



USFSA Honors OFRANEH and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives

Stephen Bartlett, Agricultural Missions



Miriam Miranda (OFRANEH) with Cornelius Blanding.
Thanks to Grassroots International for photos.

wage reforms. Rising sea levels and storm surges related to climate change also threaten the vulnerable and increasingly eroded beachfront communities inhabited for the past two centuries by the Garifuna. The corporate tourist industries covet and actively grab these lands. On the positive side, the recovery of 2,500 acres from narco-traffickers in Vallecito, Colon exemplifies successful food sovereignty efforts for the impoverished family farmers and indigenous peoples.

Cornelius Blanding accepted the prize for the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, which has fought to help African American farmers regain and retain access to land and to expand markets for produce, herbs, nuts, lumber and other crops. According to the USDA agricultural census, Black farmers in the US owned 925,000 farms in 1920, but an ominously low 18,000 farms in 1992. Current numbers are still below 1 percent. Due to the Federation's history of civil rights and farmer advocacy, tying the message of 'Black Lives Matter' with 'Black Land Matters'



Members and guests of the USFSA filled Trinity Methodist Church.

On October 14 the US Food Sovereignty Alliance awarded the 2015 Food Sovereignty Prize to two organizations whose work lifts up civil rights and land access rights for Black farmers. The Des Moines' Trinity United Methodist Church, site of the prize ceremony, has long supported progressive causes (including Black Panther breakfasts). Members and staff from the church, WILPF-Des Moines and Iowa CCI offered a warm welcome to everyone.

Land access and land tenancy are at the root of problems in agriculture today, particularly for Indigenous and Black farmers, and were the key focus for the honorees: the Afro-Indigenous Garifuna people of Honduras, represented by the National Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras, or OFRANEH; and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, based in Atlanta.

Accepting the prize for OFRANEH was Miriam Miranda. The Garifuna are working to regain territorial land rights, efforts made more difficult since the 2009 coup d'état by an oligarchy eager to roll back agrarian and minimum



Petrus Brink, Right to Agrarian Reform for Food Sovereignty Campaign South Africa, speaks on farmworker struggles at home.

was an easy progression, but US markets and food and agriculture policies must reflect that.

These organizations stress land ownership to help counter the acceleration of extractive industries and the consequential climate change hastening humanity's meltdown. (To clarify, the Garifuna seek collective or territorial ownership, but US farmers typically own land as individuals or family members.) Inequality is a man-made disease that creates the conditions for war, violence and climate chaos, but the USFSA will continue to fight for equitable access to clean air, water, land and opportunity.

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Family Farm Agenda December 2015

The Family Farm Agenda is published three times annually by the National Family Farm Coalition, a nonprofit providing a voice for grassroots groups on farm, food, trade and rural economic issues to ensure fair prices for family farmers and fishers, safe and healthy food, and vibrant, environmentally sound rural communities here and around the world.

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Fishermen Tell the Council: Junk It

Mike Crowe, A Fisherman's Voice (Editor)

The September 30 final vote on a compromised groundfish Amendment 18, four years in the making, was a particularly desperate affair. The audio of this session is preserved for posterity on New England Fishery Management Council's [website](#). From extended efforts to define the meaning of "shelve" to industry players aligning with NGO frontmen, it was a 20-year low. Curiously, the October 2014 "cod emergency action" had some of the same management players on the field who worked the A18 passage.

Attempts by fishermen and Who Fishes Matters representatives to level the playing field may not trump the status quo, but highlighting management makes sense. **A18 began as a means to limit consolidation in the ground fishing industry, and ended with the consolidators benefitting.** Holding permits and quota is an investment that will gush profits as stocks continue to recover, demand rises, competition tightens and the industry becomes a takeover target.

Consolidation in the private sector is not new. The 1890 Sherman Anti-Trust Act, the "competition law," is testament. If unfairly driving out competition in the private sector is illegal, how could it not be so for a public and natural resource?

Deregulations will continue if the Trans Pacific Partnership wins in Congress. This year Thai Union bought Bumble Bee Seafoods, the owner of Stinson's Sardine Cannery in Prospect Harbor, Maine until five years ago. With sales of \$3 billion in 2014, Thai Union projects 2020 sales to top \$8 billion. Local food sources and food security may be the canary in the coalmine for national food security.

Opacity is the council's malady. Member selection is in the political abstraction of the Department of Commerce and governors offices. Overriding council members are NMFS managers who hold their cue cards close to the vest. Backing up federal management are federal scientists. The scientific method may hold sway in the laboratory, but politics can warp method under career pressure. National Marine Fisheries Service has long been living under the threat of environmental non-government organization (ENGO) lawsuits. At the same time the council has seated several members funded by ENGOs with an 'end fishing' agenda. If it's not broke, don't fix it. If it can't be fixed, junk it.

NAMA's press advisory may be read at <http://bit.ly/1NfdpMY>



NAMA's 'meme' depicts the fishermen exiting A18 talks

If you're looking for thoughtful holiday gifts,

please visit our Member Holiday Market Pages at <http://tinyurl.com/pp9rlrv>.

To support NFFC's work, consider a donation through

<https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/1910>

or the Combined Federal Campaign account (16371).

Thanks for all your support, and happy holidays!

The TPP is a Great Deal! (Just Like My Bridge in Brooklyn)

Jim Goodman, Family Farm Defenders

The TPP is a “trade agreement” between 12 Asia Pacific region nations. It’s billed as a “free trade” agreement but has little to do with trade.

It seems we have no shortage of goods imported from TPP countries—electronics from Korea, Nike shoes from Vietnam—with plenty of trade happening already.

Trade is good, but “free trade” doesn’t work for farmers or workers or most everyone else. Free trade does, however, work well for corporations that have over 600 advisers to the TPP negotiations—we have no access to the negotiations, corporations have plenty.

In farm country we are told these trade deals will allow us to export more goods and in so doing, increase our profits. I have farmed for a good many years and have, over the course of that time, known many farmers, most of them who farm on a much larger scale than me. I have yet to meet a farmer who directly exports abroad, or even one who has the volume of product or operational infrastructure to do so.

Most Americans support country of origin food labels (COOL), but that right has been compromised by the World Trade Organization and Congress, and TPP will not restore it. Then there is the 800 pound gorilla of TPP and TTIP, the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) provision.

Under ISDS the right of an investor to make a profit could not be restricted. If countries involved in the trade deal were to enact environmental protection laws, food labeling laws, laws guaranteeing access to lower-cost generic drugs, they can be sued by corporations who feel these laws have restricted their potential profits.

In effect, a US corporation could, through a foreign subsidiary, sue the US government, but it would not have to do so in domestic courts. The merit of the lawsuit would be judged by a panel of arbitrators, lawyers, who could be representatives of the plaintiff! So much for democracy.

As a farmer, who, as President Obama says, will be one of the prime beneficiaries of these new free trade deals, I say, ‘No, I will not benefit, nor will anyone else save those corporate entities who have already benefited too much from the income disparity, the environmental destruction and the idea that economic growth is all that matters.’

Hmong Farmers Find New Markets and New Allies

Interview with Chukou Thao, National Hmong American Farmers

Although Hmong farmers have lived in the US for 30-plus years, finding markets for their products has often been difficult and elusive. After struggling with language and cultural challenges, limited access to land and credit, and the ongoing California drought, they seem to have finally turned the proverbial corner.

Sugar cane—culturally important for making wine, especially for the Hmong New Year—has put them on the map and opened doors nationally. This fall, NHAF sold 20 tons (40,000 lbs.) of sugar cane from six growers to one California rum distiller. Other cane has been shipped to San Francisco, along with their key limes, for a start-up juice company, and to Kodiak, Alaska, which also receives 15-25 boxes of different Asian crops every week. New York is a test market for the sugar cane, as it is popular among specialty restaurants and distillers.

In California, sugar cane takes about a year to mature; farmers bury a stalk, allowing shoots to grow until harvest, usually mid November. It is a hardy crop but must be protected from frost. The harvest season usually lasts only one and a half to two months, so having contracts in place with a few outlets is extremely helpful.

Chukou Thao, NHAF's executive director, is also discussing the sale of sugar cane at the Crescent City Farmers Market in New Orleans through Ben Burkett, which would benefit both NHAF and MAC (Mississippi Association of Cooperatives) farmers. Other positives: NHAF’s farm to school program appears to be in place for several years, and Asian American farmers are beginning to meet and strategize in the Oakland area. NHAF received \$200,000 from Feed the Hungry Foundation, based in (cont. page 5)



Jim Goodman and allies face arrest from security police at the Japanese Embassy in DC



NHAF’s California sugar cane.
Photo by Jon Thao

Ohioans Fight for Local Foods, Clean Water and COOL

Mardy Townsend, Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake Counties Farmers Union

Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake Counties Farmers Union continues to work on a mix of projects. We followed the debate around COOL (country of origin labeling) closely as several members grow for local markets, so expanding local food and labeling all food is very important to us; *ditto for fast track, TPP, and trade—we at the grassroots want to protect our way of life and businesses.* We appreciate National Farmers Union's support for COOL but we are not enthused about their promotion of voluntary COOL.

AGLFU provided seed money and leadership for the new Ashtabula Local Food Council. The local food movement has been strong around Cleveland and Youngstown for several years, but our distance from them makes food transport expensive. The Council projects include a revived farmers market, growers' survey, local food guide, and community education programs with film screenings and farm tours. Larger, long-term projects include a local food policy audit, food hub feasibility research, and farmers' resource network. Courtney Johnson, AGLFU secretary/treasurer and interim food council coordinator has done a wonderful job linking into the vibrant local food economy of northeast Ohio.

Fracking and disposing frack waste into Class II injection wells remains a pressing issue. Appalachian Ohio has 17.5 percent of Ohio's population and almost 75 percent of the injection wells. AGLFU members helped to draft a fact-filled letter to EPA in February charging environmental discrimination. Although EPA ignored the letter, it still circulates within Ohio and caught the attention of Appalachian township trustees and county commissioners, who know that injection wells bring many human and environmental health problems with zero economic benefit.

Meetings with trustees, commissioners, mayors and activists have resulted in resolutions seeking a moratorium on new permits for Class II injection wells until problems can be resolved. Although our state has removed local government control of all oil- and gas-related issues, there is growing momentum to take it back. On July 20, Ashtabula County commissioners convened a hearing to gather information on the impact of injection wells for three state representatives. Three AGLFU members offered testimony, as did Joe Logan, president of Ohio Farmers Union.

OFU's position, adopted January 2015, is that class II injection wells are not sufficiently constructed, monitored or safe, and that frack waste should go to class I wells (monitored by EPA). That probably won't happen: Ashtabula is a Democrat county, the three state reps at the hearing were Democrats, but the state legislature is securely Republican. Since Governor John Kasich is running for the Republican presidential nomination this is a good time to voice that his party's mantra "Ohio is open for business" has devastated parts of rural Ohio, particularly in Appalachia. Our members work with a loose network of anti-fracking activists in eastern Ohio, and in August, OFU passed a resolution supporting a moratorium on new Class II injection well permits.

In November the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration determined that the 2015 cyanobacteria algae bloom in Lake Erie was the largest ever recorded, but they did not develop near the Toledo water system intakes as in 2014. Ohio passed legislation in early 2015 prohibiting the spread of manure on frozen and snow-covered ground, and immediately before or after heavy rains. Although a good first step, this did not address the root of the problem: fields in the watershed are so packed with manure and synthetic fertilizer that phosphorous still escapes by runoff (erosion over ground or through drain tiles). The main culprit behind excessive phosphorous remains the increasing number of CAFOs. If CAFO manure could not be spread on fields with already-high levels of phosphorous, CAFOs unable to afford transporting manure to more distant fields would be forced out of business. CAFO operators currently contract manure disposal with "Certified Livestock Managers" (manure brokers). The problem will not be solved until soil testing is mandatory and spreading manure on fields high in phosphorous is prohibited.

Probably our most important issue to many farmers is the continued work to reform the farm real estate tax program. The Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV) real estate tax program was established in 1975 to tax farmland on its agricultural use value and not its full market value (i.e., speculation and development). As our state government continues to shift the tax burden from the wealthy to the middle class, farmers have really felt the sting—farm real estate tax doubled or tripled for some this past year just as the price of corn and soybeans dropped. CAUV tax rates are set by a complex formula that is supposed to account for all agricultural inputs, interest rates, capitalization and crops (including woodland), but 'crops' are currently based on the price of corn, soybeans and wheat in years prior to 2014. OFU has worked to modernize the formula with more realistic interest and capitalization rates, land use patterns and crops produced, and current crop prices. This out-of-date system has forced some families to sell off all or parts of their farms, and made it more difficult for farmers to take the risks necessary for diversification.



ALGFU Members Stand Up for Clean Water in June 2013.

Mardy Townsend photo

Speaking As A Dairy Farmer—We Want a Fair Price!

Sharon Squires, Progressive Agriculture Organization

Recently Land O'Lakes, a giant dairy cooperative based in Minnesota, announced to their East Coast co-op dairy farmer members that they were going to impose a supply management program to commence January 1, 2016. Some of their reasons may or may not be justified, but our main concern is that Land O'Lakes omitted the opportunity for their members (and ultimately all dairy farmers) to receive a realistic price for their milk.

Land O'Lakes and other cooperatives supporting a feasible supply management program would address any problems created by a potential over-supply of milk. However, placing a dairy farmer in a milk supply program without a new pricing formula gives a dairy farmer no fighting chance to cover costs, which is completely unacceptable! I firmly believe that a large number of dairy farmers would support a supply management program provision if a feasible milk pricing formula were contained in the program. Such a program would not tell a dairy farmer how much milk they can produce, but if they produced over their pre-determined base, then they would be penalized only on their over-production. The penalty funds then would be used to purchase dairy products to be given to the needy in the United States.

Do dairy farmers realize that the present pricing formula includes a 'make allowance' for processors which lowers the dairy farmer's price they receive by roughly 13 cents per gallon? (Not much for one gallon of milk, but farmers sell thousands of gallons weekly, and some have lost \$5,000 to \$10,000 per month.) The processors have a chance to cover their cost (as they should) when their products are marketed, and they also gain with the make allowance in the pricing formula, but what about dairy farmers?

In 2009, Congress lowered the milk support price (a payment to help farmers cover their costs of production because dairy cooperatives are not required to do that), then the program was eliminated altogether in 2013. To offset dairy farmer losses, Congress presented the Margin Insurance Program, which lets farmers buy insurance to ensure a minimum price for their milk.

This is simply ludicrous: if dairy cooperatives do not pay a fair price for the milk, US taxpayers and farmers should not have to support the insurance industry to assure farmers a fair price.

It appears to me that all dairy farmers should support a new program for dairy farmers that works for everyone, including dairy farmers! To join the cause, contact Progressive Agriculture at 570-833-5776.

(Thao, from page 3) California and Hawaii, to lend to farmers; community members helped with the lending process. Thao is hoping that the foundation will follow his recommendation to provide loans to Hmong farmers nationwide.

Rainfall and access to water remain sporadic, while land is looming larger as the prime concern—escalating prices mean farmers must drive farther (up to 30 miles more, for some) to access their fields. Things appear to be better overall, however, as two NHAF farmers purchased tractors this year—one raises 20 acres of green beans and the other, May Vu, was reeling from drought issues last year. Moreover, NHAF's knowledge in GAP (generally approved practices) certification and a recently acquired cooler have helped a number of their Hmong Farm to School farmers, as well as Filipino and Latino farmers in the region, to expand their markets. Finally seeing the seeds of labor and trust they planted years ago become fruit, NHAF may even take on the task of hosting a television program for a local Hmong station as another way to highlight their challenges and their solutions.



A sad state of affairs—broken barns and empty silos—are all too common in dairy country. Photo by Arden Tewksbury

-- 2016 Calendar --

January 5, Washington, DC: Congress returns

January 12, Washington, DC: President Obama's State of the Union Address

February 4-5, Albany, GA: FSC/LAF Small Farms Conference

February 16-18, Norfolk, VA: Communities Supported Fisheries Summit

February 20-22, Washington, DC: NFFC Winter Board Meeting

March 12, Madison, WI: FFD John Kinsman Food Sovereignty Award Dinner and Annual Meeting

South Dakota Celebrates KXL Pipeline Rejection

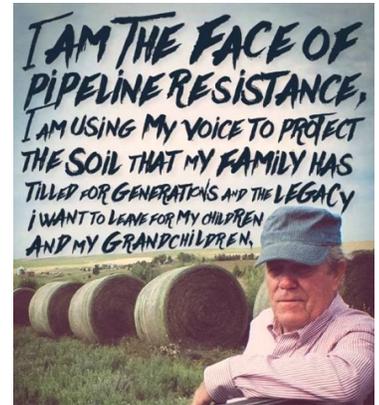
Sabrina King, Dakota Rural Action

Dakota Rural Action's press release on November 6 expressed their gratitude for President Barack Obama doing what landowners had long awaited: rejecting the Keystone XL pipeline.

"As a property owner in South Dakota, and who was coerced into a settlement agreement through eminent domain, I am deeply grateful for the rejection of the Keystone XL pipeline," says John Harter, DRA Vice Chair and a landowner crossed by the former proposed KXL route.

"South Dakota landowners have been fighting TransCanada in their use of eminent domain for over seven years now. Dakota Rural Action has organized landowners who are against the Keystone XL and Dakota Rural Action has allied with like-minded groups in North Dakota, Montana and Nebraska. Dakota Rural Action has also worked closely with native grassroots groups as well as various South Dakota tribal councils to stop the Keystone XL. Building the Keystone XL has always been a bad idea and we are thankful that President Obama has realized this. Grassroots groups have been the boots and moccasins on the ground in this fight. Never again will a company such as TransCanada so seriously underestimate the power of grassroots opposition," says DRA member and landowner crossed by the former route, Paul Seamans.

"Thank you, President Obama. Let the celebrations begin."



Rancher Paul Seamans

Photo by Tory Stolen

Graphic design by Ashley Fairbanks

Citizen Concerns Go Unanswered at Bakken Pipeline Hearing

Iowa CCI Staff

ICCI just celebrated 40 years and is still going strong. More pipeline info at: <http://iowaccci.org/in-the-news/bakken-pipeline-fact-sheet/>

Iowa CCI members challenged the faulty information and inadequate answers that Dakota Access provided under examination at the Iowa Utility Board (IUB) evidentiary hearings on November 12. The company used the same arguments already debunked by the opposition, and even withheld valuable information from the public, including data on the implications of a "worst case scenario" oil spill.

"They are repeating their tired old arguments that we've heard since day one," said Shari Hawk, Iowa CCI member from Ankeny. "The proposed Bakken Pipeline is all risk and no reward for Iowa - it won't be an economic boon for our state, oil will still be shipped by rail, and the oil is destined to be exported from Gulf Coast refineries anyway."

Under questioning, Dakota Access refused to reveal the names of their contracted oil shippers, which fostered the suspicion that companies such as TransCanada might be involved, in light of the recent failure of the Keystone XL pipeline. Given TransCanada's proposal with the [Upland Pipeline in North Dakota](#), access to the Bakken Pipeline easements would give the company a route to move dangerous tarsands oil across the Midwest if the two companies enter into agreement.

"Iowans must be aware of the long-term, precedent setting risk that an IUB approval will mean for our state," said Dick Lamb, CCI member of Iowa City who owns land impacted by the pipeline in Boone County. "Permitting the Bakken Pipeline could pave the way for more pipeline proposals, different kinds of crude oil or hazardous substances, and weakened property rights in Iowa."

Given the magnitude of the proposal, Iowa CCI members also questioned whether or not any federal dollars were supporting the proposed Bakken Pipeline. To date, Dakota Access has not disclosed this information to the public.

"With billions of dollars at stake, it's difficult to believe that Dakota Access isn't appropriating any federal funds or assistance to promote the pipeline," said Brenda Brink, Iowa CCI member of Huxley. "If so, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is triggered and a full environmental impact statement must be performed for the entire length of the proposal."

Update: On December 1, ICCI presented evidence against the pipeline at IUB's evidentiary hearing, including the voices of landowners, union members and water quality advocates. The Board is expected to issue a decision as soon as early January.



USFSA members support Iowa CCI protesting the Bakken Pipeline on October 15 at IUB. ICCI photo

Director's Take

Katherine Ozer



Saulo Araujo (WhyHunger), CUNY educators, and Ben Burkett and Savi Horne (representing FSC and LLPP) discuss farmland loss

In reflecting on 2015, a few major things have happened but there has been much inaction at the congressional and agency level. We are now in the midst of the election season which will have a big impact on what moves forward next spring, what will be addressed in a post-election "lame-duck" session, and what will wait until 2017.

The major setback this year was the congressional approval of Trade Promotion Authority—or fast-track—which opens the door for Congress to consider the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Waging the campaign against the TPP and the heightened opposition to these secret, corporate deals will hopefully delay the completion of the European-US trade deal (the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership or T-TIP). Trade and investment issues are in the forefront

of the news on many levels and I am pleased that NFFC was able to help convene the seminar on land grabs in NYC just before Thanksgiving. This meeting will hopefully accelerate the campaign against TIAA-CREF and other pension investors taking control of farmland in the US and around the world.

Ben Burkett heads to Nairobi, Kenya next week to represent the North American region of Via Campesina as part of the small yet significant Via delegation at the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting. WTO actions are rolling back important legislative wins, such as Country of Origin Labeling (COOL), and we must remain vigilant in our critique of these policies on a national and global level.

As this newsletter goes to press, Congress is in the final throes of deciding how to fund the government for this fiscal year (which began October 1, 2015). The new Republican leadership pledged to have no government shutdown even though the current debt ceiling expires on December 11. Legislators could also propose policy riders on a range of issues from the DARK Act (Denying Americans the Right to Know) to the GIPSA rider, which would continue to restrict USDA's ability to implement contract reform provisions from the 2008 farm bill. John Oliver's May 20 episode helped to educate the public about the control exerted by the pork industry and rallied a new wave of congressional support for our cause.

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The Old and The New in 2015

Ben Burkett, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund

2015 has been an exciting and rewarding year with many opportunities to represent our membership and executive director, Katherine Ozer, at events across the country.

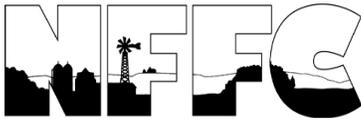
In August the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund held a very successful annual meeting with more than 500 farmers, ranchers, landowners and USDA agencies from across the South. In September I attended Farm Aid's 30th Anniversary in Chicago; in October I spoke at the Black Urban Gardener Association (BUGS) conference in Oakland, CA, and attended the Rural Coalition Annual meeting in Taos, New Mexico. In November I participated in the Land Grab symposium at CUNY with Savi Horne and Kathy Ozer, and this month I am travelling to Kenya to represent NFFC and the North American Region of Via Campesina at WTO (World Trade Organization) meetings.

Family farmers still face low prices for milk and other commodities, which continue to force some of us out of business. Family farmers of all sizes growing all commodities must work together to move forward in changing food and agriculture policies and the consumer mindset around food and farming issues. There are useful new farming practices under research but we must also respect the best traditional practices, including agroecology, that direct us to harvest foods sustainably while working for civil, human and political rights. The Federation, represented by executive director Cornelius Blanding, was honored to receive the 2015 Food Sovereignty Prize for efforts in fighting for civil rights while supporting ownership, growing and market opportunities for Black farmers they otherwise would not have had.

I would like to thank NFFC's board and staff for all their hard work, including vice president Dena Hoff who represents us so well nationally and internationally. As a proud new grandfather, my six-month-old beginning farmer provides even more incentive to see that NFFC holds a successful winter meeting. We hope to hear more board members on our planning calls and to see more of you in DC in February!



Ben with granddaughter /beginning family farmer. Darnella Winston photo



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Support Family Farmers, Ranchers,
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(Ozer, from page 8) At our winter board meeting Ben Burkett declared that this would be a good year, and it has been. There were many events to celebrate: Ben's first grandchild arriving in June, important anniversaries for several NFFC members and Farm Aid, Lisa's wedding and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives receiving the Food Sovereignty Prize in October. The EPA revoked their permission to Dow AgroSciences to release Enlist Duo seeds, providing a big Thanksgiving surprise.

Personally, I feel so fortunate that the six months since my May diagnosis of non-Hodgkin lymphoma have been tolerable. What has helped me get through this so well has been the incredible outpouring of support for me, for NFFC, and for the work to which we all commit our lives. A special thanks to the Executive Committee, volunteers and staff who have kept our work moving forward through this difficult time.

I look towards 2016 with a renewed sense of urgency to maintain the resources necessary for all of us to escalate our campaigns on these issues. We have sustained our efforts through generous and ongoing foundational support as well as donations from more than 100 individuals to our '\$57,000 fund' established this summer.

We know that everyone is working with too few resources and hope that all our [members](#) and allies have a restful holiday. We need everyone possible to be ready to tackle—and win—more campaigns next year.

FIRST CLASS

Book Review

Erika Inwald

Given the July purchase of Cargill's pork business by Brazil's JBS S.A. for \$1.45 billion, Barry Estabrook's *Pig Tales—An Omnivore's Quest for Sustainable Meat* was a timely release.

Estabrook offers many studies demonstrating pig intelligence, then details the health and labor issues that factory farm and slaughterhouse workers face, the racist and classist aspects of CAFO (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations) sites, the pollution CAFOs create, and the industry's consolidation (also seen in Shuanghui's 2013 purchase of Smithfield Foods).

Lastly, he describes small slaughterhouses and pork cooperatives as possible solutions to consolidation (which Missouri Rural Crisis Center has offered for 30 years). With humorous yet thoughtful insights, he paints a vivid picture of industrial agriculture then discusses an alternative, allowing the reader to draw his or her own conclusions. It is our job to take notice.

