

Alternative Nobel Prize Goes to Cuban Group Promoting Organic Revolution

The Grupo de Agricultura Organica (GAO), the Cuban organic farming association, long at the forefront of the country's transition from industrial to organic agriculture, was named winner of the 1999 Right Livelihood Award, commonly known as the 'Alternative Nobel Prize.'

The Grupo de Agricultura Organica brings together farmers, farm managers, field experts, researchers, and government officials to develop and promote organic farming methods. Its aim is to convince Cuban farmers and policy-makers that the country's previous high-input farming model was too import-dependent and environmentally damaging to be sustainable, and that the organic alternative has the potential to achieve equally good yields.

"This award is truly an honor for Cuba, for GAO, and for all the farmers, researchers, and policy makers who have struggled to make organic farming work in Cuba," said Dr. Fernando Funes-Aguilar, President of GAO. "We hope that our efforts will demonstrate to other countries that conventional chemically-dependent agriculture is not the only way to feed a country."

GAO was founded in 1993 as the Asociación Cubana de Agricultura Organica (ACAO), but recently changed its name when it was legally incorporated as part of the Cuban Association of Agricultural and Forest Technicians (ACTAF). Over the

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Dr. Fernando Funes-Aguilar, president of GAO.

New Book Offers Fresh View of U.S. Human Rights

In October, Food First Books released *America Needs Human Rights*, a new anthology that takes a fresh look at hunger and poverty in America through the lens of human rights. The editors of the book conclude that current social policy in the United States violates universally recognized human rights standards, and call for a human rights-based movement to change these policies.

America may be in the midst of an economic boom, but millions of Americans are not sharing the benefits. The gap between rich and poor in Amer-

ica is approaching its worst point in fifty years and is the largest such gap among eighteen industrialized nations. Hunger affects an estimated thirty-six million Americans, at least fourteen million of whom are children. One in five children under the age of five lives in poverty — the highest rate among industrialized countries. It doesn't have to be that way in a nation like ours. *America Needs Human Rights* is a call to reverse those priorities.



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FOOD FIRST empowers citizens to address the root cause of hunger, poverty, and environmental decline. Our research and educational materials reveal how anti-democratic institutions and belief systems promote hunger and environmental destruction.

Cuban Organic Farming Exchange Program Announces National Meeting

Food First's Cuban Organic Farming Exchange Program announces the Organic Agriculture Group—ACTAF IV National Meeting to be held May 17–19, 2000. The Organic Agriculture Group of the Cuban Association of Agricultural and Forestry Technicians (ACTAF), in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP), are convening to examine the contribution of organic agriculture and agroecology to the transformation of Cuban agriculture towards sustainable rural development. All interested parties are invited to share a few days of reflection and exchange of experiences.

Topics of discussion include Cuba in the world of sustainable agriculture; support for sustainable rural development in Latin America and the Caribbean; integrated systems of livestock/crop production, the agroecological ideal; biodiversity and biotic regulation; and urban agriculture, among others.

Detailed information and corollary events are listed at <http://www.foodfirst.org/progs/global/cuba/oag2000.html>

Food First's Fifth Annual Organic Agriculture Delegation to Cuba February 20-29, 2000

This nine day delegation will give farmers, agronomists, and other agricultural professionals an opportunity to witness first-hand the remarkable innovations being employed in Cuban food production. Delegates will tour farms, urban gardens, research and development facilities, and resource and extension agencies. They will meet the farmers, scientists, and policy makers who have spawned this agroecological revolution, and hear about their challenges and victories.

The total cost, including round trip airfare from Cancún, a double occupancy room, visas, meals, program translation, health insurance, and reading materials is US \$1,400.

The deadline for application is December 31, 1999. For an application contact us at foodfirst@foodfirst.org or download it from the website at <http://www.foodfirst.org/progs/global/cuba>

The 1999 Delegation report is available at <http://www.homestead.com/cubatrip/>

New Book Offers Fresh View...

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In *America Needs Human Rights*, editors Anuradha Mittal and Peter Rosset argue that the wealth and resources clearly exist in the U.S. for every man, woman, and child to have access to housing, food, a decent education, health care, and a job that pays a living wage. Ms. Mittal, Policy Director at the Institute, explains that, "the very survival of our democratic system depends on breaking out of the narrow confines of conventional political views. We need to focus on public policy issues affecting hunger and poverty in America as social and economic human rights issues."

In the past, the U.S. government has applied the framework of human rights selectively to mostly Third World countries. "The time has come," said co-editor Rosset, who is the Executive Director of the Institute, "to take a hard look at our human rights record right here at home."

America Needs Human Rights (\$13.95 plus \$4.50 shipping and handling) can be ordered from Food First by calling (510) 654-4400 or faxing (510) 654-4551, or from our web site, www.foodfirst.org

Food First 25 Years in Review:

The middle years

The 1980s were a time of tremendous change. The U.S. government involvement in Central America, the fall of the Marcos regime in the Philippines, and the collapse of the Soviet Union affected not only the countries involved, but also the balance of power in the world.

Food First's 1981 publication of *Circle of Poison* contributed to the formation of the Pesticide Action Network, an organization that quickly grew into an international network of groups concerned about pesticide poisoning. Food First education and advocacy around Central America included the 1984 Central America Television Organizing Project that split off two years later as the lobbying organization, Neighbor to Neighbor. In 1986, the first Global Exchange store opened in a small garage front on 24th Street in San Francisco, and the following year the organization, Global Exchange, was started by Food First Staffers Kevin Danaher and Medea Benjamin. In 1989 Ballantine Books published Frances Moore Lappé's book, *Rediscovering America's Values*; shortly afterwards Frances moved back to the East Coast to form the Institute for the Arts of Democracy, now known as the Center for Living Democracy.

Food First publications—The 1980s

1981

Circle of Poison
David Weir and Mark Schapiro

Land Reform: Is It the Answer? A Venezuelan Peasant Speaks
An interview with Carlos Rojas by Frances Moore Lappé and Hannes Lorenzen with historical overview by Dr. Howard Handelman

Breaking the Circle of Poison: The Integrated Pest Management Revolution in Nicaragua
Sean Swezey and Ranier Daxl

1982

Development Debacle: The World Bank and the Philippines
Walden Bello, David Kinley, and Elaine Elinson

Nicaragua: What Difference Could a Revolution Make?
First edition
Joseph Collins with Frances Moore Lappé, Nick Allen, and Paul Rice

Now We Can Speak
Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins

Food First Comic
Leonard Rifas

1983

Trading the Future: Farm Exports and the Concentration of Economic Power in Our Food System
James Wessel with Mort Hantman

A Quiet Violence: View from a Bangladesh Village
Betsy Hartmann and James Boyce

1984

No Free Lunch: Food and Revolution in Cuba Today
First edition
Medea Benjamin, Joseph Collins, and Michael Scott

Food First Curriculum
Laurie Rubin

1985

Alternatives to the Peace Corps: Gaining Third World Experience
First edition

Central America: We Can Make A Difference
slide show

1986

World Hunger: Twelve Myths
First edition
Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins

Food Self-Sufficiency in North Korea
David Barkin

Tough Row to Hoe: Women in Nicaragua's Agricultural Cooperatives
Rural Women's Research Team of CIERA, Nicaragua

1987

Don't be Afraid Gringo: A Honduran Woman Speaks from the Heart—The Story of Elvia Alvarado
Translated and edited by Medea Benjamin



Medea Benjamin receives a BABRA award in 1988 for her translation of the book, *Don't Be Afraid, Gringo*.

The Challenge to End Hunger
video/slide show

Education for Action: Graduate Studies with a Focus on Social Change
First edition

Faces of War video

Betraying the National Interest
Frances Moore Lappé, Rachel Schurman, and Kevin Danaher

Exploding the Hunger Myths: A High School Curriculum
Sonja Williams

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Alternative Nobel Prize...

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past five years it has built up an impressive program of lobbying, training courses, workshops, documentation centers, demonstration farms, and exchange visits for farmers, and has held three international conferences.

"I hope this award will awaken the world to the amazing achievements Cuba has made in organic farming and food security," said Martin Bourque, Sustainable Agriculture Program Director of Food First/Institute for Food and Development Policy. Food First has had a scientific and technical exchange program with GAO for several years, and will co-sponsor GAO's Fourth National Encounter on Organic Agriculture in May 2000.

GAO is the first Cuban winner of the Right Livelihood Award. It shares the prize money of approximately US \$225,000 with Consolidation of the Amazon Region (COAMA), a Colombian network working for indigenous rights and biodiversity, and with Chilean-Spanish lawyer Juan Garces, for his untiring efforts to bring the former Chilean dictator, General Pinochet, to justice.

For more information on GAO or Food First, you can access the following website:

<http://www.foodfirst.org/progs/global/cuba>

Food First publications—The 1980s

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Help or Hindrance: United States Economic Aid in Central America

Kevin Danaher, Phillip Berryman, and Medea Benjamin

U.S.-Sponsored Low-Intensity Conflict in the Philippines

Walden Bello

1988

Family Farming: A New Economic Vision
Marty Strange

A Fate Worse Than Debt: The World Financial Crisis and the Poor
First edition
Susan George

The Missing Piece of the Population Puzzle (later published as Taking Population Seriously)

Frances Moore Lappé and Rachel Schurman

South Africa: A New U.S. Policy for the 1990s
Kevin Danaher

Elvia Alvarado video documentary

1989

Kerala: Radical Reform as Development in an Indian State
Richard W. Franke and Barbara H. Chasin

The Philippines: Fire on the Rim
Joseph Collins

Brave New Third World? Strategies for Survival in the Global Economy
Walden Bello

Rediscovering America's Values
Frances Moore Lappé

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