

# Sample New Ideas at Upcoming Symposium

Join us on October 16 in Oklahoma City to hear a gathering of top speakers from across the nation address these questions: How can we stop the further decline of family farms and rural communities? How can we eliminate hunger in the heartland? How can we reestablish fair, competitive agricultural markets? How can we create a food system that is more responsive to the needs of people in both rural and urban areas?

*Bringing in the Sheaves: A Symposium on Hunger, Farming, and the Fairness of the American Food System* will be held on World Food Day. The goal of the symposium is to bring fresh ideas to the harvest table. Speakers will address creating a food system that is fair to farmers and ensures that every American has access to wholesome food.

Is this symposium for you? It is if you are a person of faith, policy

maker, student, educator, farmer, rancher, or just someone who is concerned about hunger in America, sustainable agriculture and rural development, equity for farmers, and ways that urban and rural people can work together.

The event is being sponsored by the Kerr Center with support from Oklahoma Farmers Union, the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, and the Oklahoma Conference of Churches.

## Iowa Food Policy Council Created

—Anita Poole

Governor Vilsack of Iowa recently created the Iowa Food Policy Council to advise him on all aspects of the food production system in that state. He appointed Drake University law professor Neil Hamilton to chair the new group. Hamilton will speak about the council and the value of promoting local food systems at the *Bringing in the Sheaves* symposium.

One stated goal for the council is to help identify how state and local governments can create opportunities for farmers and consumers. The council was designed to include people from all areas of the food system. Stakeholders represented include: agricultural

producers, food processors, food distributors, food retailers, policy and legal experts, representatives from the Cooperative Extension Service, urban agriculture and education representatives, hunger prevention and food security experts, environmental policy experts, economic development experts, and a health service representative.

The council was asked to assess Iowa's agricultural production by looking at how much food is produced in Iowa yearly and comparing that amount to how much food is purchased and consumed by state residents. The council was also charged with the duty of determining how much

Iowa-produced food was processed, distributed and marketed within that state.

Other tasks: determining what state and local policies keep food grown in Iowa from being marketed effectively. Any barriers that limit access to those suffering from hunger are also to be examined. The council is also looking for innovative local food system activities that could be implemented statewide.

Some recent recommendations made by the council include encouraging the governor to require state institutions to buy Iowa-produced food products and asking him to hire a statewide food security coordinator who would facilitate state

programs to address hunger and nutrition issues. The council also called for the state to develop an aggressive marketing plan to make everyone in the state more aware of the economic and social benefits of buying Iowa-grown foods.

The council has received funding from private donations, federal grant assistance, and institutional support from Drake University. The USDA Risk Management Agency is also providing financial support for Drake University, under the direction of Professor Hamilton, to coordinate setting up and/or administering food policy councils in three more states: Connecticut, North Carolina and Utah.

"Hunger is a sad reality for thousands of farmers, ranchers and low-income families living in rural America today. A proud generation of farmers and ranchers in the world's most advanced agricultural society are depending on donations of food from social service agencies, church pantries and soup kitchens to feed their families. It is unfathomable that the people who grow our crops and raise our livestock need charity to survive."

America's  
Second Harvest



## Consider this:

- People are hungry in rural America— one of ten households faces hunger daily. Large amounts of food are taken from Oklahoma City to rural counties each week to feed the hungry.
- A small percentage of mega-sized farms produce most of the food in America. The vast majority of farms do not earn enough to support an individual, never mind a family.
- A small number of agri-corporations are taking control of the food system from start to finish: from seed to store, from chick to chicken chunk.
- Monopolies, such as exist today in agriculture, historically have no incentive to keep consumer prices reasonable.

## On the other hand:

- Small farms can be as efficient as large farms.
- Studies show that rural communities surrounded by a large number of family-sized farms are more viable than those surrounded by a small number of large, corporate farms.
- Consumers want to eat quality food that is grown nearby: subscription agriculture and farmers' markets are booming.
- Given the opportunity, independent, small- and medium-sized family farms can raise crops and food animals in a sustainable way— it is being done all over the world.
- In short: the food system we have now is not inevitable. Consumers, agriculturists, activists, and policy makers can join together to grow a new, better food system.

## Bringing in the Sheaves will feature speakers from these important organizations:

- America's Second Harvest
- Iowa Food Policy Council
- National Catholic Rural Life Conference
- The Organization for Competitive Markets
- The Rolling Prairie Food Cooperative
- The Rural Life Ministry of the Diocese of Toledo
- Henry A. Wallace Center for Agricultural and Environmental Policy at Winrock International

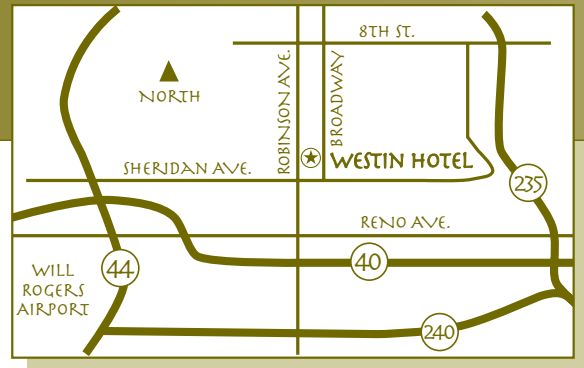
Also featured will be speakers from groups and agencies shaping Oklahoma's response to the problems of hunger and fairness in rural areas, including:

- Office of the Attorney General of Oklahoma
- Cherokee Nation
- Oklahoma Department of Agriculture
- Oklahoma State Senate

Join us on this special day.

# AGENDA

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2001



**Reception immediately following the symposium. Refreshments for conference attendees, speakers, and guests. Book Signing — *The Next Green Revolution: Essential Steps for a Healthy, Sustainable Agriculture* by Jim Horne and Maura McDermott**

8:30	Registration/Viewing of Displays
9:00	<i>Bringing in the Sheaves</i> — Opening Remarks, <b>Jim Horne</b> , President and CEO, Kerr Center
9:15-9:45	<i>Hunger in the Land of Plenty: Poverty and Hunger In Rural America</i> — <b>Doug O'Brien</b> , America's Second Harvest
9:50-10:30	<i>Mergers: Efficiency or Ego? (And How They Hurt Farmers, Rural Communities and Consumers)</i> — <b>Michael Stumo</b> , Organization for Competitive Markets
10:30-10:45	Break and Viewing of Displays
10:45-11:15	<i>Developing Local Food Systems: The Kansas Experience</i> — <b>Dan Nagengast</b> , Rolling Prairie Cooperative
11:20-12:00	<i>The Iowa Food Policy Council: The Value of Promoting Local Food Systems</i> — <b>Neil Hamilton</b> , Iowa Food Council
12:00-1:30	Lunch (at The Westin): <i>The Value of Rural Life: Why We Need a Healthy Rural America</i> — <b>Bro. David Andrews</b> , National Catholic Rural Life Conference
1:30-2:00	<i>Respecting the Land and Those Who Work It: The Cherokee Experience</i> — <b>Chief Chad Smith</b> , Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma
2:05-2:35	<i>Connecting Farm and City, Uniting Rural and Urban: Creating a Food System that Works For All</i> — <b>Sr. Christine Pratt</b> , Rural Life Ministry, Diocese of Toledo, Ohio
2:35-3:00	Break, Visit Displays
3:00- 4:30	<i>Increasing Fairness and Opportunity for Farmers: A Panel Discussion on Food Policy</i> — Oklahoma Senator <b>Paul Muegge</b> , Attorney General <b>Drew Edmondson</b> , Wallace Center Director <b>Kate Clancy</b> , Moderator: Oklahoma Agriculture Commissioner <b>Dennis Howard</b>
4:30	Closing Remarks, Invitation to Reception and Book Signing— <b>Maura McDermott</b> , Communications Director, Kerr Center

Cost: \$25, \$10 for students if received at Kerr Center by October 2. After that date, \$30 for all attendees.

Registration fee includes lunch only if registration received by October 11.

Check box if you plan to attend the evening reception/book signing.

Make check payable to Kerr Center.

## BRINGING IN THE SHEAVES

### REGISTRATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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