

## **Peace, Economics and the Future of Food**

The dark side, the bright side and the role of the farmer  
By Lakshmi Landa

The present economic and cultural system in this country that is rapidly spreading around the globe is self-destructive. The good news is that there are people hungry for a new and spiritual way of living that are waking up and stepping up to the challenges we face. Food plays a critical role in this impending and necessary “revolution” with Biodynamic farmers and conscious consumers playing a leading role.

**On the Dark Side**, many people by now know that there are problems in our system but how deeply and to what extent they can be reversed is difficult to comprehend. To name a few: Global warming, endless war, chronic and degenerative disease, drug dependency (prescribed and illegal), disgruntled youth, credit card enslavement, declining education, privatization of water, escalating national debt, etc. etc. We are facing a sick people, sick environment, and sick economy.

Socially, we are disconnected from each other, nature and the earth that sustains us when business-as-usual, regulations, profits and fear rule over kindness, compassion and love. Lew Brown in his boycott call named *wearenotbuyingit.com* says: “It is a lie that we are living in a civilized world at all. The lie is that we are in a state of freedom and that democracy is a reality... The entire globe, all human affairs, has fallen from grace.” He continues: “We are all subject to greed – each and every institution we have grown up with is corrupted and engineered to make not citizens, not even human beings, but rather damaged and easily controlled “consumers” who will work to their dying breath to perpetuate the system itself.... The system rewards the ruthless and destroys the humanity within us all.”

Besides self-destructing from within, we must be concerned about the global effect. “There is not a single conflict that is not being fought over resources,” said Wangari Maathi, Nobel prize winner, “Minorities must be given respect even if the majority are given their way, because if not, sooner or later people will rise up to claim their rights.”

If the above examples are not enough, look closely at the effects of depleted uranium, which is used extensively in our own weapons in the Middle East. Besides sickness among the veterans, their children are like war veterans themselves missing fingers, arms, legs just like children born in Iraq. These are birth defects since the first Gulf war.

Spiritually, not only are these things disconnecting us from our true nature but we must know that our ill-treatment of people, land, and animals will come back to us karmatically. It already is.

Heinz Grotzke, one of the early leaders in Biodynamics in this country says in the forward to our Spiritual Food booklet: A Plan of Action: “Materialism above all

destroys life and property to the extreme... It is not concerned about human needs, human sorrow and human suffering.”

We are at the height of the age of materialism. Is there any thoughtful person who is not concerned to the point of needing to take action?

*CREE INDIAN PROPHECY*

*Only after the last tree has been cut down*

*Only after the last river has been poisoned*

*Only after the Last fish has been caught*

*Only then will you find that money cannot be eaten*

**On The Bright Side** many people are envisioning and articulating a new and beautiful future. People are waking up and beginning to consider, conceptualize and create a new way of being. Note the annual World Social Forums, the economic resistance action organized by Lew Brown for the holiday season, Bioneers – scientists for change, and Biodynamic Farmers to name a few. Look to the supplemental materials under New Economic Model on the site map of [www.globalcoalitionforpeace.net](http://www.globalcoalitionforpeace.net) for much thoughtfulness and many working models of a new and positive future.

It is important to note that the point of critical mass that could bring about a change has not yet been reached and will not be reached until a sensible alternative is clear. We believe that farmers and consumers will play a pivotal role in creating this alternative. A “Peaceful Revolution”<sup>1</sup> is needed; one where there are neither losers nor winners; where correction is done by overcoming, not by destroying.

**How can Farms Help?**

Thoughtful, conscious, visionary farmers can offer the sensible alternative. The Spiritual Farmers we work with through SFNM have inspired us to dream in the following ways:

**Farms as Center of the New Economy**

We all must eat! The ecological, social and economic implications of the process of food and nutrition have vast ramifications in the fabric of society. They can be a model of Aparigraha – A New Paradigm for a Culture because of the Abundance of nature and because of the Spirit of service already built in to the farmer’s livelihood. Structures such as CSA that include a living wage and prices that reflect the true costs of production, offer a model for Solidarity- Based Economy. Small farms build local economy and community, which offset globalization and afford opportunity for new ways of doing business with producers and consumers working together.

**Farms as a Model of Sustainability**

Garbage (compost) produces LIFE on a farm! What better example of recycling and sustainability? Also, small, conscious and spiritual farms such as the Biodynamic orchardists and CSAs that we work with, avoid chemicals in land, water, air, plant,

animal, people; limit single-use packaging, limit oil consumption with proper management and a local customer base. Many are experimenting in ways to heal the soil and earth. In a nutshell, Biodynamic farmers practice mutual respect and reverence for all of God's creation.

#### Farms as an Educational and Social Center

These kinds of farms will teach people to grow food and study the forces of nature. They can help others retreat from city life and "detoxify" body, mind and soul; can offer opportunities for service learning/volunteering such as for alternatives to military service, troubled youth or a year off before college, and will encourage young people to take up farming as a respectable career. This has happened in Cuba where organic farming became necessary after the loss of imported oil and food. <sup>2</sup>

#### A Spiritual Center

Farms can be the "Sensible Alternative" we all desperately need. By its very nature the farmer's life is conducive to a spiritual lifestyle. Farming and Meditation go together which is much discussed by Rudolf Steiner. Farms and Karma Yoga (self-less service) definitely go together; what farmer doesn't need extra hands and what spiritual seeker doesn't need to learn self-less service firsthand? Farms can be a retreat and conference center uniting spiritual people just as Camphill Village in Pennsylvania has served as our retreat location for 8 years.

We revere farmers. The sensible alternative that will move us all towards critical mass and a bright future could be waiting for us just around the corner.... at a farm.

<sup>1</sup> for the full text, write for a copy or see [www.schooloflife.org](http://www.schooloflife.org), > SFNM > link on left.

<sup>2</sup> The *Power of Community*, is a powerful documentary about peak oil and the special period in Cuba after the Soviet Union fell.