



Keynote Speaker  
Dr. Katie Cannon



## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RACISM AND GLOBALIZATION

(By Edward "Jerry" Pennick, Director of the Land Assistance Fund, Federation of Southern Cooperatives; a Board Member of Agricultural Missions, and Chairperson of the Conference Planning Committee)

A first of its kind International Conference on Racism and Globalization was sponsored by Agricultural Missions and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund June 27-29 in Chicago. It drew nearly 120 people to hear major presentations and engage in lively discussion, networking and strategizing at the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) center. Participants and presenters included some 30 people from, or with origins in at least 20 countries outside the U.S.A. These countries included:

Belize, Canada, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Palestine, Panama, Puerto Rico, Senegal, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Uganda.

Approximately one-fourth of the participants were youth and young adults under the age of 35, all actively involved in working for social, racial and economic justice.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Katie Cannon, Professor of Christian Ethics at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, VA. She spoke on the theme of "An Ethical Mapping of the Transatlantic Slave Trade." A powerful excerpt of Katie's delivery, "when it comes to questions of parallel dynamics between the transatlantic slave trade and a globalized, capitalist free-trade market, why do God-fearing women and men far too often look on silently while people are still being oppressed, compressed, depressed and suppressed by economic exploitation and systemic underdevelopment?"

*"... why do God-fearing women and men far too often look on silently while people are still being oppressed, compressed, depressed and suppressed by economic exploitation and systemic underdevelopment?"*



(l to r): Luis Rivera Pagan, Alfonso Peñalosa Mendez, Mariama Williams, Rajyashri Waghay, Winston Carroo, Nehru Tennassee, Walter Hill and Junius Williams

There were eight powerful presentations on globalization and how it impacts different sectors of society and communities of color. Presenters included community organizers, academics, and theologians with history and experience of working with communities of color to confront the negative impact of globalization. Speaker Luís Rivera Pagán during his presentation "Xenophobia or Xenophilia: A Challenge to the Christian Ethics" says *"We need to countervail the xenophobia that contaminates public discourse in the United States and other Western nations with an embracing, exclusion-rejecting perspective of the stranger, the alien, the other...one which I have named xenophilia, a concept that comprises hospitality, love, and care for the stranger."*

**Areas covered by presenters included:**

- \*Trade policy
- \*Financial distribution
- \*Immigration
- \*Water and Environment
- \*Agriculture and food sovereignty
- \*Employment
- \*Cultural and Spirituality
- \*Education

Small group sessions followed each plenary. The primary objective of each session was to provide opportunity for conference participants to digest information provided by the presenters and begin to develop long and short-term solutions to the issues and concerns identified not just by the presenters but the group as well. Results from group discussions as well as informal meetings throughout the conference were presented on the final day and the conference participants adopted the attached Declaration (insert).

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Go to our website  
[www.agriculturalmissions.org](http://www.agriculturalmissions.org)  
 to see major presentations and  
 a report on the Conference.



# BROWN-BLACK SOLIDARITY

## KEY STRATEGY FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE STRUGGLES

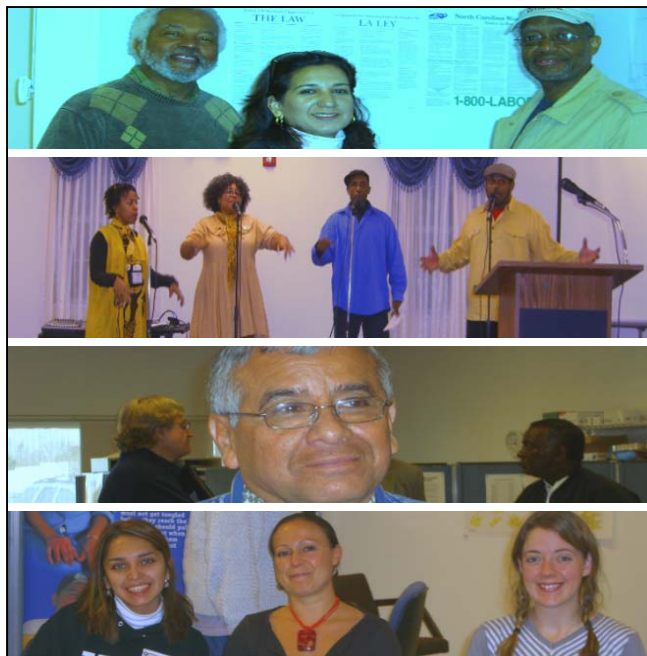
Stephen Bartlett

From Feb 28-March 1, 2008 at the historic United Church of Christ (UCC) Franklinton Center at Bricks in Whitakers, North Carolina, Agricultural Missions gathered together 60+ persons for a study session entitled: Black Brown Solidarity: Countering the Divide. Hosted by the National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM), the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), the Justice at Smithfield campaign of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), and the Beloved Community/ Southern Faith, Labor and Community Alliance.

In this era of corporate-led globalization, the issue of how racism is used and perpetuated by those in positions of economic power to divide the people is seen as a key element of structural exploitation and abuse of workers. Much of the untold history of labor struggles in the South reveals how even the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) played a role in combating and dividing white and black workers when they united, for example, to struggle against the abuses of the timber companies during the first and second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, or as part of the Small Tenant Farmers Association in the 30s, among others. (see *Working Lives: the Southern Exposure History of Labor in the South*, Edited by Marc S. Miller, Pantheon Books, Institute for Southern Studies, 1974). The recent Denzel Washington film *The Great Debaters* depicts some of the realities of that era and the integrated organizing that took place at that time, and the lynchings. Thus we come to realize that paramilitarization was aimed to create an unbridgeable wedge among those being victimized by the economic system of resource extraction and labor exploitation, and minority rule. The ruling class decided that the most effective way to destroy the southern labor movement was to divide white from black in the labor movement, and the KKK played a role in that violent strategy.

Today we see the emergence of new paramilitaries, dubbed the Minutemen, as well as the re-emergence of other white supremacy groups, whose driving force once again is racism and the fight against new arrivals to the working class of the U.S. We see widespread scapegoating of immigrant workers, under the guise of the war on terror, but situated very clearly in the chronic ruling-class strategy of racial fear-mongering and divide-and-conquer tactics.

The people and organizations gathered in North Carolina took a look at two particular struggles where the Black Brown Solidarity equation is seen as critical: the Justice



at Smithfield campaign to unionize the largest pig processing facility in the world in Tar Heel, NC, and the campaign of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) to bring RJ Reynolds tobacco company to the table to improve the conditions of tens of thousands of farm workers who labor in the tobacco fields of the state. Participants visited either the UFCW Workers Center in Lumberton, NC to meet with injured workers and UFCW organizers or the FLOC offices in Dudley to visit with farm worker organizers and allies, followed by a visit with a farm worker on a tobacco farm.

We learned about the many injuries and indignities experienced by many Smithfield processing plant workers, of the spontaneous uprising of Latino workers when pressured to respond to federal no-match letters, of the segregation and communication problems that plague latino and African American relations in the plant, of the raids by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) that led to the deportation of hundreds of undocumented workers.

We also learned about the difference between H2A guest workers conditions and that of undocumented farm workers, and the paradoxes, pros and cons of each lowly status, the difficulty of workers maintaining marriages when working away from their homes in Mexico from 3-10 months of each year; of the challenge of using one kitchen for the cooking of lunch for 36 workers at a time; of the long row to hoe for immigrant workers from south of our border, whether they are legal "guest workers" or "undocumented" workers laboring outside the formal economy, as most do.

*Continued on page 4*

This theme was outlined by Rev. Nelson Johnson of the Beloved Community Center and Southern Faith, Labor and Community Alliance, during his inspirational keynote biblical foundation talk that opened up the conference. "It was not long ago that our ancestors in slavery had to endure the lash of the whip and the strangling pressure of the noose around our necks. So how can we who have had that experience fail to come to the help of those today who are being exploited and persecuted? People today are trapped and devalued, turned into mere beasts of burden.

*"We need to know our story. I did not know that slavery was abolished in Mexico 48 years before that occurred in the U.S. I did not know that in the 1840s Mexico was attacked by the United States because they refused to return runaway slaves to their masters in the U.S. I thought that war was about Davy Crockett, and how mean people surrounded the Alamo... I didn't know it was about the Mexicans not returning slaves, so the slave masters with the U.S. army invaded and took Mexico down, taking half of the territory of Mexico as a booty of war, in order to continue the practice of slavery in the south."*

The bottom line of this struggle is this: *"For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the immigrant, giving him food and clothing. Love the stranger therefore, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."* Deuteronomy 10: 17-19 ■



Fruits of Labor Jazz Singers



Clara Nunez of the PCUSA translating for Smithfield worker during field visit.



## THEME:

**REBUILDING LOCAL FOOD ECONOMIES:**  
*True Solution to the Food Crisis*  
*From Haiti to ...Where You Live*

## DATES (March 9-15, 2009)

3/09/09 (Monday) Travel to Haiti  
3/10-12/09 (Tuesday-Thursday) Study Session  
3/13-14/09 (Friday-Saturday) Board Meeting  
3/15/09 (Sunday) Travel Back)

**Mark Your Calendar**  
**for Next AMI Study Session**







## Too Many Eggs in Too Few Baskets: THE GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS



**WHAT FOOD CRISIS?** You may have seen news reports about a global food crisis, provoking protests of hungry people that have toppled some governments around the world. The World Bank reports that global food prices rose 83% over the last three years. Most affected are 860 million people who are already hungry or food insecure-36 million of whom live in the United States. Unless the current food crisis is contained, another 100 million are at risk of the flail of hunger worldwide. Can decent people of faith and good will tolerate so much human suffering?

Many of the 36 million food insecure people in the U.S. live in "food deserts" and must travel long distances to buy fresh food. Because both fuel and food prices are going up, these people are most affected by the crisis, and may be joined by millions of others living at or near the poverty level. It is reported that 99% of food banks have witnessed an increase in those they're serving since last year, but stocks of food are down due to the higher cost of the foods and declining donations as the economy falls into recession.

**WHY ARE WE EXPERIENCING A FOOD CRISIS NOW?** Food price inflation is a symptom of a food system in crisis. Bad weather, high oil prices, agro fuels and speculation are only the trigger of the deeper food crisis. The root cause of the crisis is a global food system that is highly vulnerable to economic and environmental shock. This vulnerability springs from the risks, short-sightedness and unjust policies of an industrialized agricultural system that has driven family farmers from the land for several decades through bankruptcy and led to virtual monopoly control by transnational corporations of many agricultural markets, from fertilizer and seed to space on retail shelves. Too many of our eggs are kept in too few baskets.

**WHO BENEFITS FROM THIS FOOD CRISIS?** Would you be surprised to learn that profits are sharply up for large agribusiness corporations that sell fertilizers, pesticides and seeds, or who buy and sell agricultural commodities? Even retail chain stores are seeing increased profits from food sales. Is there something wrong with a picture in which hunger is increasing but at the same time \$200 million in U.S. government subsidies are going to support the conversion of corn into ethanol to fuel cars? Or that, buyers of commodity futures are raking in huge fortunes due to the precipitous rise in prices they are betting on? Has our food system become like a Las Vegas Casino?

**HOW CAN HUNGER BE RELIEVED? WHAT ARE THE SOLUTIONS TO THE FOOD CRISIS?** Who should we listen to for solutions to this crisis, the voices we hear in the mainstream media of government officials and corporate public relations executives who call for more of the same policies that got us all into this fix? Or the voices not usually heard in the media, the voices of the family farmers and their supporters, who know how to produce food and get it to their neighbors and local markets? Should we listen to the voices of people committed to following their religious beliefs by feeding the hungry? *To solve the food crisis we need to fix the food system.* We need to regulate food markets and our social safety net to be sure people are not going hungry. We need to support local family farmers in every community to earn a decent living from feeding people. We need to develop a solidarity economy, ideally with government support, that subsidizes access to local foods by low-income residents. *We need to make food affordable by making sustainable family farming viable.* We need to re-establish grain reserves to keep food prices steady and support the production of food close to where it will be eaten, thus guaranteeing that even with high fuel prices, food will get to where it is needed. So-called 'free' trade needs to be 'fair' trade. Agriculture needs to be democratized and farmers need a say in how local markets function. Low-input localized family farming, even on plots in cities, can solve hunger both in the U.S. and around the world, if only farmers have access to land, water and seeds. *Food security for all depends on happy farmers everywhere.*





## THE WEST AFRICA INITIATIVE A Model for Achieving Sustainable Community-Based Food Security

By Winston G. Carroo

Horace Kpukumu (right) interviews some residents of Kpai Village during workshop survey exercise.

The current food price crisis is taking a toll on the poor the world over. This is especially true of countries that depend on food imports as some food exporting countries restrict exports to protect their own citizens in these times of global food scarcity. The problem is the result of policies and programs of most developing countries, often imposed by the International Financial Institutions, to forego producing their own food and to depend on food imports to feed their populations. The notion that "free trade" can guarantee food security has been laid to rest by this crisis, yet many countries and organizations, (including the United Nations) are still promoting this bankrupt and failed free trade policy as the solution to the crisis.

The truth be told, the food crisis is the direct result of the removal of the responsibility for food production from local communities and placing it in the hands of transnational commodity trading corporations. Over the past two decades, incentives and support for local farmers and food processors have been drastically reduced and grain stocks eliminated to make way for subsidized food imports from industrialized countries. The long term, sustainable solution to the crisis lies in restoring the capacity of local communities to produce the foods they consume. This is what the West Africa Initiative (WAI) is all about.

The WAI is an initiative of the Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) that is designed to develop the capacity of the Councils of Churches in Sierra Leone and Liberia to become engaged in effective community based rural development. This effort is supported by three offices of PCUSA - Self Development of Peoples (SDOP), Disaster Assistance (PDA) and the Hunger Program (PHP), with Agricultural Missions playing the leading role in the planning and implementation, in collaboration with the Councils in both countries.

Both Liberia and Sierra Leone have recently emerged from decades of civil wars that resulted in displaced rural populations, destroyed infrastructure and abandoned farms. These conflicts effectively destroyed communities' and the countries' capacities to produce and distribute their own food; resulting in dependency on food imports.

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Now, this food crisis, along with the high cost of (imported) petroleum is placing severe pressure on the governments to avert civil unrest and even a return to civil war. In Liberia and Sierra Leone, more than sixty percent of the populations live on less than two dollars per day and the recent increases in the prices for basic foods is creating extreme hardships on the majority, already living in poverty. The governments have responded by reducing the tariffs on food imports, subsidies and increased food aid from international agencies. But such efforts do not address the root causes of the problem nor provide solutions for the long term. The WAI program does.

The implementation of this Initiative is well underway. Already in 2008, a two-week workshop in Project Management was held in Kenema, Sierra Leone in April, attended by 12 representatives from Liberia and 10 from Sierra Leone. Follow up workshops in each country are planned for September and October. Community based farmer training events are in progress and will continue in the coming months and the disbursement of small grants is enabling the production of basic foods such as rice, groundnuts and vegetables in some twenty communities. Another round of workshops is underway as this is being prepared for mailing.

While the impact of WAI on the overall problem at the national level may be relatively small, this program is very important in the communities in which it is being implemented and can serve as a model that points the way to achieving sustainable community food security. ■



A report of the management workshop held April 14-24, 2008 at the National Pastoral Center in Kenema, Sierra Leone can be viewed and downloaded on AMI website: [www.agriculturalmissions.org](http://www.agriculturalmissions.org)

## THE THIRD WORLD WAR – THE WAR FOR FOOD

My subject today is palatable (pun-intended). It is exciting! In the food business you and I are equal shareholders. Come to think of it, all beings can live without shelter, clothing and all other so called basic needs, but food? No way! The media is replete with sirens of a food crisis. An independent journalist based in London, Gwynne Dyer, has written in his column in "The New Vision" newspaper of March 31, 2008 that world wide food prices rose by 23% between 2006-2007. By March 23, 2008, Reuter's news agency was reporting a 43% rise, and still counting.

Predictably the rising food prices have ignited the fuse of the time bomb. What would take climate change twenty years to accomplish, giving us enough time to confess our sins, rising food prices are threatening to achieve in two, sending us all to hell. The chain of explosions is in progress. In Thailand, farmers are sleeping in their rice fields after reports that thieves are stealing the rice, now worth \$600 a ton, straight out of the fields. Four people have died in Egypt in clashes over subsidized flour that was being sold for profit on the black market. Government had to seek the intervention of the army to help in distribution. As food riots broke out in relatively calm Burkina Faso, 300 people were arrested prompting government to suspend customs duties on staple food imports for three months. Other riots have been reported in Cameroon, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Mozambique, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Madagascar as well as the more developed economies of the Philippines and Indonesia. In Haiti the riots went a notch more violent in early 2008 and led to the fall of the Prime Minister.

In view of the foregoing figures, one is inclined to ask, "What is really taking place?"

Accusing fingers are pointing at the biofuel craze of the United States of America and the European Union, sensibly arguing that biofuel crops not only compete for land and other resources with food crops, but to grow them rainforests, especially in Brazil and Indonesia, are cleared, making worse an already bad Climate Change situation. Furthermore sinking maize and soybean into the bottomless pit of bio fuel production creates artificial food shortages. As a matter fact European Union is aiming at providing 10% of the fuel used for transport from bio fuels by 2010. At the same time the United States of America government Energy Independence and Security Act passed in December 2007 raised the mandated volume of bio fuels for 2008 from 5.4 billion to 9 billion gallons, a quadrupling to 36 billion gallons in 14

years. That means 30% of 2008's grain harvest will go into feeding machinery and not people! When your cheap labour pool in the South has starved to death, who will operate your machinery, hmm? For all your technological advances, you are yet to attain 100% automation!

The typically selfish argument of the North that corn (maize for you) is only a first step in creating a green industry is torn to shreds by the recent study in the US journal "Science" that calculated destroying natural ecosystems to grow biofuel crops releases between 17 and 420 times more carbon dioxide than is saved annually by burning the biofuel derived from crops grown on that same land instead of fossil fuel. Dig a crater to fill a pothole? How logical, even for the US! Their explanation rings hollow like the clanging cymbal that the Apostle Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 13:1-8, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal---" "Credit us with some wisdom! We all know, in the South at least, that the real reason behind bio fuels is to provide the US and EU with homegrown fuels to wean them off Middle Eastern oil supplies! After Operation Desert-Storm, who would want to go through it again, the fighting I mean?"

That Climate Change manifesting as global warming, violent hailstorms and prolonged drought is a major cause of rising food prices is not in doubt. The New Vision newspaper in Uganda reported on February 24, 2006 that violent hailstorms had destroyed hundreds of acres of crops exposing 2000 people to hunger and reduced income. On March 19, 2008 Xinhua news agency quoted Jiao Meiyang of China Meteorological Administration as saying, "Normally there is 12.7mm (0.5inches) of precipitation by now in the North East of China, the region of inner Mongolia, Tianjin and the surrounding province of Hebei but only 6.2mm has been received, the lowest in 57 years. She predicted that some 6 million hectares (14.8million acres) of arable land in Heilongjiang province, China's largest supplier of commodity grains like corn, soybean, rice and wheat, could face severe drought during the spring ploughing season. "The citizen" newspaper of South Africa reported on June 5, 2008 that drought in Australia had caused a 5% shortfall in world wheat supplies resulting in a 130% rise in price. Reuters news agency quotes Lisa Ainsworth, a molecular biologist with the United States Department of Agriculture as having said that the world warmed by about 0.7°C, on average since the 1800s and higher temperatures can cut yields particularly in the tropics where a lot of rice is grown.

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Even change in diets is blamed! The citizen newspaper of South Africa on June 5, 2008 quoted Tongaat CEO Peter Staude as attributing rising food prices to the economic prosperity of China and India, arguing that as people of the world's most populous nations build financial muscle to consume 15% more food every year, they are putting significant pressure on the demand side of the food price equation. Just imagine! The average Chinese citizen now eats 50 kilos (110 lbs) of meat a year. Up from 20 kilos (44lbs) in the mid-1980s, yet producing meat consumes enormous quantities of grain. It is bad manners in Africa to discuss one's eating habits so I will limit my comments to "How can you begrudge a man a little meat who in times past braved harsh communist winters on a diet of cabbage, which action triggered his brain to colonize the world economically?"

The causes are endless but solutions are more interesting. In the general mayhem of accusations and counter accusations the experts have been on hand to provide prescriptions in their "expert" opinions. Mr. Peter Smerdon, spokesman for the UN's World Food Programme is quoted as saying, "There are all sorts of things you could do to make sure less rain does not mean more dead". He stressed that it requires more investment in drilling water boreholes and changing behavior but the funds needed were often lacking. Drill boreholes to reach water that is diminishing and not being replenished? Give me a break!

Yet other experts (the number of experts seems to be inversely proportional to the amount of food) Mr. Nick Haan, a chief technical adviser for the UN's Food and Agricultural Organization is quoted as saying "Development resources in terms of attention, interest, money, etc should not be disproportionately diverted to crises; and Eric Patrick, a dry lands experts at the UNDP grandly declared "Governments and donors should put more emphasis on rural development".

Not to be outdone, money minters, experts in their own right mind you, have provided their own prescription. In 1999, The Rockefeller Foundation unleashed the "New Green Revolution in Africa" on the world; not withstanding that the 1960s Green Revolution in Asia continues to have significant negative consequences for class, gender and local agro-ecosystems.

The Rockefeller Foundation won an important ally, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and together, on September 12, 2006 announced the birth of Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). They claim that AGRA is a charity aimed at reducing hunger in Africa through Agricultural development. Whom are they kidding? With partners like:

- YARA Foundation established in 2005 to mark the centennial of YARA International, the only international fertilizer producer with a significant presence in Africa for the past 25 years,
- Monsanto Corporation, one of the world's biggest biotechnology multinational companies and considered the most aggressive in promoting genetically modified crops,
- SYNGENTA Foundation, the humanitarian face of SYNGENTA, the world's third largest seed company whose most publicized project in Africa is the Insect Resistant maize for Africa (IRMA)?

Even the blind can see the profit motive wrapped in the glittering tinsel of philanthropic concern for the poor, hungry African!

Now I am not a prophet, I am not a seer; nor do I possess any such special powers like extra sensory perception, but mark my words! As hunger continues to rise, there is talk of a revolution, and it sure is not green. It's bloody, engulfing the world in smoke and has not winners – It's the THIRD WORLD WAR!

Till next time..... ■

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## AGRICULTURAL MISSIONS INVITES MEMBERS

The Board of Directors of Agricultural Missions has opened the door to a broader understanding of membership in the organization by declaring Ag Missions a membership organization. There are four membership categories:

	Religious denominations and Church Related Agencies	
People's organizations	Congregations	Individuals at large

The first members are all those that have contributed to the life and work of Agricultural Missions in 2007 and 2008. You/They are encouraged to continue that commitment, and to invite friends, colleagues, local churches and other organizations to learn about our work and become members as well.

Members will receive benefits:

- periodic reporting from AMI, including newsletters, web links, and others
- stories concerning program involvement
- calls for study and advocacy on issues of importance to rural people's organizations
- reports on the life and health of AMI
- opportunities to become meaningfully engaged with rural people's organizations and social movements, to meet and build relationships (in person, on-line)

Members will be invited to be active:

- attend annual study sessions
- participate in other learning-through-exposure events, such as visits to rural partner organizations,
- social movement convergences (e.g., World and Regional Social Forums, gatherings of COMPA, MST, and others)
- represent AMI at events in their communities, churches, etc.
- serve on working groups and committees of the Agricultural Missions Board
- recommend persons for nomination to the AMI Board
- be considered for nomination to the AMI Board

Members will be expected to do some work:

- keep informed of the issues important to AMI and its rural partner organizations and social movements
- introduce AMI and its work to others, including congregations, individuals, community groups, foundations, and others
- respond to requests for advocacy on public policy issues
- respond to calls for advocacy and action on issues of our rural partner organizations
- make annual contributions to AMI
- seek and suggest sources of financial and other support for the work of AMI

We will be sending more information about membership in Agricultural Missions in the weeks ahead and we invite you to continue, or to initiate your closer connection to the work of Agricultural Missions in these increasingly difficult times for rural peoples around the world.

*A Faith Response to Rural Poverty and Injustice*



## I AM NO LAB RAT CAMPAIGN FROM OUR PARTNER IN INDIA -- CHETHANA NETWORK

As you are aware, the biotech industry is trying to thrust Bt Brinjal\* down our throats pretty soon and the companies are claiming that all trials and tests are nearly over. However, there is hardly any consumer awareness about what genetically modified (GM) foods are; what the known impacts of such foods are; that this is an irreversible process since we are talking about living organisms that propagate and spread on their own and cannot be recalled once released into the environment; about the fact that they will be left with no choices once Bt Brinjal comes in (since labeling with systems of segregation for GM and non-GM is an impossibility in India); and the fact that there are safe, ecological alternatives to such technologies in our farming, already being practiced by farmers in lakhs (hundreds of thousands) of acres (even though the industry likes to project GM crops as the only alternative).

It is in this context that a consumer awareness and mobilization campaign called "I am no lab rat" is being launched in Hyderabad, as part of a movement across different cities of India spearheaded by the Coalition for a GM-Free India.

Meanwhile, if you do not want to be a lab rat in this experiment led by profit-hungry corporations, please do visit [www.iamnolabrat.com](http://www.iamnolabrat.com) website and send a petition to the Union Health Minister telling him "I am no lab rat". Please pass this mail to others too. Thank you.

\*For the first time an edible genetically mutated organism is being introduced into the Indian market  
— BT Brinjal ■

### MODERN-DAY SLAVE MASTERS PLEAD GUILTY: JUSTICE SERVED IN IMMOKALEE, FLORIDA

Agricultural Missions welcomes the news from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) that yet another prosecution (of a 17-count indictment) of violent enslavement of farm workers has been successful.

Yesterday, at federal court in Ft. Myers, FL, farm bosses from Immokalee pleaded guilty to numerous charges of enslaving Mexican and Guatemalan immigrants, brutalizing them and forcing them to work in farm fields.

("Five to plead guilty on charges of enslaving immigrant laborers."  
(Ft. Myers News Press, 9/2/08).

Check out the CIW website <http://www.ciw-online.org> for all the details. ■

### SOCIAL JUSTICE LITERACY QUIZ

This new resource is inspired by the Rural Women's Gathering held November 1-5, 2007 in New Mexico.

What does Christian faith call us to understand? Find out what Mictlán of the Mexican Day of the Dead has in common with the Kingdom of God, and what verses from the book of Job could apply to indigenous peoples displaced from their ancestral lands. The reader-friendly quiz includes a glossary on concepts important for understanding corporate-led globalization. Available on our website: <http://www.agriculturalmissions.org> ■



### AMI Organizes Delegation to Americas Social Forum in Guatemala

Agricultural Missions coordinated and supported an international delegation to the III Americas Social Forum held October 7-12, 2008 at San Carlos University in Guatemala City, Guatemala. AMI vice-president, Marta Benavides traveled with a delegation from El Salvador to Guatemala to participate in the Forum.

AMI and Siglo XXIII of El Salvador, lead workshops on *"Solutions to the Food Price Crisis, Holistic Rural Development and Human Rights and the International Criminal Court."*

In conjunction with the Coordination of Movements of the Peoples of the Americas (COMPA) and Grito de los Excluidos, AMI participated in larger events focusing on the role of Social Movements in Latin America today. ■



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**Rebuild Local Food Economies Tour! End Hunger, Cool the Planet – November 5-20, 2008**

Agricultural Missions and the Landless Rural Workers Movement of Brazil (MST), together with farmers and rural justice advocates in the US will be touring, speaking and acting in the mid-west and northeast US from November 5-20, 2008.

At this tipping point moment for humanity, the food and energy crises are demonstrating what small-scale family farmers and rural peoples have been saying for many years now: without support for localized agriculture everywhere, hunger can grow anywhere. Food production is up, yet so is hunger. This tour will clarify why that is so.

Consider supporting this tour and be listed as co-sponsor by hosting, co-hosting, networking or promoting an event in your community, organization, church, home, garden or field. The windows for events are November 5-12 for the Midwest (Kentucky, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio?), and November 12-20 for the Northeast and Washington D.C. (Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine, Maryland, D.C.?)

Come out to hear speakers working at the grassroots making their voices heard in the boardrooms of agribusinesses and helping mobilize mass movements addressing the root causes of the current crises. Participate in a participatory symbolic drama which evokes the absurdities of factory farms and patented seeds and the beauty of community-based agriculture and solidarity economy. Network with like-minded persons and organizations actively working on rebuilding a local food economy. Among organizations connected to this effort initially are the National Family Farm Coalition/Via Campesina and its member organizations, World Hunger Year (WHY), and the national solidarity network Friends of the MST.

We have only deepening hunger and a volatile hot planet to lose, and delicious, nourishing food security and empowerment to gain! Want an end to hunger and a cooler planet? Help us all by Rebuilding the Local Food Economy where you live and eat. Invite us to your neck of the woods!

For more information and to propose hosting events on this tour, contact Stephen Bartlett, at (502) 896 9171 or email: [sbartlett@ag-missions.org](mailto:sbartlett@ag-missions.org) consult: [www.agriculturalmissions.org](http://www.agriculturalmissions.org)

