

# Food First NEWS & VIEWS

INSTITUTE FOR FOOD AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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## Food First's 2010 Annual Progress Report

2010 was challenging for so many of us. First the bad news and then the good.

Due to the world economic crisis, Food First, like so many organizations, faced serious budget shortfalls with grants down by 61% and individual donations, which can account for 80% of our income, down 17% in 2009-2010 compared to the previous fiscal year.

Sadly, we were forced to halt unfunded projects, lay off our analyst, and cut back remaining staff salaries by 15%. We have also rented out one third of one office space and hunkered down to weather the economic storm.

One “silver lining” is that we now share our office with the California Food and Justice Coalition (CFJC) and Corporate Accountability International. Now our building is a real beehive of activism! We got to work right away with CFJC to plan the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Food Security Conference, **Food Justice: Honoring our Roots, Growing the Movement**, to be held November 5-8, 2011 in Oakland, CA.

The next good news is that a talented team of 60 interns, research fellows, plus partner organizations and friends stepped in to contribute their time and talents to Food First. Rick Jonasse built a new website for our upcoming book *Food Movements Unite! Strategies to transform our food systems*, while videographer Bill Wroblewski produced insightful author interviews for the companion website. Leonor Hurtado stepped up her Spanish translations and took over a large chunk of fundraising duties. Fellow researchers Raj Patel, Jun Borrás, Kristen Lyons, Tanya Kerssen, Cydne Holt and Anim Steel gave interviews and wrote brilliant pieces for our backgrounders, blogs, newsletters and fact sheets. Literally dozens of interns dedicated hundreds of hours to the Oakland Food Policy Council and our Oakland partner, the HOPE Collaborative: conducting interviews, recording meetings, and generating information for committees and action teams.

Then, with seed money from The Sonoma County Community Foundation, fellow Zoe Brent started an exciting new program, **Food Sovereignty Tours**, in collaboration with [Global Exchange Reality Tours](#). Our goal is to expose the realities of our current global food system, to educate travelers about local and regional food sovereignty, and to help participants engage with the global movement for food sovereignty. Drawing upon Global Exchange's 22 years of experience conducting *Reality Tours* and on Food First's robust 35-year network of farmer organizations and food activists, we are deepening awareness and promoting positive change by bringing travelers and activists together on the front lines of the world's food struggles. We've taken groups to Cuba and Bolivia with new tours planned for the Basque Country, Argentina and France. Our February 2011 tour to Mali and Senegal, which included the World Social Forum in Dakar, was led by Food First's Tanya Kerssen.



World Social Forum, 2011 photo by Tanya Kerssen

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The Institute for Food and Development Policy - known as Food First - is a member-supported, nonprofit "peoples' think tank" and education-for-action center. Our work highlights the root causes and value-based solutions to hunger and poverty around the world, with a commitment to fighting racism and establishing food as a fundamental human right.

Tanya took over from founding tour director, Zoe Brent who has moved to Argentina. To learn more about tours and sign up for the tours e-newsletter, titled *Movements*, go to [www.foodsovereignty tours.org](http://www.foodsovereignty tours.org) or ask us for a brochure.

Despite financial pressures, Food First produced a set of first-rate backgrounders:

**Nanotechnology: Transforming food and the environment**

**Youth and Food Justice: Lessons from the Civil Rights Movement**

**Food Workers--Food Justice: Linking food, labor and immigrant rights**

We also published in several academic journals and books:

- *World Bank Proposal - From Threat to Opportunity? Problems with the Idea of a "Code of Conduct" for Land-Grabbing* by Saturnino Borrás Jr. and Jennifer Franco in *Yale Human Rights and Development Law Journal*, Vol. 13, pp. 507-523.

- *Grassroots Voices: Linking farmers' movements for advocacy and practice* by Eric Holt-Giménez, et. al. in *Journal of Peasant Studies*, vol 37, no. 1, January 2010, pp. 203-236.

- *From Food Crisis to Food Sovereignty: The Challenge of Social Movements in Agriculture and Food in Crisis: Conflict, Resistance, and Renewal* by Eric Holt-Giménez, *Monthly Review Press*, July-August 2009. pp. 142-156.

Our timely fact sheets on labor and land grabs are packed with information:

- *Immigrant Workers in the US Food System*
- *Harvesting Money—The Global Land Grab*

We also conducted research for upcoming publications including:

- *Food Movements Unite! Strategies to transform our food systems*, an edited Food First book and website ([www.foodmovementsunite.org](http://www.foodmovementsunite.org)) with contributions from over 20 food movement leaders on strategies for building a transformative, local-global food movement

- *Food Crises, Food Regimes and Food Movements: Rumbblings of Reform or Tides of Transformation?* Article in the *Journal of Peasant Studies*

- *Food Security, Food Justice, or Food Sovereignty? in Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class and Sustainability*, MIT Press

- *Reform or Transformation? The pivotal role of race and class in the US food movement in the Journal of Race and Ethnicity*

Our 2010 book, *Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature and Community*, was co-published with Canada's Fernwood Press. Edited by Hannah Wittman, Annette Desmarais and Nettie Wiebe, this book includes chapters from Food First authors, Eric Holt-Giménez, Annie Shattuck and

