



Farmer Rights

Farmers have the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining:

- The freedom to form groups, associations or cooperatives with other farmers;
- To choose democratically the groups' representative to negotiate with buyers without any interference from the buyer;
- They should have the right to full access to information about the market, pricing and available supply.
- They should have right to have multiple competitive and viable options for where to sell their products.

Farmers should have the right to fair prices:

- that cover the costs of production of the farm's products using sustainable, agroecological practices;
- fixed costs for maintenance of the farm, land costs, taxes, fees, insurance;
- living wages for the farmer as well as for everyone who works on the farm that cover the costs of shelter, high quality, culturally appropriate food, health care, education, professional development, transportation, savings, self-improvement, recreation and retirement;
- investments for the farm's future, training and development for the farmer and farmworkers
- plus a fair return on the farmer's investment.

Farmers should have the right to contracts with buyers that are fair and equitable:

- resulting from good faith negotiations with a buyer;
- fair prices;
- a fair share of the food dollar at final point of purchase;
- fair conflict resolution procedures with no retaliation for raising issues;
- contract specifications such as recapture of capital investment, anti-discrimination clauses, prohibition of the termination of contracts without just cause, and profit-sharing incentives.
- Should the buyer not be able to afford to pay an adequate price, the buyer must fully disclose financial records and commit to increasing payments to farmers as finances improve.
- Buyer commitments to long-term and stable purchasing relationships

Would-be farmers should have the right of access to the resources to farm:

- access to secure tenure of high quality farm land;
- farm work as a respected career path;
- access to credit and capital to pay for necessary training, buildings, equipment, livestock;
- guarantee of parity prices in exchange for supply management and a commitment to conservation and regenerative practices;
- opportunity to create a farm that fits the farmer's own wholistic goals, that can be more than a production unit, but also a center of learning, cooperation and recreation.

If we want to make real progress towards a more resilient and sustainable food system, we have to do a much better job of linking justice for farmworkers and justice for farmers. Would-be farmers need to understand that they will probably spend years as employees - working for other farmers, working as hired farmers. When they become managers or farm owners, they should be committed to adopting fair labor and pricing practices.

In the global food system, it is difficult to make finances work on a family scale farm. The number of farms in the US has shrunk by over 4 million over the past generation. When we talk about food justice, we are not just talking about something farmers need to do for others - for exploited farm workers or undocumented dish washers. Farmers need food justice too.