

**2012 Macalester College International Roundtable**  
**Feeding the World: Globalization, Food and Agriculture in the 21st Century**  
**Call to Action**

**Problem Statement**

We, the Macalester College Student Call to Action Committee, are part of a generation embedded in a broken food system that fails to distribute food in an ethical, equitable and environmentally sound manner. This system strips us of our autonomies, disempowers our communities and threatens the cultural values, traditions, and sovereignty of marginalized people. It has far reaching consequences for long-term environmental resilience and sustainability, social equity, and human health, leaving a significant portion of the population food insecure. This form of structural violence affects everyone, some more than others, and makes it imperative that the global community comes together to address this topic of food security and the global food system.

As Macalester college students we recognize that we have the privilege and responsibility to our immediate communities and the world to be a part of a sustainable and equitable solution. As a college we have the values of multiculturalism, internationalism, academic excellence and civic engagement. In accordance with these values, we call the Macalester community to take action informed by thoughtful analysis of the problems that we face. This action requires collaboration between many stakeholders, including individuals, communities, and institutions. The following are the recommendations by the committee as a first step of this ongoing process.

**Recommendations**

**Cafe Mac**

Make Cafe Mac more environmentally sustainable.

*Call for the Food System Working Group (to be formed shortly in response to the Real Food Challenge) and Bon Appétit to continually review Macalester's progress on the real food challenge and recommend other improvements to sustainability within the food system at Macalester, by continuing to:*

- *Expand local food purchasing through Farm to Fork and other programs, especially for local smallholder and minority farmers.*
- *Educate students on the importance of local food and expand the local food challenge days, clean plate day and other sustainability programs in Café Mac.*
- *Reduce campus food waste through education and exploring alternatives to utilize food not eaten in Café Mac.*
- *Label all food in Cafe Mac for dietary restrictions (Vegan, Vegetarian, Gluten Free, other allergies etc.) and identify its origin.*
- *Facilitate Café Mac Recipe days to share cooking practices with students.*

Make Cafe Mac more equitable and socially just.

- *Ensure fair wages and labor practices for all people involved in supplying Macalester's food, including Bon Appétit employees, farmers, distributors, truck drivers, and marketers.*

## **Administration, Programs and Academics on Campus**

Support groups, organizations and departments on campus in promoting thought, reflection and programming around food issues.

- *Host Department of Multicultural Life events throughout the year that address intersections between food and identities.*
- *Encourage cultural orgs on campus to raise awareness about the food struggles in their regions. This will get students involved in the political discourse of these regions and how that relates to food security, food sovereignty and food aid.*
- *Facilitate discussions among students concerning long term implications of philanthropic donations, especially in post-disaster responses, because of the links between development and food security.*
- *Identify local businesses and restaurants that support socially and environmentally sustainable and just practices, and distribute this information to students*
- *Create a pocket of grant money for food related issues, and collaboration between food and other issues through the Institute for Global Citizenship*
- *Encourage residential life to consider additional alternative living situations/communal cooking spaces in which students can prepare their own food to express their autonomy over food decisions.*
- *Disseminate information about farmer's markets to students on campus.*

## **Academics**

Increase academic focus on food and agriculture systems and further develop structure for academic and practical engagement with these issues.

- *Offer a Food Systems and Agriculture concentration.*
  - *Hire more tenure-track faculty involved in food issues across the disciplines*
  - *Establish an endowed chair of Food Studies*
  - *Create a class about Minnesota and Midwestern food policies and systems and its relevance to the global food system, which can facilitate student engagement in food issues.*
  - *Create Food Faculty Colloquium modeled after the Urban Colloquium to increase incorporation of food issues into more courses*
- *Prioritize the awareness of the effects of academic research (and corporate funding of academic research) on communities around the world.*
- *Collaborate with other colleges and universities involved in agriculture and food issues.*
- *Recognize alternative cultural meanings of food and agriculture and strive to incorporate marginalized voices in academic discussion around food issues.*

## **Investment**

Macalester's investment policy should reflect a commitment to global food justice.

- *Require the Investment Office to increase transparency of all investments relevant to food and agriculture in our endowment to identify how Macalester's money affects the global/local food system negatively or positively.*
- *Develop socially responsible investment criteria, especially with regards to the food and agricultural sector, which will be part of the formal considerations when making investment decisions.*
- *Create a school-wide policy for socially reasonable purchasing of food and agricultural products (e.g. clothing, textiles, food etc.) and only fund purchases that meet these requirements.*
- *Develop College requirements for working with banks in regards to economic, environmental & social justice standards, recognizing how financial/lending institutions sustain structural inequality and dispossess communities from food security.*
  - *Following the example of Minneapolis Public Schools, move Macalester money out of offending banks and create a Request for Proposals for banks that meet our requirements.*

## **External Relationships**

Macalester's relationships with other communities and actors should empower efforts towards food security, sovereignty and justice.

- *Macalester as a whole must expand partnerships with local, state and national governments' departments of agriculture and food aid arms and use institutional power to lobby for sustainable food practices in politics.*
  - *Students and faculty can increase the public support for programs geared towards food sovereignty globally, for example, the monetization of food aid and increasing title five food aid.*
- *Engage in dialogue with local communities and support their efforts for food justice.*
- *Develop internships with private and public sector in Agriculture and Food.*
- *Lobby for legislation prioritizing transparency of the food system, especially with regards to genetically modified foods.*
- *Lobby the government to recognize and prioritize tribal sovereignty*
  - *Take a firm stance against the genetic mapping and modification of wild rice in Minnesota and all Native (Indigenous communities) foods.*
  - *Assert treaty rights and support the return of illegally gained treaty lands to American Indian nations.*

## **Closing Statement**

We recognize that the document represents a wide variety of voices. We celebrate this diversity and invite everyone to continue this discussion, taking this document as a call to action that is open to further refinement and reflection. We realize that everyone - the government, community, individuals - will need to work together to come up with a solution that will lead to a tangible improvement in the situation of food security and food sovereignty in the world.

In addition, we recommend that the college cancel classes during future International Round Tables so that students may attend this event.

*Sincerely,*

Christían Pederson Behrends, Sarah Horowitz, Caroline Devany, Maya Pisel, James Lindgren, Margo Faulk, Akilah Sykes, Keo Corak, Alexa Simpson, Zhe Yu Lee, Brianna Besch, Karen Weldon, Sarah O'Connor, Siyabonga Ndwandwe, John Sankara, Shaina Kasper.