Food

Key words

The co-producer

Slow Food is promoting a new approach to food consumption. To highlight the fact that consumers can stimulate decisive changes in the agrifood sector, Slow Food coined the term co-producer. This word is intended to indicate a consumer-actor who maintains a close relationship with small farmers, fishermen, livestock breeders, producers of wine or cheese. The consumer not only purchases from these people but asks them for information and advice so as to recognize qualitative differences and be able to eat in a healthier, tastier and more responsible way. With more aware and informed consumers—co-producers—farmers are more motivated to work using traditional techniques that assure product biodiversity and quality.

From table to land...

Island Experiment

A pilot 'sustainable school food' project underway on San Juan Island in northwestern USA

Slow Food Land and Sea convivium was formed with the dream of introducing a sustainable school food program to the San Juan Island community (close to Vancouver Island, Canada) that was strongly connected to local producers. After meeting chef Tom French of the non-profit group Experience Food more than a year ago, the idea began to take shape and today the project is in full flight, not only providing healthy nutritious meals, but also acting as a pilot program to assist schools across the nation who are interested in overhauling their food service. The Experience Food Project is being closely watched to track changes in behavior, health and eating habits; identify true costs and overall impact; and provide benchmarks for changing school food culture while working with local growers. The convivium continues to provide support, particularly through community and farm outreach, and the program includes a wide range of educational elements, as Chef Tom explains:

"Late last year we introduced our 13 classroom enrichment programs in conjunction with the teaching staff, including farm tours, edible school gardens, parent education, cooking demos, taste testing etc. Our signature program, Chef in the Classroom, focuses on the historic and cultural relevance of food as well as the pleasures and meaning of shared meals. Our program also incorporates education about food through enrichment programs, cultural events, and community outreach in many different forms: for example, music, dance and authentic Hispanic dishes were featured in the dining hall as part of our celebration of National Hispanic Culture. Bottom line - the food is local, tasty and well presented; the students are eating it and we are engaging them in food activism at the most basic level, one family at a time!"

For more information:

Chef Tom French
cheftom@whidbey.com

Linda Degnan Cobos, *Leader of Slow Food Land and Sea*
westboy@rockisland.com

Slow Fish in Genoa

The future of the sea is built through taste education

One of the main themes of Slow Fish 2009 (Genoa, April 17-20) is "Taste education". Being able to choose fish is important, not only for gastronomic pleasure, but also for our health, our wallets and the environment. So Slow Fish includes the following:

- **Water Workshops**, to extend people's knowledge of issues connected with the sea and fishing;
- **Guided shopping at the market**, with the help of a personal "shopper" to discover the incredible variety of fish in the sea and learn to recognize a quality fish when buying;
- those wanting to venture further afield can go on **fishing tourism** trips in professional boats;
- the **space for good practices** will present innovative and replicable methods of applied ecology.

Visitors will also be able to browse in the **Slow Fish Bookshop** or relax to the sounds of **Slow in Music**, because as Terra Madre has shown, musical traditions are also a valuable record of an area and its culture...

More information and the full program are available on the Slow Fish website: www.slowfish.com

Food on air

In Benin, the Cotonou convivium is using radio and television to educate their fellow countrymen

Prosper has been interested in food issues for a long time. A trained agronomist, he is currently a government employee at the Office for Food Safety in Benin's capital, Cotonou.

Those ideas he can't implement in a professional capacity, he develops in his private life through the Nourriture Saine Bénin convivium. The convivium, which he founded, now has 17 active and enthusiastic members, including his wife, two children, and a number of small producers. Nourriture Saine Bénin has an ambitious goal: to make the public aware of the benefits of healthy local food. For this purpose he organizes meetings of 2-3 hours to which cooks, consumers and media representatives are invited; the participants come into direct contact with products and producers and are informed about the nutritional properties of local food (sweet banana, baobab fruit,

rice). These meetings often lead to direct purchase contracts with producers. The convivium also prepares informational material, radio presentations and CDs about some of the local products and cultures, which are sent to local and national radio, TV and information agencies.

These efforts have resulted in, for example, four broadcasts about rice cultivation, the benefits and importance of eating local rice. Nourriture Saine Bénin is currently collaborating with three newspapers, two TV companies and about twenty radio stations. Some programs are broadcast in local languages. The choice of topic and presentation aim to increase the educational impact, and highlight the outstanding work of producers, the dignity and cultural pride embodied in such a simple act as eating.

For more information:

Prosper Monde

mondeprospere@gmail.com

Presidia on the menu

An alliance between Slow Food Presidia and chefs

In early 2009 Slow Food Italy is launching a new project: the creation of an alliance between the 177 Slow Food Italian Presidia and chefs interested in presenting Presidia products—particularly local ones—on their menus. The aim is to showcase Slow Food projects to a wide public, stimulating interest about initiatives set up to defend biodiversity.

Organized by regional coordinating teams, Italian convivia will be involved in enlisting support from chefs in their area who share Slow philosophy. Chefs will indicate the presence of Presidia products on their menus with a new symbol carrying the name of the producer. Slow Food will communicate information and publicize the restaurants where Presidia products can be eaten. The project will culminate with alliance dinners organized at each of the participating restaurants in early summer 2009. Part of the proceeds will be donated to the Slow Food Presidia project.

For further information about the project, contact Tiziana Gazzera, tel. +39 0172 419643 t.gazzera@slowfood.it

...from land to table

Help us to be heard

An appeal from the communities of Madagascar

Madagascar has featured in the newspapers recently because of demonstrations in the capital, poverty, and the political conflict between the capital's mayor and the country's President. However there haven't been many reports about what is

happening in the rural areas and how most of the people will be affected.

The South Korean multinational Daewoo Logistic has obtained the right to lease land—for 99 years, or two generations!—covering 1.3 million hectares, or half of all the arable land in Madagascar. It plans to produce corn and palm oil. The Koreans state that if the contract is successful, they will build roads, schools, hospitals etc, but the other side of the coin is the prospect of impoverishment and social destabilization. Thousands of small farmers will be transformed into wage earners tending intensive monocultures and food shortfalls will be aggravated since harvests are intended for export.

“The government states that the project is still being evaluated. But the president and general director of Daewoo have confirmed the agreement has been approved, regional heads have signed the contract and are marking the boundaries of the lots” writes Rindra Andriambola, coordinator of the red rice community, adding, “It’s terrible!!! The small farmers can’t do anything to oppose this giant company. All we can do is mourn the loss of our ancestral land, which we have tried to conserve to the best of our ability. We don’t know if this company is going to use GM seeds and chemical products. We hoped to escape poverty by accessing the organic market, but now we no longer know what to do. We are trying to organize a mass protest and hope you will help us to be heard” by signing our petition:

<http://terresmalgaches.info/spip.php?article1> or writing to:

- Monsieur Panja RAMANOELINA, Ministre de l'Agriculture de l'Elevage et de la Pêche. BP 301, Anosy Antananarivo MADAGASCAR

- Monsieur RATOHIARIJAONA Rakotoarisolo Suzelin, Directeur de l'Appui à l'Organisation des Producteurs auprès du Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Elevage et de la Pêche. BP 301, Anosy Antananarivo MADAGASCAR

email : daop@maep.gov.mg

Rindra Andriambola

andriambolar@yahoo.fr

The RSA Link

New Restaurant Supported Agriculture scheme to support local food production

Terra Madre Chef David Swanson of Milwaukee’s Braise Culinary School last summer started a local RSA, or Restaurant Supported Agriculture program. Following the principles of the CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) scheme, in which residents make an upfront payment to a local farm for a season of fresh produce, restaurants enter into an agreement with local producers and pre-pay a portion of their costs. This allows producers to have a better cash flow at the beginning of the growing season, but as David explains, the program brings benefits to both parties: ‘a steady supply of products at a better cost along with saving the chef/owner time in foraging for items and upfront payments which allow better cash flow to create greater efficiencies on the farm and using up surplus’.

‘I have been sourcing locally for my entire chef career. Learning to use what was in season and at the market under French chefs taught me the value of good food. Working in different parts of the country, each with unique circumstances with regard to using local food, exposed me to many different approaches. Upon settling in

Milwaukee and understanding the challenges, I began creating a system to make it easier to source locally and from that grew the RSA,' said David.

Click here

http://community.icontact.com/p/slow_food_usa/newsletters/slow_food_usa/posts/february-news-from-slow-food-usa **to read the full interview with David on the SF USA site.**

Otilia the cook meets Nadia the Slow producer

Otilia Kusmin, a cook in the Terra Madre network from Argentina, describes what happened after Terra Madre 2008

"At Terra Madre one of the recommendations made by the network of cooks was to "adopt" an artisan producer, so we could together create a relationship leading to benefits for the sustainability of our menus and for their production efforts. At the event I met Nadia, a representative of the Río Negro Province farming community. I was immediately impressed by her enthusiasm and the Slow project she intends to develop, as well as her keenness to collaborate.

Nadia is 21 and studying organic agriculture at university, but also works in a local school where she teaches children and their families to use organic cultivation methods and make preserves. In addition, she and her family manage 140 hectares of land in Patagonia based on small-scale sustainable production. Here they raise sheep and cattle naturally and produce organic fruit and vegetables. Honey, bread, desserts, artisan beer, cheese and yoghurt are also all produced here.

Together we started a project to record traditional recipes. The result is a book containing 100 recipes using local products, such as those from Nadia's fields or the local school garden. The cookbook is used in the school canteen and the children have taken it home.

Another project was to promote ecotourism activities: Nadia's farm has a small eco-friendly bungalow which can accommodate several visitors, thus boosting tourism in the area and providing another source of income.

This experience has enriched my personal and professional life, as well as helping me to rediscover simple but surprising dishes which my grandmother used to make using produce from the vegetable garden.

I didn't want to miss this opportunity to tell you how rewarding it can be to create a link between a cook and a producer: all the Terra Madre cooks should do it!"

Otilia Kusmin

Terra Madre cook, Argentina

otilia@fibertel.com.ar

Voices from Terra Madre

Dutch shepherdess on the Heath

"Each morning we take our 600 Drenthe Heath Sheep, the oldest European breed, out onto the balloërveld (heathland) to graze, as farmers have done before us since the Middle Ages in this northeastern corner of The Netherlands. While industrial farming, hypermarkets and chain restaurants are increasingly the norm, we are quietly continuing a tradition that gives us and those who visit us a great deal of pleasure, is important for the local environment, and is helping to revive a rare breed that provides a delicious, organic meat for the local market..."

Marianne Duinkerken

Mail: gakeck@aol.com

Visit this page

<http://www.terramadre.info/pagine/voci/leggi.lasso?id=3E6E345B0572524BA8spx1A45834&n=en> to read the rest of Marianne Duinkerken's story on the Terra Madre website..

The Drenthe Heath Sheep and the Kempen Heath Sheep recently became the newest of some 300 Slow Food Presidia worldwide. Special thanks to all the individuals who brought these native breeds to the attention of Slow Food and worked long and hard to attain Presidium status. Both food communities have successfully brought together sheep farmers with the local Slow Food convivium, chefs, butchers, and local agricultural and environmental groups to work to preserve these two wonderful and important native sheep breeds. They embody the collaborative spirit necessary for our goals.

More information on the Presidia can be found here

<http://fondazione Slow Food.it/eng/leggi.lasso?cod=3E6E345B052111928FJqv31EED94&ln=en>

Tradizioni alimentari

Reindeer suovas to go

Newly formed Slow Food Sápmi promotes production of this traditional cured fillet

Members of one of Slow Food's newest convivia—Slow Food Sápmi—have been active in the Terra Madre network for many years and launched a Presidium several years

ago to promote the production of *suovas*, a salted and smoked reindeer fillet which is one of the region's oldest food traditions. Sámi are the indigenous people of northern Europe who inhabit the area called Sápmi, an arc of land sweeping across northern Sweden, Finland, Norway and Russia. While they traditionally relied on a variety of livelihoods, including coastal fishing, fur trapping, and sheep herding, their food supply is almost entirely dependent on the giant herds of reindeer. Much of the traditional Sámi food was developed to remain edible for the long periods when these nomadic people were on the move and *suovas* are one of the most traditional preparations of reindeer meat. True *suovas* are prepared by dry-salting meat and smoking fillets from the upper leg of the reindeer in a traditional peaked hut for eight hours over an open fire. Once smoked, the fillets are thinly sliced and grilled over an open fire or eaten raw, and are often accompanied by pickled mushrooms or lingonberries. *Suovas*, meaning smoked in the indigenous language, or rökt in Swedish, were traditionally packed by Sámi along with unleavened bread to eat on long trips and today, you can find *suovas* served in Nordic flatbread at some festivals.

Contact:

Convivium leader Lars-Ove Jonsson

lars-ove@sapmi.com

In print, On screen

Red Carpet rolled-out

Launch of documentary on Terra Madre communities at international film festival

A key attraction in this year's Culinary Cinema line-up at the Berlinale international film festival, was the world premiere of Italian director Ermanno Olmi's documentary Terra Madre on February 6. In this production inspired by the Terra Madre network of food communities, internationally renowned Olmi delivers a powerful message about the critical issue of food, and its economic, environmental and social implications. Terra Madre was conceived in 2006 by Ermanno Olmi and Slow Food president Carlo Petrini, united by their passion for the work and values of the farmers and others gathered at the international Terra Madre gathering in Turin.

Food for Thought

Can Sustainable Agriculture feed the World?

Georges Desrués interviews Michael Pollan

The honest answer is: we don't know, because we haven't tried. However, we have to equally figure out how to run an industrial civilization with less fossil fuel, we have to figure out how to grow food with less fossil fuel. There is a lot of evidence that it can

be done. We have seen small farms that are more productive than big farms. We have seen that polycultures, which require less fossil fuel, can grow more real food. We have to keep in mind that all this high-yield commodity agriculture is not producing real food. Fifty percent of what we are growing is feed for animals and another ten percent is food for our cars. Ethanol and biofuel are industrial raw materials, not food people can eat. If we would grow food people can actually eat, there would be plenty of land. I question the assumption of the argument that you need industrial agriculture to feed the world. We are not feeding the world. We are feeding animals and cars and people are going hungry with this system. The Slow Food idea of growing real food near to where people are going to eat it has enormous potential. But it will take a lot of time and work. We will need to put into polycultural agriculture the kind of research and development dedicated to industrial food systems.

Extract from an interview published in the Italian magazine Slowfood N°38.

Visit this page

<http://www.terramadre.info/pagine/leggi.lasso?id=3E6E345B07791272C1vkK295FB3A&n=en>
to read the whole interview

What Slow Food and Terra Madre mean to me...

I am a 24 year-old man who recently "woke up" from a mental lethargy that had lasted far too long. Trapped by technology, focused on myself and afraid to speak my mind, I had allowed myself to be controlled and dominated by a society and customs I had never really believed in.

It may be a little presumptuous to say I have changed, but I think I am on the right track. To get back to the topic—for me Slow Food is a way of being, a mental state. In a world where appearances matter more than content, I have decided to say no to many things.

Above all I oppose the total violation of Nature. I am appalled to see ecosystems destroyed, animals treated as worthless consumer goods crammed into cages and killed without scruple or restraint. I am sick to see the plants and gifts of the earth being wasted and completely undervalued.

It hurts me to the core and if in my small way I can do something, I intend to help. I want genuine food, fresh air, a balanced world and happy people. That is what Slow Food is for me.

Matthew Coss
Treviso
Italia