

LFJ Resources

Available from the ICP office:

- Periodicals, newsletters, and books on food system, hunger, and agricultural issues
- U.S and Michigan Department of Agriculture publications
- Slide shows, films, and videos
- Relevant articles and pamphlets
- Cookbook featuring food grown by Michigan farmers (There is a Season)



To find out more about the Land, Food, and Justice Committee,
•join in our work,
•borrow a resource,
•arrange for a presentation or get help in planning a study session,
•make a financial contribution,
please call, write, or visit our office in the basement of Memorial Christian Church, corner of Hill and Tappan in Ann Arbor.

Interfaith Council
for Peace and Justice
730 Tappan
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(313)663-1870

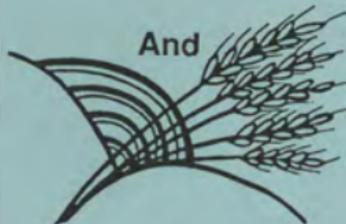
All people, urban and rural, must recognize that their lifestyles, purchasing habits and expectations contribute directly and indirectly to the concentration of land ownership and the consequent abuse of the land. We are called by God to change our consumption patterns and to act to effect justice in the land.

(from "Strangers and Guests",
Catholic bishops' statement on land issues, 1980)



*The closer we are to
the source of our food,
the more we will care
about how it is grown .*

**THE LAND,
FOOD,**



**JUSTICE
COMMITTEE**

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The Farm Crisis

Land

- Soil and water threatened by erosion and pollution.
- Urban development destroying prime farmland.
- Biological diversity replaced by unstable monocultures.
- Regenerative farming practices and principles of resource stewardship abandoned.
- Land ownership concentrated into fewer hands.

Food

- Local producers bypassed in favor of large agribusiness operations.
- Increased use of dangerous chemicals threatening food and water quality and safety.
- Increasing corporate control threatening consumer access to affordable food.
- Growing percentage of food cost going for processing, packaging, advertising, and transportation.

Justice

- Families losing their farms in record numbers.
- Black-owned farms disappearing at a rate ten times that of white-owned farms.
- Farm laborers working in substandard conditions for low wages and few benefits.
- Land ownership denied to beginning farmers because of huge capital investment requirements.
- Poor nations supplying rich nations with food while their own poor go hungry.
- Low farm commodity prices forcing farmers to give up farming or increase their production by acquiring more land, using marginal land, and abandoning good husbandry.
- Government payments to maintain farm income favoring large producers.
- U.S. export policy threatening farmers in other countries by lowering agricultural commodity prices below cost of production.



The Challenge

Our country draws both physical and spiritual nourishment from an agriculture based on small and moderate size farms. Many of those farms are disappearing while the rural communities they supported are dying. Displaced farmers are joining the growing ranks of urban job-seekers, giving up a productive and satisfying way of life and depriving society of the skill and wisdom learned over a lifetime on the land.

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The Land, Food, and Justice Committee supports a just and sustainable food system that will provide an abundant, safe, and affordable supply of food to all on this planet. Such a system would:

- provide just compensation to those who grow our food, both farmers and farmworkers.
- foster a more direct link between producers and consumers.
- favor a regionally-based food processing and distribution network.
- encourage all nations to be more self-sufficient in food production.
- recognize the importance of preserving farmland and open space near urban areas.
- use technologies that are not harmful to the future productivity of the land.
- maintain open access to farm ownership.
- have the capacity to respond to food emergencies anywhere in the world.



Programs and Projects of The Land, Food, and Justice Committee

- Presentations to concerned groups.
- Provide study materials and guides.
- Public tours of local farms.
- Promotion of direct marketing projects (e.g. farmers' markets and U-Pick farms).
- Encourage more seasonal eating and preservation of locally grown food.
- Work with groups involved in preserving agricultural land near urban areas.
- Support legislation and agricultural research that favors small and moderate size farms and sustainable agricultural practices.

