

REAL FOOD IS REAL FARMERS

Conditions and resources vary greatly around the world, but the challenges that face farmers are pretty much the same: access to land, water, and fair markets are some of the things that all farmers hold as common struggles.



1.83 million (of 2.2 million) farms in the US have a white male principal operator, but the majority of new farmers are not white.

Wealthy nations are purchasing farmland from poorer countries, for food production or just profit, at an alarming rate. Over 100 cases of this “global land grab” were reported in 2008 alone.



The average age of a US farmer in 2002 was 55.3 years. The average age of a farmer in 2007 was 58.1 years. Between 2002-2007, the number of farmers over 75 increased 20%.

Of the 2.2 million farms in the US, only about half show positive net income from the farm itself. The remaining depend on non-farm income, such as subsidies.

An alarming 17,000 cases of farmer suicides in India were reported in 2003 alone, as farmers are forced to become increasingly dependent on expensive seeds and fertilizers that create inescapable debt.

60% of farms in the US are considered small farms, with less than \$10,000 per year in total sales of agricultural products.

Female farm operation increased 30% from 2002 to 2007 in the US.

While 91% of the total 1.5 billion hectares of agricultural land worldwide are increasingly devoted to commodities for export, the majority of staple food crops in the Global South are still produced by millions of small farmers.

ABOUT FARMS AND FARMERS:

US Census of Agriculture: basic information about the state of farms and farmers in the US. The census is administered every 5 years. www.agcensus.usda.gov

Local Harvest: a comprehensive directory of farms, farmer's markets and local production in the US. www.localharvest.org

National Sustainable Agriculture Service: news, events, updates, and opportunities related to organic and sustainable agriculture in the US. www.attra.ncat.org

Global Land Grab/GRAIN: frequently-updated news about the global land grab and farmer struggles for food/land/seed sovereignty. www.farmlandgrab.org

American Farmland Trust: US organization dedicated to farmland preservation. Lots of resources related to US agriculture. www.farmland.org

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy: online publications and analysis about all sorts of agriculture and trade issues. www.iatp.org

Food First: Institute for Agriculture and Development Policy: online publications and analysis of food and agriculture issues with an international, food justice focus. www.foodfirst.org

BY AND FOR FARMERS:

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition: a national alliance of farm, rural development, and conservation groups organized to affect federal agriculture policy. Lots of current info on US agriculture policy. www.sustainableagriculture.net

La Via Campesina: news about the international peasant movement of small farmers and landless people. Research and resources about their struggles. www.viacampesina.org

Serve Your Country Food: an emerging network of young small farmers in the US. www.serveyourcountryfood.net

Family Farm Defenders: working to create a farmer-controlled, consumer-oriented food and fiber production system. Lots of specific case studies about campaigns around the US. www.familyfarmdefenders.org

Oxfam International: large NGO working on a variety of issues related to eradicating poverty, with lots of emphasis on food and agriculture policy, the global food crisis, and international fair trade. www.oxfam.org

Domestic Fair Trade Association: news and info about the movement to promote fair trade and labor conditions for domestic farmers and food producers. www.dftassociation.org

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CHALLENGE**

*Uniting students for just
and sustainable food.*

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