

Food First NEWS & VIEWS

INSTITUTE FOR FOOD AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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Annual Report: Looking Back on 2014, The Year of Family Farming, Food Workers, and #BlackLivesMatter

Last year, the United Nations declared 2014 the International Year of Family Farming. We celebrated the welcome recognition of family farmers in our publications, videos, public presentations, and college courses, emphasizing their role in global food security and their contribution to “cooling the planet” with agroecological farming practices. But Food First also deepened the conversation with a special issue Backgrounder that analyzed the five principal global *threats* to the farmers who produce 70 percent of the world’s food.



Cuban farmer. May 2014 Cuba Food Sovereignty Tour

At Food First, we think it is important to highlight the people and the practices that are transforming our food system for the better. But if these practices are to become the norm rather than the alternative, it is just as important to denounce the injustices that keep people from feeding themselves; that prevent farmers from earning a dignified livelihood; and that cause hunger, injustice, and environmental destruction. We also believe in the power of social movements.

That’s why we also brought you news, information, research, and analysis of the activities of La Vía Campesina, Campesino a Campesino, Food Policy Councils, the Food Chain Workers Alliance, the US Food Sovereignty Alliance, the fight for a \$15 minimum wage, the growing movement for climate justice, the demand for GMO labeling, the striking Sakuma berry farm-workers in Washington state, the Africa-US Food Sovereignty Summit, and other important initiatives that are working to change the rules and the institutions that control our food system. We put you in touch with the growing movements for food justice and food sovereignty through our publications, presentations, videos, and Food Sovereignty Tours.

Because Food First’s mission is to end the injustices that cause hunger, we work on the ground with underserved communities most negatively impacted by the global food regime. Our work with the We Are the Solution Campaign in West Africa supports women farmers in the development of farmer to farmer learning materials for agroecology to counter the New Green Revolution in Africa; and our East Bay Urban Farmer Field Schools partner with urban farmers to develop sustainable urban agriculture of, by and for underserved communities.

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INSTITUTE FOR FOOD AND
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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.

Our deep involvement with social movements around the world—and with communities of color in the US—led us to launch a new crosscutting focus for 2015: *Dismantling Racism in the Food System*. Tragic injustices such as the death of Black teenager Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO, reaffirmed our belief that we must create a food system—and a food *movement*—in which Black Lives Matter. We are committed to ending institutional, systemic, and individual acts of racism and other forms of oppression as they appear in the food system and within the food movement itself. Not only are we committed to ending present-day oppression, we realize that we must also work through historical legacies of trauma, internalized oppression, and white privilege.

This year is our 40th anniversary. We've seen many peoples' victories over the years from halting the Doha rounds of the World Trade Organization to the distribution of over one billion acres of land to landless workers in Brazil and the proliferation of farmers markets and CSAs in the US. We've been privileged to be a part of many of these struggles and are honored that you have turned to Food First for information and analysis of how people are transforming the food system and ending hunger. This Annual Report outlines the many accomplishments we were able to achieve in 2014 with your support and solidarity. Thank you. We look forward to another exciting and hopeful year!



Eric Holt-Giménez
Executive Director

Our Programmatic Work in 2014

RESEARCH FOR ACTION

The goal of Food First's research work area is to generate information and analysis for food sovereignty and food justice—locally and globally. We also carry out Participatory Action Research with community organizations to help them generate their own information and analyses. Our research brings the perspective of community-based struggles to broader development debates. The core of Food First's long-time work, our research and analysis is disseminated through a variety of research [publications](#)—including Backgrounders, Policy Briefs, Issue Briefs, academic publications, and books—which help diverse audiences to understand the complex dynamics of our global food system and engage in informed activism.

In June 2014, Food First, in collaboration with Restaurant Opportunities Center and Food Chain Workers Alliance, completed a landmark study on the Food Insecurity of Restaurant Workers. A Participatory Action Research project, the study was carried out by restaurant workers themselves, in the Bay Area and New York City, to assess their own working conditions and food security. The report found, for instance, that “twice as many restaurant workers reported being food insecure compared to the overall US population” and made policy recommendations for advancing justice for food workers. Our most important ongoing research initiative is the [Land & Sovereignty in the Americas \(LSA\) Activist-Researcher Collective](#) coordinated by Food First fellow Zoe Brent. Since its launch in 2012, the LSA collective has grown to include over 50 members from North America and Latin America, who are linked digitally by a list serve

dedicated to sharing information about land and sovereignty struggles throughout the region. In 2014, the Collective held two web conferences where scholars and activists had the opportunity to exchange ideas. In May 2014, the LSA Collective convened an in-person meeting in Brasilia, where it became resoundingly clear, says Zoe, “that the pressures driving agrarian transformations throughout the Americas are of great concern to social movements, NGOs, and researchers, making networks like the Land and Sovereignty Collective ever more relevant.”

The following is a list of Food First’s research publications in 2014:

Backgrounders:

- [“Agroecology Saves the Farm \(Where Fair Trade Failed\): Surviving the coffee crisis in Costa Rica”](#) by Nicholas Babin, Winter 2014-15.
- [“Brackish Waters and Salted Lands: The social cost of shrimp in Bangladesh”](#) by Jason Cons and Kasia Paprocki, Fall 2014.
- [“Food Sovereignty Tours: Can ‘alternative tourism’ contribute to food sovereignty?”](#) by Katie Brimm, Tanya Kerssen, and Zoe Brent, Summer 2014.
- [“This Land is Whose Land? Dispossession, resistance and reform in the United States”](#) by Eric Holt-Giménez, Spring 2014.
- [“Five Global Threats to the Survival of Family Farms in the International Year of Family Farming”](#) by Tanya M. Kerssen, Winter 2013-14.

Policy Briefs:

- [“Food Insecurity of Restaurant Workers,”](#) an action-research report by Food First, Restaurant

Opportunities Center (ROC), and Food Chain Workers Alliance, July 2014.

Land & Sovereignty in the Americas Issue Briefs:

- [“Land and Resource Grabs in the United States: Five sites of struggle and potential transformation”](#) by Zoe Brent and Tanya Kerssen, Land & Sovereignty Brief No. 7, October 2014.
- [“Land Conflicts and the Criminalization of Peasant Movements in Paraguay”](#) by FIAN International and La Vía Campesina, Land & Sovereignty Brief No. 6, June 2014.
- [“Farmland Meets Finance: Is land the new economic bubble?”](#) by Madeleine Fairbairn, Land & Sovereignty Brief No. 5, May 2014.

Academic publications:

- “No Time to Lose Common Ground: Why land matters in nutrition debates” by Zoe Brent, Christina Schiavoni, and Alberto Alonso-Fradejas, *Development* 57: 2, 2014.
- “Critical Perspectives on Food Sovereignty” by Amita Baviskar, Deniz Kandiyoti, Eric Holt-Giménez, James C. Scott, Marc Edelman, Saturnino M. Borrás, Tony Weis and Wendy Wolford, *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 41:6, 2014.
- “Regional Policy Frameworks of Social Solidarity Economy in South America” by Zoe Brent and Marcelo Saguier, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) Occasional Paper 6, 2014.

EDUCATION FOR CHANGE

Executive Director Eric Holt-Giménez and Food First researchers regularly teach courses and seminars, give talks, and participate



Food First fellow and Land & Sovereignty Collective coordinator Zoe Brent (L) and Ruth Hall receiving MST flags at a visit to a land occupation site outside Brasilia. Photo by Alberto Alonso Fradejas.

in public discussions everywhere from university classrooms and international conferences to farms and community centers. Our educational travel program Food Sovereignty Tours invites members of the general public to travel with our experts and social movement partners to engage with the global movement for food sovereignty. In 2014, Food First spoke at the invitation of universities, community organizations, and conferences on a wide range of topics. Additionally, Food First fellow Leonor Hurtado produced 21 short videos educating the public about agroecology, urban agriculture, food policy councils, family farming, dismantling racism in the food system, and the Occupy the Farm movement. She also produced a moving mini-documentary honoring Marilyn Borchardt, Food First’s beloved Development Director who retired in 2014 after 29 years of service.

The following is a summary of our educational activities in 2014.



Eric Holt-Giménez at the Africa-US Food Sovereignty Strategy Summit in Seattle, WA, October 2014. Photo by Alex Garland Photography

Food First lecture circuit:

- UC Berkeley
- Berkeley City College
- UC Santa Cruz
- Stanford University
- Marylhurst University, Oregon
- Trent University's Champlain College, Ontario, Canada
- University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Canada
- University of Antioquia, Medellín, Colombia
- Rafael Landívar University, Guatemala City
- University of Gastronomic Sciences, Turin, Italy
- University of Cordoba, Cordoba, Spain

To invite Eric Holt-Giménez to speak at an upcoming event at your university or organization, contact us at info@foodfirst.org or call (510) 654-4400.

Keynotes and presentations:

- Agrarian Trust, Berkeley, CA
- Food Security Working Group, Municipality of La Paz, Bolivia
- Africa-US Food Sovereignty Summit, Seattle, WA
- DeGrowth Forum, Leipzig, Germany

- Feed the World Debate, Berkeley
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) press conference, Washington DC
- EatReal Symposium at Middlebury College, VT
- Farm to Every Fork, Sacramento, CA
- Lectio magistralis at SlowFood Terra Madre Conference, Turin, Italy
- California Adaptation Forum, Sacramento, CA
- Oakland Food Policy Council 5th Anniversary, Oakland, CA
- Latin American Scientific Society on Agroecology, Berkeley, CA
- Where There be Dragons student groups, La Paz, Bolivia
- National Heirloom Exposition, Santa Rosa, CA
- Alberto Lovera Bolivarian Circle delegation, La Paz, Bolivia

Courses:

- Community-Based Food Systems (2 online courses), Village Earth, accredited by Colorado State University & Duke University
- Agroecology and Social Movements, Antioquia University, Medellín, Colombia, PhD Program in Agroecology
- Food Systems and Social Movements (4 MA courses), University of Gastronomic Sciences, Turin, Italy

E-Newsletters:

- **People Putting Food First:** News, analysis, and updates from the Food First team (monthly) – 1,020 new subscribers in 2014 (10% increase)
- **Movements:** Newsletter of Food Sovereignty Tours (monthly) – 677 new subscribers in 2014 (45% increase)
- **Food Workers-Food Justice:** Workplace news and analysis from farm to fork (bimonthly) 717 new subscribers in 2014 (37% increase)

Monthly events at La Peña:

Once a month, Food First invites the public to a free event at La Peña Cultural Center in Berkeley, CA, to share food, screen important films, and discuss timely food system issues with our local community of activists, experts, and scholars.

In 2014, our La Peña events included: Real Food Film Festival screening with Anna Lappé; *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies* book release with author Seth Holmes; panel discussion on land access in the United States with Land & Sovereignty Collective Coordinator Zoe Brent; *Hunger in the Valley of Plenty* screening with filmmaker Scott Anger; presentation on quinoa by research coordinator Tanya Kerksen; and a panel on young women in the food system presented by our Fall 2014 interns.

Find out about our next Third Wednesday event by visiting our events calendar or signing up for our e-newsletters at www.foodfirst.org.

Media appearances:

Food First researchers, fellows, and board members are frequently contacted to educate the media about key food system issues. Among our media highlights, Civil Eats listed Food First as one of a number of groups who can help you get involved in changing the food system. The Food First book *Grabbing Power: The new struggles for land, food and democracy in Northern Honduras* by Tanya Kerksen made Food Tank's list of 18 summer "must reads." In addition, Food First was interviewed or quoted in the following media:

- Al Jazeera America
- Alternet
- CCTV America
- Civil Eats

- Common Dreams
- Counterpunch
- CyperStationUSA.com
- Food Tank
- Forbes
- Grist
- Huffington Post
- Humanosphere
- Ignite
- James Beard Foundation
- KKFI Community Radio
- KPFA Radio
- Scope
- Take Part
- TeleSUR English
- The Daily Californian
- The Nation
- Truthout
- Uprising radio
- Vermont Public Radio
- Vice Magazine
- V.v Magazine
- Zester Daily

Food Sovereignty Tours Delegations (Fiscal Year 2013-14):

- South Korea: Food, Land, and Democracy
- Food Justice in California: Basque Farmers' Union in the Bay Area
- Italy: Food Sovereignty in Piedmont (Terra Madre delegation)
- Cuba: Organic Revolution and Evolution (two tours)
- Bolivia: Llamas, Quinoa, and Andean Food Sovereignty
- Basque Country: Food Sovereignty and Cooperative Production
- Mexico: Celebrating Guelagueta and Food Sovereignty in Oaxaca

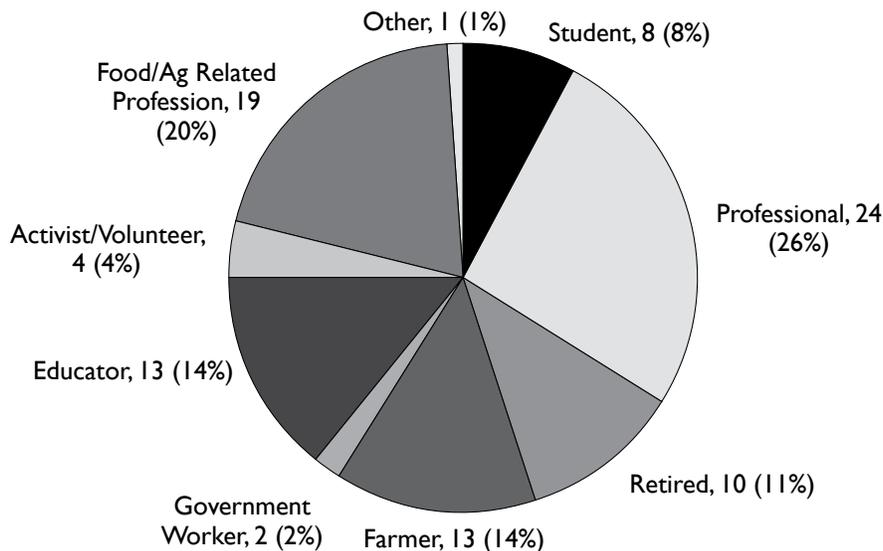
Food Sovereignty Tours: Building the global food movement

This year marks the 5th year of Food First's educational travel program [Food Sovereignty Tours](#) that connects participants with the movements, farmers, and organizations working to transform our global food system. In the last fiscal year, the program took a **record 94 participants** to international destinations, bringing our total Food Sovereignty Tours alumni to over 300 people. Food Sovereignty Tours brought delegates to important academic and cultural gatherings: the Terra Madre Conference in Italy; the International Conference on Organic Agriculture and Sustainable Farming in Cuba; and the Guelagueta Festival in Oaxaca, Mexico. We also hosted 13 farmers from the Basque Farmer's Union for a Food Justice Tour of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Additionally, program staff co-authored the Backgrounder "Food Sovereignty Tours: Can alternative tourism contribute to food sovereignty?" (Summer 2014) and program director Katie Brimm presented on a panel on ethical tourism at La Peña Cultural Center. Finally, our first-ever fundraising campaign for the Food Sovereignty Tours Scholarship Program raised over \$17,000 from local events, alumni donations, member support, and grants. To date, almost \$8,000 of this fund has been disbursed, making it possible for 13 (and counting!) deserving food activists, youth, and farmers to travel to international destinations with Food First. The Scholarship Program is a cornerstone of our mission of making transformative travel experiences accessible to those most affected by food system injustice.

Food Sovereignty Tours would not be possible without our hardworking and passionate international team of Tour Coordinators, editors and interns, and partner organizations: Viaggi Solidali, the Korean Women Peasant's Association and O'ngo Food Communications, EHNE-Bizkaia/ Basque Farmers' Union, La Paz on Foot, Amistur, Cross Cultural Journeys, Altruistas, and many others.

Food Sovereignty Tours Participants by Occupation, FY 2013-2014



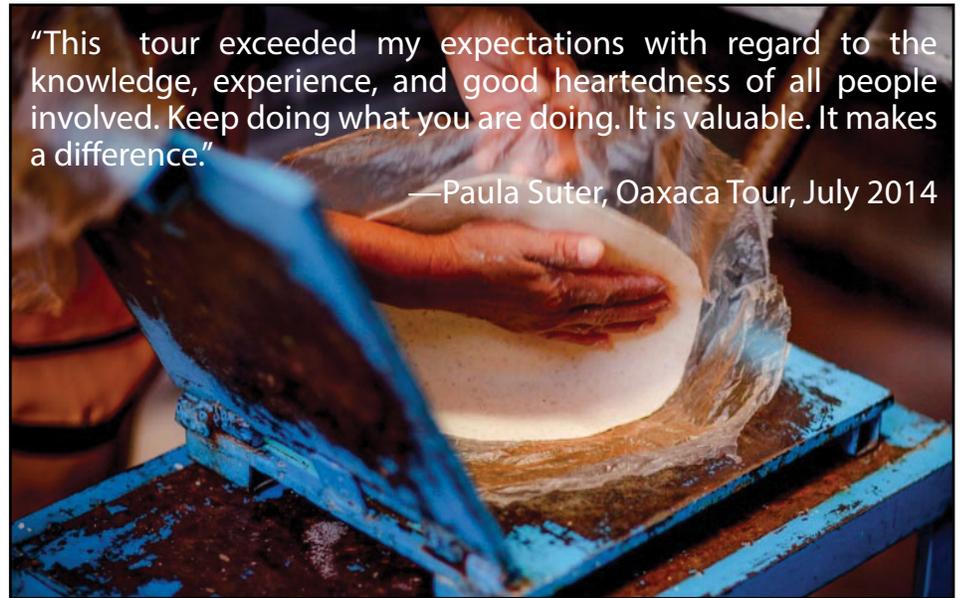
"This place and la gente vasca touched me deeply. I return home asking myself: what does it take, what do we need to do, to create a culture of cooperation and community that leads to true independence and freedom?"

--Hank Herrera, Basque Country Tour, March 2014

PROJECTS FOR TRANSFORMATION

Throughout 2014, Food First was involved in [on-the-ground action](#) to build food sovereignty from West Africa to Mexico and here at home in the San Francisco Bay Area. Eric Holt-Giménez travelled to Burkina Faso to meet with partners from Groundswell International and visit farmer-to-farmer agroecology projects as part of the “We are the Solution” campaign for African family farming. Food First produced and translated agroecological training materials for the campaign, which are available for free [download](#) on the Food First website.

In the East Bay, agroecological methodologies are also being applied through our [East Bay Urban Farmer Field Schools \(EBUFFS\) project](#), a monthly training space for urban farmers. At EBUFFS’ first meeting in January 2014, members developed a list of core principles, including a commitment to anti-racism and anti-oppression, which have guided the group. In 2014, the project held 14 workshops hosted by six different Bay Area organizations on the following topics: fruit tree pruning and planting; crop planning; fertigation and fertilization;



“This tour exceeded my expectations with regard to the knowledge, experience, and good heartedness of all people involved. Keep doing what you are doing. It is valuable. It makes a difference.”

—Paula Suter, Oaxaca Tour, July 2014

Making tortillas on the 2014 Oaxaca Food Sovereignty Tour. Photo by Paula Suter

propagation and cutting; square foot gardening; water conservation; cover crops; and composting.

In Mexico, our [Farmer-Led Pollinator Restoration Project](#)—in partnership with the Indigenous Farmers Agroecology Network of Mexico (RICDA)—farmers are implementing agroecological principles to restore the biodiversity needed to attract and sustain the honeybee population that is so crucial to food production. In 2014, 150 farming families participated in this project on more than 300 acres of farmland, and plans are underway

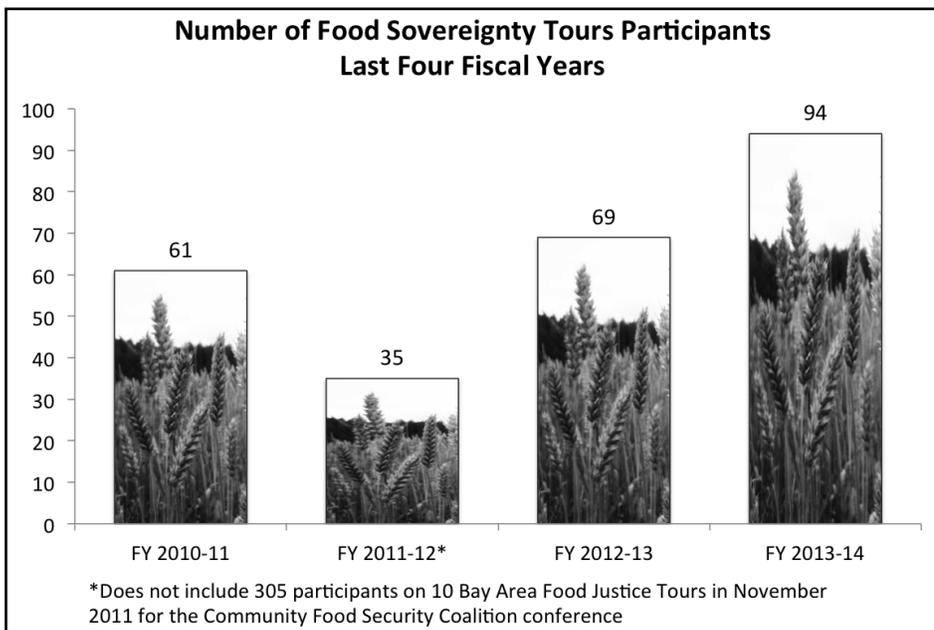
to share this information across the region with educational materials, farmer-to-farmer training, and local courses.

Finally, Food First raised funds for farmers suffering from drought and conflict in Gao, Mali, in collaboration with our NGO partner BERADA. In 2014, [the project](#) provided fishing nets for farmers and helped them apply fish waste on rice crops on the shores of the Niger River. One of the farmer-fishers cited a Malian Songhoy proverb: “If you put a fishing net in the hands of a *sorko* (fisher), he has his survival kit and can take his life into his own hands.” Additionally, the Chiwara water pumps purchased with project funds allowed the local women farmers’ organization to grow vegetables year-round, thus providing a surplus for sale in the Gao market and increasing family income.

2013-2014 Financials

Starting Fiscal Year 2013-2014 with assets from the previous fiscal year, we were in a good position financially. While the revenue in Fiscal Year 2013-2014 was lower than the expenses, our carryover from the previous year allowed us to operate within budget. Our revenue

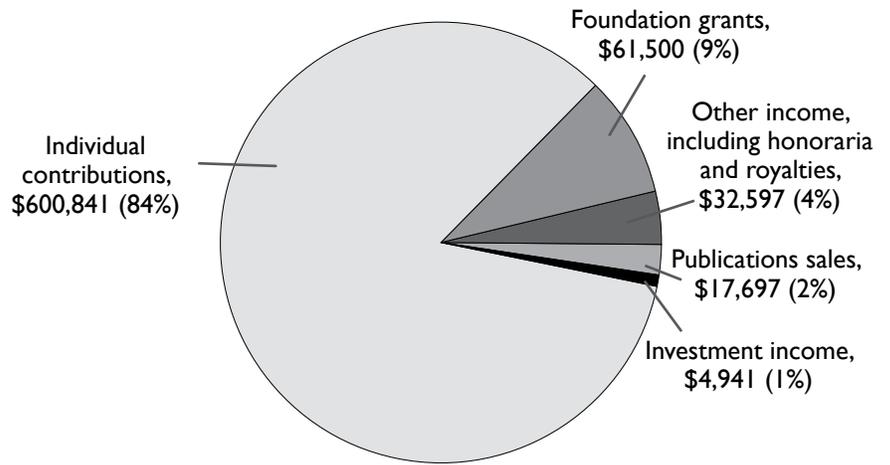
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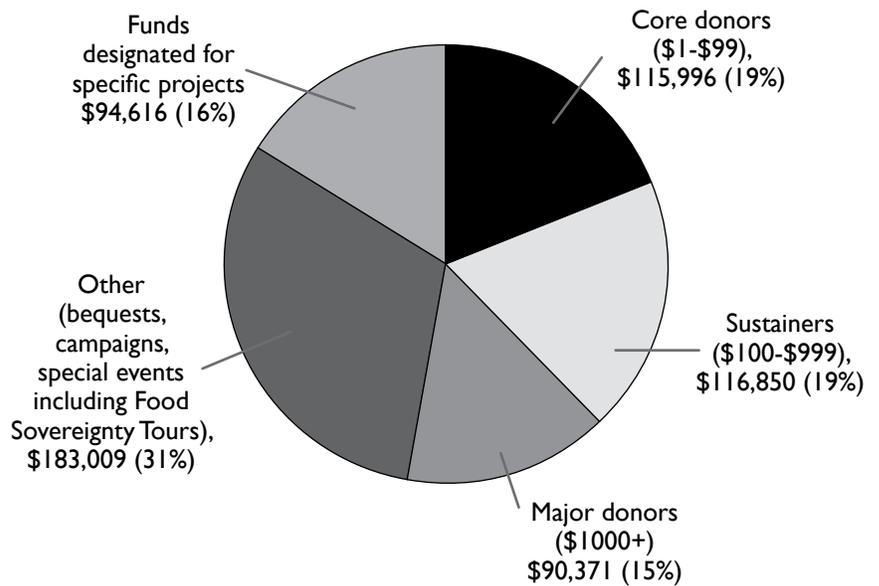
still comes predominantly from individual contributions, making up **84% of our total revenue** in Fiscal Year 2013-2014. This 84% includes revenue from the Food Sovereignty Tours program (tour fees), but even removing those program-specific funds, we still count on individual contributions for roughly 60% of our overall revenue. We are truly a people's think tank, funded by your contributions.

Our expenses were spent largely (75%) on our programmatic work, consisting of Research (20% of overall expenses), Education (38%), and Projects (17%). The breakdown of the programmatic work areas can be seen in the chart below. Again, our Food Sovereignty Tours program—which disburses payments to our many international partners for expenses like lodging, food, transportation, and speaker honoraria—is included under Education, which increases expenses in that area. While “Membership and Development” makes up 20% of the total budget, it is important to note that beyond fundraising, this includes time and resources invested in vital communications work to promote Food First events and disseminate publications so that they may reach a broad audience.

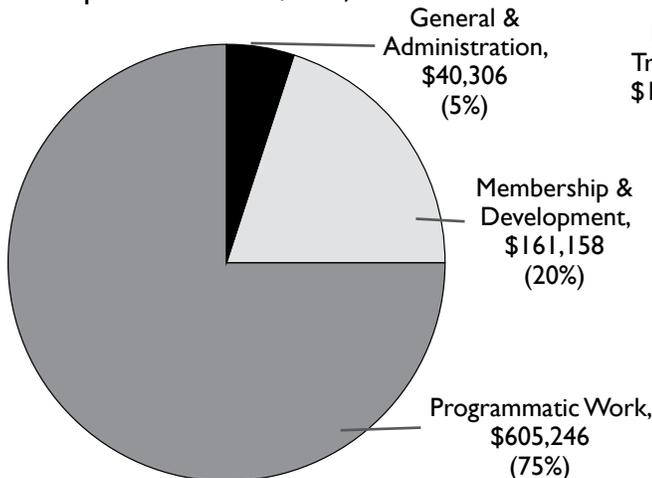
Revenue Total, FY 2013-2014: \$717,576



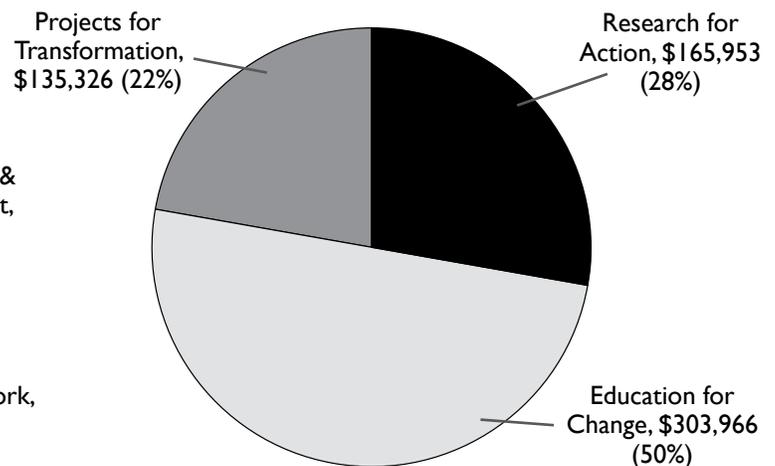
Individual Contributions by Source



Expenses Total: \$806,709



Programmatic Expenses Breakdown by Work Area



Letter from the Board President

Looking back on all of our accomplishments during 2014, I could not be more proud of the hard work of the staff, interns, volunteers, fellows, and board of Food First. The work we do truly takes a community and your generous contributions to our modest budget. This past year, we published groundbreaking research on land grabs throughout the Americas, sent delegates on Food Sovereignty Tours to six countries, and provided material support for farmers in Mali and Mexico. Our work at home has gotten stronger, too: when shots rang out and decisions were made about police killings of young Black men in the US, Food First rose to the occasion, connecting violence, structural racism, and food, proposing a new focus area on dismantling racism in the food system. Speaking on behalf of a board composed predominantly of people of color, I can say that we fully believe Food First's voice is needed in this work. So come with us, as we enter our 40th year with new energy, new projects, and new ideas. Food First exists because of your interest and support of our work in partnership with the communities we serve locally and globally. Thank you.



Joyce E. King

So many ways to give...

- Food First accepts tax-deductible contributions in cash, check, credit and debit card, stock, and electronic fund transfer. You can give in person, over the phone, through the mail, or online.
- Become a monthly sustainer so we can count on your support throughout the year!
- Name Food First in your will, IRA, or life insurance policy to leave a living legacy for future generations fighting for a fair food system.
- Donate real estate, set up a pooled income fund, or create a charitable remainder trust for your investments. Check with your tax and legal advisors to determine what is best for your situation.
- Throw us a 40th birthday party! To find out how, visit: www.foodfirst.org/food-first-40th-birthday/
- Help a young activist or farmer connect with the global food sovereignty movement by supporting the Food Sovereignty Tours Scholarship Fund. www.foodfirst.org/tours/scholarships/food-sovereignty-tours-scholarship-fund/
- Have other kinds of gifts you can share? Check out our opportunities to intern and volunteer with Food First.
- Visit us online at www.foodfirst.org or call us at (510) 654-4400, ext. 221. Whatever way you can give, THANK YOU.

THANK YOU...

- To our stellar interns who thrill us with their passion for our mission.
- To our fellows who contribute valuable expertise to keep us growing.
- To our volunteers and contributors who devote their gifts so generously.
- To our tour coordinators who fearlessly lead our global delegations.
- To our board whose guidance and vision keep us motivated.
- To our readers who give our words the chance to change the world.
- To our donors who invest in ending the injustices that cause hunger.
- To the dedicated foundations that support food justice and food sovereignty.
- To the movements that struggle every day for the right to food, land, and dignity.

FOOD Sovereignty TOURS

Occupying Paradise: Food Justice & Aloha 'Aina in Hawai'i, Aug. 14-22, 2015
www.foodfirst.org/hawaii2015/

Chiapas, Mexico: Indigenous Food & Water Sovereignty, Oct. 17-27, 2015
www.foodfirst.org/chiapas-2015/

Basque Country: Food Sovereignty, Cooperative Production & the Solidarity Economy, Sept. 25-Oct. 4, 2015 www.foodfirst.org/basque-country-2015/



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