

Hunger, Good Soil and the Value of a Human Life

One of every nine people in the world is chronically hungry and undernourished. Half of them are farmers. In Canadian terms, it would be as if every person in our farming province of Alberta were going hungry.

As followers of Jesus, we know there are no small or insignificant people and proclaim that every child, woman and man bears the image of God. Our faith challenges us to live by Jesus' own standard of service and sacrifice.

Globally, more than 56% of farming is done by 500 million small-scale subsistence farmers tilling plots of less than 2 hectares. These farmers are coming into increasing distress and struggle to sustain their farms. Even slight variations in temperatures and rain patterns negatively affect the growth of food staples, so extreme weather events such as this year's El Nino, excessive heat, storms and heavy rains wreak havoc on crops like wheat, maize, soybeans and rice. The push towards industrialization and monocultures mean small farmers have difficulty being competitive in the market. These pressures mean there is greater food insecurity, more crop disease, higher food prices, poorer nutrition, and the loss of small-scale farming. As farms fail, hunger, malnutrition and famine result. Already, 23% of Sub-Saharan Africa is hungry and malnourished.



It is urgent that we provide development assistance to farmers with small landholdings in the Global South to help them transition to conservation agriculture, rainwater harvesting, agro forestry and crop diversification to adapt to changing weather patterns.

The Good Soil Campaign allows CBWC church members to act from our hearts and our faith commitments. Like the prophets from Samuel and Daniel to John the Baptist, we can raise our voice to our civil authorities and ask the Canadian government to fulfill our international obligations and support small-scale farmers in the Global South by restoring development assistance to agriculture to the 2008-2010 level (when Canada led the world in responding to hunger) of \$450 million annually.

By participating in The Good Soil campaign and as good stewards of our God-made world, we are making a collective statement that we value the life of people who live on the margins. By doing so, we are following God's call to reduce poverty, feed the hungry and work toward a more just world.

Good Soil events are being planned for clusters of congregations in Saskatoon, Edmonton and Vancouver. In other areas, resources are available for worship services or special events. Good Soil representatives have met with MPs and cabinet ministers, presenting them with signed letters from pastors and individuals. For further information and for dates and times of events, please go to unbendthetrend.ca

Good Soil: Unbend the Trend is a partnership of the CBWC, Canadian Baptist Ministries, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and A Rocha Canada. Information from Canadian Foodgrains Bank, Food Tank and National Geographic.



What You Can Do

PRAY for farmers in both the Global South and Canada.

KNOW where your food comes from.

VISIT farmers to understand their work, challenges and viewpoints better.

BEND a spoon as part of the Good Soil campaign and send it to your MP with a letter

HOST or attend a one-day Good Soil seminar — find details at unbendthetrend.ca

DEVOTE a worship service to Good Soil and food security.

TALK to your political representatives at all levels to share your concerns about food security.

VOLUNTEER at grow projects like those in Brownfield, AB and Moosomin, SK.

LEARN about the impacts climate change and extreme weather events have on farming.

REDUCE your environmental impact by using less energy and avoiding toxic chemicals.

DON'T WASTE food. Eat what you buy, and compost your food waste.

TRY less popular grains and cereals to support crop diversity and global farmers.

JOIN a community-supported agriculture project and buy seasonal foods whenever possible.

SUPPORT farmers markets and local growers by buying their produce.

ACT in solidarity with Canadian and global small-scale farmers by planting a community garden or growing some of your own food in your back yard.

SHARE garden produce with those in need.

