

ENDING HUNGER • SAVING THE EARTH

# WorldArk



## Small Farms SUSTAINING AGRICULTURE



NICARAGUA  
CHICKENS HELP IN  
UNEXPECTED WAYS

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2004  
NORTH CAROLINA  
FARMERS TRADE  
TOBACCO FOR HOGS

## Dear Friends ...

By Jo Luck  
President and CEO

Small farmers are stewards of the earth, and the hope of a secure food supply.

It is no secret that America's family farms are in trouble. For decades, the average farm has been getting bigger while the total number of farms has been shrinking. The number of farmers in the United States dropped from more than 6 million in the 1930s to less than 2 million in 2000.

The causes of this disturbing trend are equally well known: Competition has forced farmers to consolidate in order to lower their expenses and reduce the costs of their products—the food that you and I eat.

Still, in spite of the challenges confronting them, small farmers carry on because they recognize the enormous social and spiritual value of what they do. At Heifer International, we work with small farm holders all over the world, and we know it's true that a small farmer in North Carolina faces somewhat different challenges than one in Rwanda. But it is also true that they share some of the same difficulties—such as access to markets—as well as many of the same values—such as a commitment to preserving the land for future generations.

Small farmers, because they live in close communion with the natural world, tend to see themselves as stewards of the earth. Their farms tend to be more diverse—that is, they include a variety of crops and animals—and they strive to reduce dependence on expensive chemicals that threaten the environment.

Small farmers enjoy forging face-to-face relationships with customers. Rather than chase quick profits, they seek to establish long-term relationships that provide them with reliable customers and supply buyers with wonderful, healthy food.

Small farmers work together, forming partnerships to buy equipment and market their products. They help each other succeed, and support one another in times of trouble.

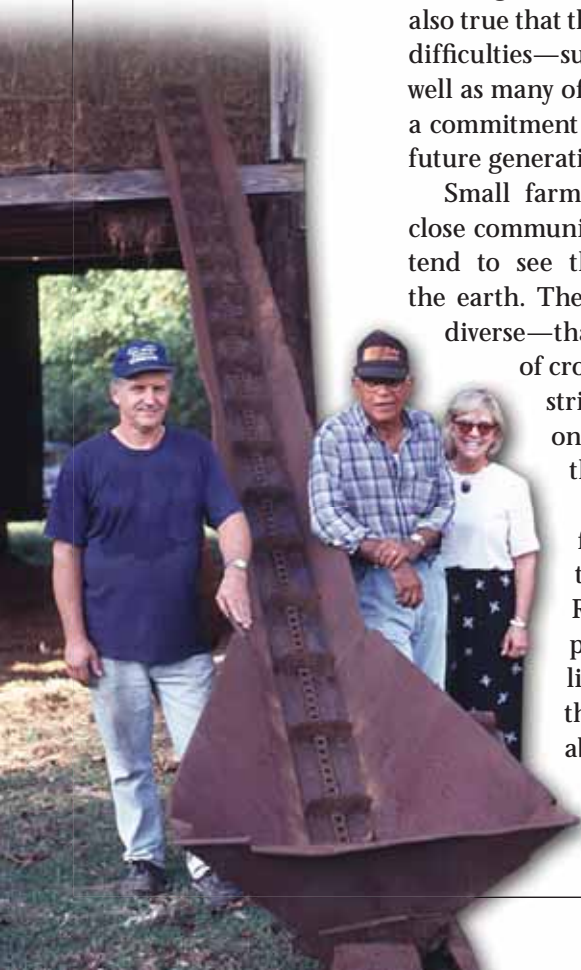
In the autumn of 1996, I visited three Heifer projects that were just then getting started in northeast Louisiana. I was struck, as I always am when I meet our project partners, by the incredible spirit of the people who join with us to end hunger and care for the earth.

These farmers had worked hard to clear unproductive land and put in pasture in preparation for receiving livestock from Heifer. They each received three to five beef cattle and access to a good bull. In the U.S., a gift of beef cows from Heifer can boost a farm family's income by 10 to 20 percent, a significant increase. One of these Louisiana farmers, I've since learned, sold a cow each year to help pay his daughter's college tuition.

Education, of course, is key to achieving self-reliance. Through Heifer projects, small farmers learn valuable skills that enable them to increase their productivity and income and become leaders in their communities.

We all have a stake in their success. Small farmers are the caretakers of our environmental resources. And, in an era of global strife, they hold the hope for a secure, wholesome food supply.

In this issue of *World Ark*, you will read more about small farmers, and you may wonder what you can do to help them succeed. If so, I encourage you to consider developing a relationship with a local farmer. In addition to supporting the local economy through your consumption choices, you will grace your table with delightful fresh fruits and vegetables and quality meats. And, in keeping with the best traditions of Heifer's humanitarian work, you'll be helping spread the benefits of self-reliance.



# PREVIEW

## WORLD ARK

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2004

// The men know that we need  
this project. The men and the  
women are on equal terms. //

—Nicaraguan project partner Miriam Díaz Lopez



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By Jan Cottingham

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Cover Photo by Darcy Kiefel, Heifer International

photojournalist: Small farms, like this one in rural Kentucky, are not just a way to make a living; they're a way of life.

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## Heifer Spirit Blossoms

My name is Matthew Towner and I am vice consul with the U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai, China. I am responsible for helping our embassy and our government better understand the conditions (political and economic) faced by farmers in our consular district (Shanghai City and Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Anhui provinces).

In early March, I had the pleasure of traveling around Anhui Province with Heifer International's regional program manager, Mr. Li Ruijin, and visiting five villages where Heifer projects are changing the lives of Chinese farmers. Mr. Li arranged a full itinerary that allowed me to not only learn what Heifer is doing in Anhui but provided opportunities for me to speak firsthand with farmers about their lives.

Mr. Li's sincerity, professionalism and commitment to Heifer were reflected not only in his efforts on my behalf but in the warmth and great respect he is accorded by local officials and Heifer project participants alike. Indeed, both see the difference Heifer is making in their communities and are eager for more.

It is evident that the livestock, training and personal support provided by

your programs in Anhui are making a real difference. All the farmers with whom we spoke reported marked improvements in their lives and living conditions. Some reported a doubling or tripling of their annual incomes. Others showed us new homes they have built or new appliances they have bought.

While still poor by most measures, several farmers told me that the biggest benefit they felt was that they no longer had to worry about living hand to mouth. Perhaps even more inspiring is the impact local participants have on their neighbors. In each village we visited, participants indicated that their interest in the program derived from the benefits they saw their neighbors accruing. In one case, a local farmer sent his son to a two-month course on insemination techniques, and now his farm has become a local breeding center. Clearly, the Heifer spirit, not just the prospect of livestock, is catching on.

Heifer is truly a first-class example of the values that the United States holds dear, in particular compassion for those in need and giving people an opportunity to improve their lives.

**Matthew G. Towner**  
Shanghai, China



## Word to the Wise

In the May/June issue of *World Ark*, the article titled "I Have a Name: Women in Nepal Find Their Voice" said that the word "namaste" means "welcome." Not completely. Namaste, translated literally, means "The God-Presence in me recognizes the God-Presence in you." While I am not a religious person in the traditional sense, I think this is a subtle, but important, difference. The word doesn't resemble "Hi, how are ya?" It's more in the arena of "We're all in this together—blessings on both of us."

**Diana Wiley**  
Fort Worth, Texas  
E-mail

## Guns or Butter

It is a sad commentary on the state of affairs in the United States when we have to have a "Great American Bake Sale" ["Bake Sale Bonanza," May/June *World Ark*] to end hunger in this country. Wouldn't it be

wonderful if the Pentagon had to have a "Bake Sale" for their weapons instead?

**Alphonse A. Grunenwald**  
San Jose, Calif.  
E-mail

**Editor's Note:** The following readers responded to the "Q&A" published in the May/June *World Ark*, which asked, "Do you think that you as an individual can have a meaningful impact on saving and preserving the Earth's resources?"

## Working Together

I do care about the Earth's resources and am for caring for it more than the average American, but I feel that one person does not truly have much power unless he or she enlists other people to help care for the Earth. Even when possible, that would only delay the unfortunate event of the Earth's natural resources coming to an end.

Although that is true, it is a good idea to care for the Earth because other people around the Earth are caring also. Therefore, the impact of one person is nothing, but many people around the world trying to save the Earth can make a large impact on preserving the resources our Earth gave us.

**Bruce Kirken**  
Clarkston, Mich.  
E-mail

## Big Tracks

I wanted to see what difference an average American makes in the environment, so I typed "ecological footprint" into my Internet search engine. I learned that if everyone on Earth lived like the average American, we'd need at least four more Earths to provide all the materials and energy.

As of 1999, the average U.S. footprint was 24 acres per person—that's about 24 football fields without their end zones.

Comparing nations, the United States has the second greatest ecological footprint.

Each year the average American uses 20 times more resources than those in the country with the smallest footprint, Bangladesh.

Negatively, each American does have significant impact on the environment. Positively, one person can make a difference by what she sees, and by what he does. Rachel Carson observed birds dying in a friend's backyard. By being fully alive and aware in one backyard, she went on to document the ecological hazards of pesticides. Her book *Silent Spring* (and her indefatigable advocacy) helped propel the international environmental movement.

Many "ecological footprint" websites suggest what we can do in our own backyards and neighborhoods. Unavoidably, each of us makes a difference. Thankfully, we can choose what kind of difference we will make.

**Pastor Mark Greiner**  
**First Presbyterian Church**  
**Baldwin, N.Y.**  
**E-mail**

## What I Can Do

I do think that I can have a meaningful impact on saving and preserving the Earth's resources because I can recycle and reuse things. I can turn off electricity and save it when I walk out of a room or when the lights are not needed or the power is not needed. I can also turn off the water when I'm brush-

ing my teeth or shaving or something like that. I can also go outside and pick up litter.

The one other thing I can do is walk or ride a bike instead of use gas to get where I need to go. These are things that I believe I can do to make a difference.

**Arlene Goeb**  
**Eighth Grade**  
**Brandon Middle School**  
**Ortonville, Mich.**  
**E-mail**

*World Ark welcomes comment from readers. Heifer International reserves the right to edit letters to the editor for clarity, grammatical errors, spelling and space. Please include a telephone number or e-mail address so we can confirm your identity. Our address is in the box at right.*

## Q&A

*In each issue we pose a question or two related to Heifer's goals of ending hunger and saving the earth.*

**Are small farms worth saving?**  
**Why or why not?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

*Send your answers, plus any additional comments you wish to make, to the address in the box at right.*

**Correction:** The phone number for the Heifer Ranch Gift Shop was listed incorrectly in the July/August *World Ark*. The correct number is (501) 889-5124.



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Heifer International publishes *World Ark* bimonthly for donors and friends. Heifer has helped millions of impoverished families worldwide become more self-reliant through the gift of livestock and training in their care. A nonprofit organization rooted in the Christian tradition, Heifer works for the dignity and well-being of all people.

Heifer is a member of InterAction. Federal employees may designate gifts to the Combined Federal Campaign by writing in #0315. Heifer International is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization and gifts to Heifer are tax deductible and are used as designated until current needs of those projects are met. Further gifts are applied to similar projects so that gifts begin helping people immediately.

Four consecutive grain harvest shortfalls have pushed carryover stocks to a 30-year low and driven prices to highs not seen in almost a decade, warns Lester R. Brown, founder of the Earth Policy Institute.

The grain shortfall in 2003 was 105 million tons, the largest on record, says Brown.

The four shortfalls have dropped world carryover stocks to just 59 days of consumption. Wheat and corn prices were at seven-year highs in May, and rice prices were at five-year peaks. Falling water tables and rising temperatures are compounding the usual difficulties faced by farmers, Brown says.

Just to stay even, which includes providing 15 million tons to feed the 74 million people who will be added to the world population in 2004, would require a 120-million ton increase in the grain harvest, Brown says.

## Food Security

Year	Carryover Stock (in million tons)	Days to Exhaust Carryover Stock
1999	566	111
2000	544	107
2001	514	99
2002	418	80
2003	309	59

Source: USDA, Production, Supply & Distribution, Electronic Database, updated April 9, 2004

A 70-day carryover stock is considered the minimum for food security. If farmers tried only to rebuild the current reserve to 65 days this year, they would have to produce a total increase in the grain harvest of 150 million tons.

Unfortunately, Brown says, a fifth consecutive year in which the grain harvest falls short of consumption seems likely.

Brown predicts a 60 million-ton shortfall in 2004. "Either grain stocks will drop by 12 days of consumption, falling to an all-time low of 47 days, or food prices will rise and force a reduction in consumption—something that will be particularly difficult for the 3 billion people who live on less than \$2 a day," Brown argues.

Such a shortfall likely would motivate exporting countries, including the United States, to restrict grain exports to curb rising domestic prices, Brown says.

And that combination of falling grain stocks and soaring food prices could destabilize governments in low-income, grain-importing countries on a scale that would disrupt global economic development, he concludes.

"No fear can stand up to hunger, no patience can wear it out, disgust simply does not exist where hunger is; and as to superstition, beliefs, and what you may call principles, they are less than chaff in a breeze."—Joseph Conrad

## California Cow Power

The *San Francisco Chronicle* reports that a Marin County rancher has devised a way to run his dairy farm, organic creamery and electric car from the manure produced by his dairy cows.

Albert Straus began feeding power into the local utility's grid in May, the paper reported. The success of his "methane digester system" marked an environmental breakthrough for the California dairy industry. Although the technology has been available for 20 years, economic factors and resistance from utility companies blocked all but a handful of the state's farmers from transforming animal

waste into energy, the paper stated.

Now, however, projects like Straus' are eligible for matching funds from the state energy commission, a reform resulting from California's summer 2001 blackouts, the *Chronicle* reported.

Straus expects to save \$5,000 to \$6,000 per month in energy costs while eliminating his farm's naturally occurring greenhouse gases and dramatically reducing its organic pollutants. He can also use wastewater left over after the methane is extracted to fertilize his fields.

Heifer International understands this concept. For some time now, we

have helped families install "bio-gas digesters" that use manure to heat cook stoves and light lamps. The digesters eliminate the need for smoky fires that can cause illnesses, and they reduce pressure on subsistence farmers to clear forests for fuel. Families also use the residue to fertilize their fields. The digesters are good for our project partners and good for the environment.



# Measles Deaths Drop



A global 30 percent reduction in deaths from measles has been announced by the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

An even greater reduction—35 percent—was reported in Africa, the region with the highest number of people affected by the disease. The statistics cover the period from 1999 to 2002.

Such progress demonstrates that collectively countries can achieve the United Nations goal of cutting global measles deaths in half by the end of 2005, WHO and UNICEF asserted in a joint press release.

"This is great news," says Carol Bellamy, UNICEF's executive director. "Countries are to be commended for their efforts to fight measles—efforts that are truly paying off."

# Pesticide Levels High

Many Americans carry unhealthy levels of pesticides in their bodies, according to a recent study.

*Chemical Trespass: Pesticides in Our Bodies and Corporate Accountability* makes public an analysis of pesticide-related data collected by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in a study of levels of chemicals in 9,282 people nationwide. *Chemical Trespass* was published by the San Francisco-based Pesticide Action Network North America (PANNA).

Many of the pesticides found in the test subjects have been linked to serious short- and long-term health effects including infertility, birth defects and childhood and adult cancers, according to PANNA.

Children, women and Mexican-Americans have the highest "pesticide body burden," according to the study. For example, PANNA found that children between 6 and 11 years old were exposed to the pesticide chlorpyrifos at four times the level deemed acceptable by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Chlorpyrifos kills insects by disrupting their nervous systems.

The Pesticide Action Network North America can be found on the Internet at [www.panna.org](http://www.panna.org).

## By the Numbers

More than a quarter of humanity—an estimated 1.7 billion people—now belong to the consumer class. Surprisingly, nearly half of them live in developing countries, including 240 million in China and 120 million in India.

# World Food Day

Some 150 countries will celebrate World Food Day on Oct. 16 to raise public awareness of hunger and to promote informed, year-round action to alleviate the suffering it causes.

"Biodiversity for Food Security" is this year's theme.

Biological diversity comprises countless plants that feed and heal people, crop varieties and aquatic species with specific nutritional characteristics, livestock adapted to harsh environments, insects that pollinate fields and microorganisms that regenerate agricultural soils.

Conserving and using biodiversity in sustainable ways are key to feeding the approximately 800 million malnourished people in developing countries, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, whose founding in 1945 is commemorated by World Food Day.

Biodiversity is threatened by urbanization, deforestation, pollution and the conversion of wetlands, the FAO says.



In the United States, 450 organizations, including Heifer International, will sponsor World Food Day, which will be observed at the local level. Participants are encouraged to hold fund-raisers for local or international projects,

brief the media on hunger issues or plan community seminars, among other activities.

For more information, please visit [www.worldfooddayusa.org](http://www.worldfooddayusa.org).



# Small Farms Sustaining





# Agriculture

By Jan Cottingham  
*World Ark* Editor

Photos by Darcy Keifel  
Heifer International Photojournalist



Chanie Waugh on his farm in Carter County, Ky.

*Many of us probably wouldn't like it, but we could survive without personal computers or cell phones. Take away food, and the most powerful PC in the world isn't worth much.*

*Although many people view it as just another enterprise, agriculture remains unique: Farming allows us to live. That simple fact makes agriculture and its future of paramount importance to the planet. And its future, experts say, is in question.*



Two farmers in Haiti (above) prepare the land for planting seeds.

In the Philippines (facing page, top) a farmer tills the soil using a water buffalo.

In Colama, Nicaragua, Rafael Acosta Tellez, a Heifer project participant, and his daughter Jazmina Acosta Miranda prepare to pass on the gift of cattle to other families in the region.

A short-term, profit-driven approach to food production has led to larger and larger farms, not only in the United States but throughout the world. Such farms depend on technology. Terms used to describe this approach include industrial agriculture, corporate farming, factory farming and agribusiness.

But big-farm, high-tech industrial agriculture is under increasing attack. “It’s not sustainable,” says Wes Jackson, president of the Land Institute, based in Salina, Kansas.

Sustainability is the key. Agriculturalists argue that small farms are more sustainable. And the sustainability of small farms doesn’t refer just to environmental issues but to social ones as well.

### “A Way of Life”

“Small farms are usually not just a way to earn an income; they’re a way of life,” says Kathy McAfee, executive director of the Institute for Food and Development Policy, better known as Food First, a nonprofit that focuses on the causes and solutions to hunger and poverty.

“Living on the land, living with cycles of nature, living in communities that share that communion with the land has many benefits—spiritual, cultural, environmental.”

More and more people are challenging the exploding use, some say misuse, of technology in farming.

More and more people are challenging the exploding use, some say misuse, of technology in farming. This includes genetic engineering, expanded mechanization dependent on fossil fuels, one-crop assembly-line agriculture or monoculture, and intensive use of growth hormones, chemical pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers.

They oppose the concentration of food production in a few hands. They decry globalization, which they say has spurred the development of large factory farming. They fear the death of the small family farm, which, particularly in the developing world, forces people into vast urban slums.

They say cheap food, at least in the United States, hides the real costs of high-tech farming. They see agribusiness not as an unqualified benefit to civilization but as a threat.

“I don’t think you can provide a safe diet, a diverse and satisfactory diet from factory farms,” McAfee says.

“The agricultural enterprise is about going from one energy-rich [resource] to



another,” Jackson says. “First it was the soil; later it was fossil fuel. It’s not sustainable.”

### “Now We Have Work”

**H**eifer International recognizes the holistic nature of small farms. In the Colama region of Nicaragua, Rafael Acosta Tellez participates in a Heifer cattle project. “Before there was nothing,” Tellez says. “Now we have work.” In a country like Nicaragua, providing livestock means people can stay on their land.

Jim Hoey, Heifer’s director of environmental strategies, acknowledges that industrial agriculture has produced large amounts of food—in the short term. But he agrees that opposition to one-crop agriculture, or mono-agriculture, is growing, and he has his own questions. Do farmers who sell to these agribusinesses “really have a say in terms of where they can sell their products?” A good example, he says, is the poultry industry.

Fertilizer and manure runoff from farms engaged in mono-agriculture or livestock production do harm the environment. “To be fair about it, a lot of these issues, such as animal wastes, can be addressed, but the larger question is, Is agriculture just about the bottom line, about profit? Land, animals, people even are viewed almost as a commodity.”

Social and environmental issues must be considered, Hoey says. “The future of the planet depends on biodiversity,” he says, and one-crop agriculture works against such biological diversity.

### Four Primary Concerns

**C**oncerns about industrial agriculture focus on four aspects: 1. the environment; 2. health—of people, animals and crops; 3. social disintegration; and 4. food security.

Proponents of sustainable agriculture, while they may disagree about specifics, tend to see these aspects as linked.

“We have to start by asking what kind



of agriculture and what kind of rural spaces people really want,” says Peter Rosset, an associate with Global Alternatives, sponsored by the nonprofit Center for the Study of the Americas, and a former co-director of Food First.

Rosset sees two opposing models of rural development: the dominant model of the industrial farm and the small farm model.

Industrial agriculture replaces people with machines, usually strips the land of everything but a single crop, eliminating trees, hedgerows and the animals that live in them; harms the soil through compaction and intensive irrigation that results in salt deposits; and damages the environment by intensively using chemical pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers, Rosset says.

These large industrial farms rob rural areas of supporting businesses, leading to boarded-up towns, says Rosset, co-author with Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins of *World Hunger: Twelve Myths*. The system is also, he says, “producing very unhealthy food.”

“It’s not very economical or efficient,” he says.



“Small farms are usually not just a way to earn an income; they’re a way of life.”

—Kathy McAfee  
of the Institute  
for Food and  
Development  
Policy





Heifer project partner Maria Rosa Toeta (in blue, above) displays the bounty of her garden in Ecuador.

Joseph Mbaziira, who received a heifer several years ago, and one of his children (facing page) work in their garden in Uganda. Mbaziira says sales of the milk from the cow allowed his family to leave their mud home and build a house of bricks.

“The other choice are rural areas that have much more productive small farms, where farmers use resources more sustainably, where land is more productive and where people have more dignity,” Rosset says. “I prefer the small farm vision.”

He is not alone, but to understand the debate, a little background is needed.

To begin cultivating crops, humans had to stop moving from place to place, hunting wild animals and gathering naturally available food until those resources were depleted. They settled down and created communities that, until the industrialization and urban migration of the 19th and 20th centuries, remained remarkably unchanged.

The Industrial Revolution of the 19th century was followed by an industrialization of agriculture in the mid- to late 20th century, not just in the United States and other developed nations but increasingly in developing nations as well. Globaliza-

tion, the fast flow of goods and ideas from one nation to another, and its partner, free trade, have contributed to the dominance of corporate agriculture or factory farming. They also have hastened the death of small farms throughout the world.

This ancient agricultural model—usually extended families working to provide almost everything needed for survival—while not perfect, provided a superior way of life, some say. The scientists, agricultural economists, ecologists and others—not least among them small farmers themselves—who make this argument say the current dominant mode of food production not only destroys our ecology but endangers values that many hold dear: self-sufficiency, autonomy and individuality but also, though it may seem paradoxical, community.

### “What Are People For?”

The supply of fossil fuels like coal and oil is drying up, so Wes Jackson says, “Let’s imagine that we could have a nation, a world, of coherent communities where instead of relying on a sufficiency of capital, you rely on a sufficiency of people. We’re not going to give up on technology, but at the same time we could do better. I think that doing better is going to require coherent communities, communities where there is a fair amount of sharing of labor.” Jackson says, “You have to ask the question, What are people for?”

## The Bottom Line

Agricultural policies work against small farmers in the United States, says Sue Bertrand, Heifer’s director of global services. Federal regulations and mandated upgrades in the dairy industry, for example, are expensive. The high costs of production combined with the low prices farmers get for their milk force many small producers out of business. Transportation costs are also high. “Every time a wheel goes around, a farmer loses money,” Bertrand says.

Just four corporations control more than 80 percent of the beef market in the United States and about 60 percent of the pork market, according to the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. This concentration of livestock markets in just a few hands is higher than at any other time in the nation’s history, the conference says.

“World population will probably peak at some 8 billion around 2030, when two out of every three people will live in towns and cities. Rising incomes will create a disproportionately higher demand for food, meaning that over the next three decades food production will need to increase by about 60 percent.” Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations



Hoey notes that some industrial food production practices—overcrowding of livestock, improper feeding—have created conditions that allow certain illnesses to thrive, diseases that threaten people as well as animals, such as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (“mad cow disease”) and avian flu.

Corporate farming is not necessarily bad, “but I think families who want to have their own farms need to have opportunities,” Hoey says.

In addition to ecological and health risks, Hoey lists several other disadvantages of industrial farming: the dissolution of rural communities, the concentration of wealth and power in a few hands and the environmental and financial costs of transporting food long distances.

Others echo Hoey’s concerns.

Natural resources are “the earth’s dowry, which includes soil, water, air and fossil fuels,” Jackson says. When people start using up these non-renewable resources, such as fossil fuels, “we get into credit card spending,” says Jackson, author of several books, including *New Roots for Agriculture*.

“Soil is as much a natural resource as fossil fuels, and we’re also getting into credit card spending with soil,” he says.

“When the land is controlled by large companies or absentee owners or temporary owners who are only thinking of land as a way to make a profit, there’s a lot of

incentive to mine that land to its limits,” McAfee says. “Lots of land in this country has become uncultivable because of this practice.”

### Productivity Disputed

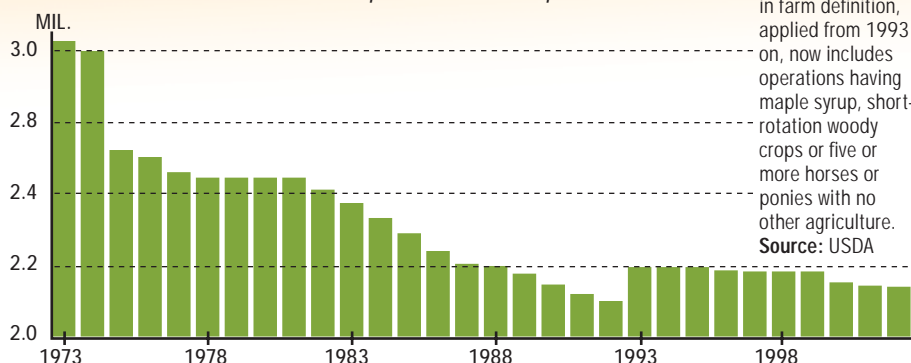
Rosset and McAfee are among those who dispute that large-scale farming is inherently more productive and efficient. They say economists often count only yield of a specific “output” per acre (bushels of soybeans, for example) or per cow (gallons of milk).

“Many farms in the United States and other parts of the world are producing multiple outputs; they’re producing a variety of crops,” McAfee says. “In the United States we have crop rotation. In other countries, there is intercropping,” or growing two or more crops together. “They often don’t get counted,” McAfee says. “They’re very important to the people in the United States, but they’re even more important to people in other parts of the world where they don’t have easy access to a drug store—for example, the harvesting of medicinal plants.”

Economists who argue that large-scale, high-chemical-use farms are more productive also neglect the



Number of Farms, United States, 1973-2002



One-crop industrial farming is “absolutely the opposite of how nature’s ecosystems have been working for thousands of years.”—Wes Jackson, executive director of the Land Institute







In the Ukraine, Heifer project participants use a local breed of horse, the Hutsul, to help them plow their fields. Hutsul horses, well adapted to the local terrain, were once endangered, but Heifer International is helping area residents preserve the breed.

environmental costs from soil degradation and erosion, as well as the health costs to farm families and consumers, McAfee says.

“How many times have we heard that large farms are more productive than small farms?” Rosset asks. “Or that they are more efficient? And that we need to consolidate land holdings to take advantage of that greater productivity and efficiency?”

“The actual data shows exactly the reverse for productivity: that smaller farms produce far more per unit area than larger farms. Part of the problem lies in the confusing language used to compare the performance of different farm sizes. As long as we use crop yield as the measure of productivity, we will be giving an unfair advantage to larger farms.”

Rosset argues that a more accurate measurement of farm production is “total output,” not yield.

**Land is being concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer people and corporations, raising concerns about “food security” as well as “food sovereignty.”**

Rosset, like McAfee, makes the case that small farms, especially in the developing world, are more productive because they tend to grow a variety of items. Rosset lists some: “various grains, fruits, vegetables, fodder, animal products, etc.”

“While yield almost always biases the results toward larger farms, total output allows us to see the true productivity advantage of small farms,” he says.

## Remember the Animals

Terry Wollen, Heifer’s director of animal well-being, agrees with those who say that quality of life is important in agriculture, not just for farmers but for animals as well.

“Everything we do in life, in the commercial sense, comes down to money. And money drives most of the decisions we make about our lives, including livestock agriculture,” Wollen says. “Over the years, farming has changed from a way of life to a business. In that transition, we have taken all the units of production, whether it’s a bushel of corn or a gallon of milk or a pig or chicken, and tried to manage them economically.”

“The more we can do to manage that with improved technology results in a better bottom line,” he says. But, Wollen asks, how do we examine that bottom-line mentality?

Wollen, a veterinarian whose expertise is animal husbandry, says the prevailing norms of agricultural science define a good quality of life for an animal in terms of production. The problem with industrial agriculture, including livestock production, Wollen says, “is we have overlooked other aspects of comfort in favor of production. That is the gist of the modern animal welfare movement.”

“The challenge that we have is raising animals under conditions that keep them productive and at the same time respect their right to a good quality of life,” he says.

## “Food Sovereignty”

Around the world, land is being concentrated in the hands of fewer owners.

This leads to the issue of food security or, even further, “food sovereignty.” “Food sovereignty says that feeding a nation’s people is an issue of national security—of sovereignty,” Rosset says. “If the people of a country must depend for their next meal on the vagaries of the global economy, on the goodwill of a superpower not to use food as a weapon or on the unpredictability and high cost of long-distance shipping, that country is not secure in the sense of either national security or food security.”



“Food sovereignty goes beyond the concept of food security, which has been stripped of real meaning,” Rosset says. “Food security means that every child, woman and man must have the certainty of having enough to eat each day, but the concept says nothing about where that food comes from or how it is produced.”

The idea that food might be used as a weapon is not necessarily a radical one. Sue Bertrand, Heifer’s director of global services, thinks small-farm production is preferable to industrial farming, but says there is room for both.

“I think the key for us is small farm diversity,” she says.

Bertrand says, “There’s a whole community of people who no longer have agricultural knowledge, who have no idea of how or where to begin, who are losing local, regional, indigenous knowledge of what works in their country or their area.”

Bertrand advocates consumers forging relationships with local farmers. “Consumers need to understand that yes, they’re going to pay a little bit more, but that’s the way it goes if they want a fresh, local and an assured food source,” she says. “When you buy stuff on the shelves, you have no clue where it came from. We are beginning to look more and more at a globalized food supply.”

“Whoever controls the food controls the power,” Bertrand says. “When there are no small farmers left, when there are no alternative markets, and when the few have control of it all, then the price is what they can get.”

“Food security is a homeland security issue,” she says.

Heifer’s Jim Hoey describes the dangers of industrial agriculture this way: “If you put all your eggs in one basket you’re going to get into trouble.”

For her part, McAfee has a hopeful vision: “We’re often told that small farms are the model of the past, but for many countries, and in a significant way for the United States too, small farms are the model of the future.” 🐾

## What You Can Do

It’s easy to feel overwhelmed by an issue as complex as sustainable agriculture, but each of us can take steps to help support small farmers. In doing so, we also help ourselves—by buying and eating healthier food, forming relationships that strengthen our communities and simply learning about agricultural issues, wherever that knowledge takes us.

### Ways to Help Small Farmers

1. Know where your food comes from and what’s in it. Read the labels at the grocery store.
2. Buy food that’s in season when possible. Why? It tastes better but it’s also less likely to have traveled thousands of miles using up untold amounts of nonrenewable fuels.
3. Buy local. That means several things, such as:
4. Shop at your local farmers market. Their numbers are increasing around the United States, and for good reason: the food is almost always fresher and locally grown, you can actually talk to the person who raised it about his or her farming practices, and you’re helping small farmers succeed.
5. Consider joining a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) group. You can buy a “share” in a member farm and then receive a regular, usually weekly, delivery of seasonal products. These products can include meat, egg and dairy items as well as vegetables and fruits. As at farmers markets, the food is fresher and you know who produced it and how.
6. Visit area “you-pick” farms, places where you can pick your own berries or melons, for example. You’ll connect with nature, and if you bring the children, they’ll learn that strawberries don’t naturally come in plastic-wrapped containers.
7. Ask your local restaurants to feature locally grown foods, and then patronize those that do.
8. Educate yourself on the issues. Not all foods that are advertised as “organic” really are. Is it necessarily wrong to treat sick livestock with antibiotics, especially if farmers follow proper safety procedures? Some websites to check out include, in addition to [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org), [www.landstewardshipproject.org](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org), [www.landinstitute.org](http://www.landinstitute.org), [www.foodfirst.org](http://www.foodfirst.org), [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov), [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org), [www.ifpri.org](http://www.ifpri.org) (International Food Policy Research Institute). The issues aren’t simple, and you’ll find widely varying views on these sites, but they provide a starting point.
9. Once you decide where you stand on agricultural issues and government policies affecting them, find out where your elected representatives stand. Become involved. Contact your member of Congress. Ask questions.
10. Vote.



# Acre for Acre

Heifer Helps Tobacco Growers  
Switch to Small-scale Hog Farming

Story and photographs by Lauren Wilcox  
HEIFER STAFF WRITER



**W**arsaw, N.C.—In the flat expanse of North Carolina’s coastal plains in the summertime, the prevailing color is green. From the brushy pines that line the highway to the wide wales of corn and tobacco in the fields, the green is unstoppable: Vines streak up dead trees, and new crops tinge the plowed dirt.

A wooded hog lot on Fred Dobson’s farm, on the other hand, is a study in earth tones. With the weedy underbrush nibbled away, the tree trunks are dark, like the rich mud and the hogs that recline in it, half submerged. “They sure like to dig,” Dobson says, regarding his herd.

It may not be as pretty as a cornfield, but it looks just fine to Dobson, whose animals command a premium in the pork market. Dobson and his hogs are part of the Golden LEAF (Long-term Economic Advancement



Unlike factory farms, which crowd animals in tight spaces and produce vast quantities of waste, these operations are low impact and hog friendly.

Foundation) Small Scale Hog Producers Project, a program supported by tobacco settlement money and Heifer International. As the market for tobacco shrinks, farmers like Dobson scramble to find profitable alternatives. They have begun replacing acres of tobacco with corn, soybeans and, now, hog pens. Started two years ago, the Small Scale Hog Producers Project was designed to help limited-resource tobacco farmers set up environmentally friendly, small-scale hog operations. Niman Ranch Pork Co., a specialty sausage company based in Iowa, has agreed to pay top prices for hogs raised according to its rigorous standards.

Unlike the massive factory farms endemic to eastern North Carolina, which crowd animals in tight spaces and produce enormous quantities of waste, these operations are low impact and hog friendly. Farmers keep their stock on uncleared (and otherwise unusable) land, where the trees offer shade, or move them from pen to pen in pastures that get fertilized with the manure. Raised this way, hogs are unfussy, resourceful tenants, happy with a little earth to roll in and root around in for grubs.

### Size of Farms Soars

Mike Jones, program coordinator, says small farms like Dobson's were once the fabric of American agriculture, part of a network of local commerce that linked even the most rural farmers with resources and markets. But in today's system small farmers get short shrift. After World War II, farming was rapidly mechanized, and farms, run by distant corporations, grew to enormous size.



"The industrialization of farming just sucked the jobs out of rural areas," says Jones. Dobson, like the other farmers in the Golden LEAF program, was insulated from some of this because he grew tobacco—"baccar"—a reliably top-dollar crop. But then demand for tobacco fell, and farmers struggled to find adequate replacements, unable to gain a foothold among the corporate-owned farms that monopolized the food and grain markets.

"It's hard for these farmers to get plugged in to the resources and markets they need," Jones tells me as we drive to the farm of David Whitman, a Golden LEAF project participant who was recently named Golden LEAF Farmer of the Year. As coordinator, Jones spends much of his time acting as a resource for his farmers, many of whom have a limited education and have never raised hogs before. On his visits, Jones helps set up equipment, gathers data on each project's hogs and provides a little gentle coaching.

It has just rained, and Whitman is striding around his hog pens in shorts and green galoshes, which make a soft puffing noise with each step. The farm was his father's; bought in 1959, it is a collage of tobacco, cucumber and corn "patches," as Whitman calls them, and the hog outfit, which Whitman's father originally set up in 1966. When he was a teenager, Whitman left for a while, working on a turkey farm, and as a packer at the local slaughterhouse,

Wade Cole (facing page, top), a Golden LEAF project partner, shows off his hogs.

Hogs owned by Johnnie Frank Williams and his brother root for food in their large enclosure (facing page, bottom).

Mike Jones (above, left), Golden LEAF project coordinator, confers with project participant David Whitman, who was recently named Golden LEAF Farmer of the Year.





Daniel Pearsall and his wife box up one of his yellow cakes at their Davis and Pearsall Family Restaurant.

Mike Jones and Wade Cole (facing page) inspect Cole's squash crop.

but then returned to work on his farm full time. "I haven't punched a clock since 1993," he tells me, with some pride.

### A Lower-Risk Investment

Jones whistles when he sees Whitman's sows, which share a pen with the boar on the end of the row. "Look at those pretty girls," he says admiringly. A "pretty" hog is blocky and deep through the chest, with a good ridge of muscle on either side of the spine. "In cross-section," Jones says, "you want your hog to be flat on top. You don't want that spine poking out. David, I think the way you are handling these girls is working wonders."

Part of Jones' goal on these visits is to determine how profitable, in comparison to tobacco, small-scale hog farming can be. While tobacco farming is the gold standard for per-acre income, it's also labor intensive. As with any crop that requires a lot of attention, there is also a lot of risk, many more opportunities for the whole endeavor to swing off course.

"Worse-case scenario," says Jones, "you could neglect your hogs for a few weeks and expect them to recover fully, but if you neglect your tobacco for that long you'll lose the whole year." Whitman is a meticulous record-keeper, Jones tells me, and after checking out the hogs Jones settles himself on a concrete block and opens his notebook.

"David," he says, "you don't have to be 100 percent accurate about this, but what



do you think is your average profit per acre, on your crops?"

Whitman sighs. "Lord, I have no idea." He begins ticking off his expenses: "Plants. Crop insurance—wind and hail. Miscellaneous hoeing and weeding. Barning labor." The numbers run into the tens of thousands. Jones punches buttons on a calculator and does some figuring on a pad.

"Of course, that doesn't include my labor," Whitman says dryly. He and Jones both know that putting a number on a farmer's hours is impossible. He cuts me a look. "And oh, Mike, I didn't put anything down for refreshments. I usually spend, gosh, almost \$200 to \$300 a year on refreshments."

### "This Can Add Up"

Success for a hog farmer, when it comes, is not as dramatic as the windfall from a bumper crop of tobacco, but it is success all the same. Sows farrow—produce piglets—twice a year, up to 15 or 16 in a litter, and income from hogs is predicated on how quickly farmers can fill out their hogs and get them to market—in five months, if hogs are fed a lot of high-quality feed, longer if they're fed less. How quickly hogs turn feed into pounds is called the conversion ratio, and Jones spends a lot of time with his farmers explaining how to maximize it.

It can be an uphill battle—the farmers aren't natural risk-takers, and have no money to experiment with; most are reluctant to pour a lot of expensive feed into their stock without some proof that it works. Recently, word spread that Wade Cole, one of the first

farmers in the program, just sold a bunch of well-fed hogs to Niman Ranch for 77 cents per pound—a remarkable price. “It may take a little while,” says Jones, “but I think these guys will realize that this can add up to a solid income down the road.”

In some cases, the income from the hogs has given the farmers the confidence to do more. Daniel Pearsall, who in addition to running his farm worked full time as a heavy-equipment operator for 36 years, last year scraped together the money to open a small restaurant on his land in a building he built by hand. Four days a week, the Davis and Pearsall Family Restaurant (Davis is his wife’s family name) serves pork, of course, and yellow cake Pearsall bakes himself, from scratch. His wife, his children and his grandchildren help in the kitchen. “People come from 25, 30 miles away,” he tells me. “We don’t need no sign.”

One of the Golden LEAF program’s most important benefits may be that it provides these farmers, whose paths might not otherwise cross, with a reason to organize. Several of the farmers have begun taking a computer class together in the evenings, and Dobson, Whitman, Cole and others in the program have formed a cooperative of area farmers. Feed and equipment are cheaper when bought in bulk, and farmers can lend each other labor and time. On a recent weeknight “about 30 heads,” by Pearsall’s estimate, met at the Davis and Pearsall Family Restaurant to talk about potential joint ventures.

### A Substantial Boost

Jones’ preliminary calculations conclude that while hogs may not be as lucrative as tobacco, they can provide a substantial boost for a low-income farmer, and require far less outlay of time and other resources. The farmers, for their part, seem open to persuasion, and though they get nostalgic for tobacco’s golden age, it is something they are not entirely sorry to see go.

“We had to crop it and tote it,” remembers



**“We had to crop [tobacco] and tote it. The juice would get all in your face and on your hands and just poison you.”—Johnnie Frank Williams, Golden LEAF project participant**

Johnnie Frank Williams, another of the program’s farmers, when we stop at his farm. “The juice would get all in your face and on your hands and just poison you. The money—well, those were the times,” he admits, waving a hand at his acreage, now a patchwork of corn and soybeans. “Nothing like this here now.” His brother, standing next to him, shakes his head in disagreement. He says softly, “If I had it to do over again, I wouldn’t mess with no tobacco.”

David Whitman, like Johnnie Williams, remembers tobacco’s bottom line fondly. “There’s nothing that can take the place of ‘baccar, Mike,” he says, as Jones finishes his calculations. “I know you’ve heard that before.” Still, as Jones reads him his profits, he brightens. A group of piglets prances around in the pen next to him, and he studies them hopefully. “Unless something disastrous happens—and I sure hope it don’t—this should be a pretty good hog year for me.” 🐷

**“The industrialization of farming just sucked the jobs out of rural areas.”—Mike Jones, Golden LEAF program coordinator**

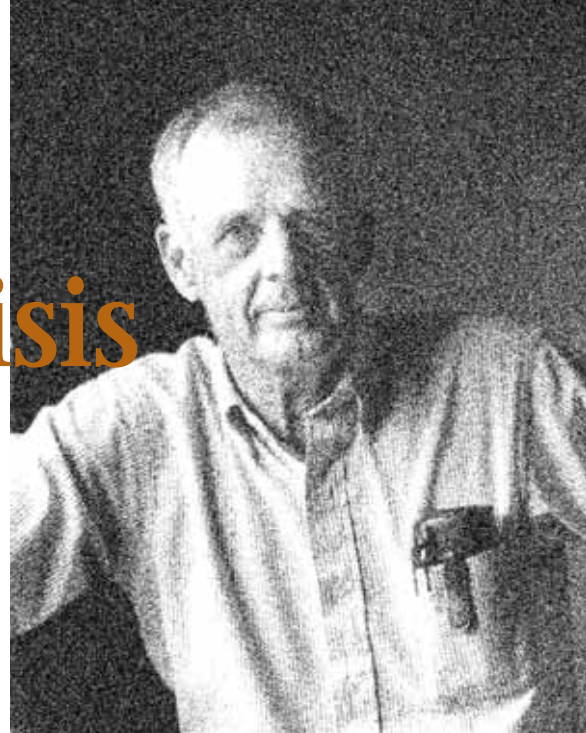
# The Agricultural Crisis as a Crisis of Culture

By Wendell Berry

The following excerpt is adapted from *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture* by Wendell Berry. ©1977 by Wendell Berry. Reprinted by permission of the author.

**I**n my boyhood, Henry County, Kentucky, was not just a rural county, as it still is—it was a farming county. The farms were generally small. They were farmed by families who lived not only upon them, but within and from them. These families grew gardens. They produced their own meat, milk, and eggs. The farms were highly diversified. The main money crop was tobacco. But the farmers also grew corn, wheat, barley, oats, hay, and sorghum. Cattle, hogs, and sheep were all characteristically raised on the same farms. There were small dairies, the milking more often than not done by hand. Those were the farm products that might have been considered major. But there were also minor products, and one of the most important characteristics of that old economy was the existence of markets for minor products. In those days a farm family could easily market its surplus cream, eggs, old hens, and frying chickens. The power for field work was still furnished mainly by horses and mules. There was still a prevalent pride in workmanship, and thrift was still a forceful social ideal. The pride of most people was still in their homes, and their homes looked like it.

This was by no means a perfect society. Its people had often been violent and wasteful in their use of the land and of each other. Its present ills had already taken root in it. But I have spoken of its agricultural



economy of a generation ago to suggest that there were also good qualities indigenous to it that might have been cultivated and built upon.

That they were not cultivated and built upon—that they were repudiated as the stuff of a hopelessly outmoded, unscientific way of life—is a tragic error on the part of the people themselves; and it is a work of monstrous ignorance and irresponsibility on the part of the experts and politicians, who have prescribed, encouraged, and applauded the disintegration of such farming communities all over the country.

**Food is a cultural product;  
it cannot be produced by  
technology alone.**

## The Changing Farm

**I**n the decades following World War II, the farms of Henry County became increasingly mechanized. Though they are still comparatively diversified, they are less diversified than they used to be. The holdings are larger, the owners are fewer. The land is falling more and more into the hands of speculators and professional people from the cities, who—in spite of all the scientific agricultural miracles—still have much more money than farmers. Because of big tech-



nology and big economics, there is more abandoned land in the county than ever before. Many of the better farms are visibly deteriorating, for want of manpower and time and money to maintain them properly. The number of part-time farmers and ex-farmers increases every year. Our harvests depend more and more on the labor of old people and young children. The farm people live less and less from their own produce, more and more from what they buy. The best of them are more worried about money and more overworked than ever before. Among the people as a whole, the focus of interest has largely shifted from the household to the automobile; the ideals of workmanship and thrift have been replaced by the goals of leisure, comfort, and entertainment.

And nowhere now is there a market for minor produce: a bucket of cream, a hen, a few dozen eggs. One cannot sell milk from a few cows anymore; the law-required equipment is too expensive. Those markets were done away with in the name of sanitation—but, of course, to the enrichment of the large producers.

Few people whose testimony would have mattered have seen the connection between the “modernization” of agricultural techniques and the disintegration of the culture and communities of farming—and the consequent disintegration of the structures of urban life. What we have called agricultural progress has, in fact, involved the forcible displacement of millions of people.

I remember, during the 1950s, the outrage with which our political leaders spoke of the forced removal of the populations of villages in communist countries. I also remember that at the same time, in Washington, the word on farming was “Get big or get out”—a policy which is still in effect and which has taken an enormous toll. The only difference is that of method: the force used by the communists was military; with us, it has been economic—a “free market” in which the freest were the richest.

And so those who could not get big have got out—not just in my community, but in farm communities all over the country. But as a social or economic goal, bigness is totalitarian; it establishes an inevitable tendency toward the one that will be the biggest of all.

### Quantity, Not Quality

Along with the rest of society, established agriculture has shifted its emphasis, and its interest, from quality to quantity, having failed to see that in the long run the two ideas are inseparable. To pursue quantity alone is to destroy those disciplines in the producer that are the only assurance of quantity. What is the effect on quantity of persuading a producer to produce an inferior product? What, in other words, is the relation of pride or craftsmanship to abundance? That is a question the “agribusinessmen” and their academic collaborators do not ask. They do not ask it because they are afraid of the answer:

The preserver of abundance is excellence.

My point is that food is a cultural product; it cannot be produced by technology alone. Those agriculturalists who think of the problems of food production solely in terms of technological innovation are oversimplifying both the practicalities of production and the network of meanings and values necessary to define, nurture, and preserve the practical motivations.

A culture is not a collection of relics or ornaments, but a practical necessity, and its corruption invokes calamity. A healthy culture is a communal order of memory, insight, value, work, conviviality, reverence, aspiration. It reveals the human necessities and the human limits. It clarifies our inescapable bonds to the earth and to each other. It assures that the necessary restraints are observed, that the necessary work is done, and that it is done well. A healthy farm culture can be based only upon familiarity

Established agriculture has shifted its emphasis from quality to quantity. To pursue quantity alone is to destroy the disciplines that are the only assurance of quantity.

and can grow only among a people soundly established upon the land; it nourishes and safeguards a human intelligence of the earth that no amount of technology can satisfactorily replace.

The best farming requires a farmer—a husbandman, a nurturer—not a technician or businessman. A technician or a business-

**A people cannot live long at each other's expense or at the expense of their cultural birthright—just as agriculture cannot live long at the expense of its soil or its work force.**

man, given the necessary abilities and ambitions, can be made in a little while, by training. A good farmer, on the other hand, is a cultural product; he is made by a sort of training, certainly, in what his time imposes and demands, but he is also made by generations of experience. This essential experience can only be accumulated, tested, preserved, handed down in settled households, friendships, and communities that are deliberately and carefully native to their own ground, in which the past has prepared the present and the present safeguards the future.

The concentration of farmland into larger and larger holdings and fewer and fewer hands—with the consequent increase of overhead, debt, and dependence on machines—is thus a matter of complex significance, and its agricultural significance cannot be disentangled from its cultural significance. It forces a profound revolution in the farmer's mind: once his investment in land and machines is large enough, he must forsake the values of husbandry and assume those of finance and technology. Thenceforth his thinking is not determined by agricultural responsibility, but by financial accountability and the capacities of his machines. Where his money comes from becomes less important to him than where it is going. He is caught up in the drift of energy and interest away from the land. Production begins to override maintenance. The economy of money has infiltrated and subverted the economies of nature, energy, and the human spirit. The man himself has become a consumptive machine.

## The Price of Competition

Ecologists have documented the principle that “you can't do one thing”—which means that in a natural system whatever affects one thing ultimately affects everything. Everything in the Creation is related to everything else and dependent on everything else.

The best human cultures also have this unity. Their concerns and enterprises are not fragmented, scattered out, at variance or in contention with one another. The people and their work and their country are members of each other and of the culture. If a culture is to hope for any considerable longevity, then the relationships within it must, in recognition of their interdependence, be predominantly cooperative rather than competitive. A people cannot live long at each other's expense or at the expense of their cultural birthright—just as an agriculture cannot live long at the expense of its soil or its work force, and just as in a natural system the competitions among species must be limited if all are to survive.

Under the discipline of unity, we see the hideousness and destructiveness of the fragmentary—the kind of mind, for example, that can introduce a production machine to increase “efficiency” without troubling about its effects on workers, on the product, and on consumers; that can accept and even applaud the “obsolescence” of the small farm and not hesitate over the possible political and cultural effects; that can recommend continuous tillage of huge monocultures, with massive use of chemicals and no animal manure or humus, and worry not at all about the deterioration or loss of soil. For cultural patterns of responsible cooperation we have substituted this moral ignorance, which is the etiquette of agricultural “progress.” 🐾

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*Wendell Berry is a farmer, essayist, novelist and poet who has written more than 30 books. He lives in Kentucky.*

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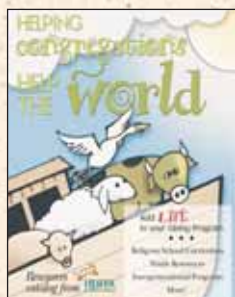
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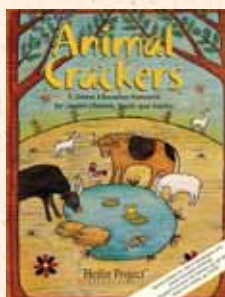
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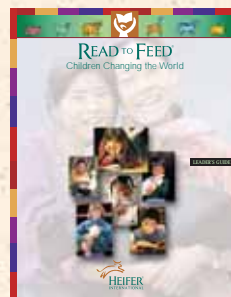
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# Conference on Ending Hunger:



## Keynote Speakers

Lester Brown



Lester Brown is founder and president of Earth Policy Institute, and founder and former president of Worldwatch Institute. His most recent book is *Plan B: Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble*.

Frances Moore Lappé



Frances Moore Lappé is author of the bestselling *Diet for a Small Planet* and the co-founder of two organizations that focus on food and the roots of democracy. Her most recent book is *You Have the Power: Choosing Courage in a Culture of Fear*.

Ray Anderson



Founder and chair of Interface, Inc., Ray Anderson is a pioneer in environmentally sustainable manufacturing. He co-chaired the President's Council on Sustainable Development during the Clinton administration, and has won numerous awards for his work.

Ritu Sharma



Ritu Sharma is the co-founder and executive director of Women's EDGE (the Coalition for Women's Economic Development and Global Equity). She serves on several boards including InterAction and the U.S. Global Leadership Campaign.

In October, Heifer International will be commemorating its rich history with a weekend of renowned speakers, keynote addresses, short "courses" and celebrations, as well as a global symposium, "Small Farmers in a Global Economy," on Thursday, Oct. 21. Join us for this unique opportunity to meet the people who are doing Heifer's work in the field, and to learn more about our mission to end world hunger and encourage sustainable development.

# Heifer at 60

October 21-23, 2004 ■ Little Rock, Arkansas, USA

Below is a sampling of the short courses that will be offered over the weekend.

- Heifer 101: How to Change the World, One Cow at a Time
- In the Shadow of Plenty: Poverty and Hunger in the Wealthiest Nation in the World
- Gender Roles and Economic Development
- The Desire to Give: The Role of Heifer International Foundation
- Healthy Growth: Environmental Issues in Development
- Heifer's Program Areas: Africa, Asia/South Pacific, Central/Eastern Europe, Latin America/Carribbean, North America
- HIV/AIDS: Heifer's Response to the Crisis
- The Rising Number of Orphans
- Passing on the Gifts: Heifer's Cornerstones in Action

## Please join us!

For the complete list and detailed information on the entire weekend,  
please click on the 60th anniversary link at [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org)

or call 888-5HUNGER (888-548-6437).

A man wearing a red baseball cap and a blue t-shirt is smiling and holding a brown chicken. He is standing in front of a wall with colorful, abstract patterns. The title "It's for All of Us" is written in large, red, serif font across the top right of the image.

# "It's for All of Us"

Heifer Chickens Help in Unexpected Ways



Katarin Tellez Diaz, daughter of Rosa Maria Diaz, holds three eggs, eggs that not only provide the family nutrition but also income. "None of my children are sick anymore," Rosa Diaz says.

By Jan Cottingham, *WORLD ARK* EDITOR

Photos by Darcy Kiefel, Heifer International Photojournalist

**N**ORWICH, Nicaragua—About 12 smiling women sit in a circle in the mid-morning shade of tropical trees, joined by one shy man, Juan Antonio Rodriguez. The women are participants in Heifer International's Norwich Women's Poultry Project, and Rodriguez takes pains to explain that he's present on behalf of his wife, who was unable to attend this gathering.

As soon as a reporter and photographer sit down with the women, they whip out food-filled plates, tasty palettes of colorful egg dishes. Eggs with salsa, eggs with fresh queso, eggs wrapped in tortillas, eggs scrambled and fried—red, white and yellow. These women, most of them in their 30s and 40s, show pride in their culinary creativity, urging their visitors to eat. The food tastes delicious, but asking questions and taking notes and photographs while eating prove difficult. The eggs are wolfed down so work can proceed.





Juan Antonio Rodriguez (facing page), of Norwich, Nicaragua, holds the rooster that, with chickens and training provided by Heifer, is helping Rodriguez and his wife feed and care for their family.

Rosa del Carmen Medina Aguilera (left), one of the poultry project's leaders, says, "Life has changed for our women in many ways because of this project. We are happy and more active with more confidence."

Rosa del Carmen Medina Aguilera, 48, speaks with confidence and an air of authority. She is one of the village leaders.

Each of 16 families in this village received 14 chickens and one rooster from Heifer last year. Hurricane Mitch devastated much of Nicaragua in 1998, and these villagers were forced to leave their demolished homes on the banks of the Rio Zopilote.

The women formed committees and sought help. A Dutch organization, the Friends from Holland, helped the families buy six acres in the state of Chinandega and build new homes. The Catholic Sisters of Carmen Laura in the nearby town of El Viejo and a group from Norwich, England, provided wells, sinks and latrines to the homes. The village, about 110 miles northwest of Managua, is named after the Norwich benefactors. The Agros Foundation helped the community of 45 families buy 198 acres for farming.

### Among the Poorest Countries

Although the civil war ended more than a decade ago, Nicaragua is one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere. Heifer International opened its Nicaragua office in 2001 in Managua,

the nation's capital. In cooperation with other nonprofit groups, Heifer is working to improve the conditions of small-scale farmers, seeking to give them alternatives to moving to city slums or migrating seasonally in search of work. Such alternatives tend to break up families, often leaving women alone to care for their children.

What have the chickens done for them? Aguilera is asked.

"It's a big help because we now have eggs for the family and the extra eggs we sell," she says.

How much money do you make?

"It depends, because sometimes the chickens don't lay," Aguilera explains. It's late April in Nicaragua, the end of the dry season, and farm animals aren't producing much. "But we keep a monthly report."

As soon as she says this, Felicitas Diaz Lopez thrusts a chart into a visitor's hands. In orderly grids and tidy numbers, she has noted that her chickens laid 192 eggs in March. She and her family of seven ate 110, they sold 55, and from the sale of the eggs they earned \$3.50.

"I'm so happy with this project," Lopez says. "Finally, instead of having to buy eggs,

**"Heifer has given us an opportunity to get ahead. It's been good for our families. It's not just a project for each of us. It's a project for all of us."**  
— Felicitas Diaz Lopez



Women wash clothes in concrete basins in Las Lagunas, Nicaragua, where Heifer recently has provided dairy cattle as part of a separate project.

we can feed the eggs to our families and earn money to buy things like sugar and soap.”

Some of the eggs are left to hatch to increase the flock, and “every once in a while, we can feed our children meat,” she says.

“Heifer has given us an opportunity to get ahead,” Lopez says. “It’s been good for our families. It’s not just a project for each of us. It’s a project for all of us.”

The tiny village of Norwich sits on the edge of sugar cane fields that supply the Santa Rosa sugar mill in the town of Chinandega. Most of the village’s men cut cane, but that work lasts only six months of the year and it doesn’t pay much.

The villagers will eventually divide their jointly owned acreage among the families to farm. But each family has a bit of land around its house. The homes, sturdy concrete-block buildings, are neat, their floors swept. They

lack running water or electricity but concrete washbasins have been built outside the homes, and the villagers get their water from wells.

### “We Had to Prepare Carefully”

“Before we could get the chickens, we first had to have a decent place for them,” Lopez says. “We had to prepare carefully.”

“There are so many possibilities with this project,” she says. “Maybe with income provided by the chickens we’ll be able to buy other animals as well.”

The project has given the women confidence, the confidence necessary to make plans for the future. “We would like to have cows,” Aguilera says. “In the future we want to eat cheese and drink milk.”

But in the here and now, “It’s so much better because the children have clothes to wear, they can go to school, they have eggs to eat,” says Maria Estaban Campo. “Before my son only went to school to sleep. Now he learns better because he’s not hungry.”

Gerardo Arroliga, a Heifer Nicaragua project technician who visits Norwich twice a week, traveling the rough roads on his motorcycle, says that his office plans to study the village’s children to determine whether their improved nutrition translates into improved learning.

Rodriguez, the lone man in the group, speaks up. “This project has been a very big help, not only for my family’s diet, but for the income it has generated.”

The poultry project has been especially helpful to the women of the village, he says. “I can go into the fields to work and the women can stay home and care for the chickens.”

### Sending Children to School

“Before this project I never had chickens,” Bridget Palacio Rugama says. “Heifer gave me the chickens. I don’t have to buy eggs anymore. When I first started, some chickens didn’t lay eggs, but now all the chickens lay lots of eggs.”

“When I sometimes sell the eggs, I can send my children to school,” says Rugama, who has five children. “I can buy pens and other school supplies.”

Rosa Maria Gutierrez, Aguilera’s daughter, says, “I feel so comforted now that I don’t have to depend on my mother. I don’t have to ask her for money. I can sell an egg and buy a loaf of bread for my family.”

Lopez notes that the village is just beginning to see the benefits of the chickens. “This project is not finished here because we’re going to pass on the gift to other



Map by Kirk Montgomery

families, mostly here, but in other communities as well.” She is referring to the Heifer Cornerstone of “Passing on the Gift,” in which Heifer partners give offspring of their animals to other families in need, a practice that has a ripple effect, spreading to others the benefits of the initial gift animal.

The women also know that if the poultry project succeeds, Heifer plans to give them cattle.

The poultry have given these women more power within the family, Arroliga says.

The women agree. “We can make decisions about this work,” Aguilera says. “If we want to get training, I talk with my husband. If he doesn’t want to go, no problem. I go. I always go.”

“The men know that we need this project,” Miriam Diaz Lopez says. “The men and the women are on equal terms.”

### Help for a Sick Daughter

Rodriguez’s home is nearby. His wife’s chickens strut and peck at the earth in a well-ventilated coop adjacent to his house. Only when asked how many chickens his wife has does Rodriguez reveal why she was unable to attend the gathering.

**Tears streak his face as Rodriguez describes his daughter’s plight and the lost infant. “That’s the only reason I sold the two chickens,” he says.**

“We have nine chickens and one rooster, but let me explain,” he says quickly, almost apologetically. Three chickens died and the family had to sell two to buy antibiotics for his 21-year-old daughter. She is in the hospital in Chinandega, where she underwent a Caesarean section to deliver her stillborn child. Her mother, Rodriguez’s wife, is with her. Tears streak his face as Rodriguez describes his daughter’s plight and the lost

infant. “That’s the only reason I sold the two chickens,” he says.

The Heifer team agrees to give him a ride to the hospital to see his wife and daughter, whose health, he says, is improving. Otherwise, he’d have to walk the 16 miles, a choice preferable to spending money to take the bus. Every cordoba, equal to about six cents, every peso counts here.

The other chicken houses in the village are as neat as Rodriguez’s. They hold large pans of water, essential always but particularly now during the hottest, driest part of the year.

After several hours of conversation and visits, the Heifer team, accompanied by the quiet Rodriguez, gets in the truck and heads for Chinandega and the hospital where Rodriguez’s daughter lies recovering from her surgery.

Is it all right if we talk to your wife about her chickens and perhaps your daughter as well? he is asked. Sure, sure, he nods. But one look at the tiny frame of Juan Antonio’s feverish daughter in her hospital bed, and camera and notebook are stowed away.

She is obviously gravely ill, despite Rodriguez’s brave words and two chickens’ worth of antibiotics. Although moaning with pain, she and her mother express thanks for Heifer’s help and soon everyone is crying—and praying. 🐔



“It’s so much better because the children have clothes to wear, they can go to school, they have eggs to eat. Before my son only went to school to sleep.

Now he learns better because he’s not hungry.”

—Maria Estaban Campo

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*Six weeks later. There’s an e-mail message from David Villalonga, the head of Heifer’s Nicaragua program, and from Gerardo Arroliga. Juan Antonio Rodriguez’s daughter is back home and in good health.*

*Heifer’s gift of chickens has brought Norwich better nutrition, income for schooling, increased status for the village’s women—and, in perhaps an unexpected way, helped save at least one life. But then miracles usually are unexpected.*



# Heifer Style

Wrap your family and friends in Heifer today.



## "Cowing" Around T-shirt

Available in Gold and Blue,  
100% cotton  
Adult Gold **NEW ITEM**  
\$15.00, sizes S-XXL, #NS4900  
Adult Blue  
\$15.00, sizes S-XXL, #NS4900



Product  
Detail

## Sage Advice: End Hunger T-shirt

Light green, embroidered Heifer logo,  
100% cotton  
Adult long sleeve **NEW ITEM**  
\$26.00, sizes S-XXL, #NS5000  
Adult short sleeve  
\$22.00, sizes S-XXL, #NS5000



## The Cow that Saved the Earth T-shirt

Black, 100% cotton  
Adult \$12.00, sizes S-XXL, #NS4800



## Heifer Denim Shirt

Embroidered Heifer logo,  
100% cotton  
Adult long sleeve \$30.00,  
sizes S-XXXL, #NS4100  
Adult short sleeve \$28.00,  
sizes S-XXXL, #NS4200



## End Hunger: Pass It On T-shirt

**NEW ITEM**  
Gray, 100% cotton  
Adult long sleeve  
\$20.00, sizes  
S-XXL, #NS5100



Share the gift of Heifer's mission to end hunger and poverty with your family. Teach your children about the world around them with **The New York Times** bestselling children's picture book, **Beatrice's Goat**, a story about how the gift of a Heifer International goat changed the life of a little girl, her family and her entire community. And bring a little happiness to your kids with a vibrant Heifer Ark t-shirt, depicting animals spreading joy to the world.

## Beatrice's Goat

by Page McBrier

Hardback \$16.00,  
#NB0700  
Softback \$6.99,  
#NB0700S

## Ark T-Shirt

White, 100% cotton  
Child \$10.00, sizes XS-L,  
#NS4700  
Adult \$12.00, sizes S-XXXL,  
#NS4700



# Heifer Gifts

You can help spread Heifer's message of hope, while your friends and family enjoy the uplifting photographs of Heifer's project participants featured in the 2005 wall calendar and Heifer "Portraits" notecards. The Heifer coffee mug is a daily reminder that it is possible to end hunger and poverty.

Gift Package \$25.00, #NMX004  
Includes all three.  
Also sold individually

A.



A. Heifer 2005 Wall Calendar  
(13 images)  
\$13.00, #NL2005

B.



B. Heifer Mug  
\$8.00, #NM0411

C.

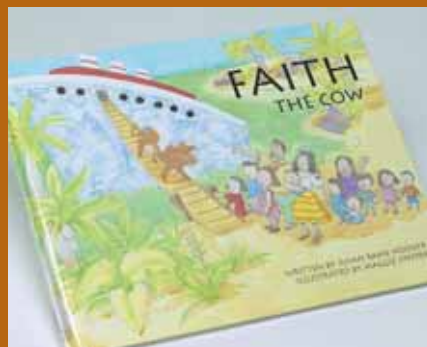


C. Heifer Portraits Notecards  
\$11.00, #NN0014

## Heifer Images

A picture is worth a thousand words...Bring the world to your family with this award-winning collection of inspirational quotes and photographs featuring Heifer International's projects and participants.

One World, One Family Book  
Softback \$5.00, #NB0703



Share the story of Heifer's beginnings with the tale of how Faith the cow brought hope and healing to families in Puerto Rico.

Faith the Cow  
by Susan Bame Hoover  
Hardback \$16.00, #NB0705

Sport Heifer  
Ball Caps  
Relaxed front,  
100% cotton  
Available in  
Stone or Khaki  
One size fits all  
\$10.00,  
#NS4000



## Heifer Greetings

Whether you want to send holiday greetings or to just keep in touch year-round, Heifer has the perfect way to connect with your loved ones.

### Heifer Holiday Cards

A. Polish Tradition Card with a Wafer to Share  
Message inside: "Share this Oplatek wafer with those you love. Breaking and sharing Oplatek comes from a beautiful Polish custom where it is a symbol of peace, harmony, integrity, love, health and prosperity. As you share this wafer say aloud your best wishes...no matter how small the piece you pass on, the wishes from your heart will reach out to another. Break a piece and receive our wish that you have a joyous holiday and peaceful new year."

10 cards in a package \$5.00, #NC0603

B. Dairy Cow with Map of the World Card  
Message inside: "Have a Joyful Holiday and a Happy Moo Year"

20 cards in a package \$10.00, #NCS604

C. One World Card  
Message inside: "Peace"

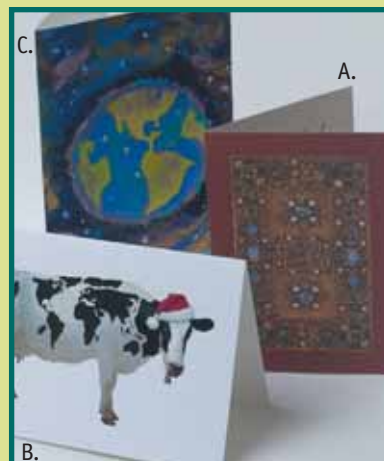
20 cards in a package \$10.00, #NC0614

### Heifer Notecards

Artist Betty LaDuke's colorful portrayals of Heifer projects in Uganda and Rwanda.

A. Uganda Set \$8.00, #NNU004

B. Rwanda Set \$8.00, #NNR004



C.

A.

B.



A.

B.



## Heifer, Naturally

*Heifer Hope Blend is a Fair Trade Certified™ organic coffee created by Green Mountain Coffee Roasters®. When you buy this coffee, you get great taste and a chance to help Heifer end hunger and protect the earth. Heifer trains small family farmers in Guatemala how to raise crops in an environmentally friendly way, and these farmers grow many of the beans used in this coffee.*



Whole Beans, 12 oz. bag  
\$8.69, #NGHH04

## Heifer Ties

*Show the world that the special man in your life makes a real difference. These 100% silk ties, adorned with the Heifer logo, not only look good—they promote a good cause, too.*



Heifer Ties  
Available in Blue  
and Maroon,  
100% silk

Blue Tie  
\$25.00, #NT001400B  
Maroon Tie  
\$25.00, #NT000400M

*Heifer is more than ending hunger—we work hard to heal and replenish the earth as well. With this Heifer grocery tote, you can support both missions. Made of 100% organic cotton, this tote will reduce the amount of waste in landfills and help preserve our forests. This product is a result of organic farming, which prohibits use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers for minimum adverse effects on the environment.*

End Hunger Grocery Tote  
11x14x4, 100% organic cotton \$17.00,  
#N00404000





# A VOICE FOR THE WORKING POOR

## The Working Poor: Invisible in America

David K. Shipler  
Knopf Publishing  
Hardcover, \$25

—Reviewed by

Sherri White, Heifer Staff Writer

The rich get richer, while the poor get poorer—this old adage rings true in David K. Shipler's *The Working Poor: Invisible in America*. Shipler reveals a dark truth of the "American Dream," where people work hard—two-and-three-jobs hard—and still live in poverty.

Shipler, a former *New York Times* correspondent and Pulitzer Prize winner, follows the lives of Americans from both sides of the tracks—across the United States and across racial lines—and unabashedly challenges the stereotypes cast upon those not lucky enough to be middle class. He quickly concedes that by most global standards, what Americans consider privation would be an extravagance to many. Shipler also points out, however, that poverty in America is still poverty.

Most impoverished people in the world would be dazzled by the apartments, telephones, television sets, running water, clothing and other amenities that surround the poor in America. But that does not mean that the poor in the United States are not poor, or those on the edge of poverty are not standing on the edge of a cliff.

This book's most powerful images come from vivid details of individuals' struggles to make ends meet. Shipler explores the lives of low-wage workers—the people who serve our food, check our groceries, farm our fields—and reveals their

plight, their dreams and their shortcomings. Shipler tells the working poor's story with great care and detail. These stories are numerous and complex and, at times, can leave the reader struggling with the continuity.

In spite of this, Shipler's message is clear. Part bad luck. Part poor choices. Part unfortunate circumstances. Part poor parenting. This is the recipe for the cycle of poverty that proves almost impossible to break. And America, as a country, isn't doing enough about it.

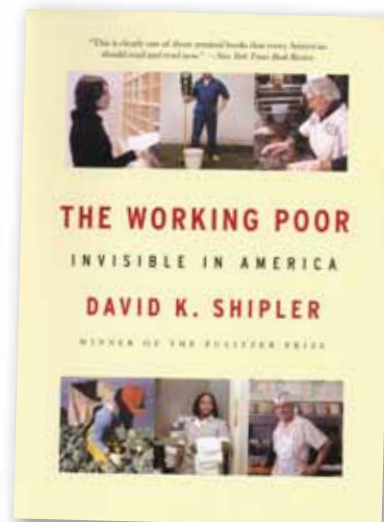
Shipler begins the book by announcing his intentions:

Indeed, devout conservatives and impassioned liberals will be bothered by this portrait of poverty, at least I hope so, for the reality I discovered does not neatly fit into anyone's political agenda. I want to challenge and undermine longstanding assumptions at both ends of the spectrum.

And he ends the book with a strong admonishment:

Workers on the edge of poverty are essential to America's prosperity, but their well-being is not treated as an integral part of the whole. Instead, the forgotten wage a daily struggle to keep themselves from falling over the cliff. It is time to be ashamed.

This book's greatest strengths are the individual voices and the explanation of how corporate Amer-



ica continues to exploit and profit from these people through high interest rates charged to those with poor credit and offers that seem too good to be true—and are.

The book's suggested solutions—living wage laws, better access to health care, intervention and training programs—could profoundly improve the lives of the working poor.

But Shipler's chapter on kinship offers the most immediate source of assistance for the working poor—a helping hand from others. Kind deeds make the most profound differences. Communities need to reach out to these families. Neighbors need to offer support. Sometimes a car ride to work can save a person's job. An offer to mentor a child can help break poverty's cycle. And voters need to demand laws that will keep these workers from plummeting off the cliff into poverty.

# "The Day After Tomorrow"

Director: Roland Emmerich

—Reviewed by  
Bill McKibben

The real problem with "The Day After Tomorrow" is not its endless supply of manipulative movie clichés nor its wooden acting. It's that Hollywood, in its first attempt to grapple with global warming, has located its likely victims in the richest cities of the Northern Hemisphere, not the poorest communities of the south.

The movie, released in June, was long overdue. Global warming is beyond any doubt the most serious crisis the human species has yet faced: The scientific consensus is that unless we very quickly and dramatically reduce our use of coal, gas and oil, the build-up of carbon dioxide in the world's atmosphere will raise the temperature of the planet something like five degrees Fahrenheit by century's end. That would make our earth warmer than it's been for perhaps 30 million years. Instead of stewarding our planet, we are literally de-creating it, all in the name of cheap energy.

But instead of dramatizing that scientific consensus, the movie's director, Roland Emmerich, turned to a different source for his inspiration: a book called *The Coming Global Superstorm*, co-authored by Whitley Strieber (the author of *Communion*, about his interactions with UFOs) and Art Bell (the host of a late-night talk show on occult topics). They pursue the implications of a different global warming scenario: that warming temperatures will melt polar ice, shutting down global ocean currents like the Gulf Stream and hence triggering (with one huge storm) the next Ice Age.

It is perfectly true that we may trigger unexpected and violent changes as we warm the earth: We have already managed to reduce the thickness of Arctic ice by 40 percent, and scientific



instruments show a noticeable freshening of waters in the North Atlantic, which could slow the great conveyor currents that help warm Western Europe and the American Northeast. But even in the worst-case predictions, that cooling would be regional—London would get frostier, but most of the world would continue to warm.

And it is in the rest of the world that the worst victims will almost certainly be found. I spent a good deal of time recently in Bangladesh—a poor country, obviously, but a fertile one too, whose 140 million people eke out a living on the river delta of Asia's sacred rivers, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra. The fertility of that delta, with its gentle annual floods, makes it possible for them to feed themselves—but it also means that they live perched just a few feet above the level of the Indian Ocean.

One of the most obvious results of global warming will be sea level rise. The rise of a few feet predicted for this century will almost certainly be enough to make large swaths of Bangladesh, and a hundred other low-lying tropical places, uninhabitable. U.N. projections show that the number of environmental refugees in this century will probably far exceed the number of political refugees in the century just past.

And while we're at it, let's think who likes a warmer and wetter world.

The answer is mosquitoes; the World Health Organization projects that the biggest emergent diseases of this century will be malaria and dengue fever, which will spread with great rapidity as higher temperatures extend the range of the mosquitoes that carry them. (Having contracted dengue while in the tropics, I can assure you that it's a very real horror—much more real than the snarling wolves that escape the Central Park Zoo to threaten the characters in "Day After Tomorrow.")

The number of disasters that will likely accompany a persistent rise in global temperature is endless. For instance, higher temperatures are beginning to impact grain production. For the last four years the world has grown less corn, wheat and rice than it has eaten, largely because of drought and persistent heat waves. Another bad year and the cost of subsistence will soar beyond what many people can afford.

But most of those people are in the developing world, which Hollywood views as of insufficient interest. And in fact, the instincts of "The Day After Tomorrow" team are probably right: If they'd made a movie about the suffering of Asian peasants, it likely would not have topped \$100 million in ticket sales by its third week in the theaters. And it's here that the answer, if there is one, to global warming lies. Ameri-

cans are the world champions on carbon production. With our SUVs and enormous houses, we manage to burn twice as much fuel each year as Western Europeans and five, 10, a hundred times as much as the residents of the poor world.

There are plenty of changes that will strike close to home. Regional projections for the United States now show gradual coastal inundation, the disappearance of the mountain snow pack that waters much of the West, the disappearance of winter in many areas. We are changing our world, too—but given the cushion of wealth with which we enter this century, we are likely to survive in better shape than more marginal citizens of our planet.

So our choice seems to be: Act out of compassion for people in the rest of the world, or act out of fear about a luridly unlikely danger to ourselves. The answer, I fear, will be to do neither and merely to continue our unchecked consumption. Hollywood could play a great role in changing those attitudes, but I doubt "The Day After Tomorrow" will be the vehicle that does it.

*Bill McKibben is the author of The End of Nature, which was the first book for a general audience about climate change. He is a scholar in residence at Middlebury College in Vermont.*

## A Continental Contradiction

### A Continent for the Taking: The Tragedy and Hope of Africa

Howard W. French  
Alfred A. Knopf  
Hardcover, \$25

—Reviewed by  
Scott Morris  
World Ark Associate Editor



"Africa eludes us," Howard W. French writes in this challenging new portrait of the continent, despite the fact that it is so concretely *there*: the earth's second largest landmass, humanity's ancient birthplace and today home to almost 800 million souls.

It is also, as French notes, "stage to mankind's greatest tragedies," including horrific wars, terrifying diseases and grinding, unthinkable poverty.

How is this contradiction possible?

Is it because Africa's size and complexity paradoxically make it invisible to those of us in the West? Or are we afflicted with a kind of willful blindness that is relieved only when we remember to covet Africa's riches?

It is both of these things, and more, according to French, a senior writer for *The New York Times* who spent most of the 1990s as the newspaper's correspondent in West Africa.

Africa's misery, he asserts, rests on three legs. For hundreds of years, technologically superior Western governments have exploited the continent in shameless and brutal get-rich-quick campaigns that taught Africans one enduring lesson: "Might makes right." King Leopold II of Belgium, who referred to the Congo (later Zaire and now the Democratic Republic of Congo) as a "magnificent African cake," may have killed 10 million people, half the territory's population and more than World War I's death toll, in his quest to forge an empire and enrich himself at Africa's expense.

Mobutu Sese Seko, the dictator of Zaire deposed in 1997, "was clearly

following in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor, Leopold II, staking out a personal claim to the wealth of an entire region," French writes.

During the Cold War, "Western meddling [was] persistent and profoundly destabilizing" across the continent, French writes, as the United States supported one anti-Soviet dictator after another. Without a democratic tradition to fall back on, African societies have been racked by "instability and bad governance ever since."

French's analysis of the causes of Africa's suffering is hardly original, nor is *A Continent for the Taking* encyclopedic in the manner of John Reader's excellent *Africa: A Biography of the Continent*. It is, however, a vivid and moving portrait of some of the continent's hot spots. French has a reporter's eye for telling details, and he finds hope in the dignity and spirit of the African people.

"Our dreams are the dreams of people everywhere, aren't they?" one man tells him during the collapse of Mobutu's Zaire. "'We want to be able to turn on the lights and read to our children at night. We want affordable cement so that we can build houses for our families. ... We want to be able to put money in the bank and know that it won't be stolen or have its value melt away. If we had our own state we could take charge of ourselves. But who can wait for that? Zaire has already lost the means to stop us from moving forward.'"



## THE HEIFER CALENDAR



### CERES CENTER

Oct. 1-2

#### YOUTH FOR HEIFER

An ecumenical event for junior and senior high youth.

Nov. 6

#### FALL FEAST

Fall outing for the whole family. Learn more about Heifer with a video and tour while dining on fall foods.

Year-Round

**FIELD TRIPS:** Learn about Heifer International and Ceres Education Center with a video, cart ride, walking tour and hands-on activities in the barn.

**GLOBAL VILLAGE:** Get a taste of the real world with this overnight experience.

**MEETING FACILITY:** Have your meeting or gathering "down on the farm" and learn about Heifer's work.

### HEIFER RANCH

Oct. 16

#### ANNUAL GLOBAL VILLAGE DAY

Take a "world tour" at a daylong celebration of the Global Village.

Nov. 4-6

#### OUTDOOR WATERCOLOR WORKSHOP

A weekend of painting for experienced beginners and intermediate artists to learn outdoor techniques.

Dec. 3 and 4

#### HEIFER RANCH LIVING NATIVITY

See the Nativity story, enjoy refreshments, hands-on activities and the International Gift Shop.

Fall and Spring

**ADULT WORK GROUPS:** Fight hunger through service with these opportunities for adult groups.

**GLOBAL EXPLORERS:** Become a Global Citizen in this two-day residential program designed to

help teachers meet social studies standards for grades 5-8.

**E.A.R.T.H. LEARNING:** Learn how to help save our planet in this new standards-based daylong or overnight environmental education program.

Spring Only

#### WOMEN'S LAMBING EVENTS

Coming in March/April 2005. Check out [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org) after Oct. 1 for details.

#### ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK

Become a part of the solution through these multi-day Service Learning programs for youth groups.

Year-Round

**FIELD TRIPS:** Learn about Heifer International and the Ranch with a video, hayride and walking tour.

**GLOBAL VILLAGE:** Get a taste of the real world with this overnight experience.

**CHALLENGE COURSE:** Learn the ropes about teamwork and problem-solving skills.

**COTTAGE INDUSTRY:** Engage in workshops that turn animal products into marketable items.

**"GVR" PROGRAM:** Combines two popular programs in this multi-day event that includes Global Village, Challenge Course, Cottage Industry and more.

#### CONFERENCE AND RETREAT FACILITIES

Leave the busy world behind and relax in the beauty of the Ouachita Mountains.

### OVERLOOK FARM

Oct. 2 and 3

#### HARVEST FESTIVAL

Horse-drawn hayrides to "pick-your-own" pumpkins. Food and children's activities.

Oct. 10-15

#### "HARVEST YEARS" SERVICE LEARNING

A program for people ages 55 and

older, including farm chores and hunger education sessions.

Nov. 19-21

#### HEIFER VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Information and speaker training for people interested in taking Heifer International to their hometowns.

Dec. 11 and 12

#### LIVING NATIVITY

A live Nativity, International Gift Shop, sleigh rides, hot cider and more.

Year-Round

**DAY EDUCATION PROGRAMS:** Full- and half-day programs for groups include a video and tour and may include a Peasant Meal in the Global Village, a hunger education session, a farm work experience and a horse-drawn hayride.

#### MULTI-DAY SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM

Two- to five-day stays during which groups enjoy farm work and hunger/sustainable agriculture education. Global Village overnight included.

**FIELD TRIPS:** Learn about Heifer International and Overlook Farm with a video, guided tour and hayride.

### INFORMATION

#### CERES CENTER

Ceres, California  
(877) 841-7182 or  
[cerescenter@heifer.org](mailto:cerescenter@heifer.org)

#### HEIFER RANCH

Perryville, Arkansas  
Ranch Events Office  
(501) 889-5124 or  
[ranch@heifer.org](mailto:ranch@heifer.org)

#### OVERLOOK FARM

Rutland, Massachusetts  
(508) 886-2221 or  
[overlook.farm@heifer.org](mailto:overlook.farm@heifer.org)

#### HOWELL NATURE CENTER HEIFER GLOBAL VILLAGE

Howell, Michigan  
(517) 564-0249  
[HCNC@howellnaturecenter.org](mailto:HCNC@howellnaturecenter.org)

### HEIFER UNIVERSITY

Heifer International offers a number of Heifer University programs to provide participants with the tools to promote Heifer in their communities and regions. Program cost is \$195 per person (includes all meals, lodging, program fees and transportation to and from the airport when necessary).

For more information, contact Rex Enoch at [rex.enoch@heifer.org](mailto:rex.enoch@heifer.org) or call (501) 889-5124. The schedule is as follows:

Sept. 23-26

**HEIFER RANCH, PERRYVILLE, ARK.**

Nov. 11-14

**HOWELL NATURE CENTER,  
HOWELL, MICH.**

Feb. 10-13, 2005

"Post-Graduate" Program at Heifer Ranch in Perryville, Ark. An in-depth curriculum for individuals who have already "graduated" from a Heifer University program.

Feb. 24-27, 2005

**HEIFER RANCH, PERRYVILLE, ARK.**

March 3-6, 2005

Heifer University for Teachers at Heifer Ranch in Perryville, Ark. This program focuses on Read to Feed and other school programs.

April 14-17, 2005

**HEIFER RANCH, PERRYVILLE, ARK.**

Sept. 8-11, 2005

**OVERLOOK FARM, RUTLAND, MASS.**

Oct. 6-9, 2005

**HEIFER RANCH, PERRYVILLE, ARK.**

*All locations are open year-round for drop-in visitors, or schedule a field trip for your group.*

# Travel

## WITH A PURPOSE

"What will we be doing? Will I need work gloves?"

The answer is no, though we often get these questions from folks signing up for their first Study Tour. While Study Tours often invigorate us with their physical and mental challenges, the real work starts after you return home. That's when you'll have the wonderful opportunity to share the inspiring stories of Heifer International's project participants with members of your own community.

Join us on a journey of hope and understanding as you travel to the heart of Heifer's humanitarian work. You'll visit country program offices and the homes and farms of project participants. You'll have the privilege of meeting some of the most remarkable people in the world—hard-working farmers from many cultures who are striving each day to achieve self-reliance in the face of tremendous hurdles.

Perhaps best of all, you will see the common thread that connects all places, peoples and cultures. This vivid sense of human community is truly life-changing: You'll return home committed to making real and lasting changes in order to end hunger and care for the earth.

For more information about Heifer Study Tours, please call (501) 907-2957 or send an e-mail to [studytours@heifer.org](mailto:studytours@heifer.org).



Two girls play at the foot of the dragon stairs leading to Wat Doi Suthep on a mountain high above Chiang Mai, Thailand. Thailand Study Tour participants will visit the city, the temple and nearby Heifer projects.

### 2004 STUDY TOURS

**ECUADOR, Nov. 4-16 (wait listed)**

Leader: Jan Schrock  
[jan.schrock@heifer.org](mailto:jan.schrock@heifer.org)  
(207) 878-6846

#### **Women to Women**

Jan West Schrock, daughter of Heifer founder Dan West, returns to Ecuador to support the work being done to strengthen gender equity. Heifer works in communities to strengthen indigenous families, works with small-scale women farmers and much more—all with a holistic management approach to natural resources. Gender equity has made great strides in Ecuador, and Heifer works with families to establish women as equal partners in family and community.

**N. THAILAND/LAOS, Nov. 19-Dec. 3**

Leader: Michael Haddigan  
[michael.haddigan@heifer.org](mailto:michael.haddigan@heifer.org)  
(501) 907-2954

The Northern Thailand-Laos study tour offers a unique opportunity to travel to the heart of Southeast Asia and to understand the cultures of Thailand and Laos. With Chiang Mai as a base, we will travel to projects in rural northern Thailand. In Laos, we will spend two and a half days hiking through the Nam Ha Protected Area to visit villages in the mountains near Luang Nam Tha. Our last destination in Laos will be the former royal capital of Luang Prabang. In both countries we'll visit markets, temples and other sites of interest. This study tour will perhaps be more adventurous than some.

#### **Costs and Lengths of Stay**

Prices include accommodations, most meals, local transportation and project visits. Some include international or in-country air transportation. Please check with the tour leader to find out what is included.

#### **Latin America and the Caribbean**

10-14 days, \$2,000-\$4,000

#### **Central and Eastern Europe**

10-14 days, \$3,000-\$4,200

#### **Africa**

17-24 days, \$4,000-\$5,500

#### **Asia and the South Pacific**

14-21 days, \$3,500-\$5,000

#### **North America (airfare not included)**

5-10 days, \$800-\$1,500

Please check our website, [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org), and click on "Get Involved" for the most current information.



## Rhode Island Students Making Connection

The staff and students at **Metcalf Elementary School** in Exeter, R.I., are living the Heifer Cornerstone of “Sharing and Caring.” Each year, the school receives \$1,000 from the Feinstein Foundation, which gives 10 elementary schools in Rhode Island a \$1,000 award for documenting their good deeds in the fight against hunger. Metcalf Elementary then shares a portion of the award with the rest of the world by supporting Heifer International.

Metcalf Elementary created a special program called Passports to Learning, in which all students participate. The program seeks to foster awareness, understanding and appreciation of different cultures around the world. Each of the four grade levels donates money to buy a Heifer animal.

The students are enthusiastic about their part in the solution to hunger, says art teacher **Lenore Dorson**. “This is such a wonderful program. The animal provides a personal connection for the students. The animal connects to a culture, and that connects to learning. The kids really know they are contributing to something larger than themselves, and they are reaching out to the world.”

Dorson says the students in her art class not only learn about sharing and caring through Heifer, but also learn about the different countries’ customs and cultures. “Our students reach out from Rhode Island to the four corners of the world. They have learned that they can play a small part in helping a needy family become self-sufficient through the purchase of an animal one year after another,” Dorson says.



**Jessica Sartin** and **Bruce Hagist** were among the students who participated in the Passports to Learning program.

## Writer Loves Her Llama



**Sandra Cisneros**, the award-winning poet and novelist, says she loves animals, so she was delighted when she received a Heifer llama after she traveled through Arkansas to help celebrate National Library Week in February.

The text selected for the “If All Arkansans Read the Same Book” was Cisneros’ *The House on Mango Street*, set in a Chicago neighborhood and considered a classic novel for young adults.

**Jane Thompson**, coordinator of the Arkansas Center for the Book at the Arkansas State Library, says, “I was looking for a gift that would help her remember Arkansas, and of course Heifer is based in Arkansas. And I knew, from reading interviews Sandra had given in the past, that she shares Heifer’s goals of ending hunger and caring for the environment.”

Cisneros says that she was already familiar with Heifer International because her agent had given an animal in her name. But “I didn’t realize that Heifer was headquartered in Arkansas,” she says. “I was really surprised.”

Cisneros’ widely praised 2002 novel, *Caramelo*, has been a best seller, and other works include *My Wicked Wicked Ways*, a volume of poetry, and a collection of short stories titled *Woman Hollering Creek*, which won the PEN Center West Award for Best Fiction of 1991 and was selected as a noteworthy book of the year by *The New York Times* and the *American Library Journal*.

Cisneros, who lives in San Antonio, Texas, and is a winner of a prestigious MacArthur Foundation Fellowship, says of Heifer and its work: “I really like the whole concept, and want to share it with my nieces and nephews.”



# Read to Feed Builds Troubled Teens' Self-image

By Sherri White HEIFER STAFF WRITER

For several years, **Alison Craig**, a veteran writing professor at Brigham Young University's law school, has volunteered at the local youth corrections facility in Springville, Utah. Craig helps the teenagers—who are incarcerated for a myriad of offenses such as truancy, burglary, shoplifting and drug use—improve their reading and writing skills. This year, Craig did more than tutor the children; she helped the troubled teens realize they have the power to change the world.

Craig constantly seeks new ways to interest the teenagers in reading. When she learned about Heifer's **Read to Feed** program, she felt it would be a perfect way to not only keep them reading but also to instill a feeling of self-worth.

"Most of the teens were so excited to be doing something good that would help other people," Craig says. "In the past, I've done other things with these kids to encourage their reading, but this was a unique way to help boost their self-esteem, too. These kids' views of themselves are just awful. Read to Feed makes them feel good about themselves."

Craig set the program up so that the teenagers were sponsored by the amount of time they read instead of the number of pages or number of books. Craig, with the help of her family, decided to sponsor the children for 20 minutes of reading a day for five days a week. She says that that kind of sponsorship serves as a good incentive and encourages even poor readers to become involved.

Craig introduced Read to Feed to the teenagers by using *Beatrice's Goat*, a book that tells the story of a girl from Uganda who was able to attend school after her family received a goat from Heifer International. This opened a dialogue about the struggles other children in the world faced. The teenagers were fascinated by the concept that they could actually make a difference.

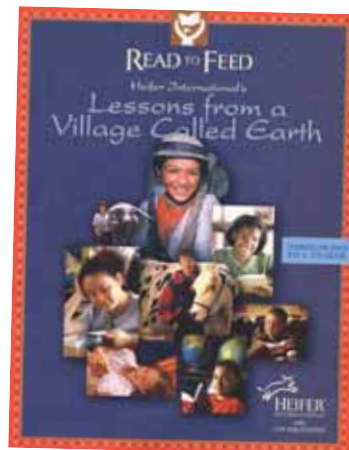
"Some of the kids started calculating how much money they could earn as a group," she says. "I was expecting they would choose individual, small things. But they kept looking through the book, the gift catalog, and they got excited. They said, 'Let's get a cow. That would be cool.'"

"Then they asked what a milk me-nagerie was. I explained it was a collection of animals. They decided that's what they wanted to do. At that point, they started figuring out how much they could earn during their stay, and they were determined to pass the project on to the kids who came after them because this was a short-term facility. That led to the kids reading more during the week," Craig says.

Craig explains that the teenagers pictured themselves as rejects of society. She says that helping others more unfortunate than themselves bolstered their self-image.

"It made the teens feel good that they were doing good things. It provided a good contrast, took them out of focusing on themselves. Then these teens saw their ability to do good for someone else."

## Read to Feed Expands



A new version of the popular Read to Feed educational program is available with the addition of a fifth- and sixth-grade curriculum.

This supplements the current third- and fourth-grade edition.

"Read to Feed is both a reading motivation and global education opportunity," says **Tim Newman**, manager of school programs. The new standards-based curriculum, developed with the Center for Teaching International Relations, focuses on three units: geography, civics and economics. Through reading, discussion, the curriculum and the website, students learn about other cultures, the causes of hunger and poverty and sustainable solutions to these issues.

The fifth- and sixth-grade program highlights Latin America and provides a variety of educational resources such as trading cards, bookmarks, a book, a poster and a CD-Rom of the curriculum "Lessons from a Village Called Earth."

To order the free materials, visit [www.readtofeed.org](http://www.readtofeed.org) or call 1-800-422-0474.

# Will *Dance* for Goats

By Barbara Justus

**H**eifer volunteer **Nadia Adler** of the Bronx, N.Y., was raised in a home where the smell of exotic cooking and rich, haunting Middle Eastern music filled the air. Encouraged by her Armenian mother, Adler began to study dance at age 7, and she dabbled in many forms, from ballet to flamenco.

But her first love? "Belly dancing, without a doubt!" says Adler, now a Middle Eastern dance instructor, choreographer and mother of a 3-year-old daughter. "It's the ultimate feminine dance form."

She has also found belly dancing to be the ultimate way to raise money for Heifer International. "I had been looking for a way to indulge my love of dance while helping others less fortunate become self-reliant."

And so she formed 1WorldBeat, a one-woman dance production company that uses art and love of dance to help people in need around the world.

Besides holding monthly belly dancing workshops and classes, Adler produced two "Big Belly Dance Shows" in May and June in New Jersey and New York. The sell-out shows raised several thousand dollars for Heifer while increasing awareness of the organization's work.

The shows, Adler explains, "introduced the audience to the many various and beautiful elements of Middle Eastern dance. All the dancers and musicians, many of whom are internationally acclaimed, donated their performances, enabling me to keep the costs low enough to make a substantial contribution to Heifer International."

The performances also provided an opportunity to introduce the work of Heifer to the hundreds of people who attended the shows.

Adler's first "Big Belly Dance Show" was held May 2



PHOTO BY ALAN PRICE

A performer takes part in a belly dance show organized by Nadia Adler of the Bronx, N.Y., to raise money for Heifer.

at the ARS Nova Theater in New York City. Audience members were so carried away with the performance that, at the end of the evening, they literally danced out of the theater and onto the street, escorted by the hypnotic rhythms of Middle Eastern drummers.

Adler's second "Big Belly Dance Show" was held June 5 in Nutley, N.J., at the Starlight Ballroom. That night, the audience was treated to a celebration featuring live "Magical Middle Eastern Music" and a dizzying array of dance forms, from whirling dervish to more traditional and sensual belly dancers. One dancer even did a routine with a lit candelabra on her head.

Adler says, "The audience felt as if they had stepped back in time and were being entertained as in the palaces of old. Belly dancing is an ancient and rich dance form that really makes the spirit soar."

"It's a dream come true to have the opportunity to share this art form on so many levels, while supporting Heifer's mission of 'Ending Hunger and Saving the Earth,' Adler says. "My goal is to feed as many children and families as possible through my partnership with Heifer International and my love of dance."

Adler thanks Sania, her first dance teacher, and Jehan Kamal, an internationally acclaimed dancer and singer, for their support and inspiration. She is currently holding belly dance workshops for women in New Jersey and New York. A portion of the proceeds goes to Heifer International. For more information, go to [www.worldbeatbellydance.com](http://www.worldbeatbellydance.com).

*Barbara Justus is a freelance writer living in Little Rock.*

# Multiply Your Giving



When you make a donation to Heifer, you know your gift is going to be spent in the best possible way, on high-quality animals and training for people working to become self-sufficient. Even better, you know your gift's value will grow as recipients pass on the gift of their livestock's first offspring to other members of their community.

If you had the opportunity to double or even triple that initial gift—making it go even further—wouldn't you be interested?

By participating in an **employee-employer matching-gift program**, you can do just that, yet only a fraction of the people whose employers provide matching gifts take advantage of these programs.

The idea of a company matching its employees' charitable donations is attributed to Philip Reed, chairman

of General Electric in the 1950s. Reed hoped his employees would donate to his alma mater.

Today, as corporate philanthropy grows, matching-gift programs are on the increase too. Companies find that these programs improve their relationships with their own employees because they provide workers with a way to participate in humanitarian causes. And because employees initiate the donations, they may prompt a company to expand the scope of its charitable giving.

Programs vary from company to company. Some businesses will match gifts to any nonprofit, while others focus on specific initiatives, like world hunger.

To find out if your employer has a matching-gift program, and what the guidelines are, start at [heifer.org/](http://heifer.org/)

*employermatch*, a detailed listing of the companies that have matching-gift programs. You can also check with your human resources department or your company's employee website. Your employer will furnish the form that you will need to fill out for the matching gift. Many employers also match gifts made by their retirees.

"This is a great way to double or even triple the effect of your charitable giving," says Cynthia Hester, Heifer's director of corporate relations. "Matching gift programs can make a real difference in Heifer's mission to end hunger and care for the earth."

## Find Your Match



**Join with your employer**  
and multiply your charitable contributions

With an employer matching-gift program, your donation to Heifer can double or even triple. Find your match today—see if your employer is listed at [heifer.org/employermatch](http://heifer.org/employermatch) or ask your employer about matching-gift opportunities.



## Looking For a Purpose-driven Career?

Make ending hunger  
your full-time job.

**Great cause**  
**Great benefits**  
**Great place to work**

See what Heifer International  
has to offer you.



[www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org)



# How We Work

From time to time, a reader asks a question about Heifer's work that may interest a general audience. A story in the May/June *World Ark* about a project in Guatemala where Heifer is providing California red worms to coffee farmers provoked several such questions.

In this project, the worms turn partially decomposed coffee pulp into fertilizer and act as a food source for chickens that were also given to the farmers. One reader wondered whether the introduction of worms not native to Guatemala would damage the local ecosystem.

The following reply was drafted by **Jim Hoey**, Heifer's director of environmental strategies, and **Dr. Terry Wollen**, Heifer's director of animal well-being.

Composting worms yield multiple benefits to Heifer families. **Jonathan Guzman**, director of Heifer's Guatemala program, notes that California red worms have actually been around Central America for many years and have been promoted by many humanitarian organizations, Guatemala's Agriculture Ministry, large to medium coffee growers and now small coffee growers as well.

To Heifer's knowledge, they have not been shown to cause ecological damage. This particular variety of worm multiplies faster than other local varieties and has



Organic mulch is used to fertilize coffee shrubs.



California red worms generate a larger volume of casings than the smaller native worms shown here lying on the ground.

become a normal management component for many farm families.

Worm beds yield humus to be added to the soil of gardens and other crops. The worm compost can be sold in the local market for about 12 cents per pound. The worms themselves provide an inexpensive and rich nutrition source for poultry.

The reader also asked how Heifer prevents inbreeding of livestock, since gift animals are typically pregnant females. Hoey and Wollen reply:

Normally, one male is placed for every five to 15 females depending on the proximity of the farms as well as the age and appropriate breed of the cows. In some cases, native bulls may be plentiful in an area, and in other situations artificial insemination services are supported by the project. In all cases, the adaptability of the animal to local conditions and the usefulness of the offspring to the family are key factors for selection.

This is the case with all species of animals in Heifer projects. Proper selection of males is just as important as selection of the breeding females, and proper reproductive management in male-to-female ratio, age of the animal and other factors are critical to ensuring that participants are able to "Pass on the Gift" and provide for the sustainability of the project.



## Sign Up and Learn

Interested in monthly updates on Heifer's work? Then sign up for Heifer International's **e-mail newsletter**.

Sent directly to your inbox, the newsletter keeps you informed about the issues that mean the most to you—including sustainability, peace, gender equity and more. You'll receive updates on events, Study Tours, conferences and other opportunities to learn and do more about ending hunger.

To sign up, just go to [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org).

## Visiting Family



As many supporters know, Heifer International was founded by Indiana farmer Dan West. West's son **Philip** visited Heifer's headquarters in Little Rock recently.

West shared some observations about Heifer's growth, changes in the organization and what his father might have thought about the little nonprofit he started 60 years ago.

West, Mansfield Professor of Modern Asian Affairs at the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center at the University of Montana, was in Arkansas to teach at Heifer University at Heifer Ranch in Perryville.

West acknowledged that he was surprised, "pleasantly surprised," to see that his father's vision had "blossomed into such an impressive organization."

"Dad was a dreamer," West said. "Dreaming and farming are not often compatible."

"I think the most gratifying thing is to see that the vision that Father had is still there," he said. "It makes me proud to have the last name West."

At 19, Philip West was a "seagoing cowboy," helping deliver heifers to Japan. West, who received his bachelor's degree from Manchester College in 1960, spent a year of study at the International Christian University in Tokyo in 1958 after delivering the heifers to Japanese farmers in Hokkaido. In 1961, West did two years of alternative service, as a conscientious objector, in Warsaw, where "the peace dimension of Heifer was put into practice."

"At the height of the Cold War, I decided to go into Chinese studies," he said. West obtained his master's and doctoral degrees from Harvard University. His doctorate is in modern Chinese history and East Asian languages.

One unique and marketable feature of Heifer is "the very name." Echoing his father, West said, "Cows don't care about race, creed or politics." Heifer's strength is its volunteer base, the people-to-people exchange and the powerful principle of "Passing on the Gift."

"It's an organization that has imbedded within it the ability to let recipients keep their dignity."

## Our Staff Maria Cruz Gomez



LOS ANGELES, Guatemala—The young Mayan couple in the mountainous Ixil region of Guatemala was saddened and puzzled when two of their Heifer-supplied rabbits sickened and died.

After inspecting the couple's rabbit hutches, Heifer field technician **Maria Cruz Gomez** explained that the rabbits had contracted a fatal disease.

Gently and respectfully, Gomez noted that the couple had missed the training sessions where other community members had learned how to avoid the disease. The couple promised to attend training more faithfully in the future.

"When a family doesn't participate, it is helpful for them to receive visits like this and for them to see how others in the community are succeeding," Gomez said later as she walked in the rain through the sprawling village to visit other Heifer families. "It raises their enthusiasm and makes them want to participate more."

The successes of Heifer participants are well known. But progress on the road to self-reliance isn't easy. That's when field technicians like Gomez step in with advice and encouragement.

"Maria is very well respected among the people in her area," said Guatemala country program director Jonathan Guzman.

Born in the mountain town of Cotzal, Gomez attended junior high school on scholarship in the nearby town of Huehuetenango and high school in Guatemala City, the national capital.

Instead of remaining in the teeming city, however, Gomez returned to the Cuchumatanes Mountains to help indigenous Mayan communities.

"I like to make progress, and I like to work for my people," Gomez said shyly. "There are a lot of people who want to start projects, but they don't know how. I can help, and that is what is pushing me."

In many ways, Heifer's methods of sustainable development fit perfectly with traditional culture in the mountains, she said. "We have always worked with nature, and people like the animals. And we like to work hard."

# This Land Is Your Land

SUPPORTING HEIFER FOUNDATION'S SOUTHEAST ENDOWMENT

By Greg Spradlin

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, HEIFER FOUNDATION

For as long as people have inhabited the rural Deep South, society has been predominantly agricultural. There is no Silicon Valley in southern Alabama, nor is there a major financial center in the Florida panhandle. But there is a lot of fertile farmland, which is in danger of being gobbled up by multinational farming corporations to produce food or food by-products that will be shipped thousands of miles for processing and distribution.

In the past, most rural communities in the South had jobs to offer. When the nation's economy was based more upon manufacturing, factories employed many people within close driving distance of their small towns and farms. Now, with so many manufacturing jobs going overseas, these

factories are closing at an alarming rate. Many have been closed for some time, creating poverty and dependence on public assistance in places where there are no jobs to be had. Yet people live in those places. Most have been there for generations and lack the education or skills necessary to move in search of opportunities.

"This land is your land. This land is my land. This land was made for you and me"—so goes the famous Woody Guthrie song. In many rural towns, small plots are all the residents have left, and in some cases, they no longer have even that. If we are to secure a stable food source, we must reconnect people with the land in meaningful ways.

That is what Heifer's North America Program is doing in the rural southeastern United States. By introducing (and in some cases re-introducing) small-scale farming to families who have limited resources, Heifer is developing projects much like those it has successfully implemented around the world for 60 years. Heifer is helping to increase project partners' incomes and improve their diets while supporting programs that develop social and civic interest in communities.

Greene County citizens in southern Alabama live in one of the state's poorest regions. Willie Busby grew up on a farm in the area and, after a stint in an Ohio factory, returned in 1970 and bought seven acres. "If I hadn't bought the land when I did, I wouldn't have any," Busby said. Now all the available land in the county is sold and traded in 500-acre parcels among paper companies and major farming corporations.

In the late 1980s, Busby joined a farmers self-help



Photo by Robyn Friday

Young people in Greene County in Alabama so enjoyed growing their own melons that they soon expanded into cultivating vegetables.

James Quinney (right, foreground) and Willie Busby with rabbits.

Latisha Wilson (facing page) with cabbage from the garden.







group that was working with Heifer and received a gift of livestock. He stayed with the group after passing on his animal's offspring and became a vital resource by conveying his deep knowledge of farming to other members.

When Busby first returned to the South with his family, he noticed there were a lot more children from single-parent homes than when he had left. While teaching his own children how to work a small farm, he began teaching their friends who came to help.

Soon the Greene County group was looking for a way to help children avoid mischief during the dull summer months. Busby knew the difference that could be made in young people's lives by giving them responsibility and teaching them to grow their own vegetables.

He asked the first children who volunteered what kind of produce they liked. Some liked vegetables, but most were more interested in the sweeter fruits, like cantaloupe and watermelon. He helped the children to grow whatever they wanted, while also growing other vegetables for them to sample. They were so impressed with having grown their own food that they expanded their crops to include a variety of fruits and vegetables.

After attending a Heifer conference, Busby learned how to start a farmers market. Soon the children were selling their surplus produce for a profit. The group's farmers market is now so popular that it has expanded to two days a week.

Willie Busby and the Greene County Heifer group have made themselves invaluable to a community where locally grown produce—like economic opportunity—is scarce. They are so successful that area supermarkets have asked about buying their fresh produce.

This is just one of many groups Heifer is working with in the southeastern United States. By contributing to the Southeast Endowment at Heifer Foundation, you can provide a deep well of lasting support to a program that will help generations of farmers who may soon be the only resource for locally grown produce. 🌱

(Please complete and return this reply form.)

## Dear Friends at Heifer Foundation:

- ☐ Please send me more information on endowments.
- ☐ Please accept my gift to the \$100 Million Club.
- ☐ I have already provided for Heifer in my will.
- ☐ Please send me a complimentary will kit.
- ☐ Please accept my gift to the Southeast Endowment.

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\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**www.heiferfoundation.org**  
**(888) 422-1161**



Mail this form to:  
**Heifer Foundation**  
**P.O. Box 727**  
**Little Rock, Arkansas 72203**



## Where Trees Grow

By Hope Coulter

Hope Coulter is director of the Arkansas Hunger Coalition and an adjunct instructor of writing at Hendrix College.

**M**y 7-year-old was refusing to wear sunscreen, so I explained why he needs it. The earth is surrounded by a protective atmosphere, including a layer of ozone, I told him. With grownups driving so many cars and cutting so many trees, the ozone layer is thinning, and bad rays from the sun are getting in. These bad rays can make you have skin cancer when you're older, but sunscreen helps to block them.

After a minute he looked at me skeptically and said, "Is this a fib?"

I wish it were. I wish the world we're passing on were better in every way: cradled more thickly in ozone, less polluted, less war-torn, more leafy, more just.

My children are among the lucky. They have clean water, comfortable homes and medical care, caring teachers and parents. They have ample food, clothes and activities. But because of the grossly unbalanced economies of the planet, these lucky are the few. Many American children go home to bare cupboards, are not tucked in at night and have never seen the dentist. In troubled areas around the world conditions are even worse: genocide and AIDS have orphaned entire generations, bullets and land mines endanger children's play, and food and clean water are scarce.

The widening gap between rich and poor is not a passive emptiness. It has a destructive power. What we do every day either contributes to the forces that are driving us apart or else helps draw us together. We can withdraw further into private enclaves of wealth and privilege in an attempt to shut out pain and trouble; or we can let down our guard, open ourselves and help our children engage with the realities around them. The first route, while it might shield a few, will further degrade and destabilize the planet. The other course may take us temporarily out of our comfort zones, but

it leads in the long run to a more secure, harmonious world.

Almost all of us have children in our lives—if not our own offspring, then nieces and nephews, friends' kids and strangers', who notice the choices we make. Do we react to other people out of prejudice and fear, or project ourselves imaginatively into their circumstances? Do we model consumption or stewardship, immediate gratification or a patience with process? Do we try to notice others' needs, relax our grasp on our own possessions and let go of our sense of entitlement?

In Yeats's poem "A Prayer for My Daughter," the narrator paces around his child's cradle during a raging storm. He pictures the woman he would like her to become, the love and prosperity he wants for her. But the howling winds outside remind him of forces that he knows will work against her happiness—destructive "arrogance and hatred" and their by-products. He wishes intensely that she be like "a spreading laurel tree," "rooted in one dear perpetual place" and able to withstand the "assault and battery of the wind."

Every afternoon, at the school in my neighborhood, a varied group of adults gathers in the shade of a couple of old oaks. We're the caretakers—parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts and sitters. Some are old and heavy and propped on canes; some are lithe and young with babies on the hip. We smile and talk a little, but always our eyes cut back to the school. We're waiting. We visit some more, shift babies' weight, rattle our keys.

Finally the doors open, and children come pouring out—a few trudging slowly, looking around, others running full tilt down the sidewalk with their backpacks flying out behind. Under the trees the grownups move forward. The children are a river of diverse color, streaming laughter and shouts. What kind of world do we hand them?

Monthly Giving Club

# Join Friends of the Ark Today!



Arpillera, 3D textile art from a Peruvian women's coop. Photo courtesy of Crossroad Trade, [www.crossroadtrade.com](http://www.crossroadtrade.com)

Right now, many children and families are hoping for an opportunity to improve their lives and move out of poverty. By joining Friends of the Ark, Heifer's monthly giving program, friends like you can help them realize the dream of self-reliance.

**Call (800) 422-0474**  
to be a Friend of the Ark today!





# Conference on Ending Hunger: Heifer at 60 and Global Symposium: Small Farmers in a Global Economy



October 21-23, 2004 • Little Rock, Arkansas, USA



**Heifer International's Conference on Ending Hunger: Heifer at 60 and Global Symposium: Small Farmers in a Global Economy** are a celebration of the work that has brought hope and self-reliance to millions of families all over the world. Heifer's founder, Dan West, said, "Dream no small dreams," and it is your gifts that have made the difference for the last 60 years.

The conference and symposium include festive events, informative sessions, celebration luncheons and award presentations to honor our worldwide volunteers and project partners. So please join us for a truly educational and inspirational event.

Please turn to page 22 and 23 for more information. Or visit [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org) and click on the 60th Anniversary link.



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