



In Memoriam: Kathy Ozer, 1958-2017

Kathy Ozer served as Executive Director of the National Family Farm Coalition from the early 1990s until her death in January 2017. For most of those years, NFFC was nearly synonymous with Kathy – her encyclopedic knowledge of farm policy; her vast network of farmers, legislators, Hill staff and advocates; and her extraordinary kindness and generosity.

Before joining NFFC in the depths of the 1980s farm crisis, Kathy worked with the US Student Association for education access. She translated her understanding of student credit into farm credit, and became a key author and advocate of the ingenious Agricultural Credit Act of 1987, saving 70,000 farms from foreclosure.

For nearly 30 years, Kathy worked on farm, rural and fair trade policy for NFFC, partnering with colleagues around the US and abroad to champion the voices and concerns of family farmers and rural communities. She addressed credit, dairy and global food crises through fairness and competition in farm and food policy. She was a systems thinker, understanding and explaining how struggles of all people intertwined. She explicitly worked with Black, Latino, Hmong and other farmers of color; forged relationships with farm and food worker organizations; and broadened the Coalition's membership to include community-based fishermen.

Kathy represented NFFC on the boards of Citizens Trade Campaign and Jobs with Justice, and helped to found the Community Food Security Coalition and US Food Sovereignty Alliance. She participated in farmer delegations at the United Nations and at World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle and Cancun.

Born August 4, 1958, Kathy died on January 22, 2017, after nearly two years of battling non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. She was 58, and is survived by her husband, David Battey; her parents, siblings, nieces and nephews; and countless friends and colleagues within and beyond the family farm movement. She is greatly missed by all who knew her.

We know that her spirit guides NFFC as we continue the work she was so proud of – representing the family farmers, ranchers and fishermen she nurtured and fought for through the years.

We are grateful for the many notes of condolence and support after her passing, and gather here some of the tributes written by her friends and colleagues:

Federation of Southern Cooperatives: [Kathy Ozer: A Longtime Colleague and Supporter](#)

Farm Aid: [Honoring Kathy Ozer](#)

Progressive Populist: [We Need More Like Kathy Ozer](#)

Daily Yonder: [Remembrance: Family Farm Advocate Kathy Ozer \(1958-2017\)](#)

The Populist Farmer: [Requiem for a Heavy Weight](#)

Grassroots International: [Remembering US Food Justice Leader Kathy Ozer](#)

Food First: [Honoring Kathy Ozer](#)

Former Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Kathleen Merrigan: [These Old Boots of Mine](#)

UC Berkeley Food Institute: [Honoring Kathy Ozer: Family Farm Advocate](#)

Civil Eats: [Remembering Kathy Ozer, Fierce Advocate of Family Farmers](#)

Washington Post: [Katherine Ozer, leader of advocacy group for family farmers, dies at 58](#)



Kathy and David, anti-TPP march, fall 2016

2017 NFFC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

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Family Farm Agenda December 2017

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

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Soil Health Pioneer Draws In Farmers and Ranchers

Megan Taylor, Powder River Basin Resource Council

More than 150 ranchers, farmers, producers, and agriculture students gathered in Sheridan, Wyoming, on November 10 to hear award-winning farmer Gabe Brown discuss soil health and regenerative farming. Gabe and his family practice holistic management on their 5,000-acre ranch, where improving soil health is a priority and no-till farming has been practiced since 1993. The Browns employ a diverse cropping strategy, which includes cover and companion crops. These practices allow the Browns to eliminate the use of synthetic fertilizers, fungicides, and pesticides and to increase the profitability and production of the ranch. (To learn more, visit <http://brownsranch.us/>.)

The workshop, aptly titled Regenerating Landscapes, was co-hosted by Powder River Basin Resource Council, Sheridan County Conservation District, Sheridan College Department of Agriculture, Plank Stewardship Initiative, and Barnyards & Backyards. It opened with an Agency and Producer Q&A session, in which audience members asked Gabe detailed questions about his ranching operation and for advice addressing their own farm or ranch problems.

After lunch, there was an update on the Northeast Wyoming Invasive Grass Working Group by Dr. Brian Mealor from the Sheridan Research and Extension Center and a primer on soil presented by Dr. Caitlin Youngquist of University of Wyoming Extension. The rest of the day was given over to Gabe's presentation on regenerative farming and ranching.

"Plant diversity is the key to enhancing soil biota in the long-term," Gabe noted. "I see our farm as an ecosystem and I try to imitate nature's design from the ground up." He discussed using animal impact as a tool to treat invasive, noxious weeds and to restore landscapes through an approach he calls adaptive multi-paddock grazing. To achieve success, he said, "It's all about soil health."

Gabe also shared his experiences with direct marketing and stacked enterprises, which may be thought of as adding new revenue streams on top of existing ones. Brown's ranch raises multiple species on the same land base, and grows along with its clientele to offer the range of products customers want. For example, the Brown's Ranch label Nourished by Nature currently operates 17 different enterprises, including grass-finished beef, lamb, pork, eggs, heirloom vegetables, cut flowers, and honey. On direct marketing, Gabe said, "We need to get back to knowing our farmer or rancher. We have an open-door policy, and we are not going to do anything on our ranch to jeopardize our customer's trust." By selling products directly, Gabe can interact with his customers, and set his own price.



(l. to r.) Megan Taylor, PRBRC; Dr. Caitlin Youngquist, U of WY Extension; John Heyneman, Plank Stewardship Initiative; Gabe Brown, Soil Health Pioneer; Carrie Rogaczewski and Jackie Carbert, Sheridan County Conservation District

Gabe admits that his approach to ranching is unorthodox, but shrugs it off. "They laugh at me because I'm different, but I laugh at them because they're all the same. To ranch regeneratively," he says, "you have to observe, adapt, and change. But most importantly, you have to have the ability and humility to unlearn and relearn."

Farmers on the Frontline

Matthew West, Dakota Rural Action

In early November, four farmers and farm advocates representing Dakota Rural Action (DRA) flew into Washington, D.C., as part of a 2018 farm bill fly-in event. DRA's members took the opportunity to stand in front of their elected officials and advocate for a 2018 farm bill that supports the needs of America's family farmers.

No Public Money for Corporate Interests

DRA members Gerry Adolf, Kristi Mogen, and Stephanie Peterson met with representatives about farm bill programs that direct public money to benefit factory farms. The group stressed that in this difficult farm economy, it is critical that public money spent in the farm bill is spent wisely, reaching the most family farmers. Too often, farm bill programs instead support corporate interests, including corporate-controlled industrial livestock operations. In particular, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and direct and guaranteed loans for hog and poultry facilities, use taxpayer dollars to tilt the playing field in favor of industrial livestock production. On behalf of South Dakota farmers and community members, the DRA members urged their public officials to reform these programs to support family farms, rural communities, and a healthy food supply.

Support Beginning Farmers

Aaron Johnson also took time away to discuss farm bill priorities with his legislators. Growing up on his family's farm, Aaron had always hoped to return to agriculture, but found a steep learning curve between growing up on a farm and running one. He credits DRA's Farm Beginnings program for helping him succeed. The program is funded in part by the USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, which is part of the farm bill.

"I grew up on a farm, but once I had my own operation, I realized there was a lot I needed to learn," he said. "My wife and I learned a lot from the Farm Beginnings course. We got help with everything from financial planning to learning how to incorporate family life into farm life – and best of all we got to meet and form connections with other beginning farmers." Aaron now serves on the leadership committee for Farm Beginnings and farms in Madison, South Dakota. Johnson Farms is one of the largest organic row crop farm operations in the state.

Aaron also highlighted a major step for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as it was making its way through the House of Representatives. The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act of 2017, introduced by Rep. Tim Waltz (D-MN) and Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), provides a comprehensive blueprint for a farm bill for the future, with provisions to expand beginning farmers' access to affordable land; empower new farmers with the skills to succeed in today's agricultural economy; ensure equitable access to financial capital and federal crop insurance; and encourage commitment to conservation and stewardship across generations.

When meeting with his legislators, Aaron also discussed other top beginning farmer concerns, such as increased access to credit and affordable farmland. In South Dakota, farmland has recently reached as high as \$9,000 per acre, posing a serious entry barrier for aspiring farmers. With the average age of American producers at nearly 60 years, Aaron stressed the important role that federal policy plays in bringing in and training up the next generation of farmers and ranchers.

DRA's Farm Beginnings

Farm Beginnings is a farmer-led training and support program that provides beginning and aspiring farmers an opportunity to learn first-hand about low-cost, sustainable methods of farming and offers the tools to successfully launch a farm enterprise.

DRA is in full swing getting ready for its ninth year hosting Farm Beginnings. Each year, twenty local farmers participate by teaching the peer-to-peer classes, which focus on whole farm, business, and financial planning; marketing; and connecting with resources and with mentors. Farm Beginnings offers over forty hours of in-class instruction and is followed by on-farm experiences such as tours, skills sessions, and internships. Throughout the summer of 2017, DRA hosted farm tours, skill shares, and workshops; recent events include learning to plant cider stock at Blackshire Farms and touring RiverBend Farm's U-pick raspberry operation.



Aaron Johnson (left) meets with members of Sen. John Thune's staff in DC

Both participants and hosts of the tours and skill sessions leave with a great sense of accomplishment and new information. Throughout the years, participants have learned to milk animals, build fence, high tunnel growing techniques, livestock pasture rotation, harvesting of specialty crops, beekeeping, and on-farm slaughter of chickens, amongst many other skills. Participants go on to use these new skills on their operations and are better equipped for having the guided hands-on experience before attempting the skill alone. Hosts come away with new ideas and in some cases, additional labor for big projects.

Federation of Southern Cooperative/Land Assistance Fund Celebrates 50 Years



Cornelius Blanding, Executive Director of the Federation/LAF, welcomes guests to their 50th anniversary in Birmingham, AL

The 50-year history of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund is one of service, struggle, and empowerment. Against incredible odds, this organization — and those who energize it — has offered hope and sustenance to some of the most impoverished people in America. They are also some of the most resilient people, willing to try new forms, new models, new approaches because the ones who inspired them did not work for them. They also happen to be mostly Black farmers with relatively few acres and agricultural workers who have tended to the crops and livestock in the American Southland for generations, dating back to when their forebears were enslaved. Yet historically, governmental policies, cultural intransigence and powerful elites have conspired to insist that they either live poor or leave. Many did leave to go North or West to crowd the cities and overwhelm those urban landscapes. Others decided to stay. This was their home, after all. They would stay and try to find a new way to survive. Cooperatives offered the best chance to work with others; to, perhaps, grab a piece of that elusive American Dream.

Cooperatives Offer Hope as Agriculture Changes

One of the new forms uncovered during this period of discovery was the cooperative business model. Cooperatives offered the blacks of the rural South the same opportunity that they offered to the impoverished nineteenth-century Londoner or eighteenth-century American colonist—the opportunity to band together to create a new system of empowerment and support; a chance to be a full partner in a community enterprise; a way of helping one's self while helping others. Cooperatives were models of democratic governance, and thus were incubators to help those left out of the political process to see how true democracy worked. By participating in the cooperative enterprise and voting for one's elected representatives to the cooperative's board of directors, people once struggling suddenly had a way forward.

Founding of the Federation/LAF

When first created in 1967, the Federation/LAF was licensed in 16 southern states. Subsequently it established offices in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana and South Carolina. The Epes, Alabama, office includes the Federation's 1,000-acre training center.

Assessment of Accomplishments

The Federation/LAF played a leading role in the Black Farmer Lawsuit against the US Department of Agriculture. Settled in 1998, it became the largest lawsuit ever filed against the US government. Known as the "Pigford Lawsuit" it inspired what were also successful lawsuits by Native American, Latino and women farmers. In her history of African-American cooperative development in the US, *Collective Courage*, economic historian Jessica Gordon Nembhard provides a sweeping summary of the successes of the first forty-five years of the Federation/LAF, which has:

Leveraged resources worth five times the amount of direct funding raised (more than \$50 million) and provided an estimated fiscal impact, beyond its direct calculable services, of more than \$500 million;

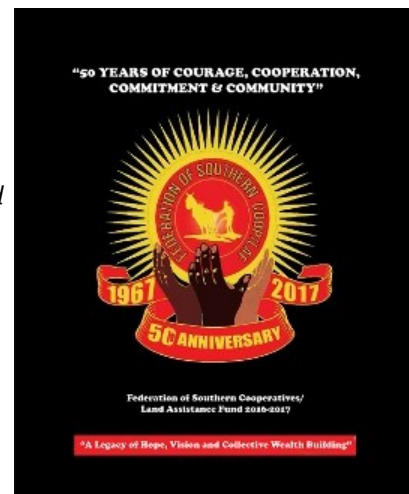
Facilitated savings of more than \$34.7 million by 16,155 people in member credit unions and made more than 79,000 loans to low-income people, totaling more than \$239 million, and \$80 million in sales through cooperative marketing;

Assisted 5,000 Black farmers in saving more than 175,000 acres (\$200 million worth) of land, and helped more than 700 families find affordable housing by creating \$26 million worth of housing units (constructed and rehabilitated);

Employed and trained more than 500 people, including VISTA volunteers, interns, and trainees, many who have gone on to work in positions of significance in the region, among them members of Congress, state legislators, county commissioners, school board members, program directors, bank managers, attorneys, social workers, college faculty, and foundation staff; and

Provided skills, knowledge, awareness, and sensitivity to working creatively on behalf of poor people and providing introductory cooperative business development courses and board training through its workshops and education programs.

The Federation/LAF has expanded and evolved over its fifty years to meet the demands of its members and their communities. At the anniversary celebration in Birmingham, executive director Cornelius Blanding said, "We must constantly change as a cooperation and as businesses, landowners and farmers. As your server I embrace this change and I ask that you do, too. This has been a time of transition for the organization and transition always means change. Change is hard but we must always change or perish. When we are finished changing, we are finished."



Cover of 50-year anniversary booklet

Food Sovereignty Prize Honors Critical Work of Small Farmers and Fishers

AGRA Watch, a project of Community Alliance for Global Justice

The week of October 15 was Food Week of Action, encouraging reflection about global food and agriculture and food justice advocacy. The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization designates October 16 as World Food Day to promote awareness about hunger and food security. The day has been reclaimed by the grassroots movement to promote food sovereignty as defined by the Declaration on Food Sovereignty from Nyéléni, Mali: "the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems."

The same week, the Iowa-based World Food Prize (sponsored by Big Ag corporations such as Monsanto, Syngenta, Dow-Dupont and Walmart) awards \$250,000 to an individual who has helped to industrialize the food system, emphasizing yield increase through genetic engineering and biotechnology, and policy that favors corporate agriculture. Alternatively, the US Food Sovereignty Alliance (USFSA) awards the Food Sovereignty Prize to grassroots organizations working for a more democratic food system by promoting food sovereignty, agroecological farming, and social justice to ensure access to fresh, nutritious food produced in harmony with the planet. USFSA is a national alliance of food justice, food producer, anti-hunger, faith-based, labor and environmental groups, including NFFC, CAGJ, NAMA, Family Farm Defenders, and other NFFC members.

This year, the ninth annual Food Sovereignty Prize was awarded on October 17 to Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers Forum (ZIMSOFF), a small farmer-led movement focused on local seed saving in southern Africa, and NFFC member Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance (NAMA), a fishermen-led organization working at the intersection of marine conservation and social, economic and environmental justice. The honorees were awarded for their communities' resistance to corporate control of the food system, including false solutions like biotechnology that damage the planet while exacerbating poverty and hunger. (The live-recorded award ceremonies from 2012-2017 are available on YouTube and may be found through a search for "food sovereignty prize.")

The 2017 World Food Prize was awarded to Dr. Adesina of Nigeria, President of the African Development Bank, who played a critical role in developing the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). Adesina was recognized by the Prize for instituting several initiatives encouraging African farmers to embrace agriculture as business. At the 2017 announcement ceremony, Adesina stated, "We must give hope and turn agriculture into a business all across Africa to create wealth for African economies. The World Food Prize gives me an even greater global platform to make that future happen much faster for Africa." His career is lauded for his achievements in promoting the use of intensive-energy inputs, such as chemical fertilizers and herbicides, and genetically engineered seeds, via agro-dealers. These programs are the hallmarks of AGRA, funded primarily by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which has granted nearly \$1.5 million to the World Food Prize since 2009.

AGRA Watch, a Seattle-based campaign of Community Alliance for Global Justice that works closely with farmer networks in Africa, condemns Dr. Adesina's receipt of the World Food Prize because of AGRA's role in securing African agriculture as a resource for the global North. By genetically engineering traditional food crops and influencing national legislation on GMO regulation, AGRA's progress comes at the cost of farmer self-determination and food sovereignty, which threatens traditional seed-saving and undermines communities' rights to produce sustainable, culturally appropriate food.

In stark contrast to the World Food Prize, the international recipient of the 2017 Food Sovereignty Prize, Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers Forum (ZIMSOFF), is the voice of over 10,500 peasants struggling for social justice and food sovereignty across Zimbabwe. ZIMSOFF's main objective is empowering farmers themselves, especially those who work on a small scale, in developing strategies that lead to the reduction of poverty. The organization encourages and promotes adoption of sustainable technologies, development of value added products, and transition to organic farming. It influences policies and public awareness on agro-ecology and farmers rights, with particular attention to the participation and leadership of rural women and youth.

On October 21, CAGJ held its 11th annual Strengthening Local Economies Everywhere (SLEE) dinner, celebrating the critical work of small farmers and fisherfolk in building agricultural systems for themselves and their communities. We proudly acknowledged ZIMSOFF and NAMA as the Food Sovereignty Prize awardees, then gathered the 300-plus dinner attendees in a photo to send a message on social media to the Gates Foundation, World Food Prize, and their corporate agribusiness partners to confirm, as our banner reads, *Food Sovereignty is the Solution! Stop the Failing Green Revolution!*



At CAGJ's 11th annual SLEE dinner, attendees send a message to the Gates Foundation, World Food Prize and their agribusiness partners

WORC Launching New Ag Storytelling Series

Active in the Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC) for more than 30 years, Mabel Dobbs has fought bankruptcy, pushed for fair contracts and livestock prices, supported country-of-origin labeling for meat, and protested the North American Free Trade Agreement as she worried about the future of agriculture and her ranch. Now, she's telling her story in WORC's new project, *Homegrown Stories: Farm and ranch families cultivating good food, healthy land and rural vitality*, which features WORC members who have organized to fight the corporate control and increased industrialization of U.S. food and farms to rebuild local and regional food systems that sustain independent family farmers and feed local communities.

In her story, Mabel, from Weiser, Idaho, describes the market that independent ranchers face. "When I married [my husband] Grant," she relates, "I looked at him and said, 'I don't understand this. How can you work all year long to raise your product and grow your product and go out on the marketplace and say, what will you give me for this?'" I grew up in a banking industry, where a producer produced whatever their product was, figured their cost of production, added a profit, priced their product and said 'this is my price.' But that's not the way it is in agriculture. One of the most frustrating things in being married to a rancher, and calling myself a rancher, is that fact—that I do not have that control."

Homegrown Stories leverages the power of stories to shift the false narrative that a corporate-controlled, industrialized food and farm system is inevitable, better for farmers and rural communities, and the solution to world hunger. The series offers a new narrative for the vitality of rural communities—one in which the food and farming system is based on democratic values and honors the health of families, the land, and rural communities.

As well as changing the narrative, *Homegrown Stories* will advance the work of WORC and its member organizations, including:

- Highlighting the campaigns of member groups challenging factory farms and telling the stories of people living near them;
- Working with allies on the 2018 farm bill to increase market opportunities for value-added livestock producers, address livestock market concentration, and expand federal support for rotational and other grazing practices that increase soil health;
- Supporting member group campaigns to pass procurement and purchasing policies to use public and private purchasing power to support development of local and regional food systems;
- Working with allies to ensure a renegotiated NAFTA prioritizes the interests of family farms, ranches, and rural communities over corporate profits.

The series uses a website to tell stories through photographs, videos, and text interviews of family farmers and ranchers. The project will spread these stories through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WORC's website and newsletters. Other stories to be featured in the series launch include:

- Montana rancher Gilles Stockton addressing livestock markets and NAFTA;
- Idaho farmhand Stephanie Rael's opposition to a proposed subdivision on prime farmland;
- Wyoming local market farmers Luc and Rachel Bourgault meeting challenges posed by local food production;
- Montana rancher Steve Charter working to restore soil on his ranch;
- South Dakota rancher Kristi Mogen fighting a proposed factory farm.

Look for www.homegrownstories.org to launch in January. For more information, contact Kevin Dowling at kdowling@worc.org.

Growing Kentucky

Maggie Smith, Community Farm Alliance

Community Farm Alliance is a grassroots membership organization working across Kentucky to protect and promote family farms and rural communities through programming, food and farm policy, and leadership development to pilot innovative, member-derived solutions to larger agricultural challenges. Read on for successes and highlights of the past year.

Farmer Education

CFA has taken more than 60 Appalachian growers to Ohio to learn about season extension and commercial processing techniques. The 2017 Eastern Kentucky Farmers Conference brought statewide resources to the mountains and provided many interactive learning opportunities, which help farmers increase the capacity and availability of local foods, bolstering small-farm income and improving access to fresh, healthy food.

Farmacy

The Pharmacy veggie prescription program is a partnership with Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation and the Whitesburg/Letcher County Farmers Market. Patients receive \$1 per day per family member each week to shop at the market, as incentive.

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Grant and Mabel Dobbs

Perspectives on African Farming in the Midwest

By Bruce Drinkman, Midwestern Organic Dairy Producers Association



(l. to r.) Mari Drinkman, unidentified guest, Bruce Drinkman and LVC International Secretariat Elizabeth Mpofu

On a cold, wintry-feeling day in early November, my wife Mari and I had the pleasure of meeting Elizabeth Mpofu at a University of Minnesota symposium, "Exploring African Agricultural Futures." Elizabeth is General Coordinator of La Via Campesina International and chair of Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers Forum (ZIMSOFF), the international winner of the 2017 Food Sovereignty Prize.

The symposium's morning seminar focused on food sovereignty and diet quality. Million Belay, of the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa, gave a presentation by Skype on agroecology, arguing that science, practice and social justice all must be in balance, using the case of millet grown in Ethiopia. Bronwen Powell from Penn State University presented on how much the variance in production of local vegetables – many of which are wild – is based on tree cover and crop production in the local area. She also reminded us that malnutrition comes in different forms, stressing that the type of calories is as important as the number. Amy Damon from Macalester College discussed favoritism and farming, examining polygyny and how there seems to be a sort of pecking order in deciding who will manage the plots. This led to a discussion and audience critique of her survey methodology.

The afternoon focused on the green and gene revolution. Abbyssinia Mushunje, from Zimbabwe's University of Fort Hare, presented his research on maize production in South Africa, primarily open-

pollinated varieties. Most of these provide greater profit to the farmers but their yield is usually less than newly introduced hybrids. Batamaka Somé, a Burkina Faso-based anthropologist, discussed the use of local seed around Africa. In most cases, locally produced seed will provide the best profit and the most nutrition. He stressed the importance of local farmer input in all research, garnering a robust round of applause from the few farmers in attendance.

Anthropologist Paul Richards gave the closing keynote on rice production in Sierra Leone, tying together the day's themes and the importance of needing all pieces to fit and work together. He made the important point that while outsiders are trying to be helpful in Africa, they must respect the local customs and knowledge. There is no one-size-fits-all solution.

This symposium was a reminder of how much communities around the world have become the same, including how the influence of corporations affects every place, not just our industrialized societies. Africa is seen as the next area for corporate profit-mining. The price tag for local economies and ways of life is no concern, customs and knowledge mean little, local people are nothing more than a cheap labor force – and the corporations will just move on to their next victim once they have taken all that they can. This extractive economy will lead to more poverty than already exists. Corruption in governments in Africa is rampant, and big money will try to buy the power to force an agenda of greed on ever more countries.

Farmers across Africa are being set up to be treated like many American farmers. Many farmers in the US do not seem to realize that they are nothing more than cheap labor for corporations, but if you travel rural America at all, it becomes quite obvious how extractive recent decades have been. Many small towns are totally gone and those that are still here are often little more than bedroom communities. The toll is already showing in parts of Africa, too.

Some are fighting back, including activists and researchers such as those at the symposium. Elizabeth Mpofu and La Via Campesina are determined to see that the truth is known, not only locally but globally. It will not be an easy fight to win, but it must continue. We all hold to one premise: to do good is the just and equitable way. Nobody should profit unless we all profit. The corporate model is profit for one, while the real need is profit for all. Profit cannot be dictated from a board room.

I hope that you will do your part to support National Family Farm Coalition and its allies as we continue our fight for a fair, just and equitable system of agriculture. It is a fight that must continue until we have leveled the playing field so that we all have enough for ourselves and to share with any of our neighbors. NFFC has been fighting for a fair and equitable price for farmers for over thirty years and will continue to strive. This struggle is global but will be won one small victory at a time.

Editor's Note: We are saddened to report that Mari Drinkman succumbed to meningitis and stroke within a few weeks of this event. She will be greatly missed by her husband, Bruce, and by others in the farm and food justice movement.

Growing Kentucky (from p. 6)

Farmers Market Support Program (FMSP)

FMSP expanded significantly in the last year with the hire of three technical market assistants across the state. Additionally, CFA and several partners launched Kentucky Double Dollars, which double SNAP, WIC, and Senior vouchers spent at state farmers markets.

In 2016, FMSP markets represented 638 farmers and more than \$2.5 million in sales. With federal benefits matching state and local dollars and an average local economic multiplier of 1.73, \$4.48 spent at the farmers market became \$7.75 generated in the local economy. 2016 was also a pivotal year as CFA and Bluegrass Double Dollars Programs collaborated to secure \$78,188 in Kentucky Agriculture Development Funds, and to submit a USDA Food Insecurity and Nutrition Incentive (FINI) proposal that would set the stage for a statewide Program for farmers markets, Fresh Stops and select retailers. Representatives from state agencies, nonprofits and private funders created the Kentucky Double Dollars Advisory Council to support this effort, and in 2017, 42 farmers markets across the state participated.

Breaking Beans: The Appalachian Food Story Project

On the radio and online, CFA Fellow Sister Kathy Curtis is telling the story of how local food and farming in Eastern Kentucky can contribute to a bright future in the mountains. Breaking Beans builds leadership in storytellers and in story collectors. By connecting, both can grow their network and recognition in the Appalachian food and farm sector.

Appal-TREE

The National Institute of Health community-based research project with the University of Kentucky was funded for an additional five years. The project has moved to Knott County, with the installation of refillable water bottle stations and distribution of water bottles to all students. Student surveys were completed this year in Letcher, Jenkins, Knott, and Harlan County school systems. Appal-TREE will continue to offer a series of cooking classes for families providing meals to youth under the age of 18. Classes will be held at various locations in each county with the intent to increase fruit and vegetable content in meals while on a budget.

NFFC Leaders in the News

Over the past year, NFFC was asked numerous times to share the voices of family farmers in various campaigns by allied organizations, including ActionAid USA, Center for Food Safety, Pesticide Action Network North America, Food and Water Watch, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Friends of the Earth US, Organization for Competitive Markets, US PIRG, Rural Forum and the Institute for Rural Futures; media outlets Washington Post, New York Times, RFD-TV and Radio America; and investment institutions El Financiero Bloomberg and Piper Jaffray. Jim Goodman's (Family Farm Defenders) widely circulated articles focused on [replacing NAFTA](#), [dismantled organic rules](#) and [farmers and the estate tax](#) have reached tens of thousands of readers. We appreciate the time our leaders take to offer wisdom and dispel myths, and provide a few other mentions of note:

Andrianna Natsoulas (NOFA):

<http://www.valuwalk.com/2017/04/tiaa-farmland-protests/>

Arden Tewksbury (Pro Ag):

<http://www.wisfarmer.com/story/opinion/editorials/2017/06/05/ag-groups-petition-national-milk-hearing/372290001/>

Ben Burkett (FSC/LAF):

<http://www.farmfutures.com/farm-policy/1-million-people-call-doj-block-bayer-monsanto-merger>

Betsy Garrold (FFMF):

<https://mainecampus.com/2016/12/betsy-garrold-fmf-president-promotes-food-sovereignty-in-maine/>

Brenda Cochran (ARMPPA):

<https://www.commondreams.org/newswire/2017/12/13/us-senator-bernie-sanders-headlines-replacenafta-day-action-event-millions>

Brett Tolley (NAMA):

<http://www.motherjones.com/environment/2017/03/codfather-carlos-rafael-fish-fraud-catchshares/>

Dena Hoff (NPRC):

<https://www.commondreams.org/newswire/2017/10/04/over-200-groups-urge-congress-level-playing-field-farmers-workers-and-consumers>

Denise O'Brien (former NFFC president):

<https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Society/2017/1027/Women-take-the-tractor-wheel>

Savi Horne (LLPP):

<http://edgeeffects.net/savi-horne/>

Scott Marlow (RAFI-USA):

<http://sustainableagriculture.net/blog/scott-marlow-fsa-credit-testimony/>



CFA members visit Athens, OH, greenhouse in February

Our President's Farewell

Ben F. Burkett, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund and Mississippi Association of Cooperatives

It has been both an honour and pleasure to serve as President of NFFC's board. As my tenure comes to an end, I would like to extend my thanks to my fellow board directors, member organizations, my predecessor George Naylor, John Kinsman, and **ESPECIALLY**, the late Kathy Ozer. Your support has been very much appreciated.

I have been fortunate enough to engage with organizations worldwide, including in China and Brussels, representing the Federation of Southern Cooperatives on behalf of National Family Farm Coalition as a small farmer. During my tenure, I have gained more knowledge on dairy farming and fisher folks as well as livestock, commodity crop and vegetable producers, including how we are interdependent upon each other.

The many trips to our nation's capital proved to be instrumental, because of the knowledge I gained personally while interacting with members of Congress and others in leadership roles. Some of the things I learned also include how large corporations control our national food supply.



Ben with Peter Rosset (Via Campesina), George Naylor and Patti Edwardson Naylor in Cuba at an agroecology encounter this year



Beautiful produce from Ben's co-op, Indian Springs, sold at farmers market in April

The Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, *one of the National Family Farm Coalition's founding organizations*, is committed to the continued survival of the family farmer. The Coalition will continue to advocate and seek justice for the underserved and small farmers throughout the world. To our members both here in America and throughout the world, the one thing that will keep our mission alive is that we care for the millions of people that rely upon our support.

I will continue to serve in whatever capacity that I am asked to fill; NFFC's cause and purpose will remain an integral part of my desire to bring equality to all who produce our food in the world. I believe this organization is worthwhile and has been successful on many levels to improve many lives in the world.

Happy Holidays to All, and may all your expectations be realized.

Staff Notes

2017 was a challenging year for anyone seeking farm, food and economic justice. Beginning with the tragic loss of Kathy Ozer and a regressive new administration, many of us have slept less since January, but we are grateful to our many collaborators in this struggle.

Thanks to very generous support from donors and allies, an energizing winter board meeting with strong member participation last March led to the formation of several short-term action committees and plans, including Fundraising, Archiving, Messaging and Transitioning as well as Trade, Fighting Corporate Consolidation and Achieving Fair Prices. Members were prepared to build a larger, more intersectional movement, and identified the need for more staff and for more members to step up – especially in this critical moment – to maintain and expand our efforts.

To that end, Betsy Garrold (Food for Maine's Future) and intern Allison Kaika (Boston College) left their respective homes to staff the DC office for the summer. We brought on Quinton Robinson, a respected veteran of federal family farm policy battles, as policy advisor, and Siena Chrisman, food/ag justice writer and longtime ally, as communications consultant to build our effectiveness on and beyond Capitol Hill. With support from allies based in DC, New York and Boston, collectively we:

- Welcomed Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance (FARFA) and Northeast Organic Farmers Association-Interstate Council (NOFA-IC) as new members;

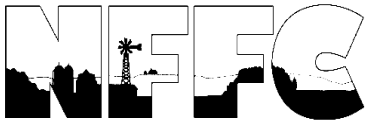
- Led the campaign to restrict dicamba spraying in response to widespread crop damage;

- Outlined family farmer and worker demands to the US Trade Representative during NAFTA renegotiations;

- Identified transparency and other concerns around investments in US and Brazilian farmland with TIAA clients and staff;



Monica Ränge & Ben Burkett (FSC/LAF), Marge Townsend (ALG-OFU) and Elizabeth Barger (FNA) front the array of members and allies at the 2017 winter meeting in DC



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FIRST CLASS

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Ranchers, Fishermen & Workers!

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Staff Notes (from p. 9)

Brought farmers to events in DC urging Congress and the Department of Justice to stop the Monsanto-Bayer merger;
Circulated letters and op-eds opposing the stringent cuts to and rearrangements within USDA;
Developed a legislative strategy designed to protect and increase fair access to fisheries for community-based fishermen;
Drafted farm bill platforms based on agroecology and our 2007 Food From Family Farms Act to provide recourse for farmers weathering pesticide damage, unfair farmgate prices, and inequitable credit, market and resource access;
Introduced the concept of InterDependence between farmers, fishermen and eaters at Farm Aid with NAMA and RAFI-USA;
Celebrated the Federation of Southern Cooperatives' 50th anniversary in Alabama;
Held a summer board meeting in Gloucester, MA, hosted by NAMA;
Launched the search for a new executive director to carry NFFC's mission and vision forward; and
Placed NFFC on stronger financial footing than it has been for several years.

Our executive committee provided extra support this year to keep NFFC strong and engaged, and now two longtime members are stepping aside for personal interests and new leadership. Ben Burkett will retire in February after serving as president for 10 years, and Margot McMillen has stepped down after serving as secretary for four years. Countless times we have called on them to provide guidance; offer their insights for policy recommendations, organizational letters and media; and in Ben's case, to travel nationally or internationally on our behalf. We thank them for their dedication and commitment these many years, and their families and organizations - the Mississippi Association of Cooperatives/Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund and Missouri Rural Crisis Center - for sharing them. We hope other members can step up to fill leadership roles.

House Ag Committee Chair Rep. Conaway is one of several members of Congress who has posted a farm bill platform ignoring any mention of credit access or fair prices for dairy or other family farmers. With upcoming tax cuts (which will make many USDA programs pay-as-you-go), withdrawn GIPSA rules, and a reorganized USDA, this administration is aggressively undermining hard-fought wins, and we must work harder and smarter to protect America's family farmers, ranchers, fishermen and our rural communities. We ask each member organization to send at least one representative to our winter board meeting in Washington, DC, February 24-27, to discuss new strategies, elect new officers, and welcome, hopefully, a new executive director. We have hope for changes in 2018, but we can not achieve this alone. Wherever you are in the struggle, we thank you for your commitment to a just farm and food system and to NFFC.