



Ecumenical Advocacy  
Alliance

Food for Life 



# Churches' Food Week of Action

11-18 October 2015



## Churches' Week of Action on Food and World Food Day

Let us take action together to eradicate hunger, promote adequate nutrition, and strive towards just and sustainable food systems!

The global Churches Week of Action on Food (October 11-18) is an opportunity for Christians and others around the world to act together for food justice and food sovereignty. It is a special time to raise awareness about farming approaches that help individuals and communities develop resiliency and combat poverty. The Food for Life Campaign places a particular emphasis on sustainable agricultural practices and the situation of smallholder producers and their access to, and control over, natural resources such as land, water and seeds.

All of us can examine our food choices and call for policy changes that will ensure the right to food for everyone.

The global Food Week of Action includes World Food Day (October 16) as well as the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (13 October), International Day for Rural Women (October 15) and the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (October 17).

2015 is the International Year of Soils, and World Food Day 2015 focuses on Social Protection and Agriculture. These themes can help guide your actions for the week.

Compiled and edited by: Members of the Food for Life strategy group and WCC-EAA staff | Design: Nicole Benz  
2015 World Council of Churches - Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance

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## 2015: International Year of Soils

1. Healthy soils are the basis for healthy food.
2. Soils help to combat and adapt to climate change by playing a key role in the carbon cycle.
3. Soils support our planet's biodiversity and they host a quarter of the total species.
4. Soils store and filter water, improving our resilience to floods and droughts.
5. Soil is a non-renewable resource; its preservation is essential for food security and our sustainable future.

Agroecological farming builds up the soil and increases the nutritional value of food grown in it. Farmers practicing the sustainable practices of agroecology should be getting greater assistance with research, agricultural extension and financial support. Instead they are pressured to adopt the seeds and practices of industrial agriculture and to grow for large or export markets. Smaller-scale farmers are being pushed off their lands by policies such as these and by land grabs around the world.

According to the FAO, nearly 90% of the estimated 570 million farms worldwide are family farms, 83% being small farms measuring 2 hectares or less.

Small- and medium-scale family farmers, who practice agroecology and own their land or have long-term tenancy, are the caretakers of the soil, the land and our ability to thrive. They serve as the primary preservers of traditional food and seeds, the land and ecosystems, and cultural heritage while contributing to local economies.

For more information see: <http://www.fao.org/soils-2015/en/>

# 2015 World Food Day: Social Protection and Agriculture: Breaking the Cycle of Rural Poverty

People of faith and their congregations have played a critical role in pushing for policies and developing programs to protect the rights and welfare of everyone, especially those pushed to the margins of society.

*“Social protection exists when governments develop policies and programs to address economic, environmental and social vulnerabilities to food insecurity and poverty. Through cash transfers, vouchers, insurances and in-kind contributions, social protection programs enhance the income, status and capacities of poor and vulnerable people. Social protection improves people’s access to health care and other social services, enabling them to sustainably provide for themselves and their family members.*

*World Food Day is an occasion to focus the world’s attention on the crucial role played by social protection in eradicating hunger and poverty.”*

- from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

For more information on World Food Day see: <http://www.fao.org/world-food-day/home/en/>



# What can you do?

## Here are some action ideas:

**Plan a church service** on 11 or 18 October to focus on the importance of soils and food security. A liturgy developed by the World Council of Churches is available at <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/events/churches-week-of-action-on-food>, and can be used in its entirety or adapted for your context.

**Organize a “bring and share” meal at your church**, with dishes prepared with produce from local gardens and farmers.

**Celebrate local foods and knowledge:** Organize a community fair that showcases local food producers and shares the stories of farmers and people involved in food justice.

**Lobby policy makers and businesses** to create a stable demand for local and seasonal produce through school meal programmes and hospitals (such as the Programa de Aquisicao de Alimentos (PAA), on page 36 of *Nourishing the World Sustainably: Scaling up AgroEcology*

**Organize a study and discussion session** for your church or community group focusing on one of the films or resources suggested.

**Talk to local media:** Encourage your local TV and radio stations to promote local food producers during the week. Write to your local newspapers about the need to support local and sustainable food producers.

**Get your hands in the dirt:** Plan a trip to your nearest farm to meet (and help!) the farmer and learn more about the challenges and joys of food production. Consider joining or starting a community garden. How-to and other ideas here: <https://www.pcusa.org/get/resources/resource/21223/>

**Share your food story** with a captioned photo, video or written social media post (e.g. YouTube, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook), using the hashtag #myfoodstory via [@e\\_alliance](https://twitter.com/e_alliance)



## Join other efforts around the world:

### Join the Zero Hunger Challenge

Individuals and groups can join ZHC, an initiative of the United Nations' Secretary General to raise awareness and build a movement around eliminating hunger. <http://blog.zerohungerchallenge.org/join-the-challenge/>

### Double Up a Meal for a Hunger Free World

World Vision is inviting supporters and churches worldwide to share their vision of a hunger-free world by celebrating food and donating the cost of their favourite meal on World Food Day to help end hunger. Proceeds will launch HungerFree, a new initiative investing in young people in Kenya and South Sudan. Learn more and find church resources, stories and videos at <http://www.hungerfree.org>

### Celebrate the Winners of the Food Sovereignty Prize

See <http://foodsovereigntyprize.org> for the winners (announcement on August 26), and past winners. Like [www.facebook.com/FoodSovereigntyPrize](https://www.facebook.com/FoodSovereigntyPrize) to get updates.

# Resources

*These and other worship, study and action resources are available and updated at <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/events/churches-week-of-action-on-food>*

## Worship and Bible Study

**2015 Food Week of Action Liturgy on Soils and Food Security**

**Bible Study Resources on Sustainable Food Systems for Food and Nutrition Security**

**World Food Day Prayer**

## Study and Discussion

**Seeds for Life: Scaling up Agro-Biodiversity** (EAA, The Gaia Foundation, The African Biodiversity Network, October 2013) Available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese.

**Right to Food and Nutrition Watch** – 2015 edition to be launched in advance of World Food Day: [www.rtfn-watch.org](http://www.rtfn-watch.org)

**Nourishing the World Sustainably: Scaling up Agroecology** (EAA, October 2012) This briefing paper documents the success of sustainable agricultural practices that support small-scale farmers and local communities and which also benefit the environment and natural resource base

**Whose Alliance? The G8 and the Emergence of a Global Corporate Regime for Agriculture** (EAA and CIDSE, May 2013). This paper outlines some of the major problems and risks with the G8 New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Africa, as well as key recommendations. Available in English, French and Spanish.

**Agroecology: Putting Food Sovereignty Into Action**, WhyHunger

**Climate and Food Center Spread** from the PHP Post (Presbyterian Hunger Program Justice Journal) Infographic on how climate change impacts hunger and poverty.

**International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science, and Technology for Development:** This major international scientific report, concludes that in order to feed 9 billion people in 2050, we urgently need to adopt the most effective and sustainable farming systems, and recommends a shift towards agro-ecology as a means of sustainably boosting food production and improving the situation of the poorest people and communities.

**Talensi Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) Project, Ghana, Social Return on Investment Report**, World Vision

**The Africa Climate Smart Agriculture Initiative**, World Vision

**Zero Hunger Challenge Resource Pack**, World Vision



# Action ideas and Resources for your region



## **These and many other organizations support the Churches' Food Week of Action!**



Agricultural Missions, Inc.

Alianza es Alianza para el Buen Vivir, la Paz y la Sustentabilidad

Canadian Foodgrains Bank

Christian Council of Nigeria

Church of the Brethren Office of Public Witness

Churchwork

Come to the Table, RAFI-USA

Commission on Justice, Peace and Creation of the National Council of Churches in India.

EcoC2S

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches In West Africa

Food, Faith, and Religious Leadership Initiative, Wake Forest University School of Divinity

Grassroots International

Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

National Farm Worker Ministry

Oikotree: Justice at the Heart of Faith

Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Seattle Tilth

The Abundant Table/Bartimaeus Cooperative Ministries

United Church of Christ (UCC), Justice and Witness Ministries

US Food Sovereignty Alliance (USFSA)

World Vision International



**World Council  
of Churches**

150 route de Ferney, P.O. Box 2100  
1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland  
<https://www.oikoumene.org>