Fit to Eat: Food Security and Justice Resource and Action Guide for Jewish Organizations

Authors: Alli Rosen, Food Justice Program Associate, and Liz Traison, Thought-Leadership and Capacity-Building Program Associate

Contributing authors: Judith Belasco (Hazon), Helen Bennett (JOIN for Justice), Julie Botnick (Hazon), Rachel Brodie (JCCSF), Devorah Brous (Netiya), Leah Bry (Hazon), Drisana Davis (Hazon), David Fox (Amir), Davida Ginsberg (Moishe Kavod House), Ari Hart (Uri L'Tzedek), Dr. Oran Hesterman (Fair Food Network), Rachel Kahn-Troster (T'ruah), Liz Kohn (Fair Food Network), Lucinda Kurtz (Fair Food Network), Becca Linden (Hazon), Adrienne Markworth (Leah's Pantry), Allen Moy (Fresh Approach), Lev Nelson (T'ruah), Deborah Newbrun (Get Set Go Community Adventures, Hazon), Avery Robinson, Michael Rothbaum, Laura Salcido (Fresh Approach), Ilana Schatz (Fair Trade Judaica), Margot Seigle (Hazon), and Carly Zimmerman (Challah for Hunger).

Hazon Jewish Food Education Staff: foodeducation@hazon.org

Hazon | 125 Maiden Lane, Suite 8B | New York, NY 10038 | 212.644.2332
Hazon.org | www.jcarrot.org

Printed Environmentally: www.gregbarberco.com

The word hazon means vision.

We create healthier and more sustainable sustainable in the Jewish world and beyond.

WE EFFECT CHANGE IN THREE WAYS:

Transformative experiences:
Our programs directly touch lives in powerful ways.

Thought-Leadership:
Writing, speaking, teaching, and advocacy.

Capacity-Building:
Supporting great people and projects in North America and Israel.

FIT TO EAT

Through the values of the Jewish Food Movement – local, accessible, healthful food, crafted by people who are treated fairly, and grown or produced in a way that promotes a healthy, sustainable, and diverse environment– we are expanding our impact on the entire sustainable food movement, bringing issues of affordability, labor practices, and access to healthy, sustainable food to the forefront of the consciousness of all who are working to improve our food systems.

Fit to Eat is a resource for Jewish organizations to self-organize actions that deepen and broaden hunger-relief efforts in order to create a more just and fair food system. While there are many components of food justice, this guide is focused specifically on injustice to consumers (as opposed to farmers or laborers), and actions to take towards increasing food security for all. In this guide we provide a Jewish framework to identify the challenges in our current food system, potential solutions, and propose action items your organization might take, complete with steps for how to get started.

This guide is in its first iteration. We welcome your feedback and hope this guide can grow to be a forum for all Jewish organizations to share best practices around food justice and food security action. If you have questions about Hazon's work or suggestions for this Guide, please email Hazon's Jewish Food Education Staff at foodeducation@hazon.org. We look forward to hearing from you.

Table of Contents

Preface

BY ORAN HESTERMAN, FAIR FOOD NETWORK PRESIDENT AND CEO

There is, undeniably, a growing passion for food system transformation in our country—from changing what is in our own refrigerators to revising national policy and practice. Just as the peace movement captured the imagination of my generation in the late 60's, so the food movement and food justice issues are calling many of us to take action now. Breakthrough ideas and inventive solutions are emerging, both here in the U.S. and worldwide, to advance the field and reinvent our food system. Fit to Eat is a blueprint for the Jewish community in our efforts to restore the fundamental relationship with the earth and the food that sustains us. It is based on the foundational principles of food justice and the creation of a fair food system.

Our health and economic vitality depend on creating a more just and sustainable food system. An equitable food system benefits all, strengthening our communities and our nation. Everyone must have equal access to safe, fresh food as well as fair access to good jobs and healthy working conditions. In an era where food safety, diet-related chronic illness, pollution, and water scarcity are major issues, we have a powerful opportunity to learn from each other and address these interrelated challenges. The tasks at hand require ambitious ideas, bold leadership, and coordinated action to move us forward, faster.

Many institutions and individuals nationwide are wholeheartedly addressing food access issues and reinvigorating local food economies—making a lasting impact in their community. *Fit to Eat* presents ideas that have been successfully tested in communities, based on what these places and people know to be effective. The replicable, scalable model programs shared here can help communities, organizations, synagogues, and other institutions and groups continue to engage their constituencies and drive change. The programs range from awareness building activities, advocacy actions, and service-learning, to establishing farmers' markets and community gardens, where members dig deeply, on a variety of levels, to grow food for their neighbors and the larger community.

Fair Food Network's healthy food incentive program *Double Up Food Bucks* is just one example of a program making it easier for low-income residents to eat fresh fruits and vegetables, while also supporting farmers and growing local economies. Through programs such as *Double Up*, and the others you will read about in this guide, motivated individuals are tackling the job of reinventing their food system within our own Jewish institutions as well as in the public schools, college cafeterias, and hospitals in their communities to create healthier and more resilient models of change.

As an alumnus of Hazon's 2013 Israel Sustainable Food Tour and a Hazon board member, I am continuing to learn more about the diversity and power of the inspiring and practical visions of what is possible for our nation's food system. We, as Jews and as members of our larger communities, can be continuously inspired, and reinspired, to take a meaningful part in the growing food justice movement. Thank you for taking the time to delve into this guide, and even better, for acting upon what you learn. Change is possible—together we *will* create a more just and sustainable food system.

FAIR FOOD NETWORK GROW THE GOOD

Sincerest Regards,

Oran B. Hesterman

Oran Hesterman, Fair Food Network President & CEO

Why Should My Jewish Organization Engage in Food Action?

"Without sustenance, there is no Torah. Without Torah, there is no sustenance."
(Pirke Avot 3:21)

The strong link between food and Jewish tradition obligates us as Jews to challenge the injustice of hunger, champion the right to healthy food, and steward the land on which our sustenance depends. *Tzedek, Tzedek Tirdof* (Justice, justice you shall pursue), a fundamental pillar of the Jewish belief system, obligates us to help create a better, more just world.

Food justice is not about putting food into the hands of people who need it. Soup kitchens, food banks—these are all important and essential acts of *chesed*—loving-kindness. However, more impactful is the work of structural change—acts of *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world). The work of food justice is to recognize that food insecurity is inextricably tied to unjust wealth distribution caused by low wages, tax loopholes, and cuts to safety-net funding. It is about advocating for radical changes in our economy that will give everyone autonomy and choice in putting food on the table.

Engaging in this work as a Jewish organization is fundamentally about helping others, but it also can deeply benefit your group. Aligning with the food justice movement and local food security efforts challenges your organization to be relevant and respond to your community's needs, to live Jewish values, and to provide meaningful opportunities for members, congregants, and students.

Before you begin to organize your community, it is important to develop an understanding of food justice and establish Jewishly-inspired motivations to take action. Fit to Eat will ensure that when you do take action, it will be informed and sustainable. Chapter 1 provides a foundation in the language and terminology used to describe the complex, varied challenges facing our food system. It provides brief definitions of many of these terms, and makes the link between modern day food justice issues and Jewish tradition.

The remaining chapters contain programs and resources for you to implement in your community with connections to many great organizations working on the varied challenges facing our food system. Chapter 2 offers ideas for creating and mobilizing a Food Action Team at your institution. Chapter 3 provides a framework for organizing learning opportunities to spark dialogue in your community. Chapter 4 focuses on action-oriented programs you can implement at your Jewish organization to become more sustainable and just.

While there are many components of food justice, this guide is focused specifically on injustice to consumers (as opposed to farmers or laborers), and actions to take towards increasing food security for all. For our purposes, throughout this Guide, we may use the phrase "food justice" to summarize and incorporate the values of food security and food sovereignty (further explained in Chapter 1). This Guide is not an end in itself; rather, it is

a jumping-off point for you to explore and confront these issues in your community. We have to acknowledge the need to go beyond purchasing a CSA share or growing your own garden to assure that our food system is producing food that is “fit to eat”. We must continue to address issues from seed to table, and we must continue to develop innovative and impactful ways to deeply engage with others working toward systemic change.

CHAPTER 1

Looking at the Modern Food System in a Jewish Framework

In Jewish tradition, the blessing of Asher Yatzar (literally, the One who created), which is customarily recited after using the bathroom, acknowledges the complex systems with which our bodies are designed. The blessing expresses wonder at the inter-connectedness of our bodies' systems, such that if just one organ were to go wrong, it would be impossible to survive.

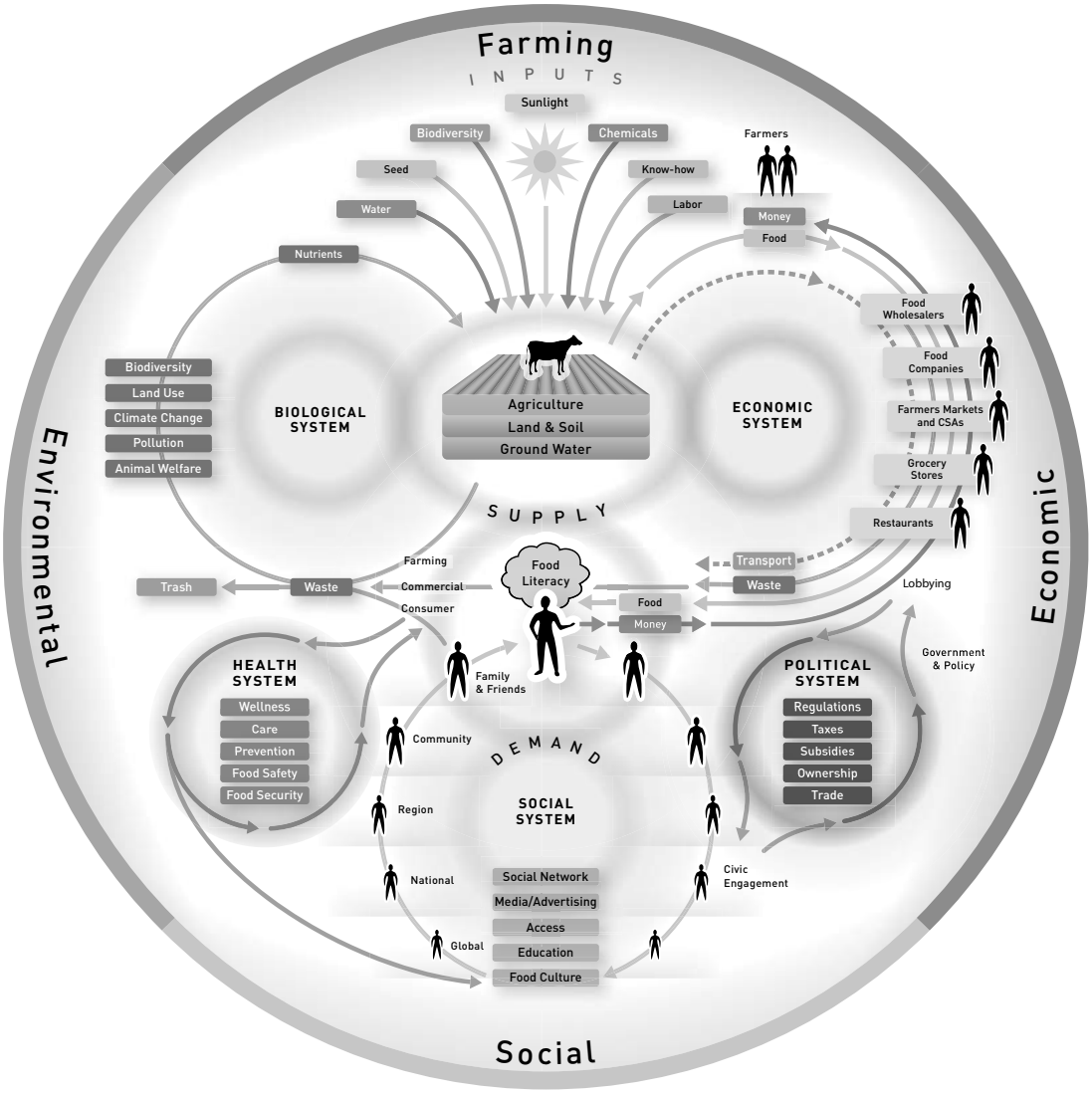
Like our bodies, the Food System is also a complex network that sustains us every day – and requires that all parts be functioning for us to survive. The **food system**, as defined by the Growing Food and Justice for All Initiative, "consists of the processes in place that bring food to your table each day. In other words, all the pieces that are involved from seed to table inherently bring people together across race, culture, borders, and industries, while bringing all of us in direct contact with our environment. A food system is the sum of the guiding forces and values that inform the production, harvest, processing, transporting, marketing, consuming and disposing of the food we consume at each meal."[1] It also includes the inputs needed and outputs generated at each step. The food system operates within and is influenced by social, political, economic and natural environments.[2]

As the *Asher Yatzar* blessing acknowledges, when even just one piece of the system is broken it can make it hard to survive. Unfortunately, the current food system is full of many holes and gaps, and affects every person all around the world. Over a billion people struggle to survive in the face of hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity every day.

While food justice has a rich history of its own, Jewish values of *Tzedek* (justice) and *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world) provide a framework for meaningful conversations within the Jewish community about how to mend the holes and gaps in the food system. When we think about food justice, or advocating for justice within the food system, we must take in to account all aspects of this complex web. The following sections will provide an overview of terms and frameworks you will encounter as you dig in deeper to the challenges facing our food system and the changes needed to make it more just for everyone.

Nourish Food System Map

What's Your Relationship to Food? Look Closer.



www.nourishlife.org

nourish
food + community

A food system entails a lot more than a farmer, grocer, and consumer. This richly detailed visualization of the food system convey how large and complex it is. This graphic is available at Nourish Life. Other tools to help visualize where our food comes from and how it gets to us are available for free download at nourishlife.org.

Roots of Food Justice & Food Security in Jewish Tradition

Because the poor will never cease to be in the midst of your land, therefore I command you saying: open your hand to your brother, to your needy, and to the poor in your land.
–Deuteronomy 15:11

In Jewish tradition the idea that we should love our neighbor as our self, *v'ahavta l'reicha ca'mocha*, is a foundational support for other Jewish values like *Tzedek* (justice), *Tzedakah* (generosity), and *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world). The current discourse about food justice did not develop necessarily from within the Jewish community. However, in looking at modern day issues in the current food system with a Jewish lens, we can start to find answers to tough questions and helpful paradigms for thinking about how we can create a healthier and more sustainable world.

While it's easy to spot what isn't working in the modern food system, it can be difficult to define exactly what a working system might entail. What does food justice look like? That all the people who play a role in the system are treated fairly, that everyone should have enough to eat and have access to healthy food, might be a place to start. In the idealized vision of the world, the Garden of Eden, human beings had enough to eat. They lived in harmony with the natural world. They are told that they can eat from all that grows, and to be caretakers of the earth. This is a place where Jewish tradition can help us start to think about our modern food system.

FOOD SECURITY

In the Torah we find a model of what it means for a society to have food access and be food secure when God provides manna in the dessert. God makes the rains fall in the right season. God makes the land fertile. And God also commands Jews to distribute the land to everyone. In this society, each person had enough for him or herself – no more, and no less. The fact that in today's world people starve to death all over the world, yet there is enough food grown each year to feed everyone, is a gross injustice – and a far cry from the suggested society outlined in the Torah.

Even though we produce 1.5 times enough food for every man, woman, and child on the planet, nearly a billion people go hungry while over a billion are malnourished.[15] Ironically, most of those who are hungry in the Global South are the very people producing half the world's food: peasant farmers. Similarly, most of the food insecure people in the developed world are food and farm workers, and many suffer from obesity and diet-related disease.

Food security means that all people in a household are able to obtain a nutritionally adequate, culturally acceptable diet at all times through local, non-emergency sources. Food security rests on three pillars being present (adapted from the World Health Organization)[16]:

- **Food Resources:** A person has the ability to secure sufficient financial resources to purchase enough nutritious food to support a healthy diet on a consistent basis [from a combination of earned income and/or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), or other government assistance].
- **Food Access:** A person has the ability to obtain affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate foods safely and conveniently from food retailers, food pantries, and meal programs. The availability of and access to food can be impacted by changes in the price of food, availability of food for sale in local markets, the location of markets in relationship to where people live, the cost of farming inputs like seeds, and the availability of land for farming.
- **Food Consumption:** A person has the ability to prepare healthy meals and knowledge of basic nutrition, safety, and cooking. This includes usable kitchens, nutrition, and cooking education.

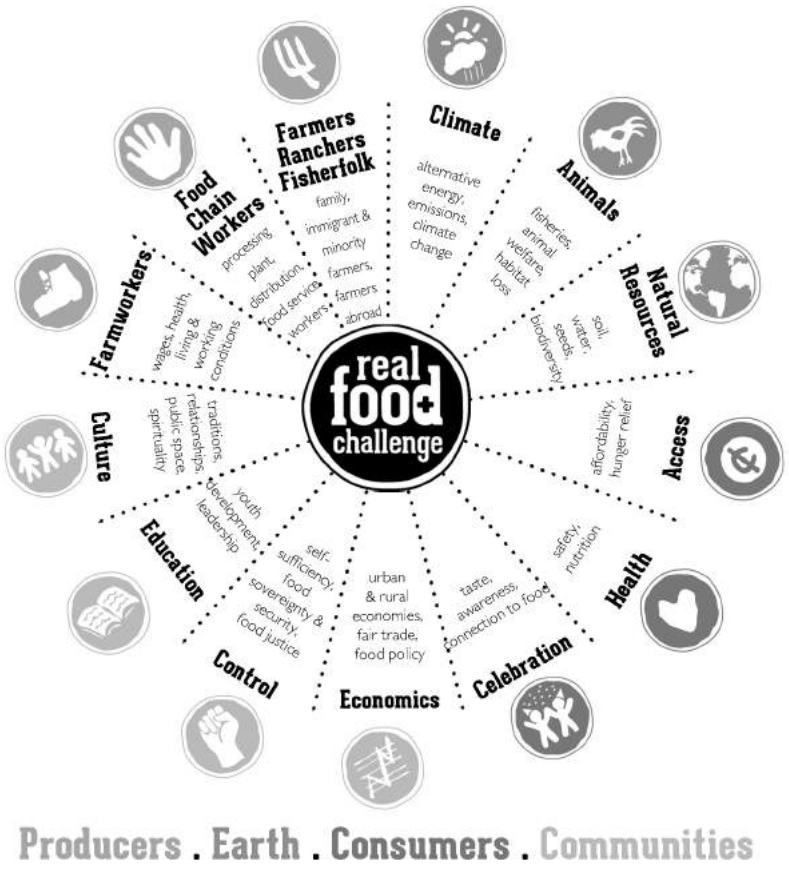
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

While the Jews were wandering in the desert only eating Manna, it was certainly a less than ideal situation—in fact, it was a punishment. However, every person had enough food to eat. In some ways this can be seen as a model of a food secure society. In other ways, it more closely resembles a welfare state since God provided the food for the people, and without that support they may not have had enough to eat.

- Which do you think is a more appropriate description of the ancient Jewish society?
- Using the above definitions, how might we start to think about creating a modern world that is also food secure?
- In our world today, what might serve as our “modern manna”?

Challenges: Food Injustice & Food Insecurity

There is no singular definition of “food injustice” because it has many different aspects. Examples of food injustices are expounded upon below.



The Real Food Challenge is an organization that works to leverage the power of youth and universities to create a healthy, fair, and green food system (realfoodchallenge.org). They effectively break down the different stakeholders within the food system, which are:

- **Producers:** including farmworkers, food chain workers, farmers, rancheros, and fisherfolk
- **The Earth:** including climate, animals, and natural resources
- **Consumers:** encompassing issues of access, health, and celebration
- **Communities:** encompassing issues of economics, control, education, and culture

Examples of Injustice to Producers and Workers

In Leviticus 19:13 the Torah states, “You should not oppress your neighbor, nor rob him; a hired worker’s wages shall not remain with you until morning”. This verse serves as a foundational text in the modern conversation about workers’ rights.

People who grow, transport, and sell food are disproportionately food insecure because they earn low or poverty wages.[9] Gender discrimination, race-based discrimination, disrespect for workers' rights, and exposure to toxic chemicals are all additional challenges food chain workers face. Farmers throughout the world also suffer when markets are flooded with food aid in the form of overwhelming quantities of subsidized industrial crops. Food aid drives down the price local farmers can get for food grown for local consumption, further impoverishing subsistence farmers.

Reverse Hunger was an American Jewish World Service advocacy campaign aimed at reforming U.S. food and agricultural policies to better address the crisis of global hunger. In early 2014, reforms that AJWS fought hard for were passed into law when President Obama signed the U.S. Farm Bill, enabling US aid to reach at least half a million more people worldwide! The new policy will enable food to reach people in need faster and more efficiently, and it will increase the percentage of food purchased locally from farmers in developing countries.[10]

www.ajws.org/reversehunger

Examples of Injustice to the Earth

Industrial farms disregard the need for balance. Land is used continuously and not given proper rest. Crops are not rotated to replenish the soil; instead, manure and chemical fertilizers are overapplied.[11] Farmers are forced to use more and more pesticides and increasingly toxic chemicals to control insects and weeds that develop resistance. As "superbugs" and "superweeds" develop, a farmer will spend more on pesticides each year just to keep crop loss from pests at a standard rate.[12] Read more about this at Pesticide Action Network, which is advancing alternatives to pesticides worldwide.

Another example of earth injustice comes from the **unhealthy ways we treat animals**. Industrial animal farming demands efficiency and stresses animals, leading to the need for inhumane practices such as gestation crates, beak clipping, and forced feeding. Factory farms concentrate an unnatural number of animals in one place, which creates an unmanageable amount of waste. Animal farms also emit gases and particles such as methane and hydrogen sulfide at high rates, which contribute to global warming and harm the health of those living or working nearby.

Examples of Injustice to Consumers

Lacking financial resources to afford fresh, healthy food was the number one cause of food insecurity for an estimated 14.5% (33.1 million) of American households in 2012.[14] **Food deserts**, or large areas without an easily accessible grocery store, lead to an under-consumption of nutrient-dense foods, which are often supplemented with high-calorie, high-fat foods, and

sugar-sweetened beverages. Diet-related diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease are on the rise, particularly in low-income households and communities where healthy food access is most significantly limited.[14]

One way to think about this notion within a Jewish context is to recall the popularly cited verse, "You shall not curse the deaf, and you shall not place a stumbling block before the blind" (Leviticus 19:14). That is to say, that in regard to our modern food system we must think about what "stumbling blocks" we have put in place for already disadvantaged people who should have access to fresh, healthy food.

Examples of Injustice to Communities

The globalization of agriculture has forced every region to specialize in whichever commodity its farmers can produce most cheaply. The economic pressure to switch to monocropping makes it tough for farmers to continue to grow their cultures' native crops. This system has endangered cultures' ancestral crops by introducing genetically modified seeds and corresponding pesticides.

Behind Jewish Agricultural Law

There are many examples of systemic injustice as the result of people not being good stewards of the earth, or "shomrei adamah". This section explains a variety of ways in which the agricultural laws laid out in the Torah, which provide a theoretical framework for creating a just and fair society, can help us think about how to create a more just food system in today's world.

When agriculture was developed (according to the Torah, this is when Adam and Eve are kicked out of the Garden of Eden), a division began to exist among those who had land, and therefore food and security, and those who did not. The agricultural laws in the Torah helped bridge the gap between the rich and the poor, ensuring that the very poor had social safety nets for their most basic food needs. While not every facet of these ancient laws may be applicable to the modern world, they certainly provide ways to start thinking about a functional food system.

The Jewish values that inform the agricultural laws are:

- **You were once a stranger** – and, hence, know what it's like to have less than you need. In Jewish tradition we are reminded often that having being slaves ourselves should be a motivating factor for treating others kindly.
- **God, not people, created the land** - therefore food from the land must be distributed to everyone, whom God also created. When there is enough food to go around, it should go around.
- **Justice, justice, you shall pursue** - a phrase famously stated by Aaron when telling the people how to structure their society.

- **Love your neighbor as yourself** - this first appears in the Torah at the end of a lengthy list of codes of conduct between humans (as opposed to between a person and God). Whether your "neighbor" is a friend or a community member who is less well-off, we are commanded to treat them as we treat ourselves.

Netiya is an interfaith network that advances urban agriculture through faith based institutions in LA. Their flagship garden, the Shared Earth Project, is a Just Gardens partnership between the Unitarian Universalist Church of Studio City and Congregation Beth Ohr, two LA congregations that share the land. According to the shared Judeo-Christian value of tithing, all food grown on the 1200 square feet of an edible orchard with 800 square feet of a brilliant edible polyculture garden is grown for the North Hollywood Interfaith Food Pantry, to feed the neighborhood. There are no fences at the Shared Earth Project as it was expressly designed to invite people from the community to step inside and be fed by their surroundings.

The Torah teaches us that caring about the earth and each other is our birthright and responsibility. Below are a few of the ancient Jewish agricultural laws that promoted fair and equal food distribution:

1. The law of **Pe'ah** commands that we leave the edges of the field for the orphan, widow, stranger and poor, the most marginalized in Biblical society.

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not pick your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I the Lord am your God. (Leviticus 19:9-10)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Perhaps you have a friend who has a practice of leaving generous tips for service workers. She tips cab drivers, hotel housekeeping staff, waiters, baristas, way more than may be customary. This particular practice is her interpretation of *pe'ah*, leaving the "corners" of her "field". Do you share your "corners", leaving extra for the hard-working poor? Can you? What ideas do you have for how *pe'ah* could be practice by non-farmers today?

2. The law of **Shikhecha** (sheek'che'cha) is the practice of leaving the sheaves and olives that fall on the ground during harvest.

When you reap the harvest in your field and overlook a sheaf in the field, do not turn back to get it; it shall go to the stranger, the orphan, and the widow—in order that the Lord your God may bless you in all your undertakings. (Deuteronomy 24:19)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Many of us are divorced from the land; many of us are not farmers. But, do you or your neighbors have any fruit trees in your backyard? Does fruit go to waste after you've used all you can? How could you practive shikhecha in your own backyard?

3. **Orlah** is the act of letting the fruit trees grow for three years before eating of them. In the fourth year, all the fruit was to be set aside for the priests who shared the fruits with those in need. Not until the fifth year could a person eat fruit from the trees he or she owned. Rabbinic sages Shamai and Hillel said we needed a date to determine the age of trees for this taxation purpose and trees planted before Tu B'Shvat, the birthday of the trees, on a were considered one year old on that date.

When you enter the land and plant any tree for food, you shall regard its fruit as forbidding. Three years it shall be forbidden for you, not to be eaten. In its fourth year all its fruit shall be set aside for Jubilation before the Lord; and only in the fifth year may you use its fruit-that its yield to you may be increased (Leviticus 19:23-25)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

In the modern world of fast paced technology and instant gratification, what might orlah teach us about patience and waiting? In particular, a desire to grow food (animals and crops) bigger and faster has been particularly damaging to our food system. How might incorporating the practice of orlah impact the modern food system?

4. **Ma'aser**, or tithing, is a practice whereby produce is taxed, and the Jewish people are obligated to give a portion to the community. "*Eser*" in Hebrew means "ten" and to "tithe" means "to give ten-percent" to the needy.

At the end of three years you shall bring forth all the tithe of your produce in that year, and shall lay it up inside your gates; And the Levite, because he has no part nor inheritance with you, and the stranger, and the orphan, and the widow, who are inside your gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied. (Deuteronomy 14:28)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Tithing is a concept that has been used over millennia by Christians, as well as Jews. In what ways could tithing be relevant today for our food system? How would or could tithing today look different than it might have in the ancient world?

These are not easy questions. But, given that the agricultural laws in the Torah are rooted in *tzedek* (justice), and because we are commanded to pursue justice, we should look back to these laws as we think about new ideas for creating a healthier, more sustainable, and more just world.

KASHRUT AND FOOD JUSTICE

Though kashrut has very little to do with agriculture, it is a significant and mysterious part of the Jewish tradition in relation to food. Kosher literally translates as "fit to eat". Traditionally, the laws of kashrut-prescribed in the Torah and expounded upon by the rabbis-have served as guidelines for what is traditionally deemed fit to eat by Jews. Through the practice of keeping kosher, Judaism elevates the act of eating to a spiritual plane by asking us to adopt a discipline around eating. Further, we are encouraged to be mindful about what we put in our mouths through the practice of saying blessings over our food before eating, and to cultivate gratitude through the practice of offering a prayerful "thank you "after we eat.

But the world of food and agriculture is rapidly changing. In our modern world, we must again ask ourselves: what qualifies as "fit" - or kosher - for eating? For some people this may mean asking, "Is food that is kosher by traditional definitions also ethically kosher?"

FOOD JUSTICE IN JEWISH HISTORY: LADIES' KOSHER MEAT STRIKE OF 1902

After two weeks of boycotting kosher butchers, on May 15, 1902, Jewish housewives on the Lower East Side poured into the streets, breaking windows and setting meat on fire, protesting a jump in the price of kosher meat from 12 to 18 cents a pound. The artificial inflation in price was due to the workings of the "Beef Trust," an oligopolous meat market controlled by industrial barons. Encouraged by the Lower East Side, women in other neighborhoods began their own boycotts. As a result of the boycott, by June, the price of meat dropped to 14 cents. The May 1902 boycott highlighted the ability of Jewish women to organize and coordinate a movement throughout the New York boroughs, and many of the women involved would later become active in the New York labor rights movement.

A primary aspect of kashrut has to do with animals. Leviticus [11] outlines the specific animals are deemed kosher, and for those that are, the rabbis expound that they must be slaughtered in a particular manner to make them kosher for eating. The ritual around *shechita* (ritual kosher slaughter) was designed to provide the least painful death to an animal. In America today, where factory farming has unfortunately become a common practice even for kosher meat, we may have to think again about what it means for something to be "fit to eat". What food is technically kosher and what food fits the spiritual definition of kashrut may not always be the same.

Famously, another big part of kashrut is the requirement to separate milk and meat products. This comes from the prohibition against boiling a kid in its mother's milk. Many believe that this is intended to teach us that we should show care and compassion, and that there is a kind of cruelty or insensitivity implied in using the mother's milk to cook her offspring.

Recently, some groups working to expand the definition of kashrut beyond these three traditional rules have begun to focus on the treatment of everyone who was involved in the process of creating a meal, from the farmer to the restaurant worker. The **Magen Tzedek** – or "shield of justice" - was a food label or heksher created by leaders from the Conservative Movement that would be given to kosher food manufacturers that also reflected Jewish ethics and social justice values. Similarly, the **Tav HaYosher** – the "ethical seal"- was launched by the Orthodox social justice organization Uri L'Tzedek as a certificate given to kosher restaurants which restaurants pay their workers at least minimum wage, and give adequate breaks and overtime pay.

While these groups and many others are creating broader approaches to kashrut, there are still lots of questions to explore regarding kashrut and ethical eating.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Can newer food labels like "GMO free" or "Fair Trade Certified" be a *heksher* (kosher certification) on their own? What could or should having a traditional *heksher* mean today? What is the place of food that may be kosher by traditional standards, but not in line with contemporary food ethics?

"What does Fast Food have in common with Jim Crow? The political disenfranchisement addressed by the Civil Rights movement, and the cheap, unhealthy food plaguing our underserved communities both reflect structural inequities that marginalize people of color. Poverty — the cause of hunger and poor diet — is built-in through 'redlining' by banks and retail outlets and the outmigration of finance, business, jobs and services caused by zoning and suburban development schemes that favor higher earning, primarily white workers, over lower-income people of color. In this sense, the fight for good, fresh, affordable food is a social and economic continuation of the struggle to end discrimination. Turning the 'invisible hand' of this skewed marketplace into a helping hand that creates and keeps wealth in underserved communities requires economic and political restructuring for equal opportunities."

– Anim Steel, Food First, 2010[18]

Food Insecurity

Many communities are impacted by **food insecurity**, or the condition under which people skip or reduce the size of their meals for lack of financial resources. This term is deemed more accurate than "hunger", or a lack of adequate calories. An estimated 14.5%, or 49 million people in the United States, were food insecure for some time during 2012, meaning they lacked access to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members.[14]

What makes this term so complicated is that different stakeholders have different views on what "reliable access" and "affordable, nutritious food" mean. To big agriculture corporations and big businesses, food can have a very different meaning than to those in the medical and wellness world. In the Mishne Torah, the most famous work of the Rambam, it states, "maintaining a healthy and sound body is among the ways of God". If striving to live a healthy life is a universal way of creating a relationship with the Divine, what happens when there are political decisions making it difficult for people to do so?

In the United States, food insecurity disproportionately impacts people of color. Households of color in the U.S. experience rates of food insecurity more than twice that of white households.[14] While 11.2% of white households experienced food insecurity in 2012, 24.6% of black households and 23.3% of Latino households faced food

PolicyLink, **Food Trust**, and **The Reinvestment Fund** created the nation's first comprehensive healthy food access retail portal. From offering practical information on funding opportunities to innovative retail strategies and policy efforts, the portal provides a wealth of resources designed to improve healthy food access in communities, build local economies, and enhance public health.

Visit healthyfoodaccess.org for resources to improve healthy food retail in your community.

insecurity. This is as a result of decades of systemic racism, including but not limited to lack of financial means due to workplace discrimination, educational disparities, and lack of access to affordable housing. Studies have consistently shown that there are fewer supermarkets and other retail outlets selling affordable, nutritious food in low-income communities than in affluent ones, and in predominantly African American and Latino neighborhoods than in predominantly white ones.[14]

Better access corresponds to better emotional and physical health. Studies find that community members with greater access to supermarkets or a greater abundance of healthy foods in neighborhood food stores consume more fresh produce and other healthful items. Increasing access to healthy, fresh, affordable food leads to improvement in diet, better health outcomes, improved economic development, and strengthened communities.[17]

In many, though certainly not all cases, the American Jewish community has reliable access to healthy food. In moving forward to think about how we can create solutions, it is important to consider that in many cases these big issues do not primarily or most significantly impact the Jewish community. However, as part of the global community it is important to take action toward addressing these serious issues. Jewish tradition also tells us that we need to take this oppression seriously, even if it happens outside of our community.

THE DECLINE OF FARMERS[8]

"When we walked as a nation away from the land, our knowledge of food production fell away from us like dirt in a laundry-soap commercial. Now it's fair to say, the majority of us don't want to be farmers, see farmers, pay farmers, or hear their complaints. Except as straw-chewing figures in children's books, we don't quite believe them anymore. When we give it a thought, we mostly consider the food industry to be a thing rather than a person. We obligingly give 86 cents of our every food dollar to that thing, too – the processors, marketers, and transporters. And we complain about the high price of organic meats and vegetables that might send back more than three nickels per buck back to the farmers: those actual humans putting seeds in the ground, harvesting, attending livestock births, standing in the fields at dawn casting their shadows upon our sustenance. There seems to be some reason we don't want to compensate or think about these hardworking people. In the grocery store checkout corral, we're more likely to learn which TV stars are secretly fornicating than to inquire as to the whereabouts of the people who grew the cucumbers and melons in our carts. This drift away from our agricultural roots is a natural consequence of migration from the land to the factory, which is as old as the Industrial Revolution."

Barbara Kingsolver | *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life*

Solutions: Creating Food Justice and Food Security

Now that we have a better understanding of the modern problems with the current food system such as food injustice and food insecurity, and have learned about Jewish tradition's rich ideas around justice, we can begin to think about how to create real and effective change.

A "food justice framework" is a system in which the benefits and risks of our shared food system – how food is grown and processed, transported, distributed, and consumed – are shared equitably. There is no "right" or "only" way to understand what food justice is or can be, though generally it is considered to be a transformation in our food system towards comprehensive local food distribution, care for the whole community, stewardship of the environment, and above all else, elimination of disparities and inequities in healthy food access and nutrition education.[6]

For an easy-to-understand way to start to frame these problems, check out the modern Talmud sheet on the next page created by the Jewish Food Justice Fellows as part of a pilot development-oriented program designed and implemented by the Leichtag Foundation to support vibrant Jewish life in North County, San Diego and to combat poverty and increase food access and self-sufficiency.

Definitions of food justice are still evolving. Growing Food and Justice for All is an initiative that explains "Food justice asserts the lack of healthy food sources in poor communities as a human rights issue. It is inspired by historical grassroots movements and organizing traditions such as those developed by the civil rights movement and the environmental justice movement".[3] Just Food, a leading food organization, defines food justice as "communities exercising their right to grow, sell and eat healthy food". Food justice is also defined as "healthy food is fresh, nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate, and grown locally with care for the well-being of the land, workers and animals. People practicing food justice leads to a strong local food system, self-reliant communities, and a healthy environment."[4] None of these definitions are so different from each other, but they aren't exactly the same either.

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

Considering the various definitions of food justice, which definition do you think most accurately describes its meaning?

While the food justice movement did not grow out of the Jewish community, there is an increasing number of individuals and groups within the Jewish community who are starting to see these broader issues as intrinsically connected to the lives of Jews as Jews, and as global citizens. Read this story below by Rabbi Rachel Kahn-Troster and Rabbi Lev Meirowitz Nelson from T'ruah, for one example.

jewish food justice

noun
('jo͞o-iSH fo͞od 'jestis)

a framework, grounded by the Jewish tradition of social justice, within which communities transform their food systems to ensure that they provide healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate and environmentally sustainable food to everyone. The pursuit of food justice engages with how food is grown, processed, transported, distributed and accessed.

modern talmud:

What is Jewish Food Justice? How do you bring it back to your community?

When you reap the harvest of your land you shall not reap all the way to the corners of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest: you shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger.–Leviticus 23:22

When you give food to a hungry person, give him your best and sweetest food from your table.–Rambam, Mishnah Torah Hilchot Isurai Mizbayach 7:11 ,

Do you donate?

or

To one for whom bread is suitable, give bread; to the one who needs dough, give dough; to one for whom money is required, give money; to one for whom it is fitting to put the food in that one's mouth, put it in. –Sifre on Parshat Re'eh

Nearly 1 in 6 Americans

are food insecure

36% of Americans are obese

*Data from USDA and CDC

CO2 Emissions (kg) produced per 1 kg of food. * Data from USDA Ag Research Service

55 ft² of rainforest **destroyed** for every **hamburger**

-Rainforest Action Network

The industrial eater is, in fact, one who does not know that **eating is an agricultural act**.
–Wendell Berry Pleasures of Eating

5 WAYS TO BRING JEWISH FOOD JUSTICE TO YOUR COMMUNITY


support local farmers


community garden


film screening


food drive


support good food policy

Jewish Food Justice Fellowship

A Leichtag Foundation Initiative

It's not every day that a group of rabbis gets kicked out of a supermarket, but it's also a bit unusual to see a group of rabbis singing in Hebrew in the tomatoes section of a Publix in Naples, Florida. In September, 2011, fifteen rabbis from *T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights* travelled to Immokalee, Fla., to meet with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), a community-based organization of mainly Latino, Mayan Indian and Haitian immigrants advocating for dignified wages and working conditions in the tomato fields. They spent the day learning about CIW's Campaign for Fair Food, which includes not only a penny-per-pound of tomatoes wage increase, but also a code of conduct in the fields, enshrining zero tolerance policies for sexual abuse, wage theft and slavery, among other basic rights.

To bring attention to the campaign and to highlight the disturbing fact that the grocery industry has steadfastly refused to sign Fair Food Agreements, the rabbis held a prayer circle around the tomatoes, singing songs of justice. Apparently, the manager of the store didn't mind a group of rabbis in *tallitot* (prayer shawls) circling the tomatoes, but once they started singing and drawing more curious onlookers, it got to be too much for her and the rabbis were asked to leave.

As rabbis, we are not experts on the problems faced by workers or the economics of the Florida tomato industry. But we can be the CIW's allies in the struggle for justice: joining in protests with other activists around the country, demanding corporations live up to their professed values, insisting that the food we eat be harvesting with dignity.

Throughout the Global South, a rapidly growing trend of "large scale land acquisitions," more popularly known as land grabbing, is undermining land rights and food sovereignty of local communities. The World Bank and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy are great resources to learn about food sovereignty issues throughout the Global South.

Food sovereignty is a term originally coined by members of Via Campesina, the International Peasant's Movement, to refer to a policy framework advocated by a number of farmers, peasants, pastoralists, fisherfolk, Indigenous Peoples, women, rural youth, and environmental organizations in the Global South (the nations of Africa, Central and Latin America, and most of Asia - collectively known as the Global South). It asserts "the right of people to define their own food, agriculture, livestock, and fisheries systems" in contrast to having food largely subject to global market forces. Advocates of food sovereignty "put the individuals who produce, distribute and consume food at the center of decisions on food systems and policies, rather than the corporations and market institutions that have come to dominate the global food system."[7] It is about shifting power away from corporations and back to communities in order to shape food policy and shape the terms under which everyone gets to eat.

While we work towards a vision of self-sufficiency, we must also work to meet people's day-to-day food needs. The Food Safety Net encompasses a wide network of critical programs to help when families struggle to find the resources to support themselves. In these cases, food often becomes a "nonessential" item; if a person with a limited income must choose between paying a fixed expense, like rent, and buying food, they often choose to pay the fixed expense.

Examples of Food Safety Net programs include:

- Free and reduced-cost school meals, including the "Summer Food Service Program" to feed students when school is not in session
- Home-delivered meals for seniors and disabled individuals
- Food pantries, food banks, free or affordable farm stands
- Free dining rooms and group meals, sometimes known as Soup Kitchens
- Government nutrition assistance programs, such as SNAP and WIC
- Systems for rescuing food that would otherwise go to waste in a landfill and delivering to those in need of food, such as non-profit organizations

Many Jewish organizations have a long history of engaging in food safety net programs. Check with your synagogue, JCC, Day School, or other institution to see what already exists in your community.

Key Legislation Directly Impacting Food Security

In Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) which is traditionally read on Jewish holidays, it says, "If you see in a province oppression of the poor and suppression of right and justice, don't wonder at the fact; for one high official is protected by a higher one, and both of them by still higher ones" (Kohelet 5:7). While this verse can be interpreted in many ways, it is a good reminder that oppression is often systematic, and requires structural change to eliminate. Below you will read about a few policies efforts which are working to make our society more just.

FARM BILL

In the United States, the **Farm Bill** is one of the largest pieces of federal legislation, with a projected budget of almost $1 trillion over 10 years, which has everything to do with what types of food are accessible and affordable. Congress reauthorizes the Farm Bill every 5 to 7 years. In 2012-2013, significant efforts were made by members of congress and individuals on the ground to promote reauthorization of a comprehensive Farm Bill that prioritized healthy food access, sustainable farming practices, and equity, even as Congress proposed devastating cuts to food programs like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), conservation programs, and beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers.[20]

The Farm Bill covers 15 categories, or "Titles", two of which include commodities (price support for main crops, like corn, soybeans, and wheat), and nutrition programs (SNAP and school lunch programs). One reason behind tying together nutrition and agriculture subsidies is the need to address the interconnected sides of the economics of food — production and consumption, rural and urban.

Why are high-fat foods and sugar-sweetened beverages so much cheaper than healthier foods, like fruits and vegetables? The Farm Bill makes grains (like corn and therefore sugars and fats) cheap, but does not provide much support for fresh fruits and vegetables. These cheap grains, sugars, and fats are comparatively higher in calories and lower in nutritional value than produce. They get turned into "food" we wouldn't even recognize, like syrups, oils, and starches.

In the words of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), "The Farm Bill was designed to reign in price volatility, manage supply and protect nature while providing vital nutrition programs for the country's poor. Instead, it's been ravaged by constant corporate assault and a Congress too emboldened with industry money to stand up for our best interests. The result? An agriculture system that is highly productive at the expense of health, the environment and rural communities."[21]

As Jewish Americans, we recognize that our country's food and agricultural policies have a profound impact on people at home and abroad. Reforming our broken food system would constitute a major step forward in repairing a world where too many needlessly suffer from hunger and poverty. In 2012, the Jewish Working Group on the Farm Bill was formed by eight Jewish organizations including Hazon, American Jewish World Service (AJWS), Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL), Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA), Mazon, and Union for Reform Judaism came together urge the U.S. Congress and Administration to take the opportunity presented by the reauthorization of the Farm Bill to prioritize policies that reduce hunger and poverty, and encourage sustainable stewardship. To promote food justice in the United States and worldwide, they supported the following principles for the 2012 Farm Bill:

- Strengthen and expand programs that reduce hunger and improve nutrition in the United States.
- Strengthen and increase investment in policies that promote conservation and good stewardship of the land.
- Reform support systems to enable farmers in both the United States and the developing world to earn sustainable livelihoods.
- Protect the health, safety and dignity of those responsible for working the land.
- Promote research on clean, renewable energy sources that do not negatively impact food staple prices and availability or the environment.
- Reform the international food aid system in ways that encourage flexibility and promote local food security.

For two years, the Farm Bill was delayed, negotiated behind closed doors, allowed to expire, and ultimately extended in 2013. The failure to pass an equitable Farm Bill in 2013 left critical programs without baseline funding. These key programs support community food, conservation, and small farmers. In February 2014, President Obama signed into law the reconciled House and Senate 2014 Farm Bill.

WHY DOES A TWINKIE COST LESS THAN A CARROT?[22]

By Michael Pollan

"Why is it that a bunch of carrots – this simple root that you can just pull from the ground without a lot of complexity or industry – costs more than a package of Twinkies – an incredibly complex creation of food science and technology that has 40 ingredients and a great deal of ingenuity in its design, packaging, and shipping? The reason is that the government is helping the Twinkie makers and not doing very much for the carrot growers. Our agricultural policies are subsidizing the cheap calories of fat and carbohydrates that we're eating too much of. We are not subsidizing, or helping, the growers of specialty crops – fresh food, whole food, and produce. Too much corn and soybeans leads to sodas that are expanding. Why is that? High fructose corn syrup is so cheap, that the economics of super sizing dictate you can make more money selling a big soda than a small soda. We have a set of agricultural policies that are making us sick. On one hand, you have the surgeon general decrying the obesity epidemic. On the other hand, you have a Farm Bill that is, in effect, subsidizing high fructose corn syrup. You don't do that if you really care about obesity. You subsidize carrots instead."

FOOD SAFETY NET PROGRAMS

The last Hunger in America study, released in 2010, reported that one hundred percent of responding food banks saw increases in demand for emergency food assistance. 99.4% of food banks and distribution agencies reported seeing more first time users in the last year. 74% reported seeing more newly unemployed persons. 48% of food banks and distribution agencies reported seeing a greater number of children in their food lines. 72% of food banks did not feel as though they were able to adequately meet the needs of their communities without adjusting the amount of food distributed.[26]

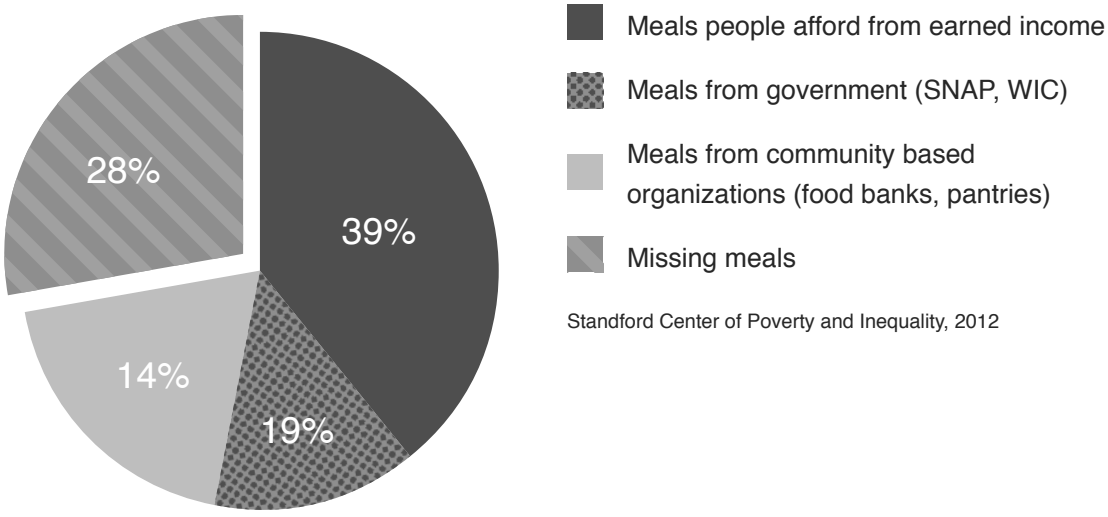
Findings from these studies suggest that families are not only visiting pantries to meet temporary, acute food needs. Instead, for the majority of people seeking food assistance, pantries are now a part of households' long-term strategies to supplement monthly shortfalls in food. Seniors, who so often are limited by fixed or no incomes, are shown to be among the most consistent pantry clients.

The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** — formally known as food stamps (and now titled differently in each state) — is a crucial piece of that safety net. SNAP is the nation's most important anti-hunger and child nutrition program that provides supplemental nutrition assistance in the form of a monthly household stipend. In 2012, nearly 1 in 7 Americans received SNAP benefits. Households who exceed 130% of the poverty line ($25,740 per year for a family of four) are ineligible for SNAP benefits. More than 80% of the 45 million Americans who participated in SNAP in 2013 had gross household incomes below the poverty level, and two out of five families had incomes that were half of that amount.[23] The monetary amount families receive from SNAP is on average a little more than $4.00 a day per recipient.

WIC, the special supplemental nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children is another program that provides federal grants to states specifically for pregnant, breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding women, and to children up to age five. In addition to food and nutrition education, WIC provides referrals to health and other social services to participants. In 2013, WIC benefits served more than 8.6 million participants per month. Of this total amount, approximately 4.6 million were children, 2 million were infants, and 2 million were women.

Because Federal Poverty Guidelines determine eligibility for federal assistance programs like SNAP and WIC, this measure is widely considered to be an inadequate indication of economic need. For example, the "Self-Sufficiency Index," created to better account for high-cost of living in California suggests an annual income of at least $73,000 (a full-time job sat about $35/hour) is necessary for a family of three (one adult, and two school aged children) to make ends meet in San Francisco County.[24] With California's current minimum wage of $10.55 per hour, it would take more than three minimum wage jobs to meet that self-sufficiency standard.

MISSING MEALS IN SAN FRANCISCO AND MARIN



Standford Center of Poverty and Inequality, 2012

Double Up Food Bucks is a Michigan-based healthy food incentive program of Fair Food Network, a national nonprofit founded on the belief that our health and economic vitality depend on creating a more just and sustainable food system. Double Up provides low-income consumers who receive SNAP benefits with additional incentive dollars to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables, making it easier to eat fresh fruits and vegetables, while supporting farmers and growing local economies. As a result, families have more purchasing power to buy fresh fruits and vegetables and Michigan growers and vendors have a larger, more diverse market for their produce.

Nationwide, non-profits, such as Ecology Center, Wholesome Wave, and Market Umbrella, oversee similar incentive programs. Rigorous evaluation across these organizations shows that when a SNAP customer purchases produce at participating farmers' market, it is good for the health of their family and the economic health of the community. Bringing together diverse stakeholders from across the food system and beyond, Fair Food Network is helping rally efforts around this important issue.

Providing these safety net food sources is a clear Jewish obligation. In the *Mishneh Torah*, Maimonides reminds us that true rejoicing comes when we open our hearts and our homes to ensure that everyone in the community can participate in feasting.

When a person eats and drinks in celebration of a festival, he is obligated to feed strangers, orphans, widows, and others who are destitute and poor. In contrast, a person who locks the gates of his courtyard and eats and drinks with his family, without feeding the poor and the embittered, is not indulging in rejoicing associated with a mitzvah, rather the rejoicing of his gut… This rejoicing is a disgrace… (Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Sh'vitat Yom Tov, Laws of Resting on Holidays, 6:18)

From this passage, we learn that when we give some of what we have, we are all better off – our rejoicing is more complete.

Food security *is* achievable. Increase in demand for services by emergency food providers translates to the need for community organizations and faith-based groups to support food banks and pantries in capacity building through food, funds, and people power. But more importantly it calls for us to fight for higher wages, affordable housing, an end to redlining and other discriminatory policies so that families aren't reliant on government subsidies or food pantries in the first place.

Shmita: Vision for a Just Society

Shmita, commonly translated as the 'Sabbatical Year,' literally means 'release.' As its most basic level, Shmita presents a set of laws that deals with methods of food production in the land of Israel. On every seventh year of a shared calendar cycle, there is no seeding or tilling

of soil. All agricultural lands are left fallow during this time. The implication of Shmita goes well beyond food production, however.

The powerful values within this Shmita cycle were integral to the vision of healthy society, as originally mapped out by the Torah. Practices of the Shmita year - reliance on perennial and wild plants; locally-eaten harvests; leaving farms' fences open to make the space common ground; and fair distribution of harvests - offer a glimpse into an ideal food system, and lay the foundational end-goal for resilient, local food security and fair food access.

The values of the Shmita year are idealistic and far from simple. These same laws of Shmita can just as easily paint a picture of food devastation and scarcity. The difference between these outcomes depends on how a community's food systems are developed and maintained through the six years of the cycle, leading up to the actual Shmita year. It depends on the values and ethics that local individuals, organizations, businesses, and governments set as their priorities.

Jewish rituals and practices primarily impact our individual spiritual lives. The next step is to consider ways that our food choices impact the world around us–the physical earth, the people who grow our food or anyone who does not have enough to eat.

HAZON SHMITA RESOURCES AND SHMITA NETWORK

We at Hazon fully realize that re-imagining Shmita will only be possible if we do this together, as a web of connected individuals, communities, and organizations. To further the possibility of our reach and impact, the Shmita Project has created a shared, widespread network of collaboration and co-creation. Our intention is to use this network to engage one another in experiential education and implementation of designs that will enable us to step into a more powerful and personal relationship with the Shmita tradition. It has been literally thousands of years since the collective Jewish community has had the opportunity to experiment with the Shmita tradition in such a practical way, and to step such into personal and direct relationship with this profound tradition.

The Shmita Project network is open to all, whether you're a Jewish non-profit organization, a Jewish educator, a Rabbi, a community leader, or an individual embracing Shmita in your own personal life. Shmita Project Network partners play a vital role in mobilizing local communities, by raising awareness around the Shmita tradition and furthering the conversation of what it might mean for us today. As a partner, you will be in direct connection with a diverse community of individuals with shared goals and interests. The Shmita Project will provide you with resources and direct support, as needed, as well as offer a platform for you to share your events and teachings with the wider community.

Learn more at shmitaproject.org.

CHAPTER 2

Organizing Your Food Action Team to Learn and Mobilize

Introduction

There are many ways to mobilize your community around food justice, whether it's community organizing, direct service, or advocacy work. This chapter will help to start you on the journey toward all of these types of action. The first step is to build a Food Action Team in order to create meaningful and educationally serious programs in your community ideally based upon the foundation of a listening tour. While food justice may be the issue that your community chooses to focus on, these techniques will work to help any community gather momentum around any particular issue.

This work is not straightforward. The actions you take to promote a more just food system will depend greatly on the needs of your community, your institution's capacity to meet those needs, and the local organizations already in place.

One common mistake that groups sometimes make is to jump straight to action without first engaging in these preparatory activities – which are really the key to the success of the action. In order to set up your Jewish organization for success in this work, we've laid out this suggested roadmap:

1. Build a core Food Action Team.

A Food Action Team at your organization will lead your institution's actions to drive the work forward. Team members share responsibilities, motivate each other, and hold one another accountable. Teams build community. Having a committed group of volunteers to drive programs is crucial to your long-term success. Your organization may already have a "Green Team" or "Social Action Team." You can build your Food Action Team as a subgroup of these existing teams, or as an entirely new team. To ensure team success, it is important to have regular meetings, clear roles, agendas and next steps, and of course, ethically sourced food!

2. Reach out to local food justice organizations in your community and listen.

An old adage of community organizing is "Power is in the relationship." What this means is that building relationships develop the community power needed to make change. In doing this work, it is important to acknowledge that people are given access to certain privileges, or not, based on their identities, but that our humanity is bound up together. To make change we must learn how to enter and work alongside communities that are not our own with respect.

Following frontline leadership is the concept of looking for leadership from organized communities who are most impacted by the issue in the fight for justice. There are thousands of organizations and collectives across the country comprised of people from most impacted communities that are organizing for change at the root of the problem: that are fighting for the right to grow food, for fair wages, for decent quality produce in supermarkets. Check out this virtual map of food justice organizations across the country to begin to identify frontline leadership near you.

www.colorlines.com

In this step, your Food Action Team should meet with friends, neighbors, fellow congregants or members, and leaders from community-based food justice organizations. The meetings should be used to hear experiences and testimonies, engage in mutual sharing about the issues your communities face, and identify new potential community leaders. This is an opportunity to ask food justice leaders in your community what support they need. Reflect together on how your organization is positioned to ally with their work. Through community listening we build relationships and surface the issues that your actions will later address.

Listening 1:1's are face-to-face meetings where leaders reach out to others to build relationships, listen for concerns, and invite participation. Visit PICO National Network for tools and resources on the PICO Community Organizing Model, building power, holding effective 1:1's, strategic questioning, and more. Connect with a local PICO organization, or a similar organization in your community for leadership and/or community organizing trainings.

3. Running Effective Programs

It is important to run programs that are well-thought out so that people in your community remain engaged and focused. One key to running effective programs is to constantly be taking stock of and evaluating your Jewish institution's existing programs, skills, strengths and weaknesses, and the "state" of local food in your community.[29] Use the following questions to take stock, spark dialogue as a team, and reflect on your own self-interest in this work (the greatest motivator), your goals as an organization to affect change, and your capacity to realize those goals. Please note: when taking stock of existing programs, we in no way intend to imply that these programs are necessary. Rather, they are an indication of where your institution's self interest lies, the foundation that you are building upon, and what may or may not work in the future.

EXISTING PROGRAMS

- Does your organization have a dedicated committee or team that works on social, community, or care of creating/environmental issues?
- What programs does your organization have for giving aid to low-income people?

- Does your organization collaborate with any emergency food organizations?
- Do you have a food pantry or soup kitchen within your organization?
- Do you have regular meals, special food events, or food traditions at your organization?
- Does your organization host a pre-school, school, adult day care, or other program that regularly serve meals?
- How would
  you describe the economic composition of your organization?
- Do you have a food exchange or distribution program (such as organization members sharing homegrown produce)?
- What has worked and not worked in all existing programs?

EXISTING SKILLS AND ASSETS

- Do members of your organization farm or garden?
- Do members of your organization have skills to share that could assist in a local food project, such as community organizing, canning, gardening, cooking, grant-writing, etc.?
- Does your organization have facilities that might be available to a local food project, such as a kitchen, cold storage, parking lot space, land for a food-producing garden, an indoor meeting space, etc.?

LOCAL FOOD IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Where do people in your congregation or community get their food? Do they use farmers' markets, grocery stores, food pantries, meal programs, CSA's, school meal programs, etc.?
- What do farms near you produce?
- What factors keep members of your organization or community from obtaining fresh, healthy, locally grown food?
- What challenges do farms in your area face? Rising land costs, lack of marketing opportunities, labor issues, an aging farm population, etc.? What strengths do they have? A diversity of crops, prosperous markets, farmers with skills to teach?
- What do you
  see as the assets specific to your organization or community that would help accomplish such a partnership with people facing food insecurity? What about challenges?

4. Reflection and Evaluation

Reflection invites you to think critically about your experience, understand the complexity of the experience and put it in a larger context, challenge your own attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, privileges, prejudices, and stereotypes, and transform a single action into further involvement and broader issue awareness.[31] **Evaluation** of your process is important to determine the extent to which your goals and objectives have been met. It is essential to build evaluation into the initial design of the project so the project's impact on both participants and the community can be measured. In addition to collecting valuable feedback,

evaluative surveys collect information about participant demographics, assess participant satisfaction and capture important statistics and quotes that aid with planning future programs and actions.

Reflection and evaluation are important to do after a program, but also useful tools for your whole initiative. Consider using the following reflective questions:

- What observable measures are there (e.g., amount of funds raised or pounds of food collected)?
- What did we hear that was positive, negative and interesting?
- What did we learn?
- What did we like?
- What should we change?
- Does our target community feel they benefited from the action? In what ways? (Actually ask them!)
- How can we assess participants' new knowledge? Deeper understandings? Changes in attitudes? Increased commitment to food or social justice?
- How successful were we in meeting our initial objectives?

This information will become increasingly valuable as you take stock of the following chapters. The rest of this guide will provide programmatic ideas to help kick start food justice programs in your community.

CHAPTER 3

Programs to Spark Dialogue and Inspire Action

Take Action

The action stage is where your institution's existing skills and assets seek to meet the needs of your community as identified in your listening campaign. Working with a local community-based organization (CBO) and your Food Action Team, plan actions that both leverage your assets and address the greatest needs in your community.

Your organization may already hold an annual food drive, collect *tzedakah* (charity), and promote service opportunities. The following actions are a small sample of the many ways you can deepen efforts you're already making. Your strategy for action can take many forms; however, we suggest the following order:

1. **Programs to spark dialogue and inspire action** with educational and awareness-building events such as film screenings, lectures, and group discussions. These actions will generate support for longer-term actions or actions that require significant investment of resources, such as starting a food-producing garden.

    - Food Justice Discussion Questions
    - Learning Groups
    - Film Screenings
    - Farm Field Trip and Work Day
    - Farmers' Market Tour

2. **Programs to take action and effect change** can involve small or large changes and are a great next step. Integrating programs that involve direct service, such as preparing and serving meals or helping with a community garden, is a great way to get participants interacting with the individuals or groups in need of support. Indirect service means engaging with a group of marginalized people from behind the scenes by helping build an organization's capacity to serve through resource development, training others in skills like gardening and social media outreach, and helping to plan for the future.

    - Food Audit and Food Policies
    - Healthy Food Drive
    - Fund Drive (Virtual Food Drive)
    - Mishloach Manot Fundraiser
    - Meal Delivery

- Challah for Hunger Chapter
- Gleaning and Food Rescue
- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
- Food Producing Garden or On-Site Farm
- Cooking and Nutrition Workshops
- Promote Small-Scale Food Businesses

KEVAH LEARNING GROUPS IN BAY AREA, CA AND BOSTON, MA

Kevah's mission is to engage Jewish identity and build community through the study of classical Jewish texts. It enables adults to explore the spiritual and intellectual richness of the Jewish textual tradition in a comfortable setting. Regardless of one's background knowledge or level of ritual observance, study of classical Jewish texts can facilitate personal growth, build Jewish community, add depth and nuance to Jewish communal policies, and improve interfaith relations. Kevah Groups build micro-communities, and empower adults to take ownership of their Jewish and spiritual lives. Kevah started in the Bay Area, and is now launching groups across the country. Visit kevah.org for information on how to start or join a Kevah group.

Learning Groups

There are many ways you can engage in learning as a group, such as going on a tour of a farmers market, visiting a farm, screening a movie, or reading a book and discussing it. Another way is by utilizing the framework of the Food Justice Discussion Points (see Appendix A). These materials offer key pieces of insight while teasing out the knowledge and experience already present in the group in order to develop a deep, systems-based understanding of food justice and Jewish tradition.

Small *beit midrash* (group learning) classes are great opportunities to get people talking about food justice issues in your community. They can be several one-time events, such as lectures with guest speakers, or an on-going series such as a monthly discussion group or book club, or a weekly lecture series, like a lunch-and-learn. Strive to invite participants with a wide range of Jewish background and involvement; a range of familiarity with the subject matter; and a balance of ages and genders. Work with your organization to find out what learning events are already planned and where new opportunities can be added.

RECOMMENDED LEARNING MATERIALS

- **Food Justice Discussion Points by Leah Bry and Liz Traison (see Appendix A).**
- **Case Studies (see Appendix B)** on the history of Jews and Food Justice as well as personal stories from Jews on the frontlines of this movement.

- **Hazon's *Food for Thought: Sourcebook on Jews, Food, and Contemporary Life*** offers additional texts, both from Jewish tradition and contemporary sources, as well as compiled text sources.
- **Hazon's *Shmita Sourcebook*** a 120-page sourcebook that draws on a range of texts from within Jewish tradition and time, tracing the development and evolution of Shmita from biblical, historical, rabbinic, and contemporary perspectives.
- ***Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life*** by Barbara Kingsolver
- ***Fair Food: Growing a Healthy, Sustainable Food System for All*** by Oran Hesterman
- ***Food Rebellions: Crisis and the Hunger for Justice*** by Annie Shattuck, Eric Holt-Giménez and Raj Patel

Film Screenings

There are many wonderful films and documentaries available that address food justice, healthy food, and other food and agriculture issues. Movie events often attract larger groups and inviting a speaker from a local food justice organization before showing the movie is a wonderful way to connect your members to the local food justice movement.

RECOMMENDED FILMS

- ***A Place at the Table:*** A Place at the Table shows us how hunger and obesity pose serious economic, social and cultural implications for our nation and how food access issues could be solved once and for all if the American public decides—as we have in the past—that making healthy food available and affordable is in all of our best interests. (Download resources for community screenings on the website).
- ***Fed Up:*** This documentary presents an analysis of our modern food production system from the Green Revolution to the Biotech Revolution, and what we can do about it.
- ***Food Chains:*** Food Chains explores critical human rights issues in American agriculture from wage theft to modern-day slavery and exposes the powers that perpetuate these un-American violations of human dignity.
- ***Food Stamped:*** In this film, nutrition educator Shira Potash and her movie-maker husband Yoav take the food stamp challenge.

Farm Field Trip and Work Day

A field trip and work day at a farm is a great educational opportunity for your community to develop a connection to the land, introduce members to sustainable agricultural practices and local food distribution, or explore connections between Jewish tradition and the food movement, and community-driven solutions to food insecurity led by farmers and food producers. Participants will love working outdoors, learning new skills, and getting their hands dirty with satisfying farm work.

Farmers' Market Tour

Farmers' markets are colorful, vibrant places that allow participants to see a local food system in operation. The trip provides a platform to explore the variety of foods available locally and ask farmers about their farm. A guided tour or self-guided activity leads participants to engage with farmers about how they grow their crops, where they come from, what's in season, why they choose to farm, labor practices on the farm, and more. Getting to know local artisans, bakers, and food purveyors can lead to participant's excitement about making healthy food choices by building a sense of connection to the people who grow their food.

URBAN ADAMAH EDUCATIONAL FARM FIELD TRIPS IN BERKELEY, CA

Urban Adamah, a Jewish educational farm and community center in Berkeley, California integrates the practices of Jewish tradition, sustainable agriculture, mindfulness and social action to build loving, just and sustainable communities. Urban Adamah offers a free farm stand with produce gleaned on site that they share with their neighbors who don't otherwise have access to fresh produce. Since they harvested their first crops, Urban Adamah has donated over 25,000 lbs. of produce. Thanks to the generous donations of area businesses, they are also able to offer bread, eggs, milk, hot food and other items.

Find out more about Urban Adamah at urbanadamah.org

FRESH APPROACH FARMERS' MARKET FIELD TRIPS IN BAY AREA, CA

Fresh Approach partners with the Pacific Coast Farmers' Market Association to offer exciting farmers' market field trips at their farmers' markets in many cities in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, San Francisco, San Joaquin, Solano, and Santa Clara Counties. Tours include an overview of the what, how, and why of farmers' markets, including a discussion of seasonality and fruits and vegetables as they relate to health. Tours can also include additional activities such as tasting or scavenger hunts.

Learn more about Fresh Approach at freshapproach.org

SNAP Challenge

"Why would Members of Congress commit to spend only $4.50 a day on food and live on the budget of the average SNAP recipient? Almost 30 of my colleagues and I are taking the SNAP Challenge — spending, on average, $1.50 a meal to highlight how critical this lifeline is for so many families." – Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif.), 201329

The Food and Research Action Center's (FRAC) SNAP Challenge (commonly called a Food Stamp Challenge) is a simulation exercise that gives participants a view of the struggle to obtain adequate food that is faced by millions of low-income Americans living on SNAP. Members of Congress like Rep. Barbara Lee, governors, state officials, journalists and other community leaders have taken the Challenge and have learned firsthand what it is like to try to make ends meet on the average food stamp benefit. Host a Challenge at your organization using the FRAC 101: SNAP Challenge Toolkit to provide participants new perspective and greater understanding of the struggles encountered by low-income families all year long. Download *The FRAC 101: SNAP Challenge Toolkit* online. The Jewish Council for Public Affairs hosted a Jewish Community Food Stamp Challenge in 2011. Resources including sample sermons given during the High Holy Days about the Food Stamp Challenge and food insecurity can be found online.

Host a Hunger Seder

Passover, which celebrates freedom, is a great opportunity to bring up issues about hunger and enslavement in the modern world, as it says in the Haggadah, "let all who are hungry, come and eat." Hunger Seder is a partnership between the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) and MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger. Held in over 40 communities, Hunger Seders educate and empower members of the Jewish community, inter-faith partners, anti-hunger leaders, and elected officials to take action to protect and strengthen anti-hunger and nutrition programs.

Hunger Seders happen all across the country and celebrate our successes and continue moving forward in the path to overcome hunger. The JCPA and MAZON created helpful resources including a Haggadah, Seder planning guide, and a supplemental reading to plan a meaningful Hunger Seder. Together we have the power to be a part of healing our fractured world and to end hunger in the United States. Free resources can be found on the JCPA website. The Hunger Seder Haggadah that MAZON and JCPA have created provides the template for the Seder experience. Crafted on the foundation of a traditional Seder, it includes teachings, insights, and information that bring issues of hunger into the prayers, readings, and discussions around the Seder table.

BEND THE ARC PASSOVER HAGGADAH

Looking for a Passover resource that will help you connect the dots between the "bread of freedom" and the work of creating a more just modern-day America? Looking for a Haggadah that will help you build food justice themes into your Passover celebration? Bend the Arc created a Food & Justice Haggadah for a Passover Seder hosted with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, on April 4, 2012. Find out more about Bend the Arc's Food and Justice Passover Haggadah on their website.

URI L'TZEDEK PASSOVER HAGGADAH

Uri L'Tzedek, in partnership with Hazon, created a Food and Justice Haggadah Supplement that features essays, insights and action to unite food, social justice, and ethical consumption. Find out more about this supplement or download it online.

The Jewish Fair Trade Project, launched in September 2014, is a partnership between Fair Trade Judaica (FTJ), T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights, and Equal Exchange (EE). The project's goals are to educate Jewish communities about a Jewish values perspective on human rights in the supply chain; empower our communities to make value-based choices in purchasing, and take action through FTJ and T'ruah to ensure the human rights of all workers.

equalexchange.coop/jewish

Fair Trade Kosher for Passover Chocolate Program

A PROGRAM OF THE JEWISH FAIR TRADE PROJECT, A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN FAIR TRADE JUDAICA, T'RUAH: THE RABBINIC CALL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, AND EQUAL EXCHANGE.

On Passover we read from the Haggadah, "*In every generation a person is obligated to see him or herself as though he/she had personally been redeemed from Eqypt.*" In recalling our people's experience, we remember that we were once slaves; we tell the details of the story, act it out, and eat charoset, symbolizing the mortar with which our ancestors made bricks for the Egyptians. Though we may not be actual slaves ourselves today, our history moves us to ask "Where does slavery exist today?" "Who is enslaved?" "What is that slavery like?"

Thousands of children in West Africa, often trafficked and without choice, work hard to bring us our favorite chocolate treats, and are a contemporary example of enslavement. They spend long hours, working in hazardous conditions, not going to school, and not experiencing the human rights that they're entitled to.

It's been a tradition in many of our communities to hold organizational fundraisers selling Kosher for Passover chocolate. In 2012, Rabbi Aaron Alexander, Associate Dean, Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies at the American Jewish University, approved specific chocolate bars offered by Equal Exchange as Kosher for Passover if acquired before *bedikat chametz* (the night before first Seder). To ensure a successful fundraising campaign, first take the time to educate your community about child labor in the cocoa industry, and how fair trade is a solution, while also linking Jewish values with Fair Trade Principles. As a community sign up as Jewish Fair Trade Project member with Equal Exchange and order a fundraising packet. As a Food Action Team organize volunteers to collects chocolate orders, and then distribute the chocolate and any additional educational materials before Passover

To learn more on child labor in the cocoa fields and Fair Trade principles visit fairtradejudiaca.org. To download a matrix linking Fair Trade principles and Jewish values and learn more Fair Trade and human rights visit truah.org

CHAPTER 4

Programs to Take Action and Effect Change

Food Audit and Food Policies

Hazon has been steadily working to compile best practices around food for Jewish institutions. **The Hazon Food Audit and Food Guide Toolkit** (newly revised in 2014) will help you navigate food choices in your synagogue, JCC, camp, Hillel, or other institution and offers practical suggestions for bringing our ancient tradition of keeping kosher to bear on the range of food choices we're making today. Hazon's *Food Audit and Food Guide Toolkit* is full of inspiration, ideas, definitions, real-life stories, and guidance. It seeks to help us to approach the daily act of feeding ourselves and our communities with the kind of sanctity, satisfaction, and gratitude our tradition celebrates. Jewish institutions — as the gathering places of our people, the places where we convene to learn, to pray to socialize, to heal, and yes, to eat — have the opportunity to do this in meaningful and perhaps even game-changing ways. Download the complete *Food Audit and Food Guide Toolkit* at hazon.org.

Create a Food Ketubah (Contract)

DAVIDA GINSBERG, MOISHE KAVOD HOUSE

The food ketubah is a community contract that binds food practices to principles of celebration, environmental sustainability, financial solvency, fair labor practices, inclusivity, health, *kashrut*, regional economy, and transparency. The Ketubah is also helpful to community members seeking to make sense of the complex array of food purchasing choices in their own lives. The Ketubah holds the community accountable to keeping in mind the local food economy when purchasing food, which includes businesses as well as farmers. The Ketubah can provide a relevant and meaningful context for community-wide learning about our local and global food system as well as our personal, immediate relationships to food. (See Appendix C for a copy of the entire food ketubah.) As a Food Action Team or as a community, gather together to create a Ketubah that will hold you accountable as you make food decisions for your community, consider:

Moishe Kavod House is a vibrant, home-based Jewish community for people in their 20s and 30s that is part of the larger Moishe House National network. MKH has a unique focus on Tikkun Olam; community members combine Jewish learning and spiritual practice, the arts, and social justice work to create meaningful impact within both other immediate community and the wider Boston Jewish community.

- **Environmental sustainability:** Choose ingredients that can come from local sources.
- **Financial solvency:** Balance the more costly purchases, such as choosing organic produce, with less expensive conventional items. In addition, if you are affiliated with a non-profit, solicit grocery stores for gift cards to offset costs.
- **Fair labor practices:** Base purchasing decisions on stores known for being cooperatives, a group run jointly by its members who work together towards common goals, and for their positive treatment of workers.
- **Kashrut:** Determine was role Kashrut plays in your community, and ensure that a wide number of people will be able to eat together.
- **Regional economy:** Purchase items such as produce, honey, and hummus from local farms and producers. You may even be able to bulk order local produce, peanut butter, honey.

Read the full text of the Moishe Kavod House Food Ketubah at hazon.org/fit-to-eat.

Build a Just Garden

DEVORAH BROUS, NETIYA

A Just Garden is a garden or orchard that is designed, built, and maintained to grow organic fruits and vegetables for donation to local food banks. Just Gardens may take many forms, from annual gardens with raised beds to mixed perennial food forests designed to save water and resources. The Just Gardens Program is designed to create systemic change in the way our member institutions engage with the food system and with tackling hunger in the community. It is based on an empowering partnership model.

With the Just Gardens program, Netiya helps faith institutions turn their underused land into productive gardens and orchards and teaches them to grow food sustainably. Netiya works with partner institutions to find the Just Garden that works for their specific circumstances.

Netiya is an interfaith network that advances urban agriculture through faith-based institutions in Los Angeles. Netiya cultivates gardens in faith-based institutions to tithe nutritious food and build community food security, and organizes faith communities to seed a more just and resilient local food system. Netiya's objectives are to address food insecurity proactively, and to organize around the ethics of our institutional-scale food choices.

Not Just A Garden– In addition to planting a garden or orchard, Netiya helps partner institutions build a culture that understands root issues around food justice, and strives to be part of a sustainable food system. The goals are to help institutions:

- Build community awareness and collaboration around food justice issues
- Learn how to produce food
- Inspire and retain volunteers to maintain the garden
- Link to anti-hunger organizations and other resources
- Use the garden/orchard as a space for community-building and learning

By installing a Just Garden, institutions become pioneers in building a more socially-responsible, regenerative and equitable food system—while stewarding land more proactively.

As part of Netiya's commitment to the practice of *ma'aser* (tithing) followed by many faith traditions, produce harvested from our Just Gardens goes through a reverse tithing–90% is utilized to address hunger, and 10% is for the institution. Netiya asks each of the 34 members in the Netiya network to sign a Covenant pledging to convert 10% of their unused institutional land into gardens and orchards. Acknowledging both the scarcity of access to arable land in urban Los Angeles, and the privilege of California's bountiful climate which makes the growing of food possible year-round, this Covenant demonstrates Just Gardens commitment to fulfilling the commandment of *Bal Taschit* ("Do not Destroy") by utilizing available and fertile land resources in the fight against hunger in our city instead of letting them lie fallow.

Healthy Food Drive

Give what you yourself would eat. This is the "Golden Rule" of food drives. When you choose to run a food drive, promote the collection of quality, nutrient-dense foods over empty calorie items, foods beyond their "sell-by date", and obscure foods that have gone uneaten from your pantry. Just as you may prioritize healthy, whole foods for you and your family, help emergency food providers stock their most needed items that have the most nutrient bang for the buck.

When organizing a food drive, it is critical to work in conjunction with your partner CBO. A hastily-organized local food drive can actually put a strain on the local agency and expend time and money better spent feeding people who are hungry. Not all food banks have the resources to sort cans, examine expiration dates, verify food safety, and distribute goods. Coordinate your drive with your partner CBO and obtain a "most-needed items list". Whether you choose to aim for total poundage of cans and non-perishables (determined with your partner CBO) or set the expectation that every congregant, member, or participant donates something, whether that's a can, a bag of groceries, a case, etc. Encourage people to donate healthy food by providing a shopping list based on the most-needed items at that time, and a flyer about food insecurity and diet-related chronic illness. Determine if they have additional resources to support you, like delivering of barrels, picking up of food donations, marketing materials like flyers, or factsheets about hunger in your local community.

Once your drive is complete and the amount donated is tallied, share the information with your members. Advertise the impact of your drive in your newsletter and include a thank you to all contributing members.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE: JEWISH HOLIDAY FOODS DRIVE

Help food providers meet the challenge of ensuring that everyone in the Jewish community is able to celebrate Jewish holidays nutritiously, ritually, and with pride of heritage. For example, in the weeks leading up to Passover, consider holding a drive to collect kosher for Passover foods such as matzah, matzah meal, and grape juice. The ritual of *chametz* removal/searching (leavened foods forbidden to eat during Passover) takes place before Passover begins. In a sense, this is the Jewish equivalent of "spring cleaning," as we thoroughly clean the house in search for leavened products, down to the smallest crumb. Rather than burning or selling one's chametz¸ this ritual serves as an opportunity to host an institution-wide drive to donate chametz and non-perishable foods to your partner CBO.

Virtual Canned Food Drive (Fund Drives)

The power of purchasing wholesale. Your donation goes even further with a fund drive. Not only is this the "greenest" option, by relying on the food bank's wholesale purchasing power and eliminating barrel delivery and pickup costs, a fund drive or "virtual canned food drive" multiplies your giving. For every $1 donated, the food bank is able to distribute as much as $6 worth of food, or the equivalent of three meals.

Giving funds also supports a CBO's ability to purchase fruits and vegetables. At the San Francisco Food Bank, millions of pounds of fresh, seasonal produce come from the California Association of Food Banks' "Farm to Family" program, which connects growers with local food banks. Their "Fresh Rescue" program collects food from local supermarkets that would otherwise go to waste.

Set your fundraising goal at a level appropriate for your community. You will be most successful if you set a targeted goal amount to fundraise. For example, challenge participants to donate a minimum of $10, which multiplies to $60 worth of food per individual donation. Allow guests to choose the amount they wish to purchase, and keep a tally of how many "cans" are purchased by displaying them on a wall or window. Visualizing the number of cans donated allows guests to see the potential impact of food dollars donated to the CBO. Advertise the impact of your drive in your newsletter and include a thank you to all contributing members.

Mishloach Manot Fundraiser

The *mitzvah* (commandment) of giving *mishloach manot*, or Purim baskets (also called *shalach manot* or *shlach monos*), dates to the story of Purim. The Book of Esther (*Megilat Esther* 9:22) instructs us in the "sending of portions of food to one another" on Purim. Your Jewish organization can turn this mitzvot into a fundraiser for your organization or partner CBO by charging a small fee per recipient of mishloach manot.

Mishloach manot can be sent in any container, such as a basket or a gift box. Each mishloach manot should contain at least two different kinds of food that are ready to eat.

In addition to special treats like hamantaschen, chocolate, candies, and baked goods, supplement healthier options like fresh fruit, dried fruit, and nuts. Consider sourcing local, organic, and fair trade ingredients for your baskets. In addition to food items you can also include small gifts such as groggers (noise makers), small toys, and hats and other festive costume wear.

Consider using an online website to simplify the process of setting up a mishloach manot fundraiser at your institution. Using HappyPurim.com enables your institution's members to signup online, select to whom they would like to send shalach manot to, and securely pay by credit card, PayPal, Google Checkout, or e-check. Happy Purim also provides an administrative website where all aspects of the fundraiser are managed and monitored. With your social action team, create an order form to be distributed among your institution's members at least 4 weeks in advance of Purim. Arrange to have volunteers to help assemble the baskets at your organization and to have volunteers deliver baskets on or before the first day of Purim.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE: *MATANOT L'EVYONIM DRIVE*

At the end of the Book of Esther when the Jewish community had successfully defended itself against its adversaries we read:

"...observe the fourteenth and fifteenth days of Adar, every year – the same days on which the Jews enjoyed relief from their foes and the same month which had been transformed for them from one of grief and mourning to one of festive joy ... observe them as days of feasting and merry making, and as an occasion for sending presents to the poor "(Esther 9:20-23).

To fulfill the Purim mitzvah of giving gifts the poor, one can give either food or money equivalent to the amount of food that is eaten at a regular meal. Alongside your *mishloach manot* fundraiser, megillah-reading services, and other Purim celebrations, consider holding a drive to collect funds, food, or other items most needed by your partner CBO.

Meal Delivery to Seniors and Adults with Disabilities

Seniors and adults with disabilities are among one of the more vulnerable populations to food insecurity. They face challenges such as having limited fixed income; limited physical ability to travel to a food store, pantry site, or meal site; and availability of transportation. Meal delivery services are crucial to meeting nutritional and social needs of home-bound seniors and adults with disabilities. Partner with a CBO that seeks volunteers to prepare and deliver meals to home-bound seniors and adults with disabilities. Frame this service experience with Jewish texts about caring for our elders. Here are two organizations you can reach out to in your community, or use as a model to start your own initiative.

- **Chicken Soupers** is a San Francisco-based program of Jewish Family and Children Services which engages volunteers to prepare, package, and deliver healthy meals to

seniors and people with AIDS, chronic illness, or disabilities. Delivery takes place on Sunday afternoons. Volunteer once or twice a month; families and individuals of all ages welcomed. Visit the JCFS website for more information.

- **Meals on Wheels** is committed to the belief that all seniors have the right to live independently, with dignity and respect, in their homes for as long as it is safely possible. It is our mission to provide isolated homebound seniors with nutritious meals, daily human contact, and supportive services. One-time and ongoing volunteer opportunities are available. Find your local Meals on Wheels Chapter at mowaa.org.

Start a Challah for Hunger Chapter

Challah for Hunger brings people together to bake challah bread, raising funds and awareness for social justice causes. Their international network of chapters creates a fun and easy entry point for Jews to meet across many divides, to engage in community and tradition, and to explore their mutual responsibility through social entrepreneurship, activism, and philanthropy. Starting a CfH chapter is an ideal program for any community seeking to engage their community in fun and meaningful social justice work.

A typical CfH chapter regularly bakes loaves of challah throughout the year with a dedicated team of volunteers, sells the challah to the community, engages the community and volunteers in acts of advocacy, and donates their proceeds to international and local causes. Visit challahforhunger.org and visit the “Start a Chapter Page” to begin the process.

Gleaning and Food Rescue

Each year, well over 100 billion pounds of food are thrown away in this country. Some estimates indicate that up to 20 percent of America’s entire food supply goes to waste. At the same time, millions of people are food insecure and CBO’s are struggling to provide enough food to meet rising demand.

Food rescue is a modern interpretation of gleaning, or the act of collecting excess foods from farms, gardens, farmers markets, grocers, restaurants, or any other sources in order to provide it to those in need. Whether you glean produce to donate from a community garden on site at your organization or assemble a team to glean from partners in your community, the people-power to rescue food before it goes to waste is a critical action your organization can take.

Gleaning requires effort from and coordination between volunteers from your institution, business owners, gardeners, farmers, and a partner CBO that can accept fresh food donations. This cooperation helps foster strong local community food systems and provides vital resources to CBO’s working to meet rising demand for services.

GLEANING TEAM AT TEMPLE BETH AM IN PALO ALTO, CA

"In my junior year of high school I started volunteering with an organization called Village Harvest. Village Harvest organizes volunteers to pick fruit trees where the fruit is being wasted, and deliver it to the local food bank. Working with Village Harvest made me realize how much fresh, delicious, healthy food grows around us, yet so much of it is wasted. Together, my Rabbi and I set up a "Village Harvest model" within our temple, Beth Am in Palo Alto, California. Once word got out, people were very enthusiastic about lending their time or the trees to help us, and Village Harvest offered to lend us tools!"

– Kate Hanks, High School Senior and congregant of Beth Am, Palo Alto, CA

Visit the USDA website for the USDA's *Let's Glean! Toolkit*. This free resource contains an introduction to gleaning, how to start a gleaning program, how to maintain a positive relationship between donors and gleaners, and resources for how to make the program sustainable by locating a funding stream and sharing best practices with others who glean. Costs may include gas and mileage for volunteers to rescue and deliver gleaned food, hand carts to transport heavy boxes of produce, etc. Resources about gleaning in Jewish tradition should be paired with this work. Look for texts about *Pe'ah* (leaving the corners of the field) and *Shikhecha* (leaving sheaves that fall on the ground during harvest) in Hazon's *Food for Thought: Sourcebook on Jews, Food, and Contemporary Life*.

TREE PLANTING PROJECT AT TEMPLE SINAI IN OAKLAND, CA

The Green Committee of Temple Sinai has recently started the "Tree Planting Project" –an initiative that brings new, native trees to the temple. This project will help beautify the area, raise environmental awareness, and honor the principles of Shmita (a Shabbat or rest for the land) which is the Temple theme for the upcoming year. Mini Grant money from the Hazon Golden Gate Ride and Retreat will help purchase trees, soil, and planters. The trees will be registered with Bay Area Gleaning, so the local community will benefit from the produce.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE: DONATE EXTRA FOOD FROM EVENTS

There are many organizations that specialize in rescuing food that would otherwise go to waste. Many will visit your organization to pick up food to take it the last mile to those in need. Make it your institution's practice to arrange for donation of surplus food from meetings, events, Bar Mitzvahs, and other *simchas* (celebrations). The organizations may ask that you follow food-safety guidelines, including refrigerating any perishable food, refraining from reheating foods, and providing the donation in disposable, sanitized, food-safe containers. If you regularly work with caterers, be sure to tell them that you want all leftovers packed up to share with

your partner CBO. If they resist for fear of being sued, share with them the “Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act”.

This appears in the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 as 42 U.S.C. 12672. The legislation essentially states that the donor of food to a nonprofit organization to people in need is free of liability. This act provides uniform coverage for the entire country. Many people don’t know about this law. It can serve as proof if the caterer does not want to cooperate:

(c) Liability for damages from donated food and grocery products. (1) Liability of person or gleaner. A person or gleaner shall not be subject to civil or criminal liability arising from the nature, age, packaging, or condition of apparently wholesome food or an apparently fit grocery product that the person or gleaner donates in good faith to a nonprofit organization for ultimate distribution to needy individuals.

CropMobster, **City Harvest**, **Feeding Forward**, and **Food Running** are great organizations that are working on gleaning and food rescue. Learn more about them online.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

A CSA is a cooperative agreement between a farmer and an organization or group of people who agree to pre-purchase a share of the farmers produce for an entire season. The CSA guarantees the farmer a secure market and gives members access to fresh, local, organic produce at competitive, yet affordable prices, while helping to preserve farmland and build community. Hazon started the first network of Jewish Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) as a platform to engage Jewish community, and offer innovative educational and community-building programs around the double prism of food and Jewish tradition.

A synagogue, JCC, day school or other Jewish institution can host the weekly CSA produce distribution. CSAs offer your synagogue or JCC the opportunity to be viewed in a whole new way – not only as a place of prayer or culture, but as a weekly home for the local, organic foods movement. It also offers new educational possibilities – a *beit midrash* around food-related texts, local-food Shabbat dinners, innovative holiday programming around Tu b’Shvat, Shavuot, and Sukkot, Hebrew school and day school student trips to the farm, and more.

The Hazon CSA program will support you through the process of planning, marketing, organizing and running your Community-Supported Agriculture project. Apply now to start a CSA in your community for the next growing season. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis at hazon.org/csa.

Food Producing Garden or On-Site Farm

DAVID FOX, FOUNDER AND CEO OF AMIR

A community garden requires careful planning, strong internal energy, and a commitment to infusing environmental and social justice language throughout all aspects of life. A garden is not isolated to the dirt and plants: for instance, how is your community behaving in all areas of life around food and environmental consciousness? Are you composting? Are you recycling? The garden you build is just the beginning of a larger conversation about your community's daily practice and behavior.

Amir was founded in 2010 as an organization committed to scaling garden-education throughout the country. Amir now works with 20 Jewish summer camps across North America. Its model of training and oversight has proven to be successful, and is transferrable to all Jewish institutions.

Amir has developed a curriculum that synthesizes work in the garden with educational content on issues of food justice and social justice. Topics ranging from Animal Rights to Workers Rights all have to do with the food that we grow, and Amir's curriculum packages programs that are easily digestible and accessible for a wide-range of ages.

For decades, the environmental community has considered the "sustainability" of garden initiatives to lay within strong leadership at the top—often, one or two people would lead the charge to bring about a community garden. The sustainability of a garden initiative lies within the diffusion of leadership, and by empowering many people within the community to take charge.

A Community Garden will benefit your organization in a variety of ways including increased youth engagement, adding innovative programming, and of course, aesthetic beauty. A summer camp, JCC, day school, or synagogue can build a Community Garden, and become a part of a growing network of Jewish institutions committed to growing food for others on their own or through the Amir network. Now a network of over 20 Jewish institutions, Amir's network is a powerful tool for sharing best practices on growing food and other environmentally conscious initiatives. In addition, the Amir Network provides a space for children to communicate issue-related content that drives their work, and connects youth across the country through the act of growing food for others.

Apply now to become one of Amir's sites!

The **Peninsula Jewish Community Center** in Foster City, CA planted their Justice Garden in April 2013. The garden is a centerpiece of the Campus, engaging hundreds of volunteers of all ages in weekly gardening and learning sessions. In 2013, we harvested 650 pounds of produce, all of which was donated to our partners at InnVision Shelter Network, for the First Step for Families Shelter. Preschool and afterschool students spend time learning in the garden each week, and monthly service days are offered to give the entire community the opportunity to work in the garden and learn about food justice.

Cooking and Nutrition Workshops

COOKING MATTERS

Cooking Matters is a program of Share our Strength, a national nonprofit dedicated to ending childhood hunger in America. Nonprofits across the country use Cooking Matters to teach valuable skills in vulnerable communities. Classes are taught by volunteer culinary and nutrition instructors who partner with host sites including clinics, shelters, housing sites, and after-school programs, and houses of worship. Jewish institutions can apply to host courses at your site, volunteer for the program as a chef, nutritionist, or class assistant, or lead Cooking Matters at the Store Tours at local supermarkets.

Families on a tight budget report that the cost of healthy groceries is their biggest barrier to making healthy meals at home. Food skills, like smart shopping, can help overcome that barrier. Cooking Matters at the Store is a free program of the No Kid Hungry campaign that empowers families to stretch their food budgets so they can eat healthy meals at home.

Visit cookingmatters.org to find a Cooking Matters Community Partner organization in your area for information for how to host courses or volunteer as course leaders.

FOOD SMARTS TRAINING PROGRAM

Food Smarts, a program of Leah's Pantry (leahspantrysf.org), is a multi-session cooking and nutrition workshop designed for low-income adults and kids across many different cultural backgrounds in California. The Food Smarts Training Program is one or two full days of nutrition, health, workshop facilitation, and cooking for people intending to teach cooking and nutrition workshops to low-income Californians. The curriculum is USDA/FNS approved and available in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Russian. Pantry staff provides technical assistance, site visits, and materials support to all graduates. For graduates working in San Diego or San Francisco, Leah's Pantry staff will even teach your first workshop series with you. Additional Resource: CookIt! Kits

People without access to a full kitchen, such as residents of single room occupancy hotels (SRO's) or homeless shelters, are unable to obtain the nutrition and cost benefits of home-

cooked meals and are often reliant on free meals providers, take-out, or restaurants. Once clients graduate from the Leah's Pantry Food Smarts Workshop series, they are given a "CookIt! Kit" which includes a slow cooker, knives, utensils, and cleaning supplies. Each CookIt! Kit is approximately $100.

Consider organizing a fundraiser to purchase supplies for CookIt! Kits, or organize a drive to collect new or gently used cooking supplies. Alternatively, by making a donation to Leah's Pantry, they will provide a "kitchen in a bag" CookIt! Kit to a kitchen-less resident of an SRO Hotel or to a homeless family.

Contact Leah's Pantry (info@leahspantrysf.org) if you would like to be trained to run Food Smarts Workshops at your site. They will let you know about upcoming trainings, or work with you to schedule a one-on-one training.

Promote Small-Scale Food Businesses

Host a Food Skill Share. Canning, pickling, and other food preservation techniques are "food skills" worth sharing. In addition to hosting healthy cooking demonstrations, consider hosting a workshop to share skills on how to safely can, preserve, and make foods allowed by Cottage Food Laws. Provide mason jars and other canning and pickling supplies to participants.

Offer access to your institution's kitchen for producing value-added products. Farmers and community members can benefit from having access to your institution's kitchen to produce food items allowed to be sold through the Cottage Food Laws. These laws legalize selling foods that are produced in non-commercial kitchens. Allowing small-scale food producers to start legitimate businesses out of their homes or other kitchen space eliminates, at least temporarily, the cost of renting a commercial kitchen could have a great impact on our burgeoning food community and the local economy. Commercial kitchen space isn't the only cost of starting a food business, but it's a pretty significant one. Not only that, there simply aren't enough commercial kitchens available. Finding a kitchen that suits one's needs can be challenging.

See the full text of the Cottage Food Laws online.

Food Chain Workers Rights

The restaurant industry is one of the nation's largest employers, but unfortunately it is also one of the lowest paying. The Restaurant Opportunities Centers United (ROC United) organizes restaurant workers, owners, and restaurant goers to improve restaurant worker lives and build a more sustainable industry for everyone. All of us – workers, employers, and eaters – have a stake in encouraging a sustainable food system that includes the people who cook and serve our food.

Download or get the app for the *2014 Diners Guide*, the first restaurant guide to rate restaurants based on working conditions for workers. When you go out to dinner pick a restaurant with high marks and start your consumer activism today!

Get involved locally–There are ROC affiliates in 10 cities across the country where you can get directly involved with local campaigns. Visit rocunited.org/locations or call the national office if your city is not listed (212) 243-6900.

APPENDIX A

Food Justice Discussion Points

The Food Justice Discussion Points are a series of four activities designed to assist your Food Action Team in deepening their collective understanding of food justice, the food system, and the meaning of eating and growing food. The Food Justice Discussion Points offer key pieces of insight while teasing out the knowledge and experience already present in the group. Rather than a curriculum following a linear trajectory or an assemblage of discrete units, these Discussion Points call on participants to build their understanding of food justice as a collection of interrelated dynamic systems. Ideally to be used in groups of less than 20 people, these were developed to take about 20-30 minutes at the start of a meeting. To save time, or if participants do not have access to computers during meetings, participants may read or watch the resources beforehand. The resources for these activities can be found online at hazon.org/food-justice-discussion-points/.

Food Justice Discussion Point 1: When Values Collide

Food is essential to Jewish tradition, not only in the matzah balls, but also as symbolic religious objects, such as a lulav and etrog, or citron fruit, on Sukkot. Many foods that have become quintessential Jewish foods today were at one point in history simply what was available in the local market. In this program, participants explore a case study on the growing practice of one of these religious items, the etrog, and then have the opportunity to discuss with guiding questions.

I. THE ETROG DILEMMA

In Sephardic and Middle Eastern traditions, etrogs are said to help with everything from digestion to fertility. At one point, these plants and fruits were local to that region, however now they are much harder to find. The demand for etrogs, and very specific shapes and types of etrogs, increases dramatically around Sukkot, resulting in a changed nature of the farming landscape.

Two articles help us better understand the etrog dilemma. The first article, “Somebody, Please Get Me an Organic Etrog” (TheJC.com, 2010) paints a sad picture about being able to have a truly sustainable Sukkot holiday, while the second article, “Down on America’s Next Big Etrog Farm” (JTA, 2012) offers hope for the future. Find these articles online: hazon.org/food-justice-discussion-points/.

- From these articles, values of sustainable farming come into conflict with elements of Jewish tradition. Can you think of other examples where this is true?
- How do you find balance in these two value systems?
- What do you see as a solution to these challenges?

Food Justice Discussion Points 2: Wellness, Body and Mind

The idea of preservation is very prevalent in Jewish culture, both when it comes to traditions and when it comes to food. In this program, participants will explore the impact of agricultural practices on land and cultures. Participants watch a video of an interview with Vandana Shiva, who speaks about preserving seeds as a meaningful start to creating systematic change. Participants will deepen their understanding of the historical and global importance of biodiversity in agriculture and how Jewish tradition relates to these issues.

I. INTRODUCTORY VIDEO

Watch a 17-minute video by Vandana Shiva, an Indian environmental activist, physicist, farmer, and author. Shiva specifically advocates against the use of GMOs (genetically modified organisms). You can find this video at hazon.org/food-justice-discussion-points/.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Vandana Shiva relates biodiversity and agricultural issues to larger questions of justice, politics, and conflict. We don't often consider politics in the context of biodiversity and ecology. Why not? Should we?
2. How does religion, Jewish tradition specifically, relate to these issues?
3. Shiva speaks to the disparate ways that different systems of agriculture are valued, and the disparate ways people using those systems are valued. What in our food and economic systems created this situation?

II. JEWISH THOUGHTS ON GMOS

"One may not mix small amounts of subpar produce with quality produce and sell it under the presumption that it is a quality product, even if one mixes from grain the new harvest with grain from the old harvest, and it need not be stated one may certainly not mix grain from the new harvest with grain from the old harvest or vice-versa, even if the older grain is actually nicer than the newer grain and the purchaser actually desires the old grain." (Shulchan Aruch, Hoshen Mishpat 228:10, translation by Rabbi Justin Goldstein)

"*It is forbidden to deceive a person in purchasing or selling, or engage in g'neivat da'at, for example: if there is some type of deficiency in the purchase, this information needs to be provided to the purchaser. Even if the customer is a non-Jew one could not, for example, sell non-kosher meat under the premise that it has had kosher slaughter.*" (Shulchan Aruch, Hoshen Mishpat 228:6, translation by Rabbi Justin Goldstein)

These texts describes Gneivat Da'at (literally, "stealing a person's mind), what we might call false packaging or false labeling. The Talmud gives a number of specific examples: One should not sift the beans at the top of the bushel because he is "deceiving the eye" by making the customer think that the entire bushel has been sifted; it is forbidden to paint animals or utensils in order to improve their appearance or cover up their defects (*Bava Metzia 60a-b*).

We are all familiar with this kind of ruse. A wholesaler takes an inferior brand of shirt and puts on Armani labels. You buy a box of perfect-looking tomatoes or strawberries, only to discover upon opening the box at home that they were packaged with the bad spots facing down. And we all know how used cars are touched up and polished for the sole purpose of overcharging the customer. Such behavior is clearly forbidden by Jewish law. (Rabbi David Golinkin, Some Basic Principles of Jewish Business Ethics)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. During the time of the Talmud, there was no such thing as a genetically modified organism or an organic certification. How do you think the above texts relate to our modern food system?
2. If GMO labels became mandatory, how would (or wouldn't) that change the meaning of these texts?
3. How do (or don't) the above texts relate to what was explained in the video by Vandana Shiva?

Food Justice Discussion Point 3: Race, Culture, and Place, Security

Jewish people come from a variety of places, backgrounds, and ethnicities. Historically, one of the traits that has kept the Jewish people together is a strong connection to the land of Israel. In Israel today there is lots of conversation and controversy around repopulating and restoring the Negev desert. In America today, there is a different kind of desert, known as a Food Desert. In this series of three programs, participants will read an article on pastoralism and sedentary agriculture in the disputed Negev desert and watch a TED talk about a guerilla gardener in South Central LA. These two sections, which allow participants to explore race, culture, and place in the context of food justice and their own lives, can be one long program or can be run over two meetings.

I. PASTORALISM: PROBLEM OR SOLUTION?

The Negev region in Israel is a beautiful and mysterious part of the land. For many years it was seen as unlivable because of the lack of water, only Bedouin tribes were able to survive

living in the desert because of their means of self-sustenance. However, as technology continues to enable humans to do more, the Negev is becoming a popular place to settle in Israel.

Read “Pastoralism: Problem or Solution” by Alice Gray, from the *Permaculture Activist* magazine. Available at: hazon.org/food-justice-discussion-points/.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. In the essay, Alice Gray asks, “How should we use the land?” After reading the article, how do you think we should use the land? Is this different than what you thought before?
2. The situation that is created by the plan to settle in the Negev is deeply problematic for Bedouin tribes, and in many cases will change their food supply. How does this seem similar or different to the food justice issues in the United States?
3. In what ways do you think technology is creating the problem? In what ways do you think technology could solve the problem?

II. A GUERILLA GARDENER IN SOUTH CENTRAL LA

Ron Finley plants vegetable gardens in South Central LA, a historically troubled neighborhood. He plants them in traffic medians, abandoned parking lots, and along curbs. Watch this video to learn more. Available at: hazon.org/food-justice-discussion-points/.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Ron Finley is talking about a very different kind of desert, and yet some of the same issues that are seen in the Negev are also happening in LA, and across the US. What do you see as similar between the two situations? What’s different?
2. In the United States and in Israel, the government plays a big role in making sure people have access to food. Ron is a “guerilla” gardener because he didn’t feel that change would happen otherwise. What is the role of the government in these two situations?
3. Think about the role of ethnicity, identity, and minority in each of these two situations. How do you think that affects the situations?

Food Justice Discussion Point 4: Economics and Finance, Sovereignty

It's impossible to talk about food without talking about economics, even when talking about a backyard garden. In this program, participants will explore an interactive infographic on the Farm Bill to see how deeply economics is connected to the food system.

FARM BILL INFOGRAPHIC

The Farm Bill is the key piece of legislation in the United States that affects food and farming policy, not only in the US, but all over the world. Take a look at the interactive infographic on hazon.org/food-justice-discussion-points/ and then discuss the following questions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What about do you see as the biggest challenge with the Farm Bill?
2. If you could create your own Farm Bill, what would be included?

SHMITA AS AN ECONOMIC IDEAL

Shmita, commonly translated as the 'Sabbatical Year,' literally means 'release.' At its most basic level, Shmita presents a set of laws that deals with methods of food production in the land of Israel. On every seventh year of a shared calendar cycle, there is no seeding or tilling of soil. All agricultural lands are left fallow. The implication of Shmita goes well beyond food production, however. For more information on Shmita, visit hazon.org/shmita.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How are the laws and goals of Shmita similar and different than the Farm Bill?
2. How could they inform each other?

APPENDIX B

Group Reading and Reflection Activities on Justice

Case Study of Food Justice in Jewish History: The Kosher Meat Boycott of 1902

COMPILED BY JOIN FOR JUSTICE, ADAPTED FROM THE JEWISH WOMEN'S ARCHIVE

On May 15, 1902, Jewish housewives on the Lower East Side poured into the streets, breaking windows and throwing meat. The women were protesting a jump in the price of kosher meat from 12 to 18 cents a pound. Meat prices, controlled by the industrial barons' "Beef Trust," were often a source of contention for Jewish immigrant communities in New York. The May 1902 boycott highlighted the ability of Jewish women to organize and coordinate a movement throughout the boroughs. The event made headlines across the city, with some newspapers cheering on the women and others condemning them.

On May 14, two women organized a meeting on the Lower East Side to rally support for the proposed boycott. The next day, tens of thousands of Jewish women took to the streets and demonstrated their outrage. Riots broke out as women attacked butcher shops and customers. Police officers tried to protect butcher shops, but protesting women grabbed meat and threw it out into the streets, even dousing it in gasoline and setting it on fire. Police arrested 85 people, three quarters of them women. Encouraged by the Lower East Side, women in other neighborhoods began their own boycotts.

New York Times, May 18, 1902. The boycott spread to the Jewish communities of Brooklyn, Harlem, Newark, Boston and Philadelphia. Protest tactics were not strictly reserved for the streets. It also spread to the synagogues, where women asked for rabbinic endorsement of their tactics. They even ascended bimahs (a raised platform in a synagogue from which the Torah is read), sometimes uninvited, to address men gathered in prayer. On May 17 during Shabbat Torah services, women interrupted prayers with a call to support the boycott. Women left their seats in the balcony to persuade men to back their cause and gain communal support.

To ensure solidarity, women patrolled the neighborhood. Canvassers traveled door-to-door to encourage neighbors to support the boycott. Home visits also allowed women to look into pots to make sure no secretly purchased meat was being cooked. Supporters picketed butcher shops. Sympathetic neighbors raised bail money for women who had been arrested.

Fliers illustrated with skulls and cross bones warned: “Eat no meat while the Trust is taking meat from the bones of your women and children.”

Under pressure from their customers, on May 22nd the Retail Butchers Association once more aligned itself with the boycotters and refused to sell kosher beef in member shops. Five days later, Orthodox religious leaders, who had mostly remained on the sidelines, formally endorsed the boycott. By June 9th, the retail price of kosher beef had dropped back to 14 cents and the boycott began to lose steam. The retail shops did a thriving business once again.

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Where do you think these Jewish women strike leaders living on the Lower East Side found the internal strength to take action? What experiences, stories or resources do you imagine they drew upon?
- How did they organize? What do you think it took organizationally and personally—for these women to win over such a diverse group of people within the Jewish community in their campaign?
- What was the immediate problem these women confronted on a daily basis? How did they come to understand this problem as a larger political issue?
- How does this episode and victory speak to your personal/family, and our larger communal/historical, identity as Jews?
- How does knowing this history impact your pursuit of food justice today?

Judaism, Food, and Justice

BY RABBI ARI HART

Madrid, Spain. 1988. I am watching my mother in our kitchen, furiously de-feathering, salting and draining the blood from chickens still warm from slaughter. It is not a pretty sight, but there is no kosher butcher in Madrid so we do this work at home. She finishes the koshering and cooking just before Shabbat begins. We gather around the table, sing zemirot (Jewish hymns), and eat with gratitude and appreciation.

Postville, Iowa. 2008. I am listening to stories from workers of the Agriproccessors kosher meat processing plant, the largest in the country. They have been doing the same work my mother did for the past 20 years, except they have been doing it as a job, for minimum wage or less, with no overtime pay. They tell me about the thousands of “kills” that happen each day at the plant, the animal neglect and abuse that happens at this kosher plant, and the environmental waste and damage that such a high slaughter rate creates. They tell me

stories of abusive bosses and injuries. I return home just before Shabbat begins. While sitting at my table Shabbat table in New York, I cannot shake what I have heard and seen.

How did we go from eating food raised close to our homes and prepared by people I know, to food made hundreds of miles away by exploited immigrants in horrific conditions? These questions pushed me and Uri L'Tzedek: Orthodox Social Justice (utzedek.org) into the work we do now. We began with an immediate response to the worker abuses happening at Agriprocessors, organizing 2000 Jewish rabbis and leaders to sign a boycott of the company until Agriprocessors bring themselves in compliance with federal and state law labor laws.

The journey into food justice that has taken me from hushed conversations in restaurant stockrooms to high powered executive boardrooms, picket lines to organic farms, all in a quest to create change that unities Judaism, food, and social justice.

One example of this work is the "Tav HaYosher", a social seal we created that ensures restaurants are meeting their basic ethical and legal responsibilities to their workers. This seal is now in over 75 restaurants, 11 different states, and two countries.

But the Tav is just a beginning. Food and food policies lie at the center of many major challenges we face today. Recent studies have estimated the amount of meat and other food consumed by Americans could feed over 1 billion hungry people. The United Nations estimates that food and agriculture have come to account for as much as one-third of greenhouse gases.

In America, fifty million Americans, including 17 million children, are "food insecure," meaning they do not have regular access to food. These are some of the problems. It is my core belief that Judaism and the Jewish people must be a part of the solutions.

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Do you have a food memory from growing up? How does it compare to the way that food is manufactured or mass produced?
- What do you as the role of Jewish tradition in food production? Is it different if that food is kosher or not?
- What do you think is the obligation of a restaurant of food business owner to his or her employees?
- Why do you think that food workers, specifically, have notoriously been treated poorly?

Salsa, Slavery, Solidarity: Shame and Redemption in Florida's Tomato Fields

BY MIKE ROTHBAUM, ORIGINALLY APPEARED IN J. THE JEWISH NEWS WEEKLY OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

You access the main exhibit of the museum by climbing a flight of steps. There's a framed sign, reading "Enter," and a velvet rope. An arrow points the way to go.

But this isn't a regular museum. It is hot and stuffy, claustrophobic and uncomfortable and unsettling. Heavy chains adorn the wall.

There's an explanation for our harsh surroundings. The Florida Modern-Day Slavery Museum, you see, is housed mainly in the back of a panel truck. I stand with six other rabbis by my side, part of a delegation sponsored by T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights. By week's end, we'll have prayed inside a Wendy's burger joint, singing songs of praise and liberation, picketing the real estate in front of the store.

But, at this moment, all of us find ourselves packed in the back of that truck.

It is outfitted to replicate the conditions experienced by workers hired by two brothers who had employed dozens of tomato pickers in Florida and South Carolina, in what Doug Molloy, retired assistant U.S. attorney, called "slavery, plain and simple."

Workers were imprisoned in a truck just like this, bound to the walls with heavy chains like the ones we stare at, wordlessly. The workers slept on the floors, if they slept at all. They relieved themselves in a corner.

All so the tomatoes in the fields of South Florida could be harvested, our guide explains, sold to retail customers like Taco Bell, McDonald's, Walmart and — yes — Wendy's. Tens of thousands of men and women pick those tomatoes, mostly by hand, making tomatoes the second-biggest crop in Florida.

And on this late spring morning, seven rabbis stand in a swampy truck, our sweat cut by tears.

Lest you think this is only a story of sadness and outrage, I'm happy to report that this tale of slavery ends in redemption. One of the workers enslaved in the back of that fetid truck found a weak spot in the roof and schemed to steal back his humanity. He waited. He escaped.

But it's what he did next, where he went next, that's truly inspirational. It's the reason we're all here. He ran through the inky Florida night to a modest one-story building in the tiny town of Immokalee. There, he found the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), a community-based organization of low-wage agricultural laborers.

Tracing its origins to a 1993 meeting in the back of a church, the CIW has been fighting wage theft and slavery for more than 20 years. Before the CIW began its work, tomato pickers

were routinely forced to work without a time clock, exposed to deadly pesticides, denied basic rights like water, shade, rest, bathroom breaks. Each 32-pound bucket harvested was rewarded with a token — good, at the end of the day, for just 50 cents. They faced verbal, physical and sometimes sexual abuse. Those who complained were fired, or threatened, or worse.

Through work stoppages and intense public pressure, including hunger strikes and boycotts, the CIW won some small gains. But the watershed moment was still to come. In 2010, a landmark agreement with the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange extended the CIW's principles — including a strict code of conduct, an abuse hotline and a complaint resolution system — to more than 90 percent of the Florida tomato industry.

McDonald's. Taco Bell. Chipotle. Trader Joe's. Even, as of a few months ago, Walmart. All have joined the Fair Food Program, requiring that their suppliers comply with the CIW basic standards of fairness and decency.

But not Wendy's, which has 6,600 restaurants around the world, none of them covered by the Fair Food agreement. Which leads seven rabbis, *tallitot* (prayer shawls) on our backs, to disrupt the dinner hour at a Fort Myers Wendy's. Because the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy demand that workers be treated fairly. Because our grandparents, too, were exploited immigrant workers. Because we've seen too much to keep silent.

I sat in shul on the second day of Shavuot, and we read the Book of Ruth. It's a book known for its passionate depiction of Ruth's loyalty, for its explication of the lineage of King David.

But it's also the story of a scrupulous landowner. Boaz, the redeemer, is also Boaz, the righteous employer. "I have ordered the men not to molest you," he says, comforting Ruth. "And when you are thirsty, go to the jars and drink … may you have your full wage from HaShem" (Ruth 2:9-12).

The Book of Ruth is not a display in a museum. We read it every year, on a festival celebrating the giving of our most precious heritage. Boaz extended human kindness and fairness to those who worked his fields.

If Boaz could manage that, is it too much to ask of Wendy?

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What is the role of rabbis and other spiritual leaders in addressing slavery issue presented in this piece?
- What do you think is your role in addressing modern day slavery?
- Solving this problem is complex and multi-layered. Where do you think is the best place to start addressing the problem?

APPENDIX C

Additional Resources

Suggested authors, writers, journalists

- **Wendell Berry** (wendellberrybooks.com)
- **Natasha Bowens** (browngirlfarming.com)
- **Masanobu Fukuoka**
  Sowing Seeds in the Desert: Natural Farming, Global Restoration, and Ultimate Food Security, 2013
- **Oran B. Hesterman**
  Fair Food: Growing a Healthy, Sustainable Food System for All, 2012
- **Barbara Kingsolver**
  Animal, Vegetable, Miracle, 2007
- **Winona LaDuke** (nativeharvest.com)
- **Gary Nabhan** (garynabhan.com)
  Where our Food Comes From: Retracing Nikolay Vavilov's Quest to End Famine, 2011
  Growing Food in a Hotter, Drier Land: Lessons from Desert Farmers on Adapting to Climate Uncertainty, 2013
- **Devon Peña** (ejfood.blogspot.com)
- **Michael Pollan** (michaelpollan.com)
- **Joel Salatin** (polyfacefarms.com)
  Everything I Want to do is Illegal: War Stories from the Local Food Front, 2007
- **Mark Shepard**
  Restoration Agriculture, 2013
- **Vandana Shiva**
  Manifestos on the Future of Food and Seed, 2007
  Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply, 2000
  Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability, and Peace, 2005
- **Malik Yakini** (foodandcommunityfellows.org)
  Land and Power in Detroit, http://bit.ly/1dF0tuQ
  Building a Racially Just Food Movement, http://bit.ly/LS5zxd
  Undoing Racism in the Food System. This video is an hour and 20 minutes long, but well worth the time. http://bit.ly/1csIAzN

Articles

- *A Dying Breed*, Andrew Rice
- *As Biodiversity Declines, Disease Flourishes*, Felicity Barringer
- *Biodiversity in Peril, the U.N. Warns*, Jim Witkin
- *Black Farmers Finally Collect $1.2 Billion in Discrimination Case, Freddie Allen Celebrate the Farmer!*, Mark Bittman
- *Sustainable Food and Privilege: Why is Green Always White (and Male and Upper Class)?*, Janani Balasubramanian
- *The Hands That Feed Us*, The Food Chain Workers Alliance
- *The Color of Food Justice*, Von Diaz
- *The Hidden World Under Our Feet*, Jim Robbins

Organizations

350.org is a global grassroots movement to solve the climate crisis and push for policies that put the world on track to get the atmospheric proportion of carbon dioxide to 350 parts per million. On the 350.0rg website, the 350 Food and Farm section explains the role of industrialized food production and livestock in the climate crisis. **350.org**

- **Amir** amirproject.org
- **Be Black and Green** beblackandgreen.com
  A site that networks, supports, and promotes Black farmers, gardeners, and food activists
- **Black Farmers Agricultural Association** bfaa-us.org
- **Challah for Hunger** challahforhunger.org
- **City Slicker Farms (Oakland, CA)** cityslickerfarms.org
  The mission of City Slicker Farms is to empower West Oakland community members to meet the immediate and basic need for healthy organic food for themselves and their families by creating high-yield urban farms and backyard gardens.
- **Coalition of Immokalee Workers** ciw-online.org
  The CIW is a worker-based human rights organization internationally recognized for its achievements in the fields of corporate social responsibility, community organizing, and sustainable food. The CIW is also a leader in the growing movement to end human trafficking due to its groundbreaking work to combat modern-day slavery and other labor abuses common in agriculture.
- **The Convention on Biodiversity** www.cbd.int/agro/importance.shtml
  Signed by 150 government leaders at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, the Convention on Biological Diversity is dedicated to promoting sustainable development. Conceived as a practical tool for translating the principles of Agenda 21 into reality, the Convention recognizes that biological diversity is about more than plants, animals and micro organisms and their ecosystems – it is about people and our need for food security, medicines, fresh air and water, shelter, and a clean and healthy environment in which to live.

- **Detroit Black Community Food Security Network** detroitblackfoodsecurity.org
  The DBCFSN was formed in February 2006 to address food insecurity in Detroit's Black community, and to organize members of that community to play a more active leadership role in the local food security movement.
- **Fair Food** fairfoodnetwork.org
- **Fair Trade Judaica** is building a fair trade movement in the Jewish community nationally, linking Jewish values of human dignity, self-sufficiency, and environmental sustainability with fair trade standards assuring fair and livable wages, no child labor, healthy and safe working conditions. fairtradejudaica.org
- **The Food and Agriculture Organization for the United Nations** fao.org/biodiversity/en/
- **The Food Chain Workers Alliance** is a coalition of worker-based organizations whose members plant, harvest, process, pack, transport, prepare, serve, and sell food, organizing to improve wages and working conditions for all workers along the food chain. Their work includes leadership development for food chain workers, campaigns to raise the minimum wage, and paid sick days for all. **foodchainworkers.org**
- **Fresh Approach** freshapproach.org
- **GreenLeaf** GreenLeafDenver.org
  Cultivating powerful youth and food justice through urban agriculture.
- **Growing Food and Justice for All Initiative** growingfoodandjustice.org
  Aimed at dismantling racism and empowering low-income and communities of color through sustainable and local agriculture. This comprehensive network views dismantling racism as a core principal which brings together social change agents from diverse sectors working to bring about new, healthy and sustainable food systems and supporting and building multicultural leadership in impoverished communities throughout the world.
- **Growing Power** growingpower.org
  Transforms communities by supporting people from diverse backgrounds and the environments in which they live through the development of Community Food Systems
- **Harvard University Center for Global Health and the Environment** http://chge.med.harvard.edu/topic/biodiversity-and-agriculture
- **Hazon** hazon.org
  We create healthier and more sustainable communities in the Jewish world and beyond. Learn about our retreats, events, educational materials, and more on our website.
- **The Jewish Climate Change Campaign** is working to mobilize the Jewish community to meet the challenges of Climate change. It was launched in 2009 by Hazon and other partners as a call to action to mobilize the wisdom of Judaism and the resources of the Jewish community. **jewishclimatecampaign.org**
- **JOIN for Justice** joinforjustice.org
- **Leah's Pantry** leahspantrysf.org
- **Navdanya** is a network of seed keepers and organic producers spread across sixteen states in India. The website offers information about seed, food, and land sovereignty; sustainable agriculture; water democracy; climate change; organic food production; organic certification; and organic shopping lists. **navdanya.org**
- **Netiya** netiya.org

- **People's Grocery** peoplesgrocery.org
  Improving the health and local economy of West Oakland (CA) through investing in the local food system.
- **Restaurant Opportunities Center United** is a united force of 13,000 restaurant workers, 100 employers, and thousands of engaged consumers working to improve wages and working conditions and raise restaurant industry. Campaigns include Fair Minimum Wage and Anti-Wage Theft. **rocunited.org**
- **Sustainable Table** sustainabletable.org
- **T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights** truah.org
- **United Farm Workers Union** ufw.org
  Founded in 1962 by Cesar Chavez, the United Farm Workers of America is the nation's first successful and largest farm workers union currently active in 10 states.
- **Uri L'Tzedek** is an Orthodox Social Justice organization guided by Torah values and dedicated to combating suffering and oppression. Their Tav HaYosher campaign is a local, grassroots initiative to bring workers, restaurant owners and community members together to create just workplaces in kosher restaurants. **utzedek.org**
- **White Earth Land Recovery Project** welrp.org

Graphic Credits

- "Farm" icon by Jane Pellicciotto, from thenounproject.com
- "Network" icon by Ann Fandrey, from thenounproject.com
- "Judaism" icon by Humberto Pornaro, from thenounproject.com
- "Torah-Scroll" and "Sukkot" icons by Gilad Fried, from thenounproject.com
- "Agriculture" icon by OCHA Visual Information Unit, from thenounproject.com
- "Sickle" icon by Edward Boatman, from thenounproject.com
- "Wheat" icon by Megan Strickland, from thenounproject.com
- "Tomato" icon by Kate Vogel, from thenounproject.com
- "Books" icon by Piotrek Chuchla, from thenounproject.com

Sources

1. Growing Food and Justice for All Initiative. (2014). "*Race and the Food System*". Retrieved from http://www.growingfoodandjustice.org/Introduction.html.
2. Farmland Information Center. (2014). "*A Primer on Community Food Systems: Linking Food, Nutrition and Agriculture*". Retrieved from http://www.farmlandinfo.org/sites/default/files/Primer_1.pdf
3. Growing Food and Justice for All Initiative. (2014). "*Glossary of Terms*". Retrieved from http://www.growingfoodandjustice.org/Glossary.html.
4. Just Food. (2014). "*Food Justice*". Retrieved from http://justfood.org/food-justice.
5. American Jewish World Service (AJWS). (2011). "*Definitions and Commonly Used Terms*". Reverse Hunger Campaign. Global Hunger Shabbat Resources. Retrieved from http://ajws.org/hunger_old/ghs/materials/1011_ghs_termsanddefinitions_v1.pdf
6. Adapted from Planting Justice. (2011). "*Guiding Principles*". Retrieved from http://www.plantingjustice.org/about-us/guiding-principles.
7. La Via Campesina. (2014). "*Food Sovereignty and Trade*". Retrieved from http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php/main-issues-mainmenu-27/food-sovereignty-and-trade-mainmenu-38.
8. Kingsolver, Barbara. (2007). "*Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life*". HarperCollins.
9. Food Chain Workers Alliance. (2012). "*The Hands That Feed Us*". Retrieved from http://foodchainworkers.org/?p=1973.
10. American Jewish World Service (AJWS). (2014). "*Reverse Hunger*". Retrieved from http://ajws.org/reversehunger/.
11. Redefining Progress. (2003). "*Eating up the Earth: How Sustainable Food Systems Shrink Our Ecological Footprint*". Retrieved from http://agron-www.agron.iastate.edu/Courses/agron515/eatearth.pdf.
12. Pesticide Action Network. (2014). "*Pesticides 101- A Primer*". Retrieved from http://www.panna.org/issues/pesticides-101-primer.
13. International Development Exchange (IDEX). (2014). "*Environmental Justice*". Retrieved from https://www.idex.org/solutions/environment.
14. Alisha Coleman-Jensen, Mark Nord, Anita Singh. (September 2013). "*Household Food Security in the United States in 2012*". United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. Retrieved from http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err-economic-research-report.
15. Hunger Notes. (2013). "*World Hunger and Poverty Facts and Statistics*". Retrieved from http://www.worldhunger.org/articles/Learn/world%20hunger%20facts%202002.htm#Does_the_world_produce_enough_food_to_feed_everyone.
16. San Francisco Food Security Task Force. (2013). "*Assessment of Food Security in San Francisco*". Retrieved from http://www.sfdph.org/dph/files/mtgsGrps/FoodSecTaskFrc/docs/FSTF-AssessmentOfFoodSecurityInSF-2013.pdf.

17. PolicyLink. (2013). "*Access to Healthy Food and Why It Matters: A Review of the Research*". Retrieved from http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/executive-summary-access-to-healthy-food-and-why-it-matters.original.pdf.
18. Anim Steel. Food First. (October 2010). "*Youth and Food Justice: Lessons from the Civil Rights Movement*". Retrieved from http://foodfirst.org/publication/youth-and-food-justice-lessons-from-the-civil-rights-movement/
19. Wikipedia. (2014). "*Redlining*". Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redlining.
20. Community Food and Justice Coalition. (2013). "*Farm Bill Resources*". Retrieved from: http://comfoodjustice.org/farm-bill-resources/.
21. Institute for Agricultural and Trade Policy (IATP). (October 2013). "*It's Time to Move Beyond the Farm Bill*". Retrieved from http://www.iatp.org/blog/201310/it%E2%80%99s-time-to-move-beyond-the-farm-bill.
22. Michael Pollan via NourishLife. (2010). "*Michael Pollan: Twinkie vs. Carrot*". Adapted from video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JH-Qv3f73x4.
23. United States Department of Agriculture. (2014). "*Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Eligibility*". Retrieved from http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligibility.
24. Insight Center for Community Economic Development (CCED). (2013). "*The Self-Sufficiency Standard for California*". Retrieved from http://www.insightcced.org/communities/cfess/ca-sss.html.
25. Christopher Wimer, Lucas Manfield. Stanford Poverty and Inequality. (July 2012). "*Coping with Accelerating Food Needs in San Francisco and Marin: An Analysis of Missing Meals and the Food Landscape in the Wake of the Great Recession*". Retrieved from http://www.stanford.edu/group/scspi/_media/working_papers/MissingMeals_July2012.pdf.
26. Feeding America. (2009). "*Hunger in America Study.*" Retrieved from http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/hunger-study-2010.aspx.
27. Professor Marshall Ganz. (2006). "*What is Organizing?*". Harvard Kennedy School. Retrieved from http://leadingchangenetwork.org/files/2012/05/What_is_Organizing.pdf.
28. PICO National Network. (2014). "*What is Faith-Based Community Organizing?*" Retrieved from http://www.piconetwork.org/about/faith-based-community-organizing.
29. Adapted from Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative. (2014). "*Survey for Congregations*".
30. PICO National Network. (2014). "*Listening 1:1s*". Retreived from http://www.piconetwork.org/tools-resources/0002.
31. Ash, Sarah and Clayton, Patti. (2009). "*Learning through Critical Reflection: A Tutorial for Service Learning Students*". Retrieved from
32. Rep. Barbara Lee. (2013). "*Join Members of Congress, Take the #SNAPChallenge*". Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rep-barbara-lee/join-members-of-congress_b_3428820.html