

Family Farm Defenders Launch Campaign to Save America's Remaining Small-to-Mid-Sized Dairy Farms

And in the process...

Stop farm foreclosures - farmers paid fairly can pay their mortgages!

Address root causes of farmer suicides like chronic debt, bankruptcy and depression

Encourage farmer-owners to take leadership roles in their co-ops

Place control over milk price back in the hands of farmers and out of the hands of commodity traders and financial speculators

Reverse the growth of mega-sized dairy CAFOs

Reorient dairy production toward quality, fairness, and the health of animals, consumers, and the land



Dear Land o' Lakes Co-op Board,

As people around the world prepare to celebrate 2012 as the U.N. Year of the Co-op, we call upon Land o' Lakes to respect its own farmer members by respecting the Rochdale Principles of International Cooperation and abiding by the Capper Volstead Act. Since its founding by family dairy farmers and smallscale co-op creameries in MN over 80 years ago, Land o' Lakes has lost sight of its original mission and needs to work hard to restore its once proud legacy.

Specifically, we call upon the Board of Directors of Land o' Lakes Co-op to:

- Pay dairy farmer members a fair milk price that covers production costs; at least \$30/hundredweight or \$2.58/gallon.
- Stop pushing genetically modified organisms (GMOs) - such as DowElanco's recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH) and Monsanto's roundup ready alfalfa.
- Stop importing unregulated dairy byproducts such as milk protein concentrate (MPC).
- End dairy price fixing at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME).

We hope that Land o' Lakes will reconsider its current trajectory and take action in the year ahead to restore its reputation as a responsible law abiding cooperative in the eyes of its farmer members and the general public.

Sincerely, _____

45¢ POSTAGE
REQUIRED
FOR MAIL
IN THE U.S.

Land O'Lakes Co-op Board
Land O'Lakes, Inc.
P.O. Box 64101
St. Paul, MN 55164-0101



familyfarmers.org/?p=299
familyfarmdefenders@yahoo.com



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Keep an eye on this unique collaboration of small farmers and farmworkers in the years ahead. When two groups like Food for Maine's Future and the CIW join together to fight for fundamental change in a food system that has undervalued labor for generations -- whether that labor is provided by a farmworker or the owner of a family-run farm -- they form a force that must be reckoned with. (Article originally appeared on August 13, 2012 at www.ciw-online.org.)

Gerardo Reyes Chavez and Greg Asbed (right) of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers give raking blueberries a try.

Winter 2013 FREE

"Advocates and activists for small farmers, farmworkers,
SAVING SEEDS
and their patrons against corporate food monopolies."

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Local Food RULES Becomes First FMF County Chapter

In October, 2012, Food for Maine's Future board of directors affirmed Local Food RULES as its first county chapter. Local Food Rules is based in Western Hancock County. The group began meeting late 2009 in response to corporate regulatory influences affecting area farms. The group formally organized soon after Blue Hill farmer Dan Brown was sued in November, 2011 in order to provide on-the-ground information regarding the "Farmer Brown" case, including for the local community. Under the new name the group quickly grew to over 100 members and has networked with farmers and farm patrons from around the state, visiting and hosting other community groups throughout Maine grappling with the same issues.



Save the Dates!

According to founding member and Penobscot farmer Heather Retberg, "supporting Farmer Brown has been an important role for us, and besides members' personal convictions and relationships with one another, we found it necessary to defend the Local Food & Community Self-Governance Ordinance." Since early 2011, the group has been *the* resource for Mainers wanting information on the Local Food & Community Self-Governance Ordinance, which has now been adopted in 8 Maine towns.

The role of Local Food RULES and future county chapters is to shape - *and lead* - the advocacy work of Food for Maine's Future, with FMF playing a supporting role connecting community-based groups and organizations working towards common goals. For information on starting a county chapter contact Local Food RULES at bonniepreston@earthlink.net or 374-3636.

Membership Meeting
Saturday, Feb. 9
9am - 12pm
Potluck lunch
Maine State Grange
146 State Street
Augusta, Maine
Join Food for Maine's Future through our website or at the door

JOIN THE CORN SEED COLLABORATIVE PRESERVE ~ RESTORE ~ DEFEND



WANTED: Experienced growers willing and able to produce and share open-pollinated corn in small to medium quantities, sweet and field. A portion of the corn produced will be distributed through a network of growers in different regions for sharing, testing, adapting, and improving. A portion will be included in a seed bank of locally and regionally adapted corn seed varieties free from GMO contamination, maintained by Food for Maine's Future. And a portion can be kept for personal use and /or for sale by the growers.

For more information contact Bob St.Peter, Saving Seeds Farm at 207-359-2128 or bobstpeter@gmail.com.

Mud Season Dinner & Jim Cook Award
Late March
Date and location to be announced

Seed Camp
August 22 - 25, 2013
Saving Seeds Farm
Sedgwick, Maine
Hands-on training in small-scale farming and seed production, farm tours

Are you a farmer at risk of foreclosure? Are you a farmworker with work-place related issues?
Call the Worker Rights Hotline **Today!**
1-866-933-WCEM
The Worker Rights Hotline is sponsored by Food AND Medicine & the Worker Center of Eastern Maine

President's Report

The Board of Directors of Food for Maine's Future met a few times during the course of the year 2012. The first was the annual meeting at the Agricultural Trade Fair in Augusta January 10th. A plan for the year was established and it was decided that future meetings would, for the most part, take place by conference call.

We met by conference call in July and planned a brainstorming and strategy session for October. On October 6th the board met in Knox to discuss the future of the organization. Bob St. Peter has decided to step back from the Executive Director (ED) position to put his time and energy into the programs of the organization: Saving Seeds Farm, the Corn Seed Collaborative, Seed Camp, Fresh Food for Migrant Workers, and the Local Food Sovereignty programs.

At the meeting a plan was developed for an orderly transition to a new ED and continued support for Bob as he maintains the excellent programs he has started over the years. We also approved a quick fundraising campaign to cover current expenses and a few past due bills. Cost cutting measures were also implemented. Moving the Saving Seeds Farm was discussed. Bob has a plan for the move. We discussed whom we would like to see participate on the ED search committee and plans were made for those meetings.

In the afternoon we opened up the meeting to other interested parties and had a brainstorming session regarding where we have been and where we would like to go as an organization. The need for an intensive fundraiser to secure the salary for the new ED, Program Director and a development budget were emphasized.

Perhaps the most exciting outcome of the afternoon's discussions was the adoption of a new mission statement and a new tagline. The mission statement adopted is: "We are advocates and activists for small farmers, farm workers, farm workers and their patrons against food monopolies." And the new tagline we discussed was: "The Grange of the 21st Century."

It was a very productive and energizing day. The immediate need fundraiser was mailed in November and had good results.

In January 2013 we had a two day work session in Augusta in conjunction with the Agricultural Trade Show. We set the calendar for the year and had a full board meeting the second day. In addition we worked on grant proposals and the next issue of *Saving Seeds*. We set the Annual Membership Meeting for February 9th, 2013 at the Maine State Grange in Augusta.

Betsy Garrold
The Shire, Knox

Award. In honoring Gerritsen, Food for Maine's Future highlights his leadership in the lawsuit *OSGATA vs. Monsanto*, challenging their stranglehold on the global seed industry, as well as the inspiration that he, his wife Megan, and their family's Wood Prairie Farm have been to young farmers in Maine and beyond. Jim will be honored at Food for Maine's Future's *Mud Season Dinner* at the end of March. Visit www.SavingSeeds.wordpress.com for more details or to reserve your ticket.

The Jim Cook Award is given in memory of Jim Cook, co-founder of Crown O' Maine Organic Coop and a mentor to many young farmers and entrepreneurs. Previous recipients include Crown O' Maine and Carly DeSignore and Tide Mill Farm.



Jim Gerritsen To Receive 2013 Jim Cook Award

Jim Gerritsen's tireless work to make organic, family-scale farming a viable way of life has earned him the 2013 Jim Cook



CIW, Food for Maine's Future join forces for Maine's 2012 blueberry harvest...

Maine's family farm movement, Florida's farmworker movement work together to build bridge between local community and farmworkers in rural Maine.

Maine has many claims to fame -- delicious lobsters, breathtaking landscapes and majestic rocky coastlines chief among them -- but for many, the state's short-bush blueberry harvest is first and foremost on the list of things that make Maine one of this country's most beautiful states. The children's classic *Blueberries for Sal* has introduced millions of young people to the charms of the state's late summer berry bounty, raising the wild-growing fruit to almost mythic proportions.

But, as with many myths, the reality can be even more interesting than the legend. And the reality is that most Maine blueberries are harvested today by crews that have traveled the length of the map from the fields of Florida to the forests of the Pine Tree State at the northernmost stop along the East Coast migrant stream. And this year, a delegation from the CIW traveled that same route, too, invited by allies with the state's small farmer movement, Food for Maine's Future.



Farmworkers with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers joined a blueberry crew from Florida and Haiti for a foggy morning of raking last August.



Food for Maine's Future "seeks to build a just, secure, sustainable and democratic food system to the benefit of all Maine's farmers, fisheries, communities, and the environment." In recognition of their years of hard work toward the realization of that vision, Food for Maine's Future received the 2012 World Hunger Year Harry Chapin Self-Reliance Award. And this past spring, one of FMF's founders, small farmer and fair food activist Bob St. Peter (left), joined CIW members and allies in Lakeland for the Fast for Fair Food, fasting all six days with the core fasting crew.

So when Food For Maine's Future invited us to join them in reaching out to Maine's seasonal farmworker community during this season's blueberry harvest, we didn't hesitate for a moment. A small delegation from the CIW headed north last week and, together with Bob and other Blue Hill area family farmers (including the incredible Retberg family that runs Quills End Farm in Penobscot), we immediately set about organizing a community/farmworker dinner at an old Grange hall in town. When a week later over 75 people walked through the door, the vast majority of them Florida farmworkers, the dinner was a huge success. A delicious, fresh meal from Bob's farm set the tone for an evening of community building, and the gathering sowed the seeds for an even closer relationship in the years to come, as many of the blueberry workers make the trip to Maine year after year.

In between outreach efforts, the CIW delegation lent its labor to local farms throughout the week, including a misty morning of blueberry harvesting (above) with the crew pictured at the top of this post, who had made their way to Maine from Ft. Pierce, Florida. Though the professional blueberry crew outpaced the CIW members in raw output, the CIW's years of experience in the watermelon harvest ensured that they didn't embarrass themselves too badly, and won them an invitation to return next season to harvest berries in earnest.

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