

SOW

Small family farmers
feed the world

Much Love

Student Activity Guide Eat Locally, Impact Globally

The global food system has become so industrialized and globalized that consumers rarely know where their food actually comes from or how it is produced. At the same time, farmers around the world are struggling to retain their right to save, sow and exchange their seeds. The age-old tradition of keeping seeds from the best plants for the next harvest allows plants to naturally adapt to their environment, which in turn ensures diversity and agricultural capacity for the future. Multinational corporations, however, are seeking to control seeds. This is removing the right of farmers to use their own seeds, which is indebting farmers, reducing biodiversity and increasing the risk of hunger.

We need to act now to support a global shift towards a return to local food systems and advocate for the rights of farmers to control their seeds!

By choosing locally-grown organic foods and fair trade products, we support small family farmers who feed the world. We need to ensure that our demands on the global food system do not rob others of their access to healthy, sustainable food.

By learning about our food systems, we can make informed choices to treat food less as a commodity and more as part of the common good.

Fast Facts

Small family farmers feed
70 % of the world's
population!

Since 1970, over

10,000

local varieties of rice seed
have disappeared in Indonesia,
replaced by industrial hybrid
seeds (which can't be re-used
and must be purchased each
year from the company).

There are more than
7,500
varieties of apples in the world!

Women farmers produce between
60 and 80 %
of food in developing countries and
are responsible for half of the world's
food production.

Small family farmers from
around the world, including
here in Canada, have
been fighting Plant Variety
Protection laws since the
1980s to protect the right of
farmers to sow, trade, and
sell their own seeds and
protect the biodiversity of our
world's food sources.

Canada produces
varieties of wheat!
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CANADIAN CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION FOR
**Development
and Peace**

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Group Activities

The following activities use the **SEE, JUDGE, ACT** model, which allows participants to come to understand the issue, determine a moral perspective, and act to bring about a more just world.

Part 1: SEE

Where does your food come from?

Elementary: Explore the origins of students' favourite fruits as a way to launch the discussion on where our food comes from. Look at the geography of where these fruits grow using a map to illustrate how we import exotic fruits from around the world. Discuss local fruits as well – you can even invite a local farmer or grocer to do a 'show and tell' about local fruit options.

Intermediate: Have students bring in their favourite food items (in original packaging) or organize a raid of the school's kitchen to explore the origin of these foods and their ingredients. Using the information on the packages, as well as research into where the ingredients grow, map the global connections of these items. Follow with the discussion guide in Part 2.

Secondary: Begin with the Intermediate activity, and adapt the discussion (Part 2) to include questions of particular interest, such as:

- Supply and demand: How does the international demand for particular foods impact family farmers in the Global South? (Quinoa is a great example for this lesson. As demand for quinoa increases in wealthy countries like Canada, Bolivians and Peruvians can no longer afford to eat this nutritious food that was a staple of their diet).
- How does the commodification of food impact farmers and consumers?
- How does the nutritional or environmental impact of industrial farming compare to local, organic and sustainable farming?



Find more tools online!

- **Food Map:** This interactive map shows where some of our most popular food items come from along with fun facts!
- **Food Quiz:** This Jeopardy-style game is ready to play! Click on the questions in the downloadable slideshow to learn about global hunger, food facts, and DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE's response to hunger.
- **The Seed Game:** This role-playing game for secondary and university students, introduces the current global struggle for control of seeds. This activity requires 60–90 minutes and contains all the background information to allow teachers, leaders and trainers to lead the activity and help participants to understand the issue.

All of the resources are available on our website at devp.org/sowmuchlove.



Part 2: JUDGE

Discuss with students the reasons why local food systems help to create a more just world, and the principles that guide us.

Economic: Our partners are advocating for a new global food system, one where communities feed themselves. This protects farmers from the short life of cash crops, market demand of specialized food, and allows farmers to nurture the land and our food in an ecologically-sustainable and economically stable way.

Preferential Option for the Poor:

Alternative models of development are needed which prioritize the needs of the world's poor while respecting the ecological health of the Earth. These new models require those of us living in wealthy countries to change our lifestyles and attitudes towards growth, and to reduce our disproportionate consumption of the world's resources.

Environmental: Seeds adapted to the local environment and conditions require less chemicals to grow, (ex. industrial fertilizers, pesticides, etc). The loss of diversity of locally adapted seeds reduces the variety of foods available now and for the future.

Common Good: The ecological health of the Earth and the importance of the Earth's resources to the common good must take priority over commercial interests. The economic and social costs of depleting shared resources should be borne by those who incur them, rather than by those least responsible for them or by future generations.

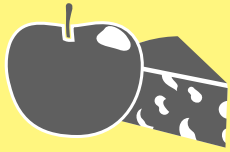
Social: Getting to know our local organic farmers creates a more dynamic and vibrant community. Supporting local, sustainable food systems means that farmers produce food for their communities and also respect the community's current and future resources.

Solidarity: We are one global community. All life is interconnected and interdependent. We strive to live in solidarity with the whole of creation, holding it in trust for future generations.

Political: We have a responsibility to protect our sisters and brothers in the Global South who are the most vulnerable. The majority of the world's poor support their families through farming. We can help to protect the right of farmers to save, sow, and exchange their seeds by supporting a shift in the global food system towards buying locally. Local markets support local decision-making and the de-commodification of food.

Subsidiarity and the role of government: The state is an instrument to promote human dignity, protect human rights, and build the common good. Subsidiarity teaches us that the government should function at the level closest to the people affected, as long as it can act effectively. When it cannot, then higher levels of government must intervene.

Part 3: ACT



1 Show your support for small family farmers

- Ask the students to talk to their families about making a commitment as a family to eating local and fair trade as much as possible at home.
- Organize a local lunch challenge! For an entire week, make sure the fruit and vegetables in your school lunch and snacks are local and fair trade products.



2 Educate yourselves and your community

- Organize a class trip to a local organic farm and meet a family farmer. See how fruit, vegetables, dairy products, eggs, poultry and livestock are produced on a farm in your area.
- Teach your community about local seed diversity by hosting a taste-test of different local varieties of fruits, vegetables, and grains, and display local heritage plants.
- Grow some vegetables from seed to watch and learn about the magic of seeds. Dampen a bean seed, water it, and watch it germinate and grow into a plant.



3 Spread the word about the campaign!

Share the campaign and photos of your activities or events through your community's social media, bulletin boards, and newspapers.

And let us know: #sowmuchlove, @devpeace, or send copies or links to schools@devp.org.

Additional Resources

Activities Database: We have compiled many activities suitable for intermediate and secondary students on a variety of social justice issues, including food and hunger. Activities include:

- **A Divided World:** How is the world's food divided among its population?
- **The Banana Split Game:** How are the profits from the sale of a banana divided between the different players in the supply chain?
- **Food or Fuel:** Introduction to the struggles faced by small family farmers in the Global South, including access to land and cash crops for agro-fuels.

Curriculum Connections: In the database you will also find curriculum connections for these activities! If your region's curriculum is not listed, or you use the tools to match curriculum objectives not listed, submit your connections to share with other teachers by emailing them to schools@devp.org.

Explore the database at devp.org/activities.

Want to learn more about the basics of farming? How and why farmers save seeds? What is subsistence farming? Find out in the *Farming Basics* tool, which can be found in the Resources section of the campaign web page at devp.org/sowmuchlove.



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