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FALL 2016 || HEIFER.ORG

worldark

HEIFER NEPAL

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FOR THE RECORD

Poverty and Natural Disasters: Why what's an inconvenience for some can be a tragedy for others.

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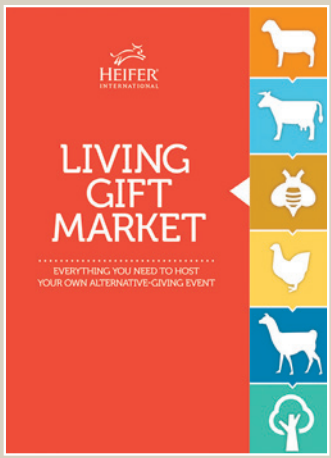
FOR EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON

Bring "love your neighbor" to life year-round with Heifer International faith community programs.

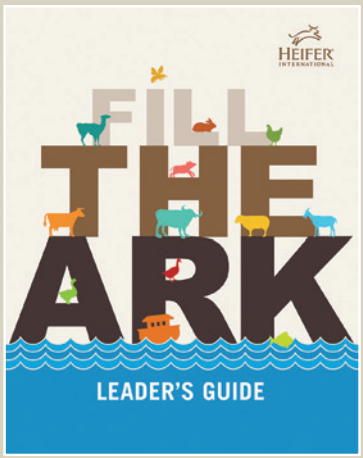
A TIME TO GIVE

These FREE, hands-on resources can help you transform hearts in your own church while helping to end hunger and poverty worldwide.



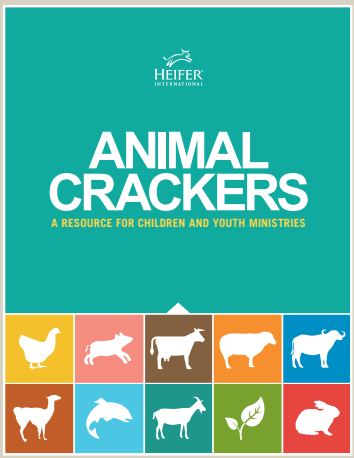
LIVING GIFT MARKET

Host an event that allows your church to purchase "living gifts" like goats, bees and cows through Heifer International that help feed hungry families.



FILL THE ARK

Challenge your congregation to help end hunger when you "Give Up to Give Back" with this daily missions-giving calendar.



ANIMAL CRACKERS

Through simple Sunday School lessons, Animal Crackers is designed to help students feel connected to the global family.

ORDER YOUR FREE RESOURCES NOW AT WWW.HEIFER.ORG/FAITH OR CALL 888.5HUNGER (888.548.6437)

Dear Fellow Activists,

Imagine what life would be like if, no matter how hard you worked, you never earned enough money to consistently pay for nutritious food and clean water. Or, you could buy enough food to eat, but a dignified standard of living remained just out of reach. And what about planning and saving for the future?

PHOTO BY RUSSELL POWELL

On the surface, money seems like the one thing standing in the way of achieving these goals. If everyone simply had the money to buy what they needed, we would all be set, right?

The trouble is, as parents have told children for generations, money doesn't grow on trees. Without substantial wealth, it takes *income* to meet our needs. And to meet more than the most basic needs, to have any hope of achieving one's full potential, a *living income* is needed. **In the communities where we work, the solution isn't that people need to work harder—they need resources and training to increase the productivity of their efforts.** More importantly, they need conditions favorable to achieving a living income, and that requires systemic change.

At Heifer, we set living income as our out-of-poverty threshold. By 2020, we will help 4 million families achieve this goal. To do this, we are enhancing our programs. We continue to give farmers livestock, training and access to markets. But we are now doing so in a way that will help them close the gap between the income they currently earn and the income they need to thrive. We are creating conditions favorable to living incomes.

As hotter, drier weather makes farming harder in Nicaragua, for example, we are training farmers like Paulina Martinez to incorporate bees into their farms. Not only can bees increase crop yields, but honey is increasingly popular in the region and can become a reliable source of income.

Because economies differ from country to country, we cannot simply apply an arbitrary income for all of our programs. Instead, we are defining what makes up a dignified standard of living.

I am excited to see the enormous progress we will help our families achieve, and I am grateful for your support, both past and future.

Yours for a better world,

Pierre U. Ferrari

MATCHING ISN'T ALWAYS EMBARRASSING

MORE THAN 16,000 COMPANIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY MATCH EMPLOYEES' DONATIONS TO HEIFER INTERNATIONAL, DOUBLING THE IMPACT OF YOUR GIFT.

To find out if your company matches Heifer gifts, just log on to **www.heifer.org/WAmatching** and type in your company's name. If you find your employer, just follow the instructions, and your contribution to end hunger and poverty will have double the impact. Or, call **888.5HUNGER (888.548.6437)**.

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features

COVER

Ganga Thapa tends to her water buffalo at her temporary home in Jiling Village, Nepal. Thapa was displaced by the April 2015 earthquake.

Top photo: The fourth-grade class at the Jana Shakti school in Tupche Village, Nepal, study in a makeshift classroom after their building was destroyed in the April 2015 earthquake. Cover photo and top photo by Geoff Oliver Bugbee

14 Wendell Berry's Reading List
A recent college grad pines for a life on the farm and a connection with the land, and farmer/author Wendell Berry shows him the way.

22 Back on Solid Ground
Destructive and deadly earthquakes roiled Nepal in 2015. Recovery is ongoing, but Heifer project participants there are determined and resilient.

34 High and Dry in Nicaragua
The farmers in one section of Nicaragua have no choice but to adapt to drier, hotter conditions. Heifer is helping make their lives a bit sweeter with drought-tolerant seeds, heartier coffee plants and honey projects.

LESS IS MORE

What a wonderful world we'd have if only humanity could embrace the compassion that St. Francis of Assisi showed when he referred to the worms that soften our earth as our brothers and sisters! Besides prompting us to forsake our meat-eating habits, such benevolence would surely reduce our propensity for cruelty against all species with whom we share the Earth.

Consider the many maladies that are linked to our excessive consumption of meat: obesity, several types of cancer and heart disease, to name only three.

In Mexico, where I lived during my childhood, meat was a luxury which my family only sampled at Christmas and on birthdays. Nevertheless, we stayed in good health on a diet of beans, tortillas, pasta and fresh fruit.

DAVID QUINTERO
Monrovia, Calif.

NOT A FAN

I love your work and have encouraged my middle school students to help me donate in the past. We have sent money to donate to Cambodia and Vietnam and purchased two sets of ducks. The kids live in a very rural area; they understand the value of livestock since so many of them have their own cows, chickens, sheep and pigs. Heifer is a great organization.

That said, the recent article in your magazine with Chelsea Clinton is laughable. The idea that Chelsea knows or cares about the environment, women's rights or poverty in underdeveloped countries is so obviously negated by her behavior and lack of giving or caring when the cameras aren't on or she doesn't have a book to sell.

Heifer doesn't need false platitudes by the super-rich who don't give unless it benefits them. Please don't link your amazing endeavors to help so many with a faker like Chelsea Clinton.

REBECCA MCCOLLUM
Waynesburg, Penn.

GET IT TOGETHER

I was disheartened by the typos in the Summer 2016 issue of *World Ark* (pp.44-45) where Madhubani was misspelled. Either your typesetter or your copy editor wasn't paying attention to the story (the spelling was correct in the first paragraph but incorrect elsewhere in the story), or there was a serious lapse in quality control.

Madhubani is an important place culturally for India. I'm glad Heifer is working there. I just wish the article had been consistent—and right.

MICHAEL KORFF
U.S. Foreign Service, Ret.
Arlington, Va.

Editor's note: We regret the error, and thank Mr. Korff for keeping us on our toes.

Response to the Summer Q&A: *"Restrictive gender roles have long been woven into many cultures. Is it OK to push for gender equity in these places, or should we respect these cultures as they are?"*

I believe that to the extent that there is oppression and discrimination against a racial or religious group, or against women, no culture (including my own) need be respected.

Since people do not willingly oppress themselves, one can assume that if women go along with oppression, they are doing it because they feel they have no choice, because protest will lead to worse consequences, or because they have internalized the idea that they are inferior. In other words, to the extent that a culture oppresses women, the women living in that culture did not create that culture or at least that aspect of it. To the extent that women did not create that culture, the culture is not valid. It is not a reflection of the whole population.

When we "respect" the cultures that discriminate, we are really only respecting half the population.

JENNI SILBERSTEIN
Burbank, Calif.

Q&A FALL

If you could recommend one book to a recent college graduate, what book would it be? Why?

We want to hear from you!

Please send your comments to ***worldark@list.heifer.org****. Include your name, city, and a telephone number or email address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity, and may be published online as well as in print. Because of the volume of mail we receive, we cannot respond to all letters.*

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Since 1944, Heifer has helped 25 million families, directly and indirectly, move toward greater self-reliance through the gift of livestock and training in environmentally sound agriculture.

Heifer International is a member of InterAction, the largest alliance of U.S.-based international development and humanitarian non-governmental organizations, and of Global Impact. Federal and state employees may designate gifts to Heifer through payroll deduction by entering CFC #12079.

POVERTY AND

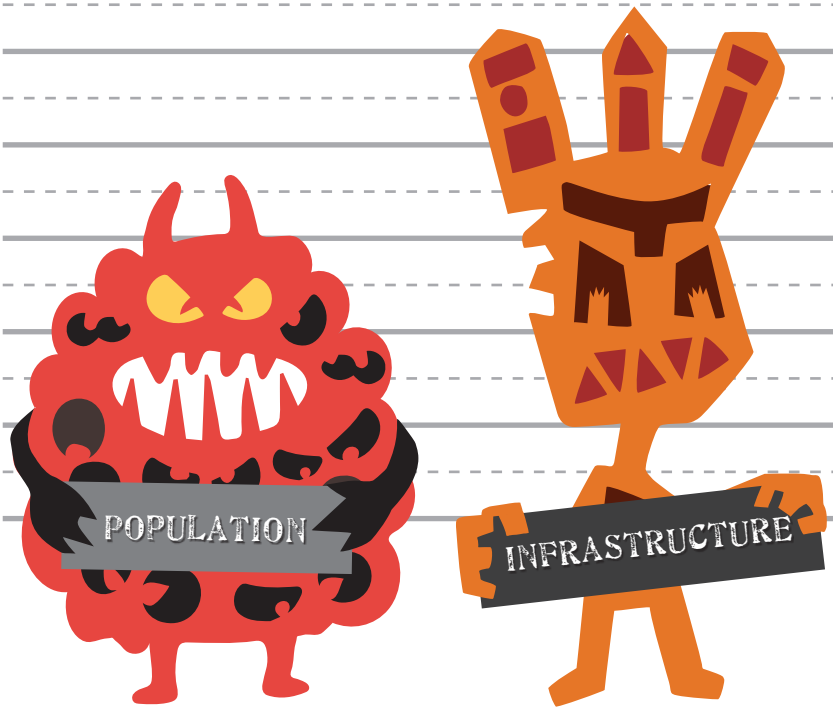
NATURAL DISASTERS DISPROPORTIONALLY AFFECT THE POOR. WHY? HERE ARE A FEW OF THE USUAL SUSPECTS. YOU MAY HAVE HEARD OF THEM.

ONLY 1%
OF ALL DISASTER AID
GOES TO PREVENTION

EVERY DOLLAR SPENT ON PREPARING FOR DISASTERS SAVES AROUND **$7**

90+
PERCENT OF DISASTER FATALITIES OCCUR IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

NATURAL DISASTERS NOW AFFECT MORE THAN
170 MILLION
PEOPLE EVERY YEAR—UP FROM 60 MILLION JUST THREE DECADES AGO



POPULATION

CHARGE: aiding and abetting

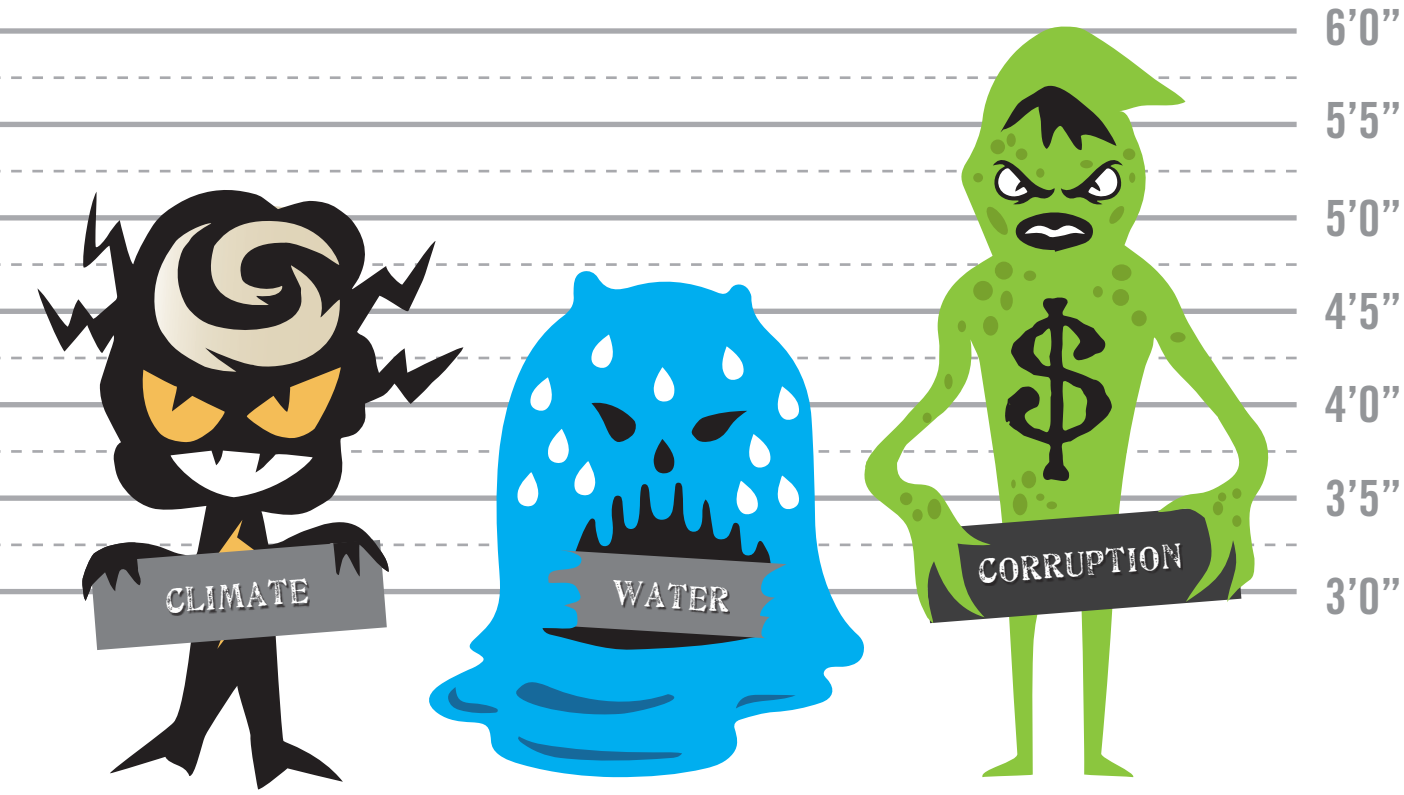
- Disasters hurt and kill more people when they strike crowded areas.
- Some of the least developed countries also have the densest populations.

INFRASTRUCTURE

CHARGE: negligence

- In poor regions, people often lack the resources to buy quality materials and hire skilled builders, so their homes and other buildings are more prone to collapse.
- Compare the 2010 earthquake near Port-au-Prince, Haiti, with the 1989 San Francisco earthquake of the same strength. The cities have roughly the same populations, but the Haiti quake killed 200,000 people, while only 63 died in San Francisco.

NATURAL DISASTERS



CLIMATE

CHARGE: theft, aiding and abetting

- Unpredictable weather patterns create food insecurity, which limits people's capacity to bounce back after disasters.
- Environmental degradation linked to climate change puts poor people at greater risk. For example, deforestation results in more landslides and flooding after earthquakes or hurricanes.

WATER

CHARGE: manslaughter

- Dirty water and lack of sanitation, conditions common in poorer areas after disasters, allow disease to spread.

CORRUPTION

CHARGE: bribery, extortion

- Poor and marginalized populations are often excluded from decisions about disaster policy, so their interests are often overlooked.
- Even when strong policies and building codes are in place, governments plagued with corruption struggle to enforce those policies and codes.

Heifer International helps project participants prepare for natural disasters with trainings in how to secure livestock, feed, water and firewood. Participants also learn how to harvest crops for food, identify evacuation centers and safeguard important papers, education materials and cash.

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Growing Garlic

By Elizabeth Joseph,
garden and education
coordinator at Heifer Farm

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY ELIZABETH JOSEPH

July 2009 – I am 23 years old and a garden apprentice at Heifer Farm in Rutland, Massachusetts. The day camp kids are helping us harvest garlic—giggling as they get their hands dirty and thrilled each time a bulb surfaces from below the ground. The garden crew and I are over the moon to have help harvesting the 6,000 bulbs growing in long, straight rows before us. One of our youngest campers tugs on a bulb, pulls it from the earth and shows it off, long leaves dangling above his head. "This garlic has tentacles, like an octopus!" he exclaims.

Seven seasons later, we're still planting a variety of garlic that's been cultivated here at Heifer Farm for more than two decades, and the day campers still help us at harvest time. It's a favorite vegetable (herb, condiment, aromatic, whatever you want to call it!) here in our kitchen because of how much flavor it imparts to each dish.

Garlic (*Allium sativium*) is native to central Asia and is adaptable to many climates and growing conditions. It is a member of the *Allium* family—alongside onions, shallots, leeks, scallions and chives—crops that are known for their flavor, aroma and medicinal properties, not to mention magical lore. Vampire repellant, anyone?

Garlic is a bulb with several smaller bulbs, or cloves, contained inside a protective wrapper. These cloves are genetic clones of their parents, and act as seeds come planting time, which, like for many bulbs, is in the fall about four to six weeks before the ground freezes. During the weeks after planting, garlic begins root growth before going through a period of rest in the cooler months. Come springtime, the leaves emerge above ground

GARLIC TYPES

Softneck varieties generally store better and have more cloves per bulb. The cloves form in a swirl reminiscent of an artichoke.

Hardneck varieties have a woody central stalk and produce an edible curled flower stalk called a scape.

Elephant garlic is not garlic at all, but a leek!

and continue growing until harvest time in late summer.

At Heifer Farm, we plant garlic the first week in November in beds that are three feet wide with four rows in the bed. Cloves are planted pointy side facing up at 2-inch depth and 6-inch spacing. Our saved seed variety is dubbed Overlook Red because of its purple hues. (Heifer Farm used to be called Overlook Farm.) We mulch over the garlic beds with straw or hay to prevent frost or freeze damage.

After harvest, our sugar house where we make maple syrup in the winter is converted to a drying shed, and the bulbs are cured for a few weeks. Then we sort for quality, putting the best heads aside for seed stock. We trim the stalk and roots and pack the heads into crates in the root cellar. We also preserve some of the garlic by dehydrating it into garlic powder and making infused oils and vinegars, all of which gets used in our farm-to-table soups, stir fries, salads, slaws and other savory sensations!

In addition to adding incredible flavor to dishes, garlic is prized for its healing qualities and as preventative medicine. Garlic is said to lower cholesterol, reduce hypertension and shorten or prevent the common cold. Proponents of garlic's medicinal merit say to crush, chop or chew the clove to release the sulfur compound allicin to achieve best results. You can also buy garlic in capsule form if you're worried about its odiferous qualities, but after making an aioli of roasted garlic, parsley and parmesan cheese and spreading it over a hearty, crusty bread, I suspect any and all misgivings will vanish!

Speaking of vanishing... goodbye, vampires! Hello, flavor and health!

GARLIC (GA)LORE

The builders of the Great Pyramids ate lots of garlic, believing that it would give them strength and endurance.

A well-known vampire repellant, garlic is mentioned 21 times in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

The brides of ancient Greece carried bouquets of herbs and garlic.

PHOTO BY AUSTIN BAILEY

Heifer Ranch's Roasted Green Beans with Garlic

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds fresh green beans, cleaned and trimmed
- 2-4 cloves chopped garlic
- Olive oil for drizzling
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper

PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Combine green beans and garlic and drizzle with oil. Massage until all beans are coated. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place in single layer on sheet pan and cook 15 to 20 minutes, stirring once. Cook until beans are shriveled and tender.

NOTES

Brussel sprouts, broccoli, cauliflower, squash, carrots, potatoes and asparagus can be substituted.

Food For Thought

Interview by Ariel Bleth, *World Ark* contributor

Author Frances Moore Lappé burst onto the scene 45 years ago with the debut of her now-classic book, *Diet for a Small Planet*. As a prolific author and thought leader, Lappé champions the argument that hunger is caused not by lack of food, but by the inability of poor people to access it. Her decades of work as a writer and advocate explore the causes and solutions to poverty, powerlessness and environmental degradation. She co-directs the Small Planet Institute with her daughter and fellow author, Anna Lappé.

WORLD ARK: You've said, "Hunger is not caused by a scarcity of food but by a scarcity of democracy." What do you mean by this?

FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ: By democracy I'm clearly talking about much more than the very thin, skeletal idea that democracy is elections plus the market. Democracy is really about voice, power and having a say in the creation of our own realities. The concept of democracy is everyone having an equal voice in creating the conditions for all of us to thrive. The scarcity and lack that is real in our world today is a lack of what I call living democracy. I add "living" in front of democracy for a number of reasons. One, for me, it connotes not just a way of government but a way of living, what we do every day. Two, it is also a set of values that infuses classrooms, family, businesses, economies, all dimensions of life.

What are the primary qualities of a living democracy?

Fairness, transparency, inclusion so all of us have voice, the dispersion of power and a culture of mutual responsibility: these are the characteristics that make a society thrive and to me are the heart of a living democracy. I also think of living democracy as something that is ever-evolving. It is like a living organism. There is no end-point that, when fixed, it is finished once and for all. Human beings are creatures always learning and evolving. I love to quote the first African-American judge of this country, William Hastie: "Democracy is not being, it is becoming. It is easily lost but never finally won. Its essence is eternal struggle." I used to resist this last phrase because I thought it would turn people off. But it is the good fight, the good struggle. Human beings thrive on having meaning and working for something that is challenging. Evolving democracy is just that. It requires the best of us to show up and call forth the best in ourselves and others. My life has become very much about shining the light on examples of emerging living democracies. Humans can't leave behind a failing system and walk into a void; we need to have a vision of where we are going, especially as human

PHOTO PROVIDED BY FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ

During a visit to India, Lappé visits with a women's group that embraces the concept of living democracy.

beings are social mimics, and we take our cues from other people.

What stands in the way of this?

While scarcity can be a lack of the physical resources that we need to thrive, such as food, water and energy, it can also be a presumption of the scarcity of goodness in human beings. Unfortunately, our media largely offers the most frightening and horrifying news, reinforcing this sense of lack of goodness in us. As you know, there are many fewer stories about our nobility, humanity, and our natural desires to help, to share and be compassionate, than there are about our brutal side. So the fundamental block to living democracy is this false presumption of lack that is built in to the scarcity mind—lack of goods and goodness which leaves people feeling frightened, competitive and in an ongoing, endless struggle over lack. This feeling of "we've got to get ours" is like a giant game of musical chairs where there is never going to be enough chairs for everyone, or monopoly where we know that someone is going to end up with all the pieces and we better compete, compete, compete. So it is a very frightening way to think about life and deeply embedded in our culture, and that is what we need to break through.

Ecology, more deeply understood, is the breakthrough. A primal fear for human beings is that there isn't going to be enough food. Agricultural ecology shows us that if we realign

with the laws of nature, there is more than enough for all of us and that we can, indeed, let go of that fear. I believe we are creatures of the mind and see the world through filters based on who we are, not on how the world really is. This is the theme of my new book, *EcoMind*. We can change those scarcity filters and become aware of how they are blinding us to solutions. I call it growing up as a species.

You talk a lot about the importance of challenging predominant assumptions and premises of who we are and how the world works. Why should we do that?
New breakthroughs in neuroscience and the science of ecology validate the idea that once we understand the laws of nature, including human nature, we know the solutions. We can create rules that bring out the best in us and keep the cruel part of us under wraps, and we know what those rules are. It is a freeing way of looking at life. I love to quote Albert Einstein, who says, "It is theory which decides what we can observe." Or Aldus Huxley, who wrote *Brave New World*, said, "All that we are and will and do depends, in the last analysis, on what we see the nature of things to be." So it is these core ideas about the nature of life that determine what shows up. Even in my recent adult lifetime, we've come to this understanding and have seen the way that thoughts change our bodies. Recent studies of meditators show that our thoughts actually create channels that either keep reinforcing us into neurosis or into calm, depending on what thoughts we entertain. The term that scientists use is neuroplasticity: our thoughts can actually change our brains. I find that incredibly encouraging and frightening as so many of the images we receive reinforce the scarcity scare. But the idea that we can actually take charge of the development of our own brains is pretty amazing.

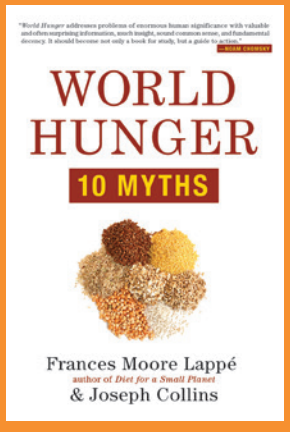
Instead of "more for me and less for you," you believe that growth in one person's power can enhance the power of others. Can you share an example of this idea in action?
Recently I was in Andhra Pradesh in southern India, a region that had been considered the pesticide capital of the world. I visited a group of women who told me how, 20 years earlier, they lived in absolute terror, depression, hunger and humiliation. They used the word "dark" a lot. They were brutalized by their husbands and mistreated by the landlords. In only 20 years, they have gone from that condition to absolute food security and pride and joy in their lives. The living democracy piece that was key for them is this: the women came together in groups, called *sangams*, which met once a week in their homes. Together they made decisions and planned how to develop the fields. The soil, which when I walked on it I wouldn't have thought anything could have grown there, gave yield to the whole mix of crops they need for a healthy diet—their protein crops, the lentils, the oil seeds, the greens and the grains, such as millet. In their communal gardens they also grow medicinal crops, and they have their own radio station where they share information on hygiene and agricultural practices. So it is an embodiment of every element I have talked about and the process of aligning with our nature, which desires power and voice. Power that is transparent and shared, in which we are empowering each other rather than a single person elected to do for us. It is the group working together and dividing up the labor. In terms of empowerment, whenever a man in the village mistreats a woman, the whole group of village women now confronts him and demands that he change his ways. So there is a profound shift of power in the village. When I asked about the men, the women said the men are now very supportive because they see the success of this approach. They are living better, they work together with the women and also have their own marketing cooperative and own processing equipment so they don't have to do so much hand processing. They are sharing what they are learning with other villages as well—they have a caravan that went to about 90 other villages

last winter to teach how to save and share seeds.

How might any individual human being best positively impact the whole?
My emphasis is on courage and believing that humans are soft-wired for cooperation, for empathy, for a sense of fairness, which there is more and more evidence of. But we do have an extremely hard time speaking out, of breaking with our group. The rap on us is that we are individualistic and that this is our problem. I think that, really, our challenge is that we are so social and so embedded in a group. We evolved knowing that separation from the tribe meant death. So breaking with the pack, risking disapproval from people close to us, is a hard thing to do. So that is what we need to work on. The way I think of it is that the whole tribe is heading over the cliff, so separating from the pack, at this moment of the history of our species, means life, not death. My advice to myself, because I struggle a great deal with fear, is to recognize that fear can be just energy and not a verdict that we are wrong. It can be energy telling us that we are on our cutting edge of where we should be for our own, and the Earth's, happiness.

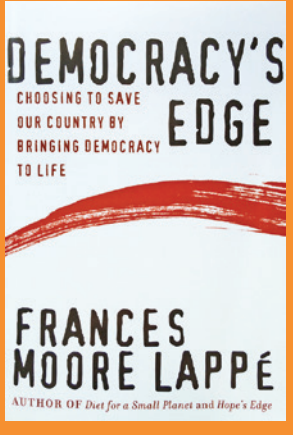
In *Hope's Edge*, which I wrote with my daughter, Anna, we describe a life-changing moment for both of us when we met a Kenyan minister who had been told that if he continued to preach with any message critical of the government, he would be killed. Despite this, he proceeded in his usual way the following Sunday. That night, assailants came to his home to kill him. As he thought he was dying, he began to give away to his assailants all of his treasures. I interrupted and said, "Fear is instinctive. I don't understand, you are telling me that while someone was trying to kill you, you were able to be generous to them?" He said, "Fear is inside us, it is not out there in them. We can take that fear energy and do with it whatever we want. We can harmonize it and turn it into anything we want. We can use it for love. It is just energy." As a result, his assailants realized he was a good man and took him to the hospital to save his life. Fear is just energy that can be used any way we choose. ■

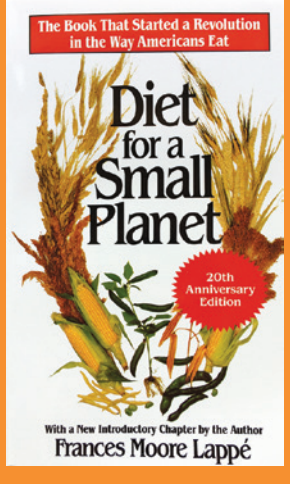
NOTABLE BOOKS BY FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ



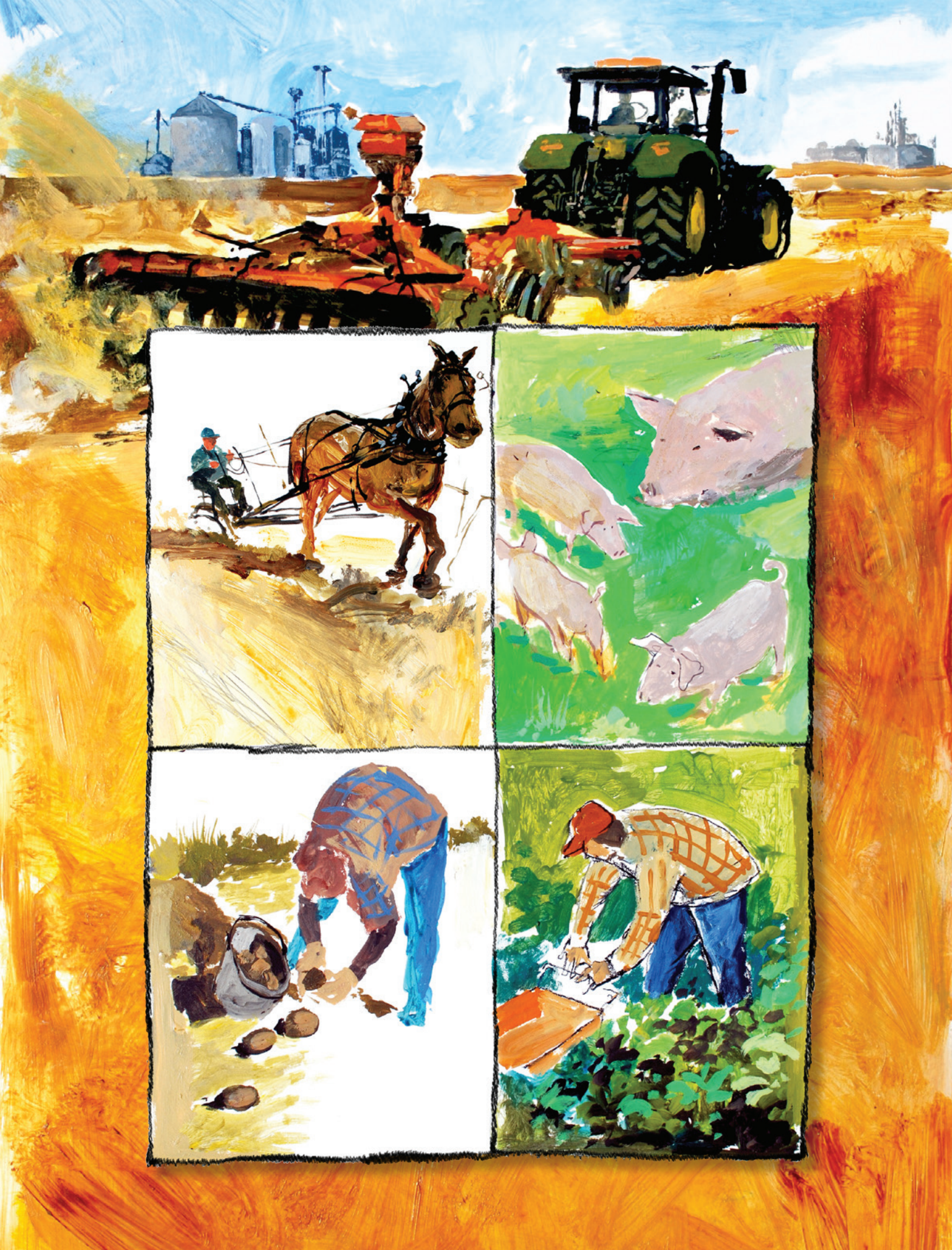
***World Hunger: 10 Myths* With Joseph Collins**
A rewrite of the 1977 *World Hunger: Twelve Myths*, this book explores why so many go hungry even as the world produces an abundance of food.

Democracy's Edge: Choosing to Save Our Country By Bringing Democracy to Life
This book is both a guide and a rallying cry that aims to bring more people into the democratic process.





Diet for a Small Planet
Still popular today, this 1971 bestseller includes vegetarian recipes and an exploration of the ways food policy contributes to world hunger.



Wendell Berry's Reading List

A starry-eyed fledgeling farmer seeks direction from the elusive guru of sustainable agriculture.

By **Ragan Sutterfield**, *World Ark* contributor

Illustrations by **Michael Paraskevas**

I needed guidance. It was just after college, and I was living on the North Side of Chicago, working at a university library and trying to decide what to do with my life. With a philosophy degree in hand, my only prospects for employment were five more years of schooling away. Tired of classrooms, I longed to do something more active, something tangible. The idea that kept coming was a farm—a place I could grow good food and take care of the land.

The local food movement was just beginning to pick up. A small organic grocery store in my neighborhood was selling locally grown produce through a CSA (community-supported agriculture) program. A few blocks away I had a plot in a haphazard community garden on the empty lot of a friendly landlord. Having grown up in rural places, I had a taste for quiet, open spaces and long drives in the country. But calling me to the fields most loudly were books. I'd been reading Wendell Berry.

Talk to any group of young farmers, farm interns, kids with liberal arts degrees who are choosing to grow kale over 401(k)s, and the common denominator is likely to be Berry. He offers more than sharp cultural criticism, compelling novels and beautiful poetry; Berry makes readers want to change their lives. For many this is done by eating differently, following Berry's insight that "eating ... is inescapably an agricultural act." His writing inspired the local food movement as people began to understand that the health of the environment depends on our decisions at mealtime.

I needed guidance, and so I wrote to the one man I felt could give it: Wendell Berry. Within a few weeks of sending my letter a response came in the mail, adorned with an Andy Warhol stamp and a postmark from Port Royal, Kentucky.

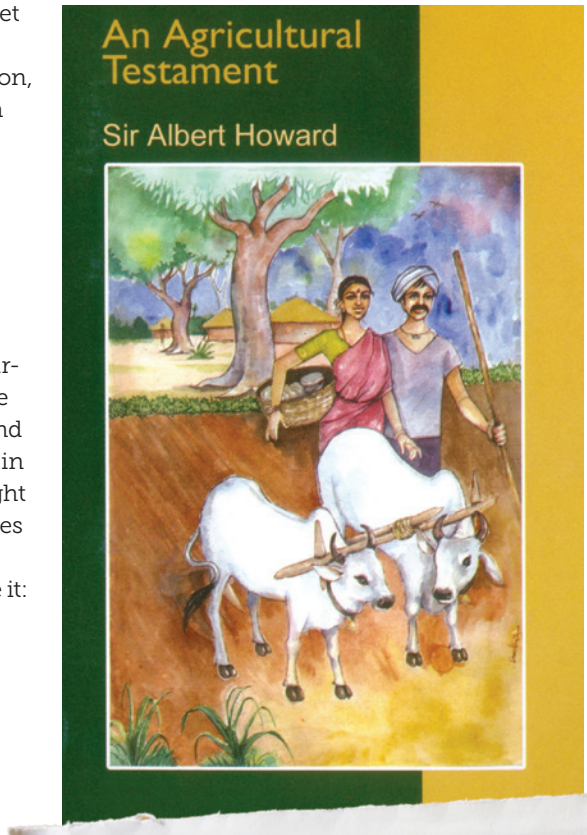
For some, Berry is a religious figure. I once met a woman in a coffee shop who told me that Berry's poem "The Wild Geese" was her religion, its closing lines offering a call to be present in our places:

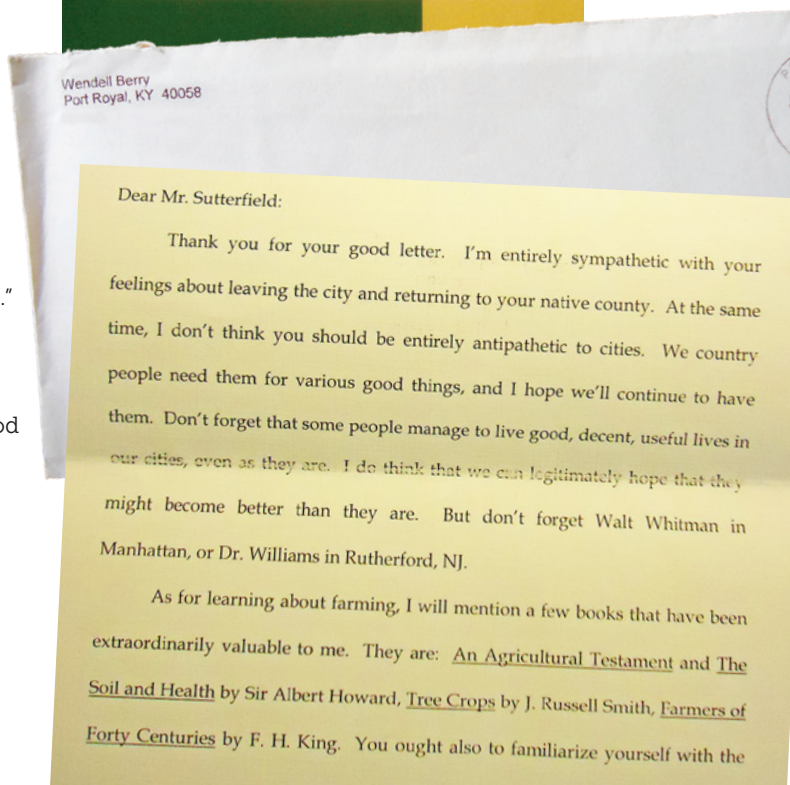
…we pray, not
for new earth or heaven, but to be
quiet in heart, and in eye
clear. What we need is here.

And then there are those who, like my 22-year-old self, are drawn to radical responses. Those who consider a return to the land to farm it and care for it with all the virtues Berry works out in his writing. But how to begin, was this the right choice, and most importantly for one who lives by books—what to read? I needed guidance, and so I wrote to the one man I felt could give it: Wendell Berry.

Within a few weeks of sending my letter a response came in the mail, adorned with an Andy Warhol stamp and a postmark from Port Royal, Kentucky. "Thank you for your good letter," it began. "I'm entirely sympathetic with your feelings about leaving the city and returning to your native county." He went on to offer some perspective on city life, a caution that "people manage to live good, decent, useful lives in our cities" and not to forget such good examples as "Walt Whitman in Manhattan, or Dr. Williams in Rutherford, NJ."

The letter then set out a curriculum, if I should pursue it, to learn about farming. Warning that "books are no substitute for good teachers and experience," Berry offered "a few books that have been extraordinarily valuable" to him. Central on the list were *An Agricultural Testament* by Sir Albert Howard, *Farmers of Forty Centuries* by F.H. King, and *Tree Crops* by J. Russell Smith.




Wendell Berry
Port Royal, KY 40058

Dear Mr. Sutterfield:

Thank you for your good letter. I'm entirely sympathetic with your feelings about leaving the city and returning to your native county. At the same time, I don't think you should be entirely antipathetic to cities. We country people need them for various good things, and I hope we'll continue to have them. Don't forget that some people manage to live good, decent, useful lives in our cities, even as they are. I do think that we can legitimately hope that they might become better than they are. But don't forget Walt Whitman in Manhattan, or Dr. Williams in Rutherford, NJ.

As for learning about farming, I will mention a few books that have been extraordinarily valuable to me. They are: An Agricultural Testament and The Soil and Health by Sir Albert Howard, Tree Crops by J. Russell Smith, Farmers of Forty Centuries by F. H. King. You ought also to familiarize yourself with the

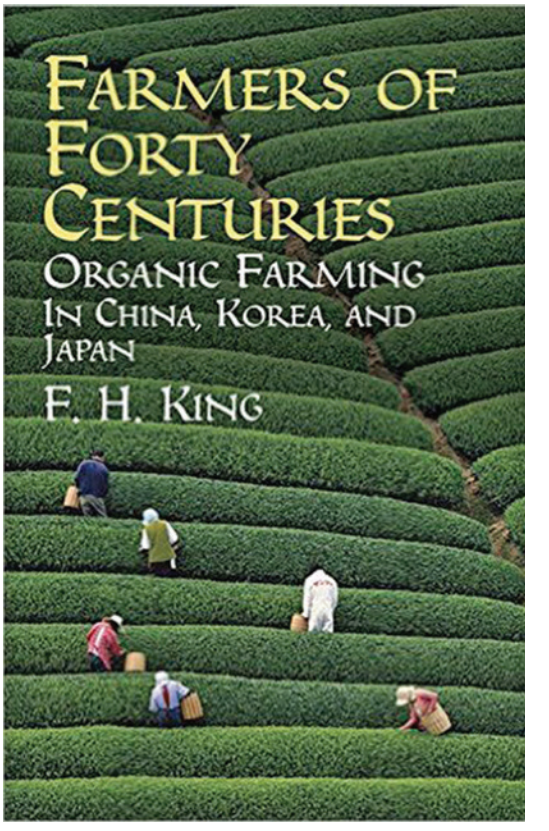
Howard is the foundational figure on the list. Hardly a household name now, Howard's work was the first systematic move toward organic agriculture—a term he popularized. Howard was a Cambridge-educated botanist who worked as an agricultural advisor in India. As a representative of the British Empire, Howard came to India to teach Western agricultural techniques. He found, however, that he was the student and the Indian farmers he met were his teachers. Working with these farmers he observed the connections between healthy soil and healthy villages. He came to advocate for traditional Indian agricultural practices that maintained and enriched soil health as the basis for human health.

The wisdom Howard gained through observations of traditional agriculture fuelled his groundbreaking book, *An Agricultural Testament*, where he wrote: "The maintenance of the fertility of the soil is the first condition of any permanent system of agriculture." By "permanent system" he meant something like what we now call "sustainable"—a system of agriculture that can continue to produce food in a place for millennia without exhausting the soil. This insight offered me a different way to look at the land and agriculture. I began to see farms from the ground up and good farmers, whatever they grew on top, as primarily soil builders.

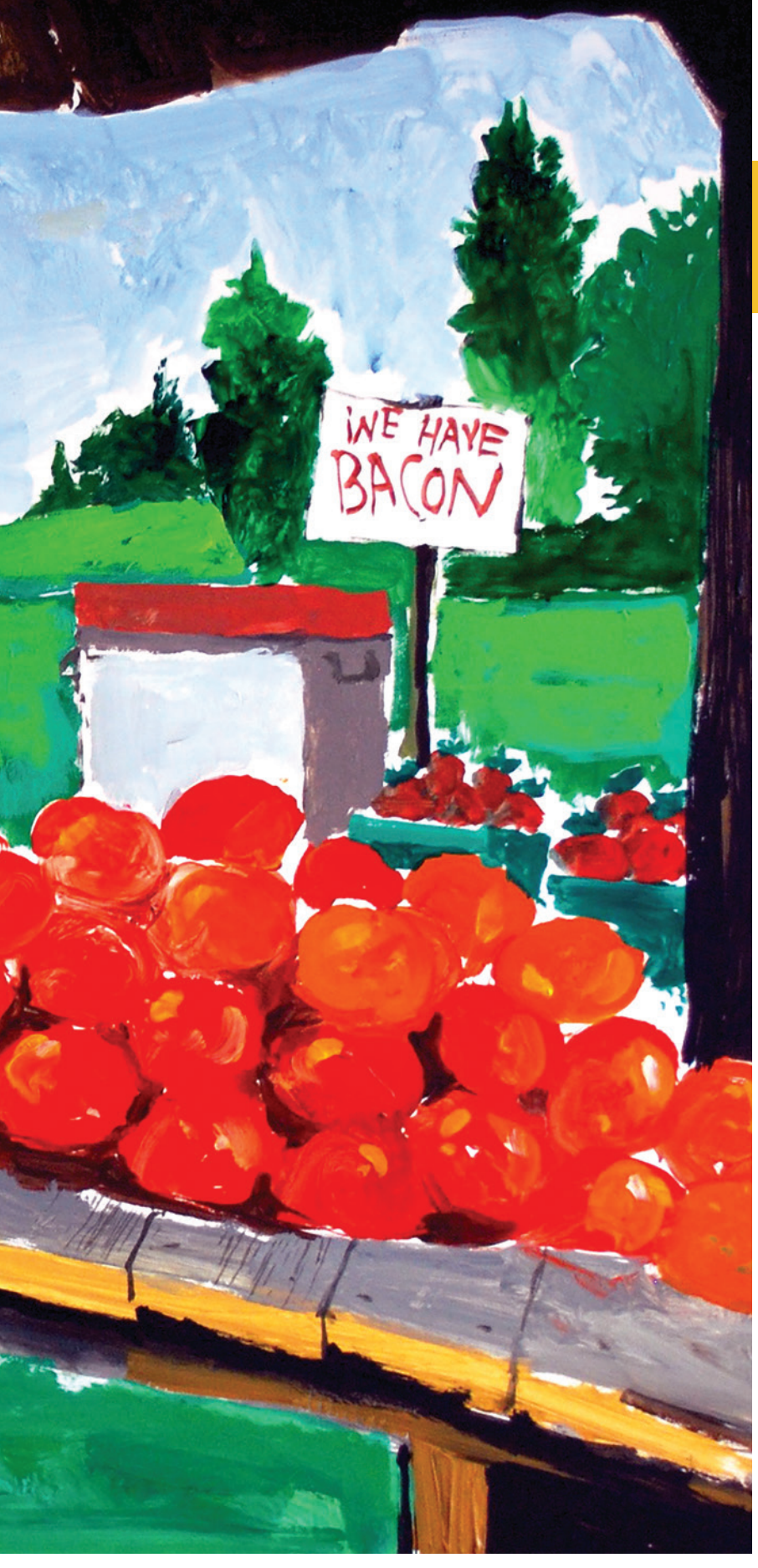
For the best guidance on how to practice this soil building, Howard pointed to nature—"the supreme farmer." This was well before the concepts of permaculture or bio-mimicry and yet here it is in 1943—a vision for ecological agriculture. Howard laid out the principles by which nature farms. In nature "there is never any attempt at monoculture: mixed crops and mixed farming are the rule," Howard wrote. Big fields of corn or soybeans like the ones I saw on my long drives between Arkansas and Illinois go against the grain of nature. Howard also recognized that in nature, "plants are always found with animals: many species of plants and of animals all live together." Nature offers what we might now call a diversified farm.

It is this sort of farm that Berry advocates in essays and illustrates in his novels. It is this kind of diversified farming that Berry practices, and it is the wide-spread loss of this kind of farming that Berry mourns. Not only should crops and animals connect with and contribute to the soil, Berry said. Farmers should, too.

"Farmers must tend farms that they know and love," Berry wrote, "farms small enough to know and love, using tools and methods that they know and love, in the company of neighbors that they know and love." And we might add that those of us who are not farmers should buy our food from farmers that we know and love, or at least farmers that we can get to know and come to love. My first move toward farming was buying food from farmers I could talk with and befriend, learning to love the land as they love it.



Love of the kind Berry is talking of is not love at first sight; it is stable and long-term. "Now we must think of marriage," Berry wrote in the closing sentence of his essay "Nature as Measure." And if we are to learn to love the land and treat it with this kind of love we must look to the knowledge and example of other people



After reading King I've never been able to flush a toilet without a twinge of guilt.

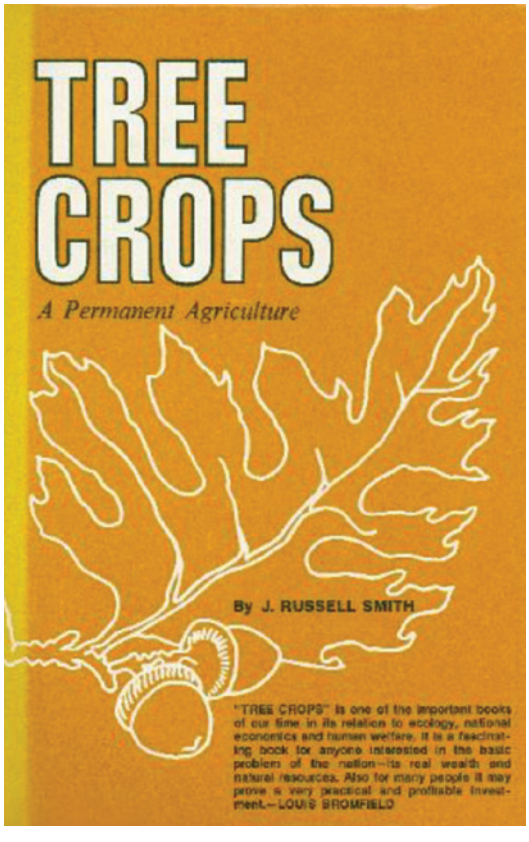
who have developed and maintained such long relationships. Howard did this in his exploration of Indian agriculture. F.H. King, another on the reading list, did this by looking to the example of East Asia in his study *Farmers of Forty Centuries, Or Permanent Agriculture in China, Korea and Japan*.

King was a soil scientist who made a nine-month tour of Asia in 1909. What he found was an agricultural system that maintained soil fertility over millennia while supporting the longest-running civilizations in human history. Key, he discovered, was the way these civilizations cycled nutrients. Writing in 1911, in a prescient mode, he argued that mineral fertilizers (what we would now call chemical or synthetic fertilizers), at that time newly introduced to the United States, cannot be continued indefinitely. Synthetic fertilizers masked the tremendous loss of soil fertility that was and is running rampant through Western agriculture—a mask that comes at great expense to soil health.

"One of the most remarkable agricultural practices adopted by any civilized people is the centuries-long and well nigh universal conservation and utilization of all human waste," King wrote, championing the age-old principle of return and cultivation. A farm maintains fertility only if the soil is rebuilt, and manure, compost and mulch are the best ways to do this. That we take things that could replenish soil fertility and treat them as problems to be served by sewage and dump trucks is a telling characteristic of our society. After reading King I've never been able to flush a toilet without a twinge of guilt.

King compared the way farmers in the United States utilize soil fertility to coal mining—we extract it and burn it up. "In the uncontrolled hands of a generation," King wrote, farmers in Western societies "swept into the sea soil fertility which only centuries of life could accumulate." This is a remarkable claim not only because of its truth, but because it was written in 1911—decades before the widespread industrialization of agriculture.

What would our landscapes look like if our world listened to King in 1911? Would composting facilities be more numerous than sewage plants and landfills? Our window of opportunity for going back to go forward hasn't passed. We could change how we treat waste. We could farm in ways that return and build fertility rather than merely extracting it. But what would such a farming look like? I tried to imagine that when I began my own farm. One of the first things I built was a large compost pile where I could turn the death and waste of the farm into a resource for its flourishing. I tried to make my farm a place of cycles and return rather than extraction and export.



After reading so much Berry, I already understood that soil is best held in place by plant communities that continue over years rather than seasons. As Berry wrote, "Annual plants [like corn, wheat, soybeans, etc.] are Nature's emergency medical service, covering wounds

Like Albert Howard and F.H. King, Smith worried about the demise of soil in Western agriculture. "Forest—field—plow—desert—that is the cycle of the hills under most plow agriculture," Smith wrote. The solution he proposed was to work backward—move from field to forest again.

and scars to hold the land until the perennial cover is reestablished ... our present agriculture, giving 80 percent of our farmland to annuals, is in a state of emergency." A vision for an alternative to such agriculture can be found in the third classic on Berry's list of recommended reading: J. Russell Smith's *Tree Crops*.

Like Albert Howard and F.H. King, Smith worried about the demise of soil in Western agriculture. "Forest—field—plow—desert—that is the cycle of the hills under most plow agriculture," Smith wrote. The solution he proposed was to work backward—move from field to forest again.

Smith recommended a "two-story" agriculture with trees providing one tier of crops and annuals on the ground providing the other. "This idea is attractive," wrote Berry, "because it would diversify both the agricultural and the natural life of the arable farmlands; it would make them more productive, more healthy, and more beautiful." Unfortunately, the industrialization of agriculture resulted in thousand-acre farms with no trees at all. The next time you drive through a swath of country filled with nothing but a desert of corn, imagine the difference it would make if pecan and walnut trees were interspersed in the rows. Our soils would be richer, closer to nature's measure and pattern, and as is usually the case when we follow nature's way, the view would be far lovelier.

It is a beautiful vision of agriculture—one that yields wildlife habitats and greenhouse gas sequestration. It is a vision I saw on countless farms I had the chance to visit in my pending farm apprenticeship; places where songbirds sang from fence posts and frogs laid their eggs in clear pasture streams.

The education I gained from Wendell Berry's reading list enlivened me again and again to the truth, found in hope and warning, throughout Berry's writing—the soil is precious. In the end, I did leave Chicago and farm for a few years, apprenticing and then setting out on my own for a time. My knowledge, skills and bank accounts were not up to the task. I eventually sold my livestock to an Amish farmer and went back to deskwork (though I still dabble in growing things). Even without farming as my occupation, Berry's reading list stays with me, having changed from simply a curriculum for agriculture to a curriculum for a flourishing life on Earth. The books he recommended, like his own writing, have a great deal more to say than simply why we should eat locally grown food or farm sustainably—they address the question of how human beings should make use of the world. This is a question we should all be asking now, and our answers will mean the difference between our flourishing and our destruction.■

THE BOOKS MENTIONED HERE CAN BE FOUND USED OR NEW IN A NUMBER OF EDITIONS. HERE ARE A FEW PLACES TO FIND THESE TEXTS FOR FREE ON THE WEB:

An Agricultural Testament **by Sir Albert Howard**
http://journeytoforever.org/farm_library/howardAT/ATtoc.html

Farmers of Forty Centuries **by F.H. King:**
http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/5350

Tree Crops **by J. Russell Smith**
http://journeytoforever.org/farm_library/smith/treecropsToC.html

The Faces of RESILIENCE

IN THE MONTHS FOLLOWING THE MASSIVE EARTHQUAKE THAT SHOOK NEPAL ON APRIL 25, 2015, HEIFER HAS SUPPORTED TENS OF THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES IN THE REBUILDING PROCESS. AMONG THEM ARE THOUSANDS OF WOMEN WHO EMERGED FROM THE RUBBLE AS INCREDIBLE EXAMPLES OF STRENGTH AND RESILIENCE.

By ANNIE BERGMAN, Heifer global communications director
Photos by GEOFF OLIVER BUGBEE

A new home rises from the mountains in Chainpur, Dhading, Nepal. Lalu Maya Shakya, front, has financed the new construction by raising and selling goats given by Heifer Nepal.

DEVI RIJAL

GITA SHAKYA

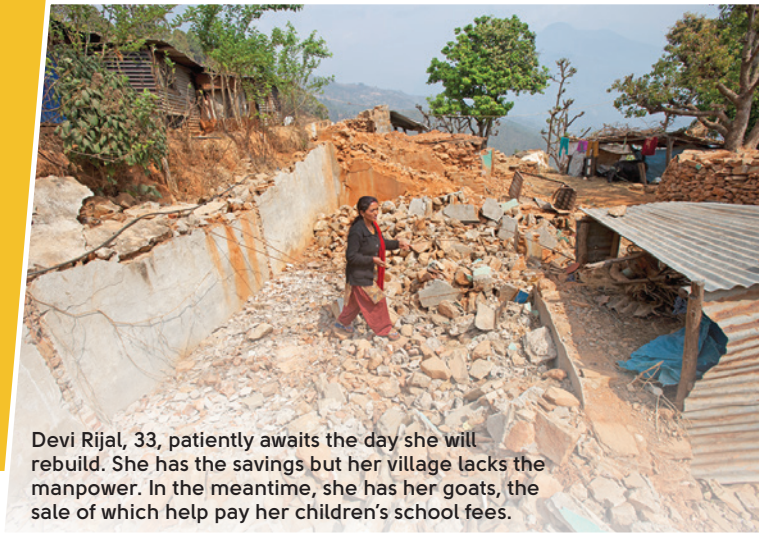
GANGA THAPA

HADING, Nepal—The shaking woke Gita Shakya and her newborn baby from a nap. She grabbed the infant and ran out of the house as her belongings began falling inches from where they lay.

Devi Rijal was feeding her chickens when the ground buckled, causing her to stumble. She fled downhill, looking back just in time to see the walls of her home begin to crumble.

For Ganga Thapa, the shock of the earthquake didn't end when the tremors subsided—she continued screaming for her children before she realized they had made it home and were clutching her legs.

A look into the valley provides a great view of the terraced farms on the road to Dhading.



Devi Rijal, 33, patiently awaits the day she will rebuild. She has the savings but her village lacks the manpower. In the meantime, she has her goats, the sale of which help pay her children's school fees.

More than a year after a 7.8-magnitude earthquake devastated Nepal, the women in Heifer's projects can recount with perfect clarity where they were at midday that Saturday in April 2015. Though the trauma is lingering and the road to a full recovery will undoubtedly be long, each woman is forging ahead on her own path.

With the help of Heifer International, many of them are already miles ahead of the curve.

CLEARING A PATH AHEAD

The days and weeks following the quake were chaotic. Heifer Nepal's assessments indicated more than 11,000 participants' homes had collapsed and another 21,000 families' homes were damaged. More than 3,000 Heifer animals died.

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL PROJECT AREA DAMAGES FROM THE QUAKE

7.8 magnitude quake

108 people killed

378 people injured

11,366 houses collapsed

21,142 houses damaged

3,162 animal deaths

The blue walls are all that remain of Devi Rijal's home. She now lives with 20 other family members in the corrugated tin structure seen above.

The partial ruins of houses, like Rehka Bak's above, dot the countryside in Dhading district. Bak has since built a new home with the help of the fund from Heifer.

In the chaos and confusion of the earthquake Sushila Sedai, 26, broke an ankle fleeing her crumbing home. She wouldn't realize how severe her injury was until 10 days later.

Since the earthquake, Devi Rijal has grown her goat herd and increased the size of her chicken flock. She is saving as much of the money as she can so that she will be able to fully fund reconstruction of her home.

Heifer Nepal works with entire communities, which made relief distribution quick and effective according to Neena Joshi, director of programs for Heifer Nepal.

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL NEPAL PROVIDED 22,714 FAMILIES WITH RELIEF SUPPLIES, INCLUDING:

- **40,672** blankets
- **20,210** tarps
- **220** foam mattress rolls
- **33** plastic sheets

"We felt like we had to do something. We'd been working in these areas for so many years. It was like it had happened inside the family," said Neena Joshi, director of programs for Heifer Nepal.

It was Heifer Nepal's first experience providing relief after a disaster, and it wasn't without difficulty, Joshi said. "We had to pass through villages that were waiting for materials. People were so angry," she said.

But because of their reach and influence—in Nepal, Heifer works with entire villages, not just select households—staff were able to effectively and efficiently mobilize local governments, and they had help and support from local police. The project participants even volunteered in the distribution and registration processes, while the chairperson from each Heifer self-help group ensured that no family missed out.

"It was a collaboration between Heifer and the districts," Joshi said. While relief efforts were ongoing, Heifer staff assessed conditions for next steps and ultimately decided to establish revolving funds for each self-help

Neena Joshi and all Heifer staff worked tirelessly after the earthquake to package and distribute relief supplies, like foam mattresses, to project participants.

Tarps and other supplies are sorted at Heifer Nepal's office cafeteria before distribution to the hardest-hit districts.

Supplies were delivered and readied for pick up just days after the first earthquake. Many families indicated that Heifer was the first organization into their communities.

"WE FELT LIKE WE HAD TO DO SOMETHING. WE'D BEEN WORKING IN THESE AREAS FOR SO MANY YEARS. IT WAS LIKE IT HAD HAPPENED INSIDE THE FAMILY."

—Neena Joshi, director of programs for Heifer Nepal

group. About $2.5 million was distributed. The money will be reinvested in the community groups, ensuring local economies are infused with cash over and over again.

In Tupche village, the Pragatasil Women's Group mobilized almost as quickly as the Heifer Nepal staff.

Just two days after the disaster—with 19 of the groups' 25 families living together under tarps strung between trees—the group called an emergency meeting. The earthquake had blocked the single path into the village, cutting off help for the many injured who needed medical attention.

So, the women decided to build a road.

Together with six other Heifer-formed self-help groups, the women of the Pragatasil group divided the area into seven sections and got to work. They took whatever tools they had, shovels, wheelbarrows—even their bare hands—and began digging. Even with each woman putting in four or five hours of work a day, it took more than three weeks to finish the 4-mile road.

The Pragatasil women's group in Tupche village recalls the days following the earthquake. Most credit their participation in the group with their recovery.

"Even though we don't have homes we have this road," said group member Devi Rijal, 33. Now you can see that not just ambulances but trucks and motorbikes can travel through the village. It makes us feel very proud."

In addition to road building, women have been busy reconstructing livestock sheds. The group received the equivalent of nearly $4,000 in revolving loan funds from Heifer.

Each self-help group participant received 15,000 rupees, the equivalent of about $150, and invested the money in a variety of ways, including in building improved livestock sheds, purchasing animals including goats, chicks, oxen and water buffalo, and rebuilding their own homes.

Januka Bogoti, 42, invested in 150 chickens, while she used some of her personal savings to build a coop and buy feed.

"The 15,000 rupees that I received from Heifer was very important for me. It gave me hope and confidence that I could rebuild my livelihood," Bogoti said.

STAGES OF GRIEF AND RECOVERY

Though the initial earthquake on April 25 and a second, massive aftershock on May 12 were the tremors that made the news, the people of Nepal have felt thousands of temblors over the past 18 months.

And while the tremors are subsiding, so, too, is the grief and psychological toll.

A joint project with USAID helped provide funds for improved goat sheds like the one seen here. The structures are detatched from houses and made from wood, decreasing the likelihood that animals would be injured or killed from collapsing stone walls in future quakes.

Women have invested revolving fund money in a variety of ways. Sharmila Shakya, 38, bought chickens and now sells eggs in a small grocery shop.

HEIFER ASSISTED MORE THAN 31,000 FAMILIES AND DISTRIBUTED $2.5 MILLION IN REVOLVING FUNDS TO FAMILIES IN 40 COMMUNITIES THAT SUSTAINED SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE.

34% bought construction materials to build improved animal sheds

31% purchased small animals like goats and chickens

4% purchased large animals like oxen or water buffalo

12.9% purchased vegetable seeds and fertilizers for farms

9.2% bought construction materials to rebuild their homes

Bhawana Shrestha is part of Deep Jyoti Women's Group in Chainpur village, Dhading district, which suffered significant damage from the first quake. Part of her home collapsed that day along with her goat shed. Her son was injured, too.

For Shrestha, however, her biggest trauma was losing her favorite kid goat.

Though her shed collapsed, her goats were initially fine. Without shelter, though, they were exposed to the elements.

"Because of the continuous aftershocks and the cold, one of my twin baby goats died. It was probably the first time I had such a beautiful, healthy baby goat. That was the first time I cried because an animal had died.

Bhawana Shrestha embraces Maya, a kid goat born after the earthquake. Maya follows Shrestha around her small farm.

"MY GOATS ARE MY MAJOR SOURCE OF INCOME, SO LOSING THAT, I WAS FEELING VERY EMOTIONAL. IT WAS VERY HEALTHY. I CAN STILL SEE ITS IMAGE IN MY EYES. I DID NOT CRY AS MUCH WHEN MY HOUSE WAS DESTROYED, BUT WHEN THAT KID DIED, I SOBBED."

—Bhawana Shrestha

"I didn't have a house to live in, but this really beautiful, healthy baby goat: even God had taken that away from me," Shrestha said. "My goats are my major source of income, so losing that, I was feeling very emotional. It was very healthy. I can still see its image in my eyes," she said.

"I did not cry as much when my house was destroyed, but when that kid died, I sobbed."

While Shrestha has continued to raise goats after the quake, the revolving funds from Heifer allowed her to purchase a second water buffalo.

Despite the hardships of the last year, Devi Rijal is hopeful life for her family will soon return to normal.

With her 15,000-*rupee* loan, Shrestha bought a water buffalo to add to her farm, and materials to help rebuild part of her home.

While a number of questions remain about her family's future, Shrestha is happy she has her livestock. The manure from the buffalo she bought with her loan and her goats is helping her garden thrive. She's been able to save money, her son is back in school and she has 13 goats—many of them kids.

That hole in her heart left by the goat last April is being filled by a long-eared, black and tan kid goat she's named Maya. Maya was born in February 2016, and she instantly brought a smile to Shrestha's face.

Chances are if you visit Shrestha now, she has a goat-shaped shadow.

"I can call her name and she'll come running to me," Shrestha said, laughing. "If she hears my voice, she'll start bleating. She's my favorite."

While Ganga Thapa is still moved to tears when she recounts her story of losing her home, two goats and her grain stores to the disaster, she is forging ahead and choosing not to dwell on what she can't yet fix.

Thapa moved to a family home in Jiling Village, across the deep river-carved valley after the first earthquake toppled her home in Tupche. The home remains in ruins, as it will take significant funds to demolish what's left and rebuild.

She knows rebuilding will come in time and is determined to return to the home in Tupche.

"I am very confident now after joining the Heifer group. I've lost everything, but I know that I can raise buffalo and goats and chickens and earn money," Ganga said. "I have my skills with me wherever I go, so I'll continue doing the same thing wherever I go. What happened, happened."

While recovery will continue for months and even years, these women have maintained their positive outlook, and many attribute that to their participation in the Heifer project.

"If we had not joined the group we would not have been able to come together to rebuild our lives. It is our luck that we survived this disaster and that after surviving, we received support from Heifer," Bogoti said.

Rijal took that sentiment one step further. "Because we live on, there will be hope," she said. ■

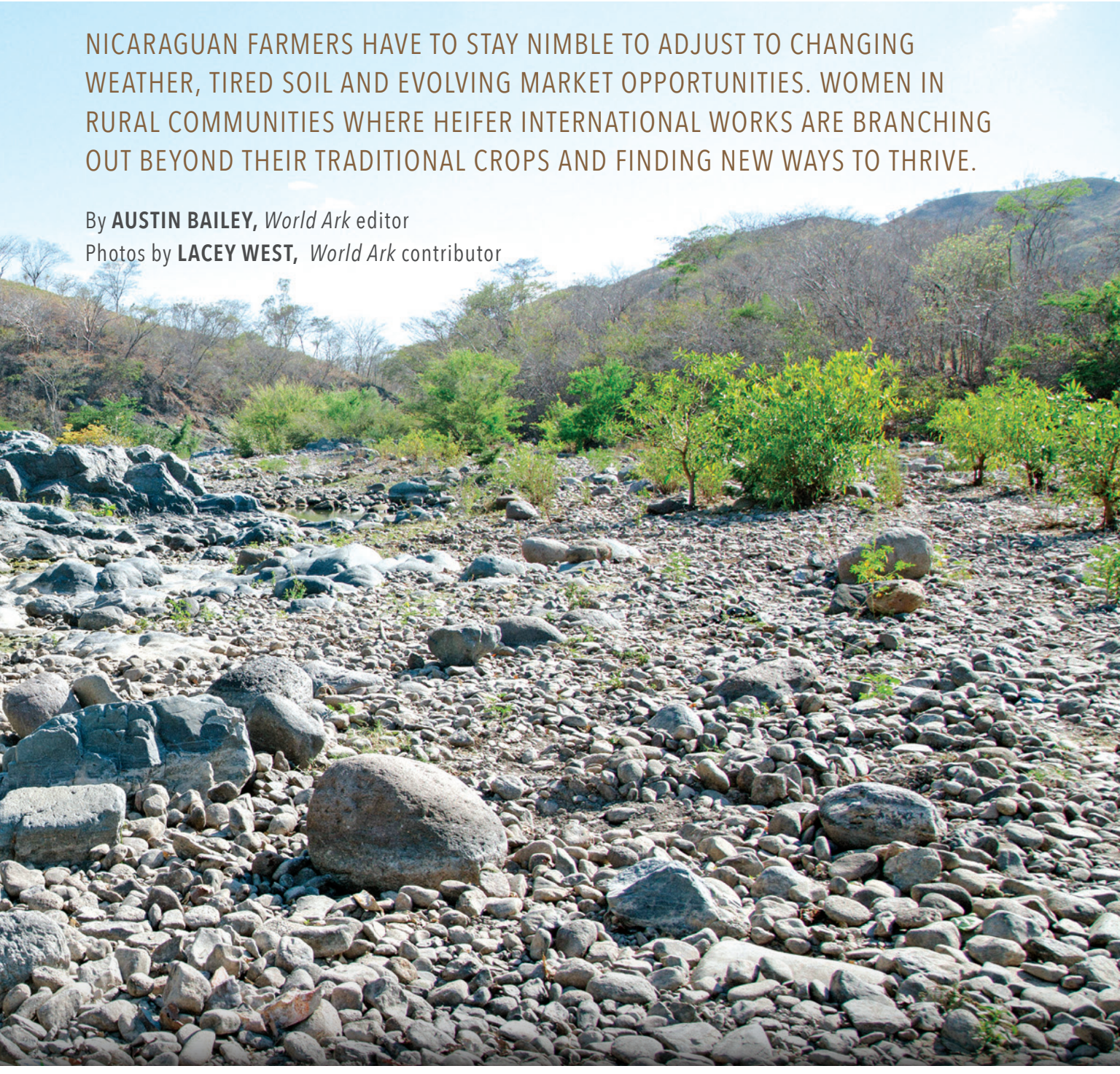
HIGH AND DRY

After several concurrent years of drought, the dry season in Nicaragua is tougher than usual.

IN NICARAGUA

NICARAGUAN FARMERS HAVE TO STAY NIMBLE TO ADJUST TO CHANGING WEATHER, TIRED SOIL AND EVOLVING MARKET OPPORTUNITIES. WOMEN IN RURAL COMMUNITIES WHERE HEIFER INTERNATIONAL WORKS ARE BRANCHING OUT BEYOND THEIR TRADITIONAL CROPS AND FINDING NEW WAYS TO THRIVE.

By **AUSTIN BAILEY,** *World Ark* editor
Photos by **LACEY WEST,** *World Ark* contributor



Honey hives are inspected every eight days.

"THE WATER TABLES ARE SO LOW THAT THEY COULDN'T EASILY ACCESS WATER FOR IRRIGATION. THEY HAD TO DO SOMETHING ELSE."

–ERICK ANTONIO MATAMOROS, AGRICULTURE TECHNICIAN

MATAGALPA, NICARAGUA— Paulina Martinez is quick to snatch up her wood and leather swatter to shoo away any curious dogs or clumsy chicks that amble too close to the porch, threatening to disturb her prized quiet time. Rules are different, though, for the bees and wasps nesting in the porch eaves. Stinging insects don't bother the mistress of this house at all and are free to zoom in and out unmolested. Industrious pollinators are welcome guests in this hard-baked region of Nicaragua. Martinez draws honeybees to her yard with rows of white wooden hives, and they reward her hospitality with a year-round supply of honey.

Martinez is part of a Heifer-supported project in Nicaragua's Dry Corridor that's helping farming families adapt as hotter weather, sparser rainfall and depleted soil render the land less fruitful. She's one of more than 700 members of The Federation of Women Producers of the Field, a cooperative that formed to maximize production for farmers living in the department of Matagalpa.

"The water tables are so low that they couldn't easily access water for irrigation. They had to do something

Paulina Martinez and Francisco Alarcon Rubina on their porch.

Honey is bottled for sale.

Clarity connotes high quality.

Martinez harvests honey.

Twins Thomas and Jose Ruiz taste honey for the first time.

Honey and snacks are sold at a roadside stand.

else," said Erick Antonio Matamoros, a technician with the Agricultural Federation of Cooperatives of Rural Women Producers in Nicaragua. Known locally as FEMUPROCAN, Matamoros' group teams up with Heifer to help women farmers in the region.

Children here have always climbed trees to scoop wild honey from bees' nests. And honey is doled out as a remedy for sore throats and stomach aches. But bee farming is just now catching on.

"People used to not pay attention to beekeeping," Martinez said. "Now, they realize it makes money."

And money is particularly hard to come by in this poor and arid region. Nicaragua's strip of the Dry Corridor runs north and south near the Pacific coast, but its proximity to so much water belies desert-like conditions. El Niño weather patterns brought acute drought to the already parched region in recent years, and average temperatures inched up. A scrim of dust coats everything as the forests and fields wait for rain. Still, flowering trees muster on, providing the raw ingredients for honey and allowing the bees here to work year-round.

Heifer International is working with 11,000 farming families in the Dry Corridor, helping them pivot to new agricultural practices and crops that can take the heat. In addition to honey, Heifer International is helping farmers by supplying drought-tolerant seeds, fungus-resistant coffee plants, chickens, pigs and loans that farmers are using to build irrigation systems or start small businesses.

Martinez and her family continue to coax what they can from the increasingly barren fields, and she runs a bakery out of her home. The proceeds from honey hives ensure Martinez and other beekeepers make up for the crops lost to drought.

Mariana Trujillo Calderon prepares tortillas for her family.

Calderon harvests cashews.

A WOMAN'S TOUCH

Not all of Heifer's work in Nicaragua revolves around honeybees, but it does all revolve around women. Nicaragua is the poorest country in Central America, and high rates of domestic violence and teen pregnancy plague women here, especially far out in rural areas where social progress comes more slowly. Women's workloads are heavy, with children, housework, cooking and gardening all traditionally falling in their domain.

The strain is easing a little for women in Genizaros, a hidden community in northwestern Nicaragua, since they've enlisted their husbands and sons to help. The Heifer project here cleverly grants livestock and training only to women, leaving men with no choice but to take on some of their wives' workloads if they want the family to benefit. Despite his initial misgivings, it's turning out to be a fine system for Diego Manuel Rocha Hernández, father of six and husband of Mariana Trujillo Calderon.

He admits he didn't like it when his wife first started dashing off to trainings, raising pigs and chickens and bringing in the bulk of the family's income. "I felt like I was removed from my leadership," Rocha said. He went along with his wife's decision to join the Heifer project, though, because he saw few other opportunities. His own farming

Trujillo sits with her husband and some of her children.

The family raises chickens and sells eggs.

Evelio Daniel Rocha Trujillo, 15, fetches water.

"WE NEEDED HELP, SO MUCH HELP AT THAT TIME. WE HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF WHAT THEY PROVIDED."

–MARIANA TRUJILLO CALDERON

efforts on the family's land failed more often than they succeeded lately, and he was hopeful that Trujillo might be on to something. "Sometimes she has better ideas than me," he admitted. If Trujillo could grow food and make money, Rocha knew he wouldn't have to leave the family anymore to travel to Costa Rica for months at a time to work as a farm laborer.

And he was right. The family's fortunes improved almost immediately after a Heifer project began in their community in 2013, as Trujillo went to every training and planted every seed offered. Quiet, focused and steady, Trujillo embraced and maximized every resource. "We needed help, so much help at that time," she said. "We have taken advantage of what they provided."

As Trujillo began spending more time working with her fellow Heifer participants, she handed many of her chores over to her husband. He now washes dishes, irons clothes and feeds the animals, all jobs he never did before. "I taught him these things," Trujillo said. "He was a good student."

With the weight of her daily work lightened, Trujillo focused on climbing the ladder toward economic security. She sold eggs to buy more chickens. She sold chickens to buy pigs. She sold pigs to buy cows, and she sold milk to buy cement brick to build her family a larger, sturdier house. Trujillo shared tips and tricks with neighbors, who also thrived. The once-small women's cooperative swelled to 300 members who pooled their money to buy land for a chicken farm. Built this spring, the farm houses chickens on mesh flooring to keep the birds cleaner and healthier. Their chickens feed a robust market and bring in steady profits.

Husbands and fathers who were initially skeptical about the project now embrace it for the simple reason that money is coming in, enough money to keep the men from having to hitch rides to El Salvador, Guatemala or Costa Rica for work.

"I feel good and thankful because we're succeeding. We went from a hard situation to a better situation," Rocha said.

The coffee-growing community of Cantagallo is slowiy recovering.

MEMBERSHIP PERKS

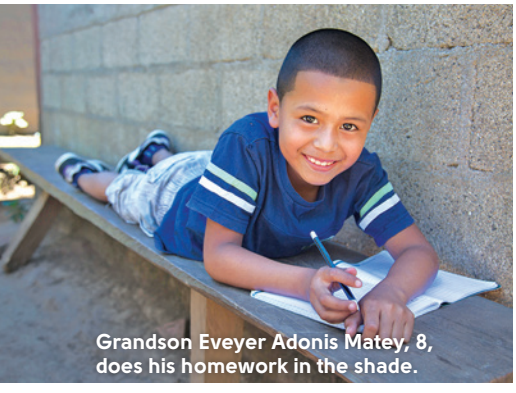
The heat and dust let up a bit on the climb to the Cantagallo community, and a weak breeze moves across the low mountains. People living in this section of the Cordillera Isabella mountains that curve close to the Honduran border get a break from the lowland heat, but not from the economic challenges plaguing Nicaraguan farmers in recent years.

The coffee trees that earned most of Cantagallo's cash for decades succumbed to coffee rust in 2011, ruining two-thirds of the harvest. Known locally as *la roya*, coffee rust is a fungus that announces itself with yellow dots on the leaves and eventually consumes the entire tree, leaving only skeletal gray branches

The coffee co-op building is used for meetings and to store grains.


Coffee cherries


Gilma Cordova Calderon inspects her healthy plants.


Grandson Eveyer Adonis Matey, 8, does his homework in the shade.


Chickens provide enough eggs to eat and sell.

behind. The fungus spread through Central America in recent years, demolishing countless harvests and local economies. "The families were in crisis," said Agilla Gonzalez, president of the St. Geronimo farming cooperative. "They didn't have food because there was no money to buy it. We were surviving on corn and beans." Fathers, brothers and sons hitched rides down the mountain to work on tobacco farms a couple of hours away.

Heifer and partner organizations arrived in 2013, bringing rust-resistant coffee trees to replace the lost groves. But that didn't solve the problem. Coffee trees don't begin producing until their third year, and hungry families in Cantagallo couldn't wait that long.

Gilma Cordova Calderon's family was one of the first to receive chickens from Heifer to help get them through the next few years. With her husband and two grown sons gone to look for work in the tobacco fields, she took on the chickens, selling eggs to buy sugar, oil, cheese and sour cream. The improved diet had an immediate effect on Cordova's grandsons. "I could tell they had more energy and weren't so listless," she said. She sold enough eggs to buy pigs and also to install a rudimentary irrigation system to keep her gardens thriving. Soon, she will add bees to her menagerie.

Her plot of coffee trees stands waist-high, set between the naked trunks of the coffee trees ruined by *la roya*. Eventually the new trees will stand 7 feet tall. Because they use organic growing methods, Cordova and the other coffee farmers of Cantagallo will be able to sell their product at a higher price. She suspects the crops will be lucrative enough that she will be able to pay day laborers again to help her with the harvest, as she did before coffee rust wiped out her economic reserves.

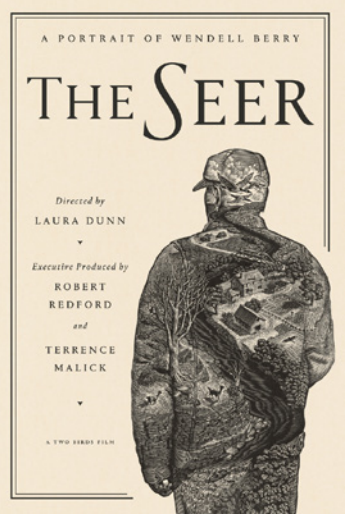
The new trees are bushy and green, and already producing the rich red coffee cherries that have been the foundation of local economies for ages. But even if the harvest fails in the future, Cordova said she will be able to weather the setback with her chickens, pigs and bees, and that her grandsons will never have to scrimp by on only corn and beans again. ■

The Seer

Laura Dunn's Vision of a Poet Prophet

Reviewed by Ragan Sutterfield, *World Ark* contributor

When a New York Times reporter asked Wendell Berry whom he would like to write his life story, he shuddered. "A horrible thought. Nobody. As the only person who ever has lived my life, I know that most of it can never be documented, is beyond writing and beyond words." So you can imagine the challenge documentary filmmaker Laura Dunn faced when she set out to create a film about Berry—a man famous for not owning a computer or a television and harboring a general distrust of all things mediated by screens.



The Seer
A documentary about Wendell Berry
Directed by Laura Dunn
Produced by Jeff Sewell

Dunn's previous film, *The Unforeseen*, features a poem by Wendell Berry. She said she was surprised by how many people asked her about the poem's author. While Berry was a transformational writer for Dunn, many people in her audiences had never heard of him. She decided her next film would focus on the writer and farmer, a man Michael Pollan credited as the instigator of the "national conversation around food and farming."

Berry refused to appear on camera for the film, so Dunn had to reimagine her approach. The result is a powerful documentary that seeks to not so much look at Berry as *with* him. *The Seer* tries to capture through Berry's eyes a vision of American agriculture as farming became more industrialized and many agricultural communities faded away.

The film joins archival photographs and film of Berry, on-camera interviews with Berry's wife and daughter, and interviews with farmers in Berry's native Kentucky with audio interviews Dunn conducted with Wendell Berry himself. The resulting film is more powerful than a simple biopic. It carries forth Berry's vision by returning our gaze to the land and its people—"the membership," as Berry calls it, of his place.

The opening sequence is made up of short cuts of cityscapes, coal mines and factories as Berry reads a poem about a nightmare:

...I saw the last known landscape destroyed for the sake
of the objective, the soil bulldozed, the rock blasted.
Those who had wanted to go home would never get there
now...

It is a poem about displacement and destruction, all in the name of economic progress.

The film weaves pieces of Berry's biography and writing life with interviews of farmers caught in economies of scale that violate the limits of both the land and its people. It is these interviews with farmers that I found the most moving part of the film. Many are large-scale industrial farmers, of the sort that are viewed by many local food activists as "the enemy." But in the interviews it becomes clear that these are people who love the land, who love farming, but are forced into destructive modes of survival by an economy that is stacked against them. They are victims of the kinds of farming policies that Berry has advocated against from his earliest writing, especially in his 1977 book, *The Unsettling of America*.

A glimpse of hope in the film comes in a series of interviews with Steve Smith, a Kentucky farmer who was trapped in the same net as most farmers—growing more crops and yet going into more debt as prices continued

to fall. But unlike many other farmers who responded by continuing to expand their acreage or quit farming altogether, Smith pursued a different way of doing things—intensive organic vegetable production. He was desperate for a solution so he tried it, becoming the first Community Supported Agriculture farmer in Kentucky. And though it isn't mentioned in the film, he also came to know and eventually marry Wendell Berry's daughter.

This mix of the tragic realities of country life, with hope that there is a different way, is something one finds throughout Berry's poems, novels and essays. *The Seer* captures this, along with the other emotive force of Berry's work. For myself and many others, reading Wendell Berry leaves us wanting to live more deeply, to embrace a better and more holistic life. He is the kind of writer who can change what you eat for breakfast and maybe even the work you go to afterward.

When my wife and I finished watching the screening of *The Seer*, our response wasn't simply a nod, a sigh or even a "Wow," as it is with many films. Instead we started into a conversation about how to live in light of the truth and hope of Berry's vision as offered in the film. "I only wanted to start a conversation," Berry once said of his work. *The Seer* is a film that carries that conversation forward in a new way with new audiences. ■

READ TO FEED

KAITLYN ROY
Age 7, Pleasant Valley School
South Windsor, Connecticut

I love reading the book The Lorax. *It teaches you a special lesson. Things can get bad, really bad, if you cut down trees. You have to take care of the environment!*

I liked being able to not only read lots of great books (I love to read!) but I liked getting pledges from my family so that my class could buy baby chicks. Baby chicks grow up and make eggs for people to eat.

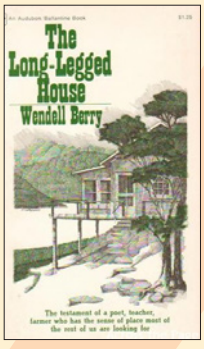
I think that Heifer is an awesome program to help people who are poor and need food. I love chicks, but I donate money every year to buy a pig. I also talked my mom into donating to Heifer every month! At my last birthday party, all of my presents were for Heifer!

LEARN MORE AT WWW.READTOFEED.ORG

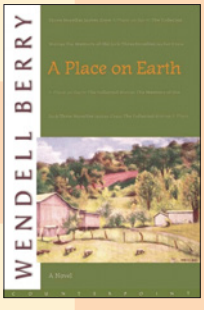
FOUR FAVORITES:

FROM WENDELL BERRY

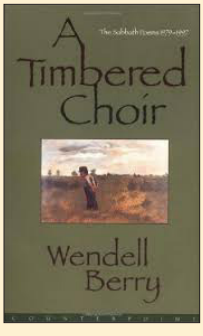
If Ragan Sutterfield's essay and documentary review in this magazine piqued your interest, here are a few favorites sure to turn you into a Wendell Berry devotee.



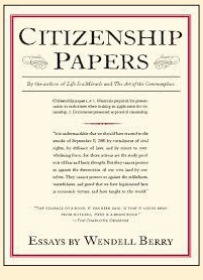
The Long-Legged House



A Place on Earth



A Timbered Choir



Citizenship Papers

Hope for the Holidays

By Misti Hollenbaugh, *World Ark* contributor | Photos by Petal Mattheson

Children at the 2015 Lancaster Gifts That Give Hope Fair make animal puppets and learn about how the animals can benefit impoverished families.

Pennsylvania's Heifer volunteers create an impressive display to draw in visitors.

While Heifer International has long promoted living gift markets, Gifts That Give Hope takes this idea and spreads it out to benefit multiple causes.

Gifts That Give Hope is a nonprofit that helps communities host alternative gift fairs. Each year, the average American spends more than $800 on Christmas gifts; alternative gift fairs offer meaningful alternatives in the form of donations to charities.

The first Gifts That Give Hope fair launched in 2007 in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. Since then, the organization has helped organize alternative gift fairs across the United States, raising more than $435,000 and helping more than 120 local, national and international nonprofits.

Jennifer Knepper, the coordinator for a fair in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, said having a variety of organizations to choose from is important, as each donor has unique values and passions, and each organization appeals to a different demographic. Knepper said Gifts That Give Hope tries to make the fair a personal and educational experience for visitors.

"Any issue is multi-faceted," she said. "I think if we each got involved in some aspect, we could address things a little more."

Norma Good, volunteer coordinator for the Southeast Pennsylvania (SEPA) Volunteer Heifer Committee, said 2015 was the sixth year Heifer was represented at the fair. Norma and her husband have worked with Heifer for 26 years.

"It's not just 'let's not give gifts that people don't want anymore,' it's to teach people that you give to a cause," Good said. "It's to stress the alternative gift and the whole business of giving to a cause."

Knepper helped start the Gifts That Give Hope Fair in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 2008, and in its first year, the group raised $30,000 for 30 nonprofits. The fair has continued every year since. In 2015, the fair raised $1,358.50 for Heifer: 37 people gave $10 for a share of a sheep, 21 people gave $30 for honey bees and the remaining funds were undesignated.

The Lancaster fair comprises 60 percent local organizations and 40 percent national and international organizations, including Heifer. Causes include poverty and injustice, hunger, homelessness, human trafficking, education and abuse.

"We try to choose things that are relevant or on people's radar," Knepper said. "What we really want to do is take it to the level so when they come to the gift fair, it's about raising awareness and understanding."

The fair strives to create a family-friendly atmosphere, with snacks and child-oriented activities. In 2014, the

Southeast Pennsylvania Volunteer Heifer Committee bought a cow costume, an addition that, according to Good, draws a lot of attention to their table. Good and her fellow volunteers also set up a craft table where children can make puppet animals and other Heifer-related crafts.

Lancaster's ninth annual gift fair will be 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on December 10 at the Farm and Home Center.

If you're interested in hosting a Living Gift Market to benefit Heifer this holiday season, you can find all of the instructions and materials you need online at **www.heifer.org/faith.** Or call (800) 422-0474, and we'll mail you the supplies you'll need. ■

Third-graders at Willowbrook Elementary in Bentonville, Arkansas, set out to buy a goat, but ended up buying an entire farm's worth of animals for struggling families. Their 4-month fundraising campaign raked in $6,500. To thank them for their generosity and hard work, staff from Heifer Ranch in Perryville, Arkansas, paid the school a visit, bringing along Lucy the lamb and Cher the goat. ■

Heifer Ecuador Helps After Major Earthquake Strikes

By Annie Bergman, Silvana Gonzalez and Jason Woods

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HEIFER ECUADOR

On April 16, the strongest earthquake to hit South America in decades struck Ecuador's coast, killing 663 people, injuring more than 36,000 and leaving about 28,000 people temporarily homeless.

The epicenter of the 7.8-magnitude earthquake was 16 miles from Muisne in the province of Esmeraldas, where Heifer International Ecuador is actively working to restore the endangered mangroves and help fishing families tap new sources of income as their catches dwindle.

All Heifer participants survived, but the earthquake forced the evacuation of the entire population of Muisne and razed the village of Santa Rosa, where project participants were living. Electricity and clean water supplies were cut off in Muisne and were difficult to access at temporary shelters.

Heifer project participants in the province of Manabí, where there is great potential in cacao farming, faced substantial property damage and a lack of basic services after the earthquake.

In the provinces of Esmeraldas and Manabí, 8,000 buildings were destroyed and another 5,000 were damaged.

In the months following the initial earthquake, the communities affected endured more than 1,700 aftershocks. The largest two, of 6.7- and 6.8-magnitude respectively, occurred within nine hours of each other on May 18.

On April 16, a 7.8-magnitude earthquake destroyed or damaged thousands of buildings and left tens of thousands homeless. Heifer Ecuador's staff and project participants banded together to support victims of the quake.

During natural disasters, Heifer works alongside relief organizations to provide support and help our farmers recover. Once immediate needs for survival are met, Heifer helps affected families rebuild. In May, Heifer Ecuador began rebuilding cacao collection centers in Manabí.

In the long term, Heifer Ecuador is committed to rebuilding homes and reconstructing the economies and environments damaged by the earthquake and its aftershocks. Counseling will also be provided in the zone for the next two years in partnership with local universities.

So far, Heifer Ecuador has supplied 3,489 families in Esmeraldas and Manabí with:

- 351 rations of non-perishable food
- 220 rations of fresh food
- 4,824 liters of water
- 170 hygiene kits
- 24 community shelters
- 50 dry latrines
- 2,052 medical treatments

Some of the aid came from Heifer alpaca project participants in the Andes who were unaffected by the earthquake but concerned about those who were. Although some of the Andean families still struggle on a low income, they were inspired to donate what relief items they could, including food staples, toothpaste and toilet paper.

Olmedo Cayambe, a project participant in the Andes, said, "All of the communities Heifer supports are under the same umbrella, and because of that, we have to lend a hand." ■

PHOTO BY SILVANA GONZALES

PHOTOS BY DAVE ANDERSON

William Chila, innkeeper

We worried for all of Muisne when a strong earthquake shook Ecuador's coast this spring, but we worried especially for the family of William Chila, an innkeeper and Heifer project participant whose hospitality and friendship made the country's magical mangrove forests all the more appealing. So the *World Ark* staff cheered when we received a photo of Chila, happy and well and standing in the flood-washed but still intact courtyard of Cabañas Bella Vista. In the top photo, Chila is holding the Fall 2015 issue of the magazine, which featured his community tourism business.

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Although the notification of your intent is not a binding agreement, it allows us to project future support for Heifer International's mission to end hunger and poverty.

Visit www.HeiferFoundation.org or call 888.422.1161 to learn about the W.I.L.L. Society and more estate planning options.

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