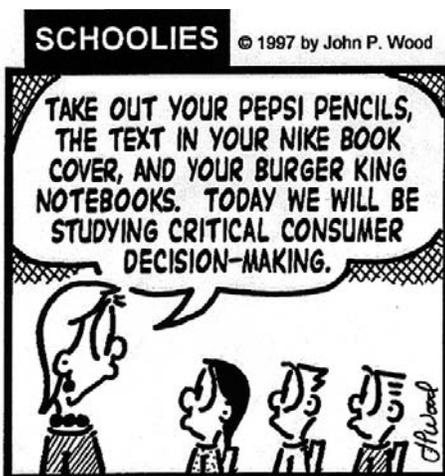


Women, Food & Agriculture Network

Fat Kids and the Pepsi Generation: Who is Responsible for the Public's Health?



by Keecha Harris

Remember the “new generation,” the Pepsi generation? It now appears as though the company that once courted this generation of attractive, talented, young Americans is now referring to its consumer base as a bunch of “fat slobs.”

In a recent interview, PepsiCo CFO Indra Nooyi insisted that junk food and soft drinks aren't responsible for the rise in obesity, but rather the lack of exercise is to blame. “The problem is the couch, not the can,” stated Nooyi. These same “couch potatoes,” however, generated more than \$25 billion in revenues for her company last year.

Nooyi's company is one of many attempting to reinvent itself with “good for you” products so as not to appear heavily invested in America's obesity epidemic. This could be the result of a rash of lawsuits pending against food conglomerates. For example, a group of New York children filed a class-action lawsuit against McDonald's, blaming the company for their health problems. One of the 15-year-old plaintiffs weighs 400 pounds.

Perhaps the tango between the couch and the can is slowing to a waltz. Maybe corporate obesity is facing the same challenges as human obesity.

Nooyi maintains that the public has not been asked “to drink Pepsi...(or) eat Lay's potato chips morning to night.” However, the frequency and number of advertisements suggests that people should consume junk food in their sleep.

Fast Food and Squeeze Tubes

Some would say the food industry is preying on the weakness of the public. Americans spent more than \$821 billion on food in 2000 while consuming nearly half of all meals away from home. It is projected that we will spend as much as \$1.2 trillion by 2010. Junk food moguls are developing drip-, spill- and leak-free products for the half of children aged 10 to 13 who eat while they surf the Web. Among the products being marketed are scrambled eggs and macaroni and cheese served out of squeeze tubes.

Meanwhile, 61 percent of adults are overweight or obese, and 15 percent of

(Public Health, continued on page 5)

Mission

The *Women, Food, and Agriculture Network* links and amplifies women's voices on issues of food systems, sustainable communities and environmental integrity.



Calendar

July 19, 2003: Step at a Time Gardens Summer Celebration. Starting at 4:00 p.m., hayrack tour of farm and lake, potluck supper and more. Come and meet our ISU Life in Iowa intern and explore this growing CSA farm. Contact Jan Libbey at 641-495-6367 or <libland@frontiernet.net>

July 18-19, 2003: WFAN Summer Meeting, Northeast Iowa (see insert in this newsletter)

July 25-27, 2003: Midwest Sustainable Agriculture Working Group summer meeting, Delaware, Ohio. Contact Teresa Opheim, 515-270-2634, <msawg@aol.com>

November 7-9, 2003: The Fourth Annual Tri-state Gathering at Good Earth Village, Spring Valley, Minnesota

January 16 -17, 2004: Iowa Network for Agriculture (INCA) Local Food Conference and Celebration. Mark your calendars now and be sure to come to INCA's new and revised annual event!

Guthrie County: <jmnorwood@hotmail.com> or 515-277-2609; Cheri Grauer—Washington County event: <cgrauer@inhf.org> or 515-996-2496; Susan Appleget-Hurst—Outreach Committee Chair, supporting both events: <editor@iowagardener.com> or 515-277-5442

Local Community Action Conversations

The National Catholic Rural Life Conference is sponsoring a series of local community action conversations in northwest Iowa. These discussions carry a message of hope and action in support of rural people, their farm and non-farm enterprises, and their local farming community. Fr. Marvin Boes will discuss how governments, non-government organizations and local rural people individually and together are taking action and offering assistance to rural people in maintaining and developing sustainable independent enterprises and farming communities. Time: 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Those yet to take place are:

June 23, Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish, Moorland

June 24, St. Joseph Parish, Sioux Rapids

June 25, Holy Spirit Parish, Carroll

June 26, St. Michael Parish, Kingsley

June 30, St. Joseph Parish, Salix

July 1, St. Patrick Parish, Sheldon

For more information, contact Fr. Marvin Boes at 712-277-2046.

Buy Local Program

“Buy Fresh, Buy Local,” is a program that will make it easier for Black Hawk and nearby counties to find locally grown agricultural products. The program is sponsored by the Center for Energy and Environmental Education at the University of Northern Iowa, and the Practical Farmers of Iowa. Kamyar Enshayan, adjunct assistant professor of physics at UNI and campaign organizer, said the groups have put together a “Buy Fresh, Buy Local” directory of farms, farmers’ markets and meat lockers in Black Hawk and nearby counties that sell locally grown products. Also included are grocers and restaurants that feature local food. For more information, contact Kamyar Enshayan at (319) 273-7575; or Todd Kim at (515) 232-5661, ext. 108.

Events

Going Local at the Fair

After much discussion, the local food message is moving from the Iowa State Fair to two county fairs. The Iowa Network for Agriculture (INCA) is taking its successful Eat Locally for Goodness Sake project to the Washington County Fair (July 14-16) and the Guthrie County Fair (August 29 to September 1) to help place local food within a community context.

Why county fairs? Because they represent the grassroots level—where life is happening, where community experiences can lay important groundwork for future developments. The celebration and education elements of Eat Locally for Goodness Sake will be central to these events. Representatives from local economic development agencies, the faith community, the health community, and other key community partners will be invited to be a part of this celebration.

If you are located near one of these county fairs and would like to help, or have additional ideas on how to contribute, please contact: John Norwood—

Women, Food and Agriculture Network

This newsletter is published by the **Women, Food and Agriculture Network**, a Tides Center Project, with the help of Iowa State University Extension, Ames, Iowa. We welcome suggestions, stories, and news from your part of the world. Our emphasis is on women's lives, their relationships, communities and families. We welcome first person articles, analyses, book or video reviews, original poetry and art, and letters to editor. Deadlines for upcoming issues:

September issue: August 15, 2003

December issue: November 15, 2003

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(CoWfan@metc.net)

Katy Hansen

(kwhansen@ia.net)

Betty Wells

(bwells@iastate.edu)

Action Items

Iowa Shares' 2003 Raffle

You may purchase your \$5 tickets for the annual Iowa Shares' raffle by contacting WFAN at 712-243-3264. This raffle helps support the Iowa Shares' operating budget and contains over \$1,200 of prizes, including retail gift certificates, DVD players, and local Iowa foods baskets!

Iowa Shares is a statewide federation of social action and environmental non-profit organizations raising funds through workplace giving. Women, Food and Agriculture Network is a member of Iowa Shares and receives donations from over a thousand employees who sign up for a regular contribution each month. For more info on Iowa Shares, go to their website at: <http://www.iowashares.org>.

Fresh Food for Kids

At a school cafeteria in Santa Monica, children line up at a salad bar to partake of fresh fruits and vegetables. They are as fresh as fresh can be, having been delivered straight from a nearby farm or picked from a school garden.

In north Florida, farmers, who needed to find new markets, formed a co-op to start selling their collard greens, strawberries, and watermelons to nearby schools. Across the country, Farm to School projects provide food that is healthy for children, communities, and local farm economies.

To spread the success, the Community Food Security Coalition is working with legislators to develop a Farm to School grant program. Grants of up to \$100,000 would help schools cover their initial costs—chopping and cooling equipment, extra staff time, seasonal menu development, and nutrition education materials.

How can you help? Call the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121, and ask to speak to your Senator or Representative. Ask your Senator to support Senate Resolution 995 in the child nutrition reauthorization. Ask your Representative to support a separate measure for Farm to School programs in the child nutrition reauthorization.

Sustainable Agriculture in Cuba

by Denise O'Brien

On a cold and snowy February day I left the United States for a two-week research and education journey to Cuba. The study tour was designed to explore urban agriculture sustainable food systems as well as rural sustainable agriculture-science-education policy. The opportunity was provided by Food First/The Institute for Food and Development Policy of Oakland, California. Approximately 90 individuals from the United States and Latin America participated.

The participants met in Cancun, Mexico where we were briefed about our journey. Prior to leaving home I read an Oxfam America report *Social Policy at the Crossroads: Maintaining Priorities, Transforming Practice*. We were also provided with the book *Sustainable Agriculture and Resistance: Transforming Food Production in Cuba*, edited by Fenando Funes, Luis Garcia, Martin Bourque, Nilda Perez and Peter Rosset.

On the morning of February 25th we landed in Havana, Cuba. The excitement was clearly creating a festive atmosphere. It was unbelievable to me that I was actually in this forbidden land! The weather was hot and humid and felt wonderful given what I had left in Iowa. I knew a good number of people on this journey as we were all directly involved in food systems work. What great fun to be in a country where organic agriculture was a part of the norm and to be there with friends! In fact, it was great fun but also a little overwhelming at times.

During the next ten days we toured the area around Havana and Santa Clara. We visited urban gardens where we talked with farmers and learned of the challenges of providing food for the 12 million Cuban people. As we toured the countryside we visited beautiful gardens that had once been dumpsites. Everywhere we visited, farmers proudly showed us their compost and red worms.

Farmers can sell the crops they raise in a number of different ways. They sell a certain portion to the government to supply schools, nursing homes, daycare centers and institutions. They sell the rest of the produce from stands on their farms

or at farmer's markets where they pay a 10% fee to sell. Some farmers have an intermediary sell the produce at market, because they do not have time to sit at the market and sell. There is a waiting list of people who want to be farmers, and people leave professions to become farmers.

The collapse of the Eastern Bloc in 1989 transformed Cuba from a model of industrial agriculture comparable to the Central Valley of California to an agriculture that works with nature. Cuba had 85% of its trade cut off, and people quickly realized that they were going to have to do something quite drastic to feed themselves. The question was often asked, "If the U.S. embargo is lifted and Cuba is free to trade, will Cuba remain organic?" The answer was always an emphatic "Yes!"

I have had the opportunity to travel in a number of Central American countries and Cuba is among the poorest. But, I witnessed in Cuba a dignity and a spirit-edness that does not exist elsewhere. I admire the people for being able to provide a high level of education, healthcare for all, and food security. I saw democracy working in neighborhoods where people come together to make development decisions. I experienced a country that puts its people first. Although Cuba is a poor country it works hard to provide for the basic human needs of its citizens.

Resources

Chapter on Cuba

"Cuba: A Successful Case Study of Sustainable Agriculture," by Peter M. Rosset. Chapter 12 in *Hungry for Profit: The Agribusiness Threat to Farmers, Food and the Environment*, edited by Fred Magdoff et al. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000. This chapter is on the Food first website in full at www.foodfirst.org/cuba/success.html

Green Revolution

More on the Cuba experience can be found at www.pathtofreedom.com/cuba/greenrevolution/

Introducing your WFAN Coordinating Council

by Linda Warren

Recently the women who have been coordinating activities for WFAN over the past six years have been meeting more regularly by conference call and in person to plan a more formal structure for WFAN and make more concrete funding and program decisions.

This group of women is now called the Coordinating Council, and we would like to introduce ourselves to you. Please feel free to call, write or e-mail any of us if you have any comments or suggestions for WFAN or news on any of the issues we are continuing to work on.

(listed alphabetically):

Stacey Brown, who grew up in Alaska, became involved with WFAN when she was an intern for the group through a program conducted by the United Methodist Church. Since the conclusion of her internship she lives in Ames and manages the produce department at a community owned natural foods store, Wheatsfield Grocery. She is passionate about food and justice and has found a place within the sustainable agriculture movement and WFAN that encompasses her beliefs. Stacey has been the coordinator of the three very successful Tri-State Women's Gatherings for women in Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin who are involved in sustainable farming and food issues.

Stacey's e-mail address: <staceyleighbrown@yahoo.com>.

Nancy Dundatscheck has a Masters Degree in Social Ecology and holds an AAS in Illustration from the Fashion Institute of Technology. Currently she is Photographer Artist-In-Residence at the Octagon Center for the Arts in Ames, Iowa. Nancy served as an Americorps member, both as education coordinator and as a farming assistant at a community supported farm, and has also taught field ecology and sustainable farming concepts to children and teens in the NY metro area. She is now starting her second season working part time at Angela Tedesco's Turtle Farm CSA based in Granger, Iowa. Nancy has served as Practical Farmers of Iowa's Membership Services Coordinator and is currently

working on PFI's Farming Systems on-farm research database. Nancy hopes to combine her involvement in the healing arts with her interest in the arts and land stewardship/sustainable agriculture to create a healing sanctuary space for the spiritual and emotional growth of women.

Nancy's e-mail address: <naturgal@netins.net>.

Katy Hansen has a B.S. from Alfred University (New York State), an M.S. from Iowa State University, and an

Amy Miller recently moved from Des Moines to Northeast Iowa where she farms 420 acres with her husband Mike Natvig. Theirs is a diversified acreage and a sustainable model well known throughout the state of Iowa and beyond, including prairie restoration among its many features. Among their crops are organic grains and forages, cattle, organic hogs, and vegetables. Amy has previously run a CSA at the Henry A. Wallace Country Life Center and is a long time member of both the Iowa Network for Community Agriculture (INCA) and

The Coordinating Council: Stand up and Introduce Yourself!

Stacey Brown

Nancy Dundatscheck

Katy Hansen

Amy Miller

Virginia Moser

Diane Phillips

Stephanie Weisenbach

Betty Wells

Danielle Wirth

Staff:

Denise O'Brien

Linda Warren

M.Ed. from Arizona State University. She was in the Peace Corps in Nigeria, where she taught chemistry and mathematics in a secondary school. She also spent a year in Uganda. Hansen has been active in the National Peace Corps Association since its founding in 1978. She was editor for their newsletter for seven years and is also a former national president. She is founder of the Iowa Peace Corps Association and the RPCVs for Environment and Development for which she still does their newsletter layout. Katy is also the newsletter editor for WFAN, and brings valuable organization experience to the group. Hansen is presently Executive Director of the Iowa United Nations Association. She has also been on the national Board of Directors of the UNA-USA and was chair of the their Council of Chapters and Divisions. Hansen has attended three of the United Nations World Summits, including the recent World Summit on Sustainable Development held in South Africa.

Katy Hansen, 1203 Cambria Court, Iowa City, Iowa 52246, 319.351.3375, <kwhansen@ia.net>

Practical Farmers of Iowa. Amy homeschools her son Jacob. She and her husband have both been presenters at the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference.

Amy Miller, 20074 Timber Avenue, Cresco, Iowa 52136, 563.569.8358, northriver@iowatelecom.net

Virginia Moser is a long time organic farmer. Hers was the first farm certified under the State of Iowa's certification program when it began and she has long been a role model for women in farming and for organic farming. Her CSA was one of the first in her area northwest of Cedar Rapids and continues to thrive. She also markets extensively at area farmer's markets. Virginia is an active member of both the Iowa Network for Community Agriculture (INCA) and Practical Farmers of Iowa, and has worked extensively in her community promoting local foods.

Virginia Moser, P.O. Box 175, Garrison, Iowa 52229, 319.477.8863, vamos@netins.net

Diane Phillips learned about WFAN when she became a graduate student in sociology at Iowa State University, working with WFAN co-founder Betty Wells. Diane has worked on many WFAN projects, including the woman landowners survey which was organized through Betty's office at ISU. She is a strong supporter of women's, rural and sustainable issues.

Diane's e-mail address: drphill@ias-tate.edu

Stephanie Weisenbach, an Iowa native, is the Iowa Campaign Organizer for The Humane Society of the United States. She has background organizing local foods in grocery stores, apprenticeships on organic farms in Oregon, and working with the consensus process in a non-profit housing collective. She works on a campaign for farm animal welfare and sustainable agriculture. This involves addressing issues of confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and promoting alternatives such as sustainable local food systems and humane livestock production.

Stephanie's e-mail address: <sweisenbach@hsus.org>.

Betty Wells is one of the founding members of WFAN. She also serves as "professional facilitator," bringing to the network her experience in organizational and leadership development and some of the resources of her institution, Iowa State University, where she is a professor of sociology and extension sociologist. In addition to her work with WFAN, Betty works with ISU Extension's Nonprofit Management Institute and Life in Iowa programs, conducts participatory research with women farmland owners, teaches a Women's Studies course on Ecofeminism, and is active in ISU's graduate program in sustainable agriculture. Beyond the office, she lives in Ames with family and a menagerie of pets. She loves gardening, at least in early spring, and reading mysteries.

Betty Wells, 303 East Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011, 505.294.1104, bwells@iastate.edu

Danielle Wirth is a long time environmental activist, writer, teacher, and promoter of sustainable living. She currently teaches Ecology and

Environmental Science classes at the Des Moines Area Community College, and has also taught classes at Iowa State on topics in Eco-Feminism. She is one of the founding members of WFAN and has been a presenter at many area conferences on one of her special interests, prairielands and prairie restoration. She is a governor-appointed member to the State Organics Standards Board in Iowa, representing "the public" on that board.

Danielle Wirth, 1456 334th Road, Woodward, Iowa 50276. 515.438.1263, ehorizon@netins.net

Paid Staff

Our paid staff, who are also members of the Coordinating Council, are Denise O'Brien, Coordinator, and Linda Warren, treasurer:

Denise O'Brien is a long time organic farmer and farm activist. She has attended and been a presenter at countless events throughout the country and beyond, including the Women's Conference in Beijing, China, and the Rural Women's Workshop in Rome, Italy. She is a member of the first class of the prestigious Food and Society Policy Fellows for farm and food issues, a W.K. Kellogg Foundation-sponsored program. In 2000, O'Brien was inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame. Denise farms with her husband in Cass County, Iowa, where they specialize in local marketing of their berries, apples and turkeys.

Denise O'Brien, 59624 Chicago Road, Atlantic, Iowa 50022, 712.243.3264, cowfan@metc.net

Linda Warren lives in Madison, Wisconsin and works in the Capitol office of State Senator Russ Decker. She has previously owned an organic farm and continues to be involved in many women's and sustainable issues. She was chair of the certification review committee for Midwest Organic Services Association (MOSA, an organic certifier) and has been a presenter at a variety of conferences, speaking about local marketing projects and sustainable living choices.

Linda Warren, P.O. Box 1611, Madison, Wisconsin 53701-1611, 608-231-9717, <linda.warren@earthlink.net>.

Public Health

(Public Health, continued from page 1)
children ages 6-9 also bear the burden of a food industry gone wild.

Memories of my childhood are flanked with messages about joining a "new generation" of attractive, talented, affluent Americans - the Pepsi generation. The Coca Cola vs. Pepsi advertisement wars had one clear message: soft drinks were the "wave of the future."

Just what was the force behind that viscous wave of 10 teaspoons of sugar per 12 ounces? Corporate greed? Yes. Fattening America? Probably not.

Each month, 90 percent of all American children eat at McDonald's. Less than one-third engage in physical activity on a regular basis. Child obesity rates have more than doubled over the past three decades and continue to rise.

Need to Refocus

It is clear that the industry focused on selling to the family needs to refocus. With 5 million households headed by single parents and most of the rest led by two working individuals, time is a premium issue.

As families seek convenience and speed at mealtime, they fail to see that a bag of carrot sticks requires about the same effort to prepare as a frozen entrée. Furthermore, the carrots are cheaper and are more filling.

It seems as if "the wave of the future" has turned into a monsoon, forcing both institutions and individuals to reconsider food. We can no longer afford to have industry sit in one corner releasing syrupy beverages from hydrants while the public slurps through gigantic straws. The "real thing" is personal and corporate responsibility.

(Keecha Harris, MPH, RD, Birmingham, Alabama is a WFAN member and a 2001-2003 Kellogg Food and Society Policy Fellow, a program of the Jefferson Agricultural Institute and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy.)

Shared Leadership: Learning to Build a Strong Organization

WFAN Coordinating Council members Stacey Brown, Denise O'Brien, and Betty Wells participated in the second "Cultivating Leadership for a Changing Agriculture" program in late March. Also known as Shared Leadership (SL), the program is a collaboration between the Institute for Conservation Leadership (ICL) and the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST). SL is designed to foster and sustain efforts that promote a more localized, healthy and equitable food system by building the capacity of agriculture organizations and developing individual leadership skills and competencies. SL seeks to assist organizations in finding sustainable solutions to agricultural and food system problems and promote dialogue, understanding and collaboration among grassroots non-profits, scientific societies, and university institutes working on agricultural issues. SL was developed with a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

WFAN was selected in a competitive application process in the category of nonprofit sustainable agriculture organizations. We attended the first workshop SL-I last October with 30 people from eight organizations. We participated in activities designed to help us understand our leadership and organizational styles, and we interacted with representatives from organizations ranging from Rural Roots, a small sustainable agriculture organization in the northwest U.S., to the Tri-Societies, a large science-based organization with thousands of members.

The first and second workshops had a slightly different mix of participants and organizations. We were fortunate to be selected to attend both. Together, with the help of skilled facilitators, we developed action plans for WFAN which included formalizing the board of WFAN, creating a strategic fundraising plan, and formalizing the Network.

In the SL-II, we made more action plans to establish a decision-making process, to survey our members about the future directions for WFAN, and to develop role definitions for Coordinating Council members and staff. We continue to develop our plans during periodic conference calls, and we have planned a

face-to-face-meeting on the day prior to our summer meeting.

We would like to share a bit from each of our individual vantages:

Denise O'Brien

Denise: Formalization will bring about a stronger organizational structure. During the last six years WFAN has worked with volunteers as the Coordinating Council. By formalizing WFAN we have decided the annual meeting will be in the fall. We will also have mail elections so members can be nominated and elected to the Coordinating Council.

I came back with a renewed energy to accomplish the work before us. These training sessions have helped me sort out priorities and helped build my coordination skills. The time has also provided the opportunity to meet and work with people outside my limited sustainable agriculture world. Shared Leadership provided a time away from work and family where I was able to concentrate on the work of strengthening WFAN.

Betty Wells

Betty: Organizationally, SL accelerated a process of development begun at our fifth anniversary meeting last summer (generously supported by Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation and the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture). At that meeting, we focused on developing our leadership base and member diversity. Outcomes of the meeting were ready-made for inclusion in our application to participate in Shared Leadership.

Personally, several place-based memories still resonate with me. At the first session, we were welcomed to the site (west of Pike's Peak in the Colorado Rockies) by members of the Ute Nation. We were told the original names of geographic features of the landscape (not Pikes Peak!). When asked about the meaning of the colored ribbons pinned to his shirt, an elder explained that the red ribbon represented the coming of the white man from the east (red to signify the sun rising in the east) and of unre-

lenting pace of changes accompanying this unrelenting wave of newcomers. I took from this story an understanding of the need to step outside of our "western" perspective for a deeper appreciation of other more systematic, and more sustainable worldviews. The participation of the International Indian Treaty Council, a grassroots sustainable ag organization, in



Stacey Brown and Denise O'Brien mapping out organizational plans at Shared Leadership.

SL-I underscored this recognition.

The built and natural landscapes enhanced my experience at Asilomar (Refuge by the Sea) site of SL-II. Many of the arts and crafts style buildings of this original YWCA camp designed by architect Julia Morgan are now in the Registry of National Historic Places. As I contemplated this space designed by a woman for young women, I pondered too our efforts in WFAN to make a space for women and the stark gender distribution at SL-I and II. The scientific societies were large and with few exceptions male. The sustainable ag organizations were small and with few exceptions female. What might the full incorporation of the perspectives of women contribute to the search for sustainability?

Stacey Brown

Stacey: Last fall in the mountains of Colorado and this spring on the beach in California, I feel we were truly provided a blessing to reflect on and create plans for moving WFAN forward. In the midst of cramped agendas, we don't often take the time to do what we did at both of the Shared Leadership sessions. I came back home feeling strength from focusing on myself as a leader in WFAN and the rest of my life, and a focus on WFAN as an evolving organization. After sharing our

Coordinator's Corner

action plans from SL-I, the group of us who had been making business decisions for WFAN became officially the Coordinating Council. We started preparing organizational by-laws and exploring some steps that we will one day need to take if we decide to apply for 501(c)3 status on our own (currently we are a Tides Center Project). SL-I was beneficial because it helped us work on our first action plans. We weren't necessarily at the same place as the other organizations. During SL-II, we built on what we learned in Colorado and were pushed to think about how to collaborate with some of the CAST organizations.

When I first came to WFAN as a Mission Intern, I struggled with some ideas and notions of where an organization should be as a formal entity and I saw some places where we had potential to grow that were hard to communicate because I was new and an outsider and the organization wasn't yet at that place. The Shared Leadership trainings brought up some of the ideas that I had in the beginning, and I was now ready to be at those trainings and wanting to take in as much as possible. I feel honored that I could be there as a part of this organization.

At the end of SL-II, someone read a message written by the Hopi Elders in Oraibi, Arizona. It starts like this, "You have been telling the people that this is the Eleventh Hour. Now you must go

I came back with renewed energy to accomplish the work before us.

back and tell the people that this is the hour. And there are things to be considered: Where are you living? What are you doing? What are your relationships? Are you in right relation? Where is your water? Know your garden. It is time to speak the truth. Create your community. Be good to each other. And do not look outside yourself for the leader." These words really resonated with me and my time as a participant at the Shared Leadership trainings. WFAN is in her hour and there are things to be considered. I hope that you, the members, will join us on this journey and be leaders to help this organization continue to grow.

by Denise O'Brien, Coordinator for WFAN

As I write for the summer issue, I have a lot of things on my mind. The fiasco with the war in Iraq hits me really hard. So far here in mid-May, they have found no weapons of mass destruction. That was the reason for spending horrendous amounts of money in the first place. Victory is being declared. How can a victory be declared when thousands of lives have been lost and millions of acres of food crops have been destroyed? A deeper question is, how can our mainstream press be an accomplice to the falseness of the whole set up?

I read that the agriculture system in Iraq has been rendered useless with farmers not having access to credit, seeds, fertilizers, gas and oil. The United Nations reports that as many as 24.5 million people will go hungry as a result of Iraq's agricultural collapse. On top of all this, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman has appointed former Cargill executive Daniel Amstutz to lead the U.S. government's reconstruction effort in Iraq. Amstutz has been involved with trade negotiations unfavorable to the family farm system of agriculture since the Ronald Reagan era. How can this Administration be so blatant about putting corporations in control? Surely with the help of our sisters around the world we can change that!

But you may say, life must go on and we must continue to do the work that we do for food systems, sustainable communities and environmental integrity. That is so true. The work we all do is important now more than ever. A sustainable, diversified, decentralized system of food production is the only way to food security. Those in power do not understand this and so it is up to us to continue to build and support a diverse food system.

In this newsletter Keecha Harris writes about nutrition and what the advertisers want us to think and do. Women, Food and Agriculture Network strives to be at the forefront of innovative ways to produce and distribute quality, healthy food. Whether you are a farmer, an educator, an activist or professional, it is imperative that we educate ourselves

about food and food systems and participate in making change from the current industrialized model that ruins everyone's lives.

I hope that in the upcoming months you all enjoy the warm weather and the abundant food. Join the struggle for a just food system - whether you grow food or buy food, we must all work together.

Resources

<http://www.igtn.org/> — International Gender and Trade Network

<http://www.coc.org/> — Center of Concern, Global Women's Project

www.oxfamamerica.org

<http://www.foodcircles.missouri.edu/> — Food Circles Networking Project, Connecting Farmers, Consumers and Communities

<http://www.hsus.org/ace/11513> — Humane Society of the United States Farm Animals

Call for Papers

The Mid-Atlantic Women's Studies Association is calling for papers for its annual conference, "Women in Rural Communities: Maintaining Activism, Cultivating New Experiences, Advancing Scholarship"

Place: Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, Feb 21, 2004. Submission deadline: Oct. 3, 2003.

Papers, panels, and workshops in all areas related to women's studies teaching, research, and practice inside and outside the classroom are welcome. Focus is on the lived experiences of rural women including student voices. Proposals should include: Name of Contact Person, Mailing address, E-mail address, 1 page description/abstract, type of session, equipment required, and names, addresses, e-mails and 50-word bios of all presenters. Send proposals to: Dr. Simona Hill, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, PA 17870 <hill@susqu.edu>.

**Women, Food
& Agriculture
Network**

A Tides Center Project
59624 Chicago Road
Atlantic, IA 50022-9619

Women, Food, & Agriculture Network

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on issues of food systems,
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Women, Food and Agriculture Network

Membership is either \$30 or \$10 (your choice). Fill out this form and make your check payable to Tides-WFAN. This newsletter is a benefit of membership. We are a network of women with food, agricultural, environmental and economic concerns. Please share your thoughts, ideas, successes, interests, and solutions with us.

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Women, Food & Agriculture

c/o Linda Warren

PO Box 1611

Madison, WI 53701-1611

Email (print clearly): _____

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