

ACTIONS FROM WORKSHOP

WORKSHOP TITLE:

Food, Diversity, Life: rooting our Daily Bread in a healthy environment

Suggestions from Workshop Leader, Patrick Mulvany, and Facilitator, Peter Hickey

As we discussed in the workshop, the challenges, as Pope Francis highlights in Laudato Si, of making the transformative changes needed to improve our food system and sustain the planet, are considerable. And it will be mainly achieved through the efforts of the small-scale food providers lauded by Pope Francis, the modern-day peasants who currently feed 70% of the world's peoples, that this will be achieved. Yet, as we reflected, the challenge is also to break the chains that constrain consumer choice and lock larger-scale producers into unsustainable production systems dependent on proprietary seeds and technologies and crippling contracts. Busting the myth of the dominant but misleading "Feed the World" narrative about food security being provided by industrial agriculture is as important as nurturing the localised food systems supplied by the world's main food providers. It is they, who, in the framework of food sovereignty, actually nourish most people in the world and know how to maintain the health of our planet.

The food sovereignty movement is in the vanguard of making the necessary changes. The seventh International Conference of La Via Campesina - the International Peasant Movement - ended with the adoption of the "Euskal Herria Declaration - We feed our peoples and build the movement to change the world". It's a dynamic and forward looking document.

www.viacampesina.org/en/viith-international-conference-la-via-campesina-euskal-herria-declaration/

Suggestions emerging from discussions in the workshop sessions

Some shared concerns were initially raised among the group regarding 'Brexit' as well as the supermarkets which recently withdrew from 'Fair-trade'. We began to explore how we might combat these and other issues related to food production and distribution, including supporting localised (and biodiverse) food systems. We looked at challenging investment and divestment as well as pension providers. A positive step that we might make as individuals could be getting involved in community gardens, farmers markets and to reinvest in

community generally. 'The community land trust' model was discussed and the positive impact these are already having. As well as action at a local level, we also felt it was important to take part in lobbying and to channel our voices through mediums such as "38". We felt a sense of conveying a sense of urgency regarding the situation was important