



April

Editorial

Grabbing Africa's Land

In August 2009 King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia celebrated Ethiopia's first rice harvest destined for his state, which was soon followed by barley and wheat. Like the Gulf states, the growing desert kingdom has decided to tackle its food problems by buying up agricultural land on the other side of the Red Sea, in the Horn of Africa, in countries such as Ethiopia where 10 million people are hungry, or Sudan, where the immense tragedy in Darfur continues.

This theft of land and food from the poorest and hungriest continent in the world is a recent phenomenon and still not widely known. Millions of hectares in Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Sudan and Madagascar have been sold or leased for 20, 30 or 90 years to China, India and South Korea in exchange for vague promises of investment. South Korea already owns 2.3 million hectares, China has bought 2.1, Saudi Arabia 1.6, the United Arab Emirates 1.3.

Governments are the key players. On one side are countries with money and a need for fertile soil. On the other side are extremely poor governments - often corrupt - which in exchange for some money, technology and infrastructure, hand over the most valuable resource of a still largely agricultural continent: land.

At the same time, hardly any African small-scales farmers own the earth that they live and work on. Mostly, land has been cultivated and grazed for generations without any formal contracts, by observing local traditional rules, and is only under private ownership in a small percentage of cases. Rural people therefore have no binding legal ownership over this land, and governments can consider it 'unused' or available for sale or rent regardless. In addition to governments, there are the private investors who began looking for more tangible investments following the financial crisis. At the top of the list was land for food and biofuels.

What happens when foreign investors arrive? There is a move from traditional agriculture - based on diversity, local varieties and communities - to agribusiness, which means monocultures intended for export (such as rice, soy, and palm oil for

biofuels) and a massive use of chemicals (fertilizers and pesticides). And when the land has been completely impoverished, foreign investors will simply move on.

Carlo Petrini
Slow Food President

The Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity has joined forces with a coalition of organizations to protest against the recent increase in land grabbing and denounce its support by the World Bank.

Click here for the full article on the Slow Food website

<http://www.slowfood.com/sloweb/eng/dettaglio.lasso?cod=C2744B880a2262C0CCUupj5E799D>

Click here for more information on the petition or to sign

<http://farmlandgrab.org/12200>

Project of the Month

Training Local Leaders

A project to support the development of family and community food gardens in Cuba.

<http://www.slowfood.com/donate/pagine/eng/progetti.lasso?-idp=012>

Slow Food Key Words...

UNISG The University of Gastronomic Sciences

The University of Gastronomic Sciences (UNISG) is a private non-profit institution founded in 2004 by Slow Food in cooperation with the Italian regions of Piedmont and Emilia-Romagna. Students from around the world come to study and experience artisanal and industrial food production through a multidisciplinary program that covers both science and humanities, sensory training, and hands-on learning during study trips on five continents.

UNISG is concerned with renewing farming methods, protecting food biodiversity, and building an organic relationship between gastronomy and agriculture. Thus, graduates of the 3-year degree and post-graduate programs are unique professional figures within the gastronomy field – knowledgeable in the production, distribution, promotion, and communication of high-quality foods.

For more information: UNISG

http://www.unisg.it/welcome_eng.lasso

Campaigns

Slow Fish

A new website for good, clean and fair fish

This month sees the launch of the international Slow Fish campaign website in four languages. Through the website, Slow Food aims to inform people about the situation facing our oceans by collecting and presenting data from leading organizations and scientific institutes around the world. Furthermore, it offers a glimpse into the lives and work of the small-scale fishing communities of the Slow Food Presidia and Terra Madre network, and describes some of the most interesting initiatives organized around the world by Slow Food convivia to promote sustainable fishing and seafood consumption. Finally, it provides suggestions for simple everyday actions through which we can make a difference – whether we are retailers, restaurateurs or consumers - when deciding what fish to buy and cook.

The Slow Fish campaign aims to spread the guidelines and information provided through the international Slow Fish event held every two years in Genoa, to the entire Slow Food community, encouraging convivia and the Terra Madre network to consider these issues in their activities and to practice and promote responsible good, clean and fair choices.

We would like to invite all of you to visit the site, and to use this information in your personal lives and in organizing initiatives. Let us know what is happening in your area – whether it is a dinner prepared with local sustainable fish, a traditional recipe, a fishing technique worth reviving or an initiative for children – and get in contact if you have any ideas or information to add.

The Slow Fish campaign has been developed with funding support from the Lighthouse Foundation, a German organization promoting the defense of marine biodiversity (for information see www.lighthouse-foundation.org).

<http://www.slowfood.com/slowfish>

The next event: Terre d'Acqua

The Veneto Regional Authority, in collaboration with Slow Food, is organizing the first edition of *Terre d'Acqua* (Waterlands), in Rovigo, Italy on May 28, 29 and 30. This event aims to focus attention on ecosystems in brackish and fresh waters, with particular emphasis on the Po delta. The event will also involve a fundraising activity to help the Robinson Crusoe Island Seafood Presidium in Chile, which was seriously affected by the devastating earthquake and tsunami last February.

Click here for more information on Terre d'Acqua

<http://www.terredacqua.net/>

Click here to find out more about the Robinson Crusoe Island Seafood Presidium

http://www.slowfood.com/slowfish/pagine/eng/pagina.lasso?-id_pg=117

and click here if you would like to make a donation to assist them in their recovery.
<http://www.slowfood.com/donate/pagine/eng/progetti.lasso?-idp=018>

The European Food Declaration

A coalition of organizations calls for a better food system

Slow Food has joined a coalition of European organizations who have created a declaration as the first step in efforts to build a broad movement of change towards food sovereignty. The *European Food Declaration* outlines the group's recommended policy objectives for the next several decades of the Common Agriculture and Food Policy (CAP), the EU's system of agricultural subsidies and programs, due for change in 2013. "After more than a half-century of industrialization of agriculture and food production, sustainable family farming and local food cultures have been substantially reduced," the declaration states. "Today, our food system is dependent on under-priced fossil fuels, does not recognize the limitations of water and land resources, and supports unhealthy diets." The declaration calls for a healthy, sustainable and fair CAP, and highlights twelve key principles including encouraging the production and consumption of local, seasonal, high quality products, reconnecting citizens with their food and food producers, and considering food as a universal human right, not merely a commodity.

Click here for the full article.

<http://www.slowfood.com/sloweb/eng/dettaglio.lasso?cod=C2744B880a15e2CD45gkh2F026EB>

Click here for more information or to sign the declaration.

<http://www.europeanfooddeclaration.org/who-are-we>

From land to table...

Taste of the Cape

Youth Agricultural Ambassadors promote organic farming and the future of agriculture in their region

South Africa - The Youth Agricultural Ambassadors (YAA) project was launched in 2008 under the guidance of Terra Madre delegate Tshediso Johannes Phahlane by a group of eight young people who wanted to motivate and educate their peers, school children, orphans and others on organic agriculture, and empower them to lead their communities in becoming self-sufficient. The YAA team formed a committee to run the project and enlisted a group of organic producers to educate participants about their approach to agriculture - no chemicals and using permaculture design - as well as broader topics such as HIV/AIDS, leadership skills, gender equality and career guidance. "Our objective is to create job opportunities for youth, women and people with disabilities and to provide relevant skills for the present and in the future," said Tshediso Johannes. To date, the YAA have trained over 300 orphans and 806 children

in five different schools. "We want our children to live in a good environment and eat healthy food. It is our responsibility to make this dream come true."

For more information:

Tshediso Johannes Phahlane

tpahlane@gmail.com

A new convivium promotes good, clean and fair to all through community activities

Meanwhile further south in the country, Cape Town's second convivium has hit the ground running since it opened late last year. The Mother City Convivium has so far organized tastings, an artisan beer and food-pairing evening, a visit to a bio-dynamic farm, a workshop on preserving foods and a mushroom forage in the forest, as well as a community-supported agriculture program connecting small farmers directly with groups of urban consumers. "We were simply so excited about how many awesome events we could organize and small producers we could visit, that we decided Cape Town was big enough for two sister convivia and leapt into the breach," said convivium committee member Pia Taylor. "The idea is to make our convivium accessible to students and families by offering affordable outings that promote the values of Slow Food."

For more information:

www.slowfoodmothercity.co.za

Forgetting the War

Srebrenica celebrates local food traditions through Slow Food Presidia

Prior to the 1990s, Srebrenica was a lively town in eastern Bosnia. Its spa facilities attracted tourists and it was a cultural center for the surrounding area, with a theater that welcomed artists and performers from around Yugoslavia. Then the civil war and genocide of 1995 brought it all to an end and devastated entire communities. Srebrenica has gradually recovered and is slowly re-establishing its cultural traditions. Last month, for example, the three-day cultural event Tempus Argenti was organized and featured theater performances and musical concerts as well as a series of Slow Food Taste Workshops.

The Taste Workshops were organized by the Slow Food Goražde Convivium who invited producers from the Pozegaca Plum Slatko and the Cheese in a Sack Presidia, as well as from the Trebinje Poljak Bean Producers food community. The sessions presented local gastronomic traditions to young people and adults and helped them appreciate the value of artisan methods and traditions in food production. Erna Subasić, the young convivium leader said: "We want to reconnect young people with the land. People are proud of their region in Bosnia but we can no longer distinguish a homemade apple juice from an industrial one. Food is an essential element in regaining a healthy relationship with the local area and our identity".

This initiative was supported by Roberta Biagiarelli of Italian Cooperation and is one in a series of activities planned to revitalize social and cultural life in the Srebrenica and

Bratunac areas of Bosnia Herzegovina.

For more information:

www.utlsarajevo.org

Aiding Livelihoods

Assisting HIV-affected families to improve food nutrition and security

Kenya - A new initiative is aiming to improve food and nutrition security for HIV sufferers by raising funds and working with affected families to empower them to generate their own food and income. Through the project 'Aid Livelihoods for 90 HIV Affected Kenyan Homes', the Slow Food Central Rift Convivium and Network for Ecofarming in Africa (NECOFA) will provide families in the Molo District with materials such as seeds and livestock plus training in sustainable agriculture, small livestock farming and nutrition, in an effort to help them become more self-sufficient. "While many Kenyan families are struggling with challenges of poverty, food and nutrition insecurity, families affected by HIV/AIDS are more prone and vulnerable," explained Pascale Brevet, UNISG Master's graduate who led the research phase of the project. "They are faced with the extra responsibility of taking care and feeding the infected person(s) who also require even more nutritional attention." Since January, the convivium and NECOFA have successfully provided support to twelve critically affected families and are currently calling for donations to help reach all affected households in the district.

Click here for more information or to donate.

<http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/aid-livelihoods-for-90-hiv-affected-kenyan-homes/>

School garden project awarded

Kenya - In an active period for the Central Rift Convivium and NECOFA, their joint school garden project at Michinda Boys' Primary School has been judged the country's best in a Ministry of Agriculture competition. "The level of intelligence of the young boys amazed the judges who also appreciated how they were able to incorporate different subjects into their school garden work. They not only demonstrated crop growing, harvesting and preservation but they also showed the judges how they avoided chemicals and grew their food organically," said Jane Karanja, Central Rift Convivium's organizational secretary. "When the boys learnt of their position and success they were overjoyed and started singing and dancing songs of praise all over the school compound. Who could blame them for the noise - they were the champions of organic farming and the agriculturists for tomorrow."

For more information:

Jane Karanja

Slow Food Central Rift Convivium

jane_karanja2001@yahoo.com

Voices of Terra Madre

Cuban Lessons

(index) *Canadian members have the chance to visit the community garden project they support in Havana...*

*In celebration of Terra Madre Day last December, members of Slow Food Pelham in Canada pledged to support a Slow Food project and together decided on the Cuban project 'Training Local Leaders'. After donating funds, convivium members **Renée Girard** and Daniel Boudin visited the project organizers. Renée shares their story...*

Cuba - *Daniel and I decided to visit Havana as we thought it would be a great opportunity to learn more about the project we donated to, and exchange ideas with the people involved. Vilda Figueroa and José Lama, the two directors of the program, run a number of projects alongside 'Training Local Leaders', including one on preserving food. They welcomed us warmly and showed us with great pride their gardens and shelves filled with more than a hundred different home-preserved products.*

Managing to communicate in a mixture of Spanish, English and French, we discovered that Vilda and José have published many booklets on food preservation, condiments and medicinal plants. Throughout the island, they hold workshops in schools and community centers to teach local people how to make preserves, dry different culinary and medicinal herbs, and conserve food through the process of fermentation.

Ingenuity and creativity are definitely Cuban qualities. Upon our arrival we were shown an urban garden where all available space was utilized either to grow or dry herbs and plants. We discovered that Cubans are extremely creative and resourceful within a system where it is difficult for them to access what we in the industrialized world have. Thus, they manage to do so much with so little.

It was surely a lesson for us who come from a country where abundance is taken for granted and industrially processed foods are taking over. In Canada making preserves and preserving food at the peak of its freshness and availability is often considered an art of the past or a sporadic hobby. In Cuba, it plays an important part in the economic survival of the families as well as improving their health and quality of life. In Canada, despite the relative wealth of the population, many suffer from bad nutrition and could benefit from reintegrating this lost art in their life.

There are still many lessons that we need to learn. However, a special link has been created between Pelham and Havana. We now hope to share Vilda and José's knowledge, enthusiasm and dedication with our community.

Renée Girard

Slow Food Pelham

dboudin@cogeco.ca

To find out more about the Training Local Leaders project or make a donation click here: <http://www.slowfood.com/donate/pagine/eng/progetti.lasso?-idp=012>

Food for Thought

Sustainable Dining

UK organizations helping conscious diners

Consumers are becoming more eco-conscious at home - buying Fairtrade, organic and free-range foods - but are unable to maintain their ideals while eating out. This was the conclusion drawn by researchers of the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA) before their launch earlier this year. Aiming to change this, the organization rates restaurants according to their sustainability in a wide selection of criteria, including food locality and seasonality, energy use, waste, and building relationships with farms and producers, in an effort to help both customers and restaurateurs concerned about eco-friendly and ethical dining. "Our belief is that restaurants need help and consumers do too," said founder Giles Gibbons, "When you get both sides moving and learning together, then you create real change."

The SRA joins Fish2Fork, an online organization that rates UK and USA restaurants that serve fish, not only for the quality of their food but also for the effect their menu choices have on the seas and marine life. Many individual restaurants are also making great progress in moving towards sustainability. In the kitchen of London restaurant Konstam, for example, 80% of produce sourced by head chef Oliver Rowe is grown or reared within the area covered by the London tube network.

For more information:

The Sustainable Restaurant Association

<http://www.thesra.org/>

Fish2Fork

<http://fish2fork.com/apps/welcome/>

Konstam

<http://www.konstam.co.uk/>

In Print, On Screen

Do Fish Feel Pain?

While there has been increasing interest in recent years in the welfare of farm animals, fish are frequently thought to be different. In many people's perception, fish, with their lack of facial expressions or recognizable communication, are not seen to count when it comes to welfare. In *Do Fish Feel Pain?* biologist Victoria Braithwaite explores the question of fish pain and suffering, explaining the growing scientific evidence of fish behavior, and examining the ethical questions about how we should treat these animals.

Do Fish Feel Pain?, Victoria Braithwaite, Oxford University Press, 2010

Click here for more information or to purchase.

<http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780199551200.do?keyword=do+fish+feel+pain&sortby=bestMatches>

The Town that Food Saved

Vermont farmer Ben Hewitt tells the true story of a rural, working-class community which jump-started its economy and redefined its self-image through a local, self-sustaining food system unlike anything else in America. Hewitt describes how the mostly young entrepreneurs have created a network of community support, and brings to life to the colorful characters that drove the movement.

The Town That Food Saved: How One Community Found Vitality in Local Food, Ben Hewitt, Rodale Books, 2010

Click here for more information or to purchase.

http://www.rodalestore.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/ProductDisplay?catalogId=10002&storeId=10051&productId=196782&langId=-1&nav_wt=search

In the Green Kitchen

In the Green Kitchen presents essential cooking techniques and more than 50 recipes for fresh, local, and seasonal meals from Alice Waters - chef, champion of the sustainable, and local cooking movement and Slow Food International Vice-President. Waters starts by demystifies the basics including steaming a vegetable, dressing a salad, creating stock, filleting a fish, roasting a chicken, and making bread.

In the Green Kitchen: Techniques to Learn by Heart, Alice Waters, Clarkson Potter, 2010

Click here for more information or to purchase.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780307336804>

Local Solutions for Global Disorder

Released in France on April 7, Coline Serreau's latest documentary, *Solutions Locales Pour un Désordre Global* examines the problems of our current approach to food production, but without dwelling on the disastrous situation facing us. The director focuses on a series of alternatives to the present system, inviting us to think about the environment, society and agriculture. Serreau spent three years traveling with a film camera, capturing a fascinating array of interviews. The world's major voices of agroecology, from Vandana Shiva to Serge Latouche, explain their points of view and propose realistic solutions to protect our health and the future of the planet. The film never resorts to controversial arguments but focuses on practical choices that can have immediate positive effects.

Solutions Locales Pour un Désordre Global, a film by Coline Serreau,
2010, CINEMAO,
Click [here](#) for more information.
www.solutionslocales-lefilm.com

CALENDAR

Feria Regional del Alimento

Quetzaltenango, Guatemala
May 1-2 2010

Burren Slow Food Festival

Ireland
May 21 – 23, 2010
<http://slowfoodclare.com/>

Terre d'acqua

Rovigo, Italy
May 28 - 30 2010
<http://www.terredacqua.net/>

Terra Madre Argentina

Buenos Aires, Argentina
July 8-11, 2010

Terra Madre Balkans

Sofia, Bulgaria
July 8-10, 2010

Janecka Vecer

Mavrovo National Park, Macedonia
July 26 - 27 2010

Salone del Gusto

Turin, Italy
October 21 -25, 2010

Terra Madre

Turin, Italy
October 21 -24, 2010

Terra Madre Day

International
December 10, 2010
<http://www.slowfood.com/terramadreday/>