



SEEDS OF SOLIDARITY

Cultivating Hope, Educating for Change

BE THE CHANGE



To survive and thrive in life one must develop internal strength and resources to get through hard times personally, as well as vision and practical skills to provide for basic needs of food, energy and shelter. Our work and teaching at Seeds of Solidarity leans increasingly towards uniting healing with action in the journey towards sustainable living and strong communities.



An action becomes stronger when woven with practices that surface emotion and spirit. A day in the life of our SOL Garden program for local teenagers begins with profound personal sharing. Then with this circle spun, we share in the collective work of hauling compost, learning to stucco, or transplanting tomatoes bound for the SOL field, local schools and libraries. As we rejoin for reflection, we celebrate work accomplished together, as colorful youth-made banners painted with values like caring, trust, and generosity wave in the breeze and feed our souls as much as the life force of the food we grow.

Be it one of 25 youth in our SOL Garden program, a visitor on a Solidarity Saturday, or a family soaking up celebration and skills at the Garlic and Arts Festival, we are honored when people derive inspiration towards change within along with ideas for action in their lives and communities. But what does one do upon leaving a circle of support, alone to face change? How do hearts and minds remain open to the truth of wholeness and beauty when pained by the hunger of our neighbors, or devastating oil breaks wrought by corporate irresponsibility and consumer complacency?

The journey of remembering and relearning how to live lovingly and ever conscious of the sources of our sustenance is not an easy one, but denial and disconnect simply cannot lead to a life fulfilled.

It's been said that you are either on the way, or in the way. There are heroes and heroes we deeply admire worldwide and throughout history. Yet we cannot, as speaks a powerful Hopi prophecy, look outside ourselves for the leader.

In this annual newsletter, we make a special effort to merge our stories of success and words of reflection with ideas and resources to inspire your life and work. May the circle that unites and strengthens us as change-makers and believers in a beautiful world be unbroken.



Seeds of Solidarity Education Center provides people of all ages with the inspiration and practical tools to use renewable energy and grow food in their communities.

GOOD FOOD FOR ALL KIDS

Politics remind us how glad we are to be doing the on-the-ground work of building local food self-reliance.

This year the federal Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act passed, providing a \$4.3 billion funding increase over the next decade to update school food nutrition towards reducing obesity. But, this bill may be funded in part by a \$2.3 billion cut to SNAP, formerly known as food stamps. Let us be reminded that \$4.3 billion is equivalent to only nine days of the cost of waging war in Iraq and

Afghanistan. Grassroots initiatives that promote healthy kids are ever needed as hunger and obesity persist, and congressional bills are battled. May our school partnerships inspire your ideas for community based change.

Our spring after-school program culminated with elementary students selling their fabulous school-grown seedlings complete with growing tips. Thanks to these young gardeners, families in our community grew hundreds of vegetable plants in containers, on porches, and in backyard gardens. Kids voted to use proceeds from the seedling sale towards fresh local fruit for the free summer lunch program, so their peers could savor ripe strawberries for snack. Come summer, the young gardeners made an even broader service impact, contributing proceeds from their farmer's market towards oil clean-up efforts with a donation to the Gulf Restoration Network.

Try this—more ways to connect kids with healthy food and meaningful learning:

- Pair teenagers with children in school garden programs: teens become leaders and kids have great mentors.
- Create a mobile cooking cart with a blender, hotplate and assorted bowls, utensils and recipes to inspire young chefs to prepare fresh food.
- Plant hardy salad gardens in spring and fall to extend the school year growing season: Pea greens, Asian greens, spinach are edible as micro-greens in 10 days, and salads in 3-4 weeks



“Our schools have grown towards that goal of ‘community schools’ where local organizations, parents and guardians, and citizens can become part of the village raising children. I point towards Seeds of Solidarity as ‘that organization’ that has allowed us to create new paradigms of collaboration and cooperation.”

Dr. Paul Burnim
Superintendent
Orange Elementary
Schools



MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Our Annual Grow Food at Schools Workshop:
Friday August 12, 2011

Contact us about designing
Grow Food Everywhere Trainings for
your school district or community.



SOLful YOUTH

 **While
at
SOL
Garden
I feel:
Alive,
Amazing!**

As much as our SOL (Seeds of Leadership) Garden project is about youth cultivating food, it is equally a place of community building and healing. The harvest of veggies into brimming bags for donation to low-income elders peaks in summer, but exciting leadership grows all year. SOL youth mentors co-lead Seeds of Solidarity's 1st Annual Food Forum in February that brought together fifty community members sharing skills like sharpening tools, growing apples, and raising goats. In June, our community was in danger of losing our treasured public library to budget cuts. The day of the over-ride vote, youth leaders planted a 'Hope Garden' on the library grounds. (Vote passed—library and garden thrive!)

In October, youth leader and board member Vanessa Lynch joined Director Deb Habib to present at the Community Food Security Coalition Conference in New Orleans on engaging youth in food justice and community building. We packed the house, and are excited to share our work widely through the release of **Food for the**

SOL: A Food, Justice and Community Building Curriculum, available on our website in January 2011. The 12 units within follow our April to June food system and sustainability learning sequence, and include activities such as the global food gallery that we do to close a day of deep conversation, a theatrical activity to explore and share diverse farming traditions, and ample digging, mulching and potato planting.

Try this Global Food Gallery activity with youth or adults:

Access photographer Peter Menzel's collection of "What the World Eats" photos at:

www.time.com/time/photogallery. Print and laminate the pictures with descriptions, and prepare an 'outdoor gallery' ahead of time, then invite participants to quietly walk and take them in. Sit together in a circle near the photos and share emotional reactions, questions, and conversation about food, lifestyle, culture, hunger, excess, and access.

**Myself,
Accepted,
Friendly,
Safe,
Fascination
Like I
belong,
Calm,
Energetic,
Peaceful,
Wonder,
Content,
Free!**

[SOL group dialogue]



A SOLful garden planted for the Leverett Peace Pagoda



Our video features the voices of SOL Youth leaders!

www.seedsofsolidarity.org connects you to our 10-minute film created by videosforjustice.org; a great teaching tool for youth and educators.



A grateful farewell to Kaitlin Doherty, Program Director extraordinaire as she returns to her native Canada!

We love you Kait!



DEEPEN OUR ROOTS

FALLACY: THERE IS NOT ENOUGH FOOD TO FEED THE WORLD.

This myth powers and perpetuates genetically modified organisms, corporate control, poison pesticides, and land grabbing from the world's poor. It is essential that all reclaim the right to real food and ecologically and culturally attuned farming practices; not just to feed bellies locally and globally but to restore our soulful connection to the earth and the source of our sustenance. At Seeds of Solidarity, our growing practices and teachings are rooted in restoring the right of healthy food to all people, and honoring soil as living and life giving.



"Our work to build a better food system is inextricably linked to the struggle for worker's rights, immigrant rights, women's rights, the fight to dismantle racism in our communities, and the struggle for sovereignty in indigenous communities...in order to create a better food system, we must break up corporate control of our seeds, land, water, and natural resources."

People's Movement for Food Sovereignty,
US Social Forum 2010, Detroit

We celebrate the launch of the US Food Sovereignty Alliance that took place on World Food Day on October 16th. We are inspired by

organizations like WHY (World Hunger Year), Via Campesina, and Grassroots International, so actively engaged in the movement for food sovereignty.

Seeds of Solidarity joyfully partners with Grow Seed and founder Eli Rogosa to grow precious, ancient wheat on our farm to contribute to their seed bank. Camila Martinez of the Maya Seed Ark Project stayed with us this summer, presenting on her work to keep GMO seed out of Mayan lands and their traditional, sacred corn. Mayan prayers, learned Ricky in studies with elders, culminate with kissing the earth. We are honored to grow Hopi Blue Corn and Narragansett Corn on our land, and to be sharing these seeds of sovereignty with others.

Our gratitude to a beautiful stream of farm volunteers this summer.



Special thanks to Angelo Rosso for returning often and serving the land, weaving friendships, and warming our hearts so.

Join us in 2011 and learn to
Grow Food Everywhere:

Visit; Solidarity Saturdays: June 4, October 22
No-till Gardening For Life: June 4, 1-3PM
Grow Food Everywhere at Omega Institute
(omega.org) June 17-19





Growing, storing and sharing food throughout the seasons

promotes community food sovereignty and self-reliance. Practicing no-till methods that foster soil life and sequester carbon is something we can all do to help mitigate the impact of climate change as we also deepen our roots, hands in soil.

NO-TILL GARDENING FOR LIFE:

Create Self-Sustaining Gardens That...

Eliminate machinery and fossil fuels, reduce weeding, conserve water, and create fertile soil.

You can put down cardboard anytime of the year. Worms and microbes decompose cardboard year round, leaving well-aerated and worm-casting rich soil in its place.

Put cardboard on a new area or existing garden in the fall; it will break down by spring, easy to dig holes for seedlings. The remaining cardboard serves as mulch and weed barrier.

You can also put down cardboard in early or late spring for the Insta Garden Approach:

Lay down large pieces of cardboard to create a garden size that fits your needs. Use a utility knife to cut holes in the cardboard spaced appropriately for the seedlings you are planting. Shovel out existing soil in each hole and replace or mix with good quality compost. Put a transplant in each hole and water well. Cover remaining cardboard around seedlings with mulch hay, or well rotted leaves. You can plant part of your garden with cool weather crops (kales, broccoli, chard) in late spring, then add hot weather crops in early June.

To sow and grow greens using Insta Garden approach:

Lay cardboard on a lawn or lot to make a bed approximately 3 feet wide and as long as you wish. Cover cardboard with at least 3-4" of decent soil, covered with 3-4" of rich compost. Gently rake the top of your bed smooth and water. Scatter sow greens seeds like Asian greens, spinach, lettuce mixes or arugula. Gently water seeds, cover with light layer of compost, and water again. Keep moist, cut when salad size, water and let grow again.

In your second year after an Insta-Garden:

The sod and cardboard has broken down and your soil is fertile with worm castings. Then, you can make raised beds and plant, and also continue to put cardboard on beds each fall or around crops year round for a self-sustaining garden.

"The garden we planted in the workshop is flourishing! In the spring we'll put some kitchen gardens in outside the dining hall as well. You literally planted the seeds for something which has continued to spread so much joy and nourishment throughout our community."

—Stephanie, Seasonal Staff and Workshop participant, Omega Institute, July 2010

Seeds of Solidarity's Ricky Baruc received a 2010 grant from SARE (Sustainable Ag Research and Education) with farmer/scientist Rachel Scherer, and Dr. Chris Picone, Fitchburg State to gather data on soil and plant properties in cardboard mulch prepared no-till beds. Stay tuned for results!

Seeds of Solidarity no-till techniques featured in new film!

THE FOOD AND CLIMATE CONNECTION. View it at:
www.whyhunger.org





EARTH AND SPIRIT

Take time for repose, it is the germ of creation

Eight Matters of the Heart, speech by Ed Young

In 2010 Seeds of Solidarity launched Earth and Spirit Retreats to inspire meaningful change from the heart, then heart outward into our lives and communities. During a retreat, contemplative practices like meditation and yoga are woven with interactive workshops on growing food, renewable energy, and sacred, energy efficient design. Introspection, reflection, and dialogue throughout the weekend support deep integration. Nourishing meals incorporate our farm fresh vegetables. Retreat participants leave with new skills and renewed direction for physical and spiritual sustainability for self and community, and a life-affirming vision.



FROM OUR 2010 RETREAT PARTICIPANTS:

... Seeds of Solidarity and Earth and Spirit Retreats hold the complexities with me: from what we eat and how it's grown to the energy we consume. From healthy relationship-building to loving community-building, from the local to the global ... from contemplation to action. I know of few other places that weave so much together.

... Spending time on your land healed something in me by reminding me how much I need to make contact with land... I don't know how it is that I ever forgot how important that was for me...[The retreat] was really beautiful, and I am happy to derive my greater vision for my life by way of the visioning you do for your lives.



CONTACT US TO RECEIVE REGISTRATION INFO FOR:

Earth and Spirit Retreat for Adults: July 8-10

Earth and Spirit Retreat for Youth: Aug 20-21



New!

Living your Green Dream,
A Workshop for Couples: Aug 6



Seeds of Solidarity co-founder Ricky Baruc now offers personal mentoring to help you get:

Off the Grid, Onto the Land, Into Your Heart

Contact Ricky at 978-544-7564 for more information.



CREATE CELEBRATIONS

A call recently came in from another state, asking how to organize a festival like Garlic and Arts. Given the impossibility of abbreviating 12 years into a 5-minute conversation, the key things we offered were to know your core values and always hold meetings over food. The venerable Pete Seeger built the Beacon Sloop Club and literally launched the famous Clearwater Festival by cajoling people into volunteering. “I called it a potluck supper and 30 people showed up,” says Seeger in a recent New York Times article, also affirming “food is one of the great organizing tools.”

The Garlic and Arts Festival is a labor of love created by 20 neighbors and with over 300 volunteers the weekend of the event. In addition to the fabulous weekend long festivities that attract 10,000 including ample free-range kids, we are thrilled that the festival (initiated in 1998 over a potluck dinner and with \$100) can now make mini-grants to local groups that promote community building through the arts, food, energy, and wellness projects. How cool is that?

In February 2010, Seeds of Solidarity held the First Annual Food Forum at the Orange Innovation Center, with similar values of community building and skills towards local self-reliance. An event is stronger when it embodies values that resonate with mission and vision while providing opportunity to connect and rejoice, as with our Zydeco Dance Party to benefit our youth programs, in which we revel as the year draws to a close.



COOL TOOLS:

Amazing Garlic and Arts super-volunteer Athena Bradley created “*Guidance for Special Events Food Waste Diversion*” as part of her work with the Northeast Recycling Council. Download it at www.nerc.org to transform trash at your event.

Whole Measures for Community Food Systems: Values Based Planning and Evaluation is a great tool for engaging community in developing programs and assessing outcomes related to food justice and fairness, healthy people, strong communities, thriving local economies, and more: www.foodsecurity.org/pubs.

Rituals of celebration and unity are needed for people and places to heal and thrive.

What are some of the key elements of organizing events that foster vibrant communities and a new dream of co-existence?

Know and stay true to core values

Eat good food together

Share in physical work together

Celebrate volunteerism, your own and others’

Know when to hold on or let go of your position or opinion

Change to remain passionate about the process and outcome

Laugh often

Add yours here! _____





SEEDS OF SOLIDARITY EDUCATION CENTER

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FROM OUR TABLE:

Things Do Not Change, We Change. –Thoreau



What sparks one to change; internal unhappiness, the state of the world, realization of a new way of being?

When we first began our journey together while working at the New Alchemy Institute 25 years ago, we wondered: if people knew the truth of the planet's environmental despair would they change?

Mass media continues to hide much but there is no denying the devastation that persists in the quest for power and profit. Do we understand the need for change at a soul level, but fall victim or become party to an economic system that keeps us running in place?

Our focus when we began Seeds of Solidarity was on physical change; to design and build, cultivate food and harvest renewable energy. If visitors experienced options that showed that a life of less harm was possible, would that help propel them to choose such a path? We now strive to go deeper to bridge outward action and inner change in our practice and teaching.

Deep change requires courageous leaps in many realms—emotional, spiritual, physical—and unearthing of beliefs and patterns that keep us from changing.

Maya lineage carrier Nana Mercedes B. Longfellow writes that “The Elders say what it takes to make the shift is to engage our own desire to reconnect with the life force that lies both within us and in the natural world. They say that the world of joy and harmony is within, as is the world of pain, suffering, anguish and disruption. The outer world shifts when the inner world makes a shift in consciousness.”

May Seeds of Solidarity continue to blossom as a place of vision and healing that supports many on a journey towards a new dream.



Do not go where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.

Ralph Waldo Emerson



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We value and need your support. Every contribution is meaningful.

Please return the reply envelope with your gift or make a secure donation at www.seedsofsolidarity.org.