



Being a Consumer

I am a lousy consumer, as Cathleen frequently reminds me. When she urges me to buy a second pair of pants I am apt to say, but I only have two legs. Shirts? Well, after Cathleen has turned the collar and the cuffs are worn through I do admit it is time for a replacement – but only one, not two. I tend to believe that if some new item is purchased, something has to be given away (or find its appropriate home in the rag-bag.) After 20 minutes in a shopping mall I get a huge urge to flee, whether or not I have found what I was looking for.

Really, it's not that I am a bad consumer, I'm not a consumer at all. A consumer is an artefact of The Market. The responsibility of a consumer is to participate in the market, spend time shopping in the malls, to purchase stuff, and of course to consume. But if you look closely at what's out on the curb on garbage day it will appear that many folks have a hard time actually consuming what they have purchased. It's great that Ottawa now has a Green Bin program for compostable waste, but we sent our free bin back to the City since with our own composters we would have a hard time finding enough material for it, even every other week. I guess we are both bad consumers.

Some years ago, I got a speaker-phone, because it's hard for me to talk on a regular handset with my hearing aids. Last week I realized that the funny buzzing noise on the phone was not just my deteriorating hearing, it was the speakerphone that was breaking down. Time for a new one. So off I went to get a new one from Bell. After a couple of tries at two different stores in two different malls, I found that the only such phone they offer is actually dysfunctional: I could hear but no one could hear me! Returning the phone to the store each time, the only thing I could think of to say to the young, obviously inexperienced clerk was, please do not try to sell this piece of junk to anyone else. No point in asking to speak to the management, or in asking the clerk to convey a message. Who knows where 'management' might be, or whether 'they' would be the least bit interested in hearing from an ornery customer. Who, then, is responsible for the dysfunctional phone?

Editors' Note: Try as we might, we could not avoid devoting a lot of space to Haiti and Africa in this issue. We feel that what is being done to Haiti and Africa starkly illustrates the way the world is being organized for the benefit of capital and the wealthy elite of the world. And we do feel that we need to expose the mega-context of the efforts for food sovereignty, ecological agriculture and local food provisioning worldwide.

The one thing I shop for regularly is socks – they actually wear out in due course. So off I go to The Bay, to get the McGregor socks I have bought for as long as I can remember. I mean, it's a good Canadian brand and who would want to go comparison shopping for socks! I try to find someone responsible for the mess of mixed up sizes and 50 different styles/fibre contents/sizes (regardless of what the labels say). Who can help me? Who to complain to? On one foray to the sock department I happened upon a guy from McGregor who was trying to make sense of the display and restock it. In a brief and

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GRANDMA MCGREGOR

rather amusing conversation, he acknowledged that once McGregor shut down its Toronto factory and outsourced production to China, quality and predictability had gone down. Now it's all marketing, and McGregor owns most of the other recognized brands as well. So what he was really telling me, with a note of resignation, was that there was no one responsible to complain to.

As we write, farmers' markets are just opening across the country for the new season – more and more of them every year. Isn't one of the big reasons they are so popular is that with both you know exactly who is responsible? If the apple is really good, and the meat super flavourful, you can compliment the person who grew or raised it. If the asparagus turned out to be beyond its prime, or there was hollow-heart in the potatoes, you could report this to the farmer on your next visit to the market. The markets do offer a different set of choices than most other food retailers, but the important choice is to go to the market in the first place and to embed your food purchasing in a social relationship.

Which brings us to the People's Food Policy Project. This grassroots endeavour, which has engaged about 1,000 people across Canada, aims at the policy framework of food choices. The project rejects the notion that we have no option but to choose among the alternatives put forward by the globalized food industry, and insists that people should have the authority to frame the alternatives themselves. It's based on a vision of a society in which nobody goes hungry and everyone has a strong connection to the sources of their food, where food sources and food providers are honoured and food is understood as the essential base of both life and community.



The project has spent the past year and a half having conversations at “kitchen table meetings” all over the country. This process was chosen to emphasize and build on the work that people are already doing to create local food sovereignty through projects and programs that support people's ability to feed themselves and their communities, respect and sustain the environment, provide sustainable livelihoods for farmers, fishers, and others who provide food, and ensure that this does not endanger the livelihoods or environments of people elsewhere.

In the end, almost 300 different policy proposals were submitted. These are currently being reviewed by volunteer teams of academic and community experts,

who are sorting them into about ten policy areas and making sure that the evidence for each proposal is clear, consulting frequently with the project animators (also volunteers) to make sure that the message from the community participants is maintained.

Needless to say, this is a lengthy process, and we expect the first set of questions for public commentary to be posted on the project website (<http://peoplesfoodpolicy.ca>) by September. Another round of community meetings and feedback will take place in the fall and the draft will then form a large part of the program of the biennial National Assembly of Food Secure Canada, which will be November 26-28th in Montreal. After the participants at the Assembly have had a chance to work through it, the final draft will be prepared and announced in early 2011.

Like the tip of the iceberg, however, the food policy itself is just the most visible part of the process. The larger part of the project is to enhance the many and various food projects that are the building-blocks of food sovereignty on the ground – that build relationships between people who farm, fish, and hunt and the people who eat that food, that include all people in the food circle, that help people manage our behaviour in relation to the natural elements so as to nurture and sustain them for the future. The link to food policy is then based on this reality.

In our view, the social dynamics of this approach are contrary to the concept of a ‘right to food’. As I have discussed in “The Tyranny of Rights”, the notion of a right in the Western legal context is a claim by an individual against the State, or the society. It thus warps the social relations and personal as well as community responsibility inherent in the vision of food sovereignty.

We are clearly a long way from such a general assumption of responsibility, whether it's the telephone manufacturers or the purveyors of socks – or our Member of Parliament, John Baird, who has made it clear that he is not the least bit interested in hearing from me. Like his boss Harper, he feels no responsibility to me. Otherwise he might actually answer one of my letters rather than have a staff person (who has no real responsibility) send an acknowledgement that my letter was received.

The grand question in all of this is: What happens to ethics when there is no responsibility?

– B.K. (& C.K.)

HAITI

No end to the colonialism

Over the past two decades mandated cheap food imports killed Haitian agriculture. The imports were commanded by World Bank and IMF free trade policies that obliged Haiti to open its markets. Bill Clinton says that during his presidency from 1993 to 2001, he had effectively increased the penetration of US rice into Haiti, which wiped out Haiti's own rice production. Now Clinton says it was a mistake. "I think it was part of a global trend that was wrong-headed." – WP, 15/4/10

Having learned little, he is now looking to boost Haitian farm output by providing seeds and fertilizer through his charitable foundation. Opposition leaders are livid about an 18-month emergency period approved by Haiti's Parliament, during which \$9.9 billion in foreign reconstruction money will be directed by a commission headed by former US President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive.

Giant predator Monsanto moves on Haiti

Monsanto is donating 431 tonnes of corn and vegetable seeds. Farmers will have to buy the seeds at markets to avoid flooding the local economy with free goods, but Monsanto will not receive any revenue from the sales. Monsanto representatives said no genetically modified seeds will be included. Instead they are sending hybrid seeds which produce larger yields than non-hybrid seeds, but with such a variety, new seeds have to be purchased and planted every year.

– Business Week, 14/5/10

According to Monsanto, "The Haitian Ministry of Agriculture approved a donation from Monsanto to Haitian farmers of \$4 million worth of conventional hybrid corn and vegetable seeds to be made over the next 12 months in support of reconstruction efforts. The Ministry's involvement ensured the seed selected

was appropriate for the growing conditions and farming practices in Haiti. The initial seed shipment will be distributed to Haitian farmers by the WINNER project, a five-year, \$126 million, program to increase farmer productivity funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). WINNER will provide the in-country expertise, technical services and

other inputs, such as fertilizer, needed by farmers to manage the crops. . . The WINNER project will distribute the seeds through farmer association stores to be sold at a significantly reduced price. The farmer stores will use the revenue to reinvest in other inputs to support farmers in the future. The farmer associations alone will receive revenue from the sales."

– Monsanto Press Release 13/5/10

On the Ground

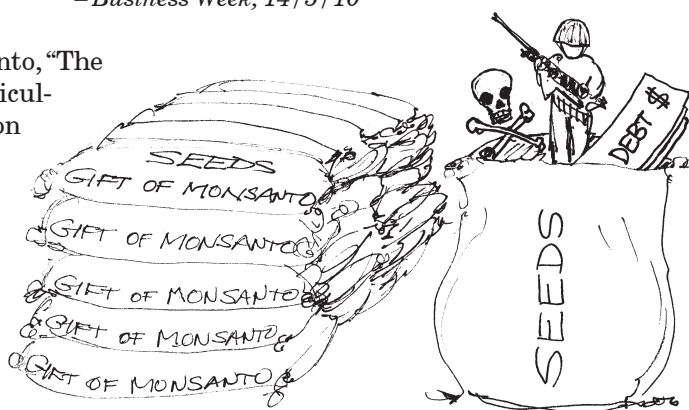
Beverly Bell reports:

In an open letter May 14, Chavannes Jean-Baptiste, the Executive Director of MPP and the spokesperson for the National Peasant Movement of the Congress of Papay (MPNKP), called the entry of Monsanto seeds into Haiti "a very strong attack on small agriculture, on farmers, on biodiversity, on Creole seeds..., and on what is left of our environment in Haiti." Haitian social movements have been vocal in their opposition to agribusiness imports of seeds and food, which undermines local production with local seed stocks. They have expressed special concern about the import of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). For now, without a law regulating the use of GMOs in Haiti, the Ministry of Agriculture rejected Monsanto's offer of Roundup Ready GMO seeds. In an email exchange, a Monsanto representative assured the Ministry of Agriculture that the seeds being donated are not GMO.

[However], the hybrid corn seeds Monsanto has donated to Haiti are treated with the fungicide Maxim XO, and the calypso tomato seeds are treated with thiram. Thiram belongs to a highly toxic class of chemicals called ethylene bisdithiocarbamates (EBDCs). Results

of tests of EBDCs on mice and rats caused concern to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which then ordered a special review. The EPA determined that EBDC-treated plants are so dangerous to agricultural workers that they must wear special protective clothing when handling them. Pesticides containing thiram must contain a special warning label, the EPA ruled. The EPA

also barred marketing of the chemicals for many home garden products, because it assumes that most gardeners do not have adequately protective clothing. Monsanto's passing mention of thiram to Ministry of Agriculture officials in an email contained no explanation of the dangers, nor any offer of special clothing or training for those who will be farming with the toxic seeds.



Haitian social movements' concern is not just about the dangers of the chemicals and the possibility of future GMO imports. They claim that the future of Haiti depends on local production with local food for local consumption, in what is called food sovereignty. Monsanto's arrival in Haiti, they say, is a further threat to this.

– Beverly Bell, *Other Worlds*, 17/5/10,
www.otherworldsarepossible.org/another-haiti-possible/

Haiti spends \$550 million annually on rice, sugar and poultry imports.

The US Congress has passed the Haiti Economic Lift Program (HELP) Act that will extend and expand current trade law with Haiti with the aim of increasing US imports of Haitian assembled textiles. The assembly industry does not offer a model of sustainable or sovereign national development, however. The products made in Haiti's textile factories are not generally made out of Haitian fabric or on Haitian-made machinery. Once assembled, the goods are shipped abroad. The jobs are insecure, as factories can and do leave without notice to find cheaper labor or other conveniences elsewhere. The Canadian apparel manufacturer Golden Thread, for example, decided to quit Haiti within one day of the January 12 earthquake, shifting its Haiti-based operations to the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Honduras instead. "Haiti's only role in the process is as a stopover in the production process, where cheap labour keeps profit margins high," comments Beverly Bell.

The US is joined by the UN in placing sweatshops at the forefront of the post-earthquake rebuilding plan. The textile industry had already been given a leading role, prior to the earthquake, in the UN's development plan for Haiti.

Seed Assessment

On March 10th, Catholic Relief Services released a report titled: "A Rapid Seed Assessment in the Southern Department of Haiti – An examination of the impact of the January 12th earthquake on seed systems."

A rapid assessment was conducted in the South Department between February 17 and 26, 2010. The assessment collected information on seed supply and demand for 5 most common food security crops – bean, maize, sorghum, pigeon pea, and peanut. In addition, information was collected on the impact of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) on host communities and households. 78% of respondents reported hosting an average of 5.6 IDPs. This has put an enormous strain on household coping strategies with households eating less, selling off possessions, selling off livestock, selling grain re-

serves, selling labor, changing the diet, and felling trees to make charcoal.

The report also states:

Traditional responses to natural disasters in an agricultural context include direct seed distributions (formerly called Seeds & Tools). The logic of this strategy is that the distributed seed will replace seed lost in the disaster and will enable farming populations to rapidly regain their livelihoods. Nevertheless, these strategies frequently weaken the very livelihoods the activities are meant to sustain. In many cases, local sources of food and seed remain undamaged by the disaster. The direct distribution of external seed undermines the local market and negatively affects those producers and sellers participating in these markets. Repeated distributions can have profound negative long-term effects on the local markets and producers. *As a prerequisite to any seed intervention, a Seed System Security Assessment of local supply and demand should be undertaken.*" (Emphasis added)

What Haiti is caught up in today is little different than what it has experienced in its 200-year history of attempted sovereignty: foreign intervention (France and the USA primarily) and the exploitation of what began as one of the wealthiest colonies in the world. It was once timber and sugar. Today it is the promise of mineral and oil. There is much to learn about colonialism and capital from the experience of Haiti.

The colony of Puerto Rico

. . . RUM (University of Puerto Rico's Mayagüez campus) biotechnologists proclaim with great pride that they are developing a GM cassava (also known as yucca or manioc) with increased nutritional content, with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The test field of this "wonder yucca" is in a UPR experimental substation in the municipality of Isabela. Right across the road are the offices of Monsanto Caribe and over 325 acres of their GM crops. Just west of the substation there is a large lawn, possibly as large as the substation itself, dotted with military antennae, which form part of an emergency global communications network to be used by the Pentagon in case of a nuclear war. I do not mean to say that one thing is related to the other, but I find it very educational to see right next to each other two symbols of the colonial oppression we Puerto Ricans live under: the military industrial complex and the corporate biotech "life sciences" industry, two reminders that we have no authority in our own land and no say in our destiny. . .

– Carmelo Ruiz-Marrero, director, the Puerto Rico Project on Biosafety, <http://bioseguridad.blogspot.com>

Real Cost of Closing Prison Farms

Government tenders reveal Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) will pay almost \$1 million to replace the milk currently produced at one of Kingston's prison farms. The tender notice, placed on the government's website, MERX, states that a milk supplier is required to deliver milk Monday to Friday to locations in Campbellford, Gravenhurst, and Kingston. The contract is valued at \$990,000.

"This ad shows the value of the milk now being produced at the Frontenac Institution in Kingston," said Dianne Dowling, a local dairy farmer and a member of the Save Our Prison Farms campaign. "We were right to doubt the financial argument the Harper government used to justify closing the prison farm program across Canada." There are six prison farms in Canada, located in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario (two in Kingston), and New Brunswick.

Dowling pointed out that Frontenac Institution also provides milk to prisons in Quebec, a supply requirement not addressed in the advertisement. "Another tender will be needed to fill that gap when the prison farm is closed. As well, there are the eggs supplied by Frontenac that will also have to be contracted out." In addition, senior Corrections staff have already told campaign members that CSC will not replace the thousands of dozens of eggs they currently supply to the local food bank.

The CSC notice indicates that the tender comes under NAFTA regulations, meaning the milk could come from as far away as the United States or Mexico.

"The prison farm at Frontenac spends about \$900 000 per year in the Kingston region. Closing the farm will have a negative economic impact on this part of eastern Ontario, especially farm suppliers," Dowling said. "It shows the disdain the government has for local farmers and local business operators."

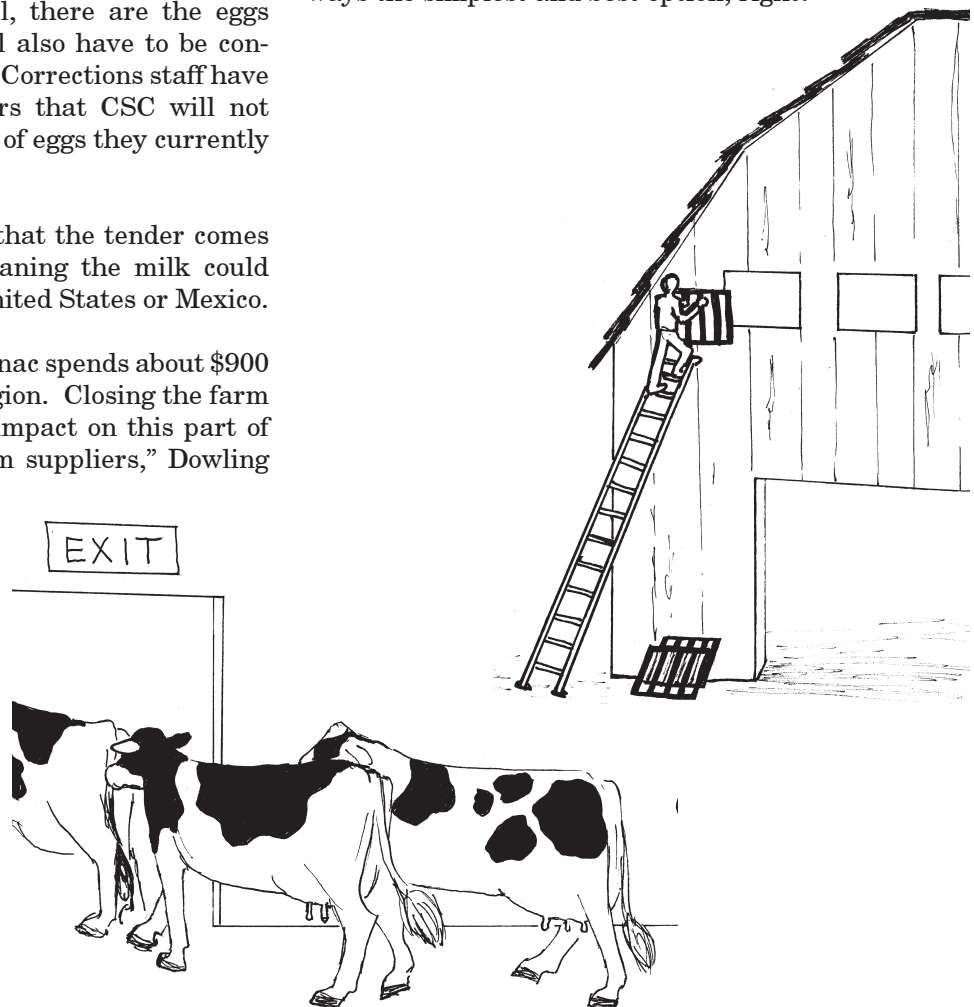
"Meanwhile it will cost CSC almost a million dollars to replace the milk they are now producing for themselves," Dowling said. "That money will go to milk processors and distributors that could be anywhere in North America, and will add thousands of kilometres on the delivery, contrary to the local food movement. The

milk produced at the prison farm is now processed at the prison dairy within hours of collection and inmates earn third party dairy handling certificates." (Apparently the Federal Government is exempt from Canada's dairy supply management rules which prohibit imports of whole milk. There is no dairy quota attached to the prison farms so they could not be sold to a local farmer.)

Both the Save Our Prison Farms campaign and the House of Commons Public Safety Committee have asked the Harper government to make public the CSC Strategic Review, which proposed closing the prison farms. So far, Public Safety Minister Vic Toews has not supplied the information.

– National Farmers Union, 29/4/10,
<http://saveourprisonfarms.ca/>

As we have noted before, the reason for the closure of the prison farms has nothing to do with their efficiency or effectiveness in rehabilitating prisoners. Rather it is part of the Harper regime's need to be 'tough on crime' when crime rates are diminishing, by increasing the numbers of crimes, and thus incarcerating a greater portion of the population. This of course requires more prison space, and building on farm land is always the simplest and best option, right?



Urban Farms

John Hantz, multimillionaire owner of Hantz Financial Services in Detroit, Michigan, is launching an ambitious plan to revitalize the former home of the notorious US automobile industry, where one in five houses is vacant and the unemployment rate is 27%. In a city where urban gardening has a long history and strong presence, he is planning to build a series of ultra-modern, high-tech urban farms. The operations will bear little resemblance to a traditional farm. The business plan calls for the deployment of the latest in farm technology, from compost-heated greenhouses to hydroponic (water only, no soil) and aeroponic (air only) growing systems designed to maximize productivity in cramped settings.



Crop selection will depend on the soil conditions of the plots that Hantz acquires. Experts insist that most of the land is not irretrievably toxic. The majority of the lots now vacant in Detroit were residential, not industrial, and the biggest problem is how compacted the soil is. For the most part the farms will focus on high-margin fruits, berries, and greens and the first crops are likely to be lettuce and heirloom tomatoes.

Not everyone is excited about the prospect. Detroit is at the forefront of the urban gardening movement: the nonprofit Detroit Agriculture Network counts nearly 900 urban gardens within the city limits. Although the gardens are generally small, they serve as antidotes to urban blight; sources of healthy, affordable food in a city that, incredibly, has no chain supermarkets; providers of meaningful, if generally unpaid, work to the chronically unemployed; and beacons around which disintegrating communities can begin to regather themselves.

The community gardeners feel that Hantz is using his money and connections to capitalize on their pioneering work. A founder of the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network, which operates D-Town Farm on Detroit's west side, commented: "At this point the key players with him seem to be all white men in a city that's at least 82% black." Hantz flatly rejects the idea that he's orchestrating some kind of underhanded land grab. In fact, he says that he welcomes others who might want to start their own farms in the city. "Viability and sustainability to me are all that matters," he says.

There are other private enterprises who are getting involved in the transformation of some of Detroit's estimated 40 square miles of vacant property (more

than 25,000 acres). Urban Farming has been transforming vacant, often-blighted land into gardens and small farms since 2005, and has gardens at about 90 sites in the city. Now they are partnering with Triscuit (Kraft) to build a garden at the city's Northwest Activity Center, and the partnership is planning five other community gardens in Detroit and the suburbs of Farmington Hills and Wayne.

Kraft would not say how much money it is devoting to the effort. But Kraft has helped create a website to promote home gardens, and Triscuit included cards with basil or dill seeds in 4 million packages of its crackers to encourage shoppers to grow at home.

The urban gardening movement in Detroit is no stranger to partnerships, even if these new partnerships are a bit strange. Earthworks was started in around 1997 by the Capuchin Brothers to complement their soup kitchen, and is now partnering with the county health authority and a local church to distribute fresh food to the needy and to develop youth programs. The Gleaners Food Bank has a large garden growing seed garlic and a number of food gardens, including gardens for children, which support food bank participants. The Urban Farming Network, which is based in Detroit, notes that in addition to the Urban Farming garden programs, the Urban Farming model includes solutions to some of the contributing factors to hunger such as unemployment, lack of access to healthy produce and poor educational opportunities.

—www.urbanfarming.org/aboutus.html

No labels, no choice

For more than 20 years, the biotech industry lobbied long and hard against any labelling of GE foods.

For example, the Biotechnology Industry Organization spent \$2.2 million lobbying the US federal government in the first quarter 2010 on health care, agricultural, and economic issues affecting the biotech industry.

—*Forbes-AP, 18/5/10*

Eight years ago, Dale Adolphe, current ED of the Canadian Seed Growers Association and at that time president of the Canola Council of Canada, was quoted as saying: "The total acreage devoted to GM crops around the world is expanding. That may be what eventually brings the debate to an end. It's a hell of a thing to say that the way we win is don't give the consumer a choice, but that might be it." —*WP, 4/4/02*

How Africa is being contaminated

In the last four months, South Africa has dumped almost 300,000 metric tons of genetically modified (GM) maize onto Kenya, Mozambique and Swaziland. These are the first documented cases of commodity exports of GMOs from South Africa to the rest of the African continent, and set a worrying precedent. Even Kenya, which is of vital strategic importance to the biotech industry in Africa, and where the vast majority of the GM maize ended up, severely lacks the capacity to ensure the safe handling and monitoring of such a huge volume. As much as 80% of the grain trade in East Africa is informal and undocumented; the arrival of 280,000 tons of GM maize into Kenya presents the potential for genetic contamination on an unimaginable scale.

These shipments have come at a time when South Africa has experienced its second largest maize harvest on record, at over 13 million tons. The latest available figures from the United Nations indicate that improved maize production in Kenya and Mozambique will result in increased food security in the two countries in the coming year. In both cases, analysts have stated that any remaining shortages can be plugged by inter-regional trade and government policies, without the need to impose GMOs on countries that have no infrastructure to safely handle them. None of the three countries have functional biosafety legislation in place, let alone monitoring capacities.

Swaziland has already refused entry to two shipments of GM maize this year, but records on the Department of Agriculture's website indicate that the South African response was to merely re-issue the permits to agribusiness, showing a flagrant disregard to its neighbour's right to say no.

– *Mariam Mayet, African Centre for Biosafety, 14/5/10*

South Africa's corn farmers are preparing to reap their biggest crop in 28 years, and the price of the most commonly traded type of corn on the South African Futures Exchange slid to a four-year low this year as traders anticipate a glut. South Africa may have corn supplies of as much as 15 million tons when left over stocks are included and exports of about 1.65 million tons in the marketing year ended April 30 are taken into account. The country's average annual consumption is 9 million tons.

With an ageing rail system that prioritizes moving higher value coal and iron ore to ports, South Africa's corn farmers have to largely rely on consumption in their home market and neighboring countries where grain can be trucked. South African corn may be too expensive to export in large quantities given the cost of

freight over the long distances to markets on other continents.

Many South African farmers were suffering even before the slump in corn prices and the jump in grain stocks. Their numbers have fallen to 35,000 from 60,000 10 years ago. The mainly Afrikaans commercial farming community has been the subject of land claims under legislation designed to redress the inequalities of apartheid. The murder of about 3,000 farmers, a result of South Africa's rampant crime, since the first all-race elections in 1994 has also driven many off their land.

– *Business Week, South Africa, 17/5/10*

Another side of the story is that Kenya ships 10-15 tonnes of fresh produce every day to different parts of the world and up to 500 tonnes of flowers daily, 97% of which go to Europe.

– *GW, 23/4/10*

The African Century

It was probably not intentional, but the Toronto Globe & Mail has nicely set out, in its special edition on "The African Century" on May 5th, the picture of a single monocultural Africa that appeals mostly to major corporate interests and western business. Of course Africa has never been monocultural.

Diversity notwithstanding, this 'special edition' is described by editor-in-chief John Stackhouse as "the product of months of work, motivated not by tragedy or sadness, but by a growing awareness that Africa is key to this century, a resource rich and youthful continent that has found itself and is set to take on the world." It was 'edited' by Bob Geldof – "We're interested in the issue of poverty" – and Bono – "A lot of people realize that the real way out of poverty is never aid. It's commerce."

There you have it: "resource rich" and "commerce" – and "defence". "What's new for us," this special edition credits President Barack Obama as saying, "is our intention to elevate development so that it stands alongside defence and diplomacy as an equal. Defence, diplomacy and development need to reinforce each other, but each also brings a unique perspective and set of capabilities to the table. Together, they make us stronger, smarter and more effective."

Anna Tibaijuka, a UN under secretary-general and the highest ranking African woman in the UN, is cited as saying "If we want to unlock the economic potential of Africa, a continent known for its riches and natural resources, then we must commit ourselves to the urbanization of Africa."



Extreme capitalist Jeffrey Sachs of Harvard University: "New seed varieties and fertilizers will soon double harvests. High world prices and new discoveries are leading to booming mining sectors, which – it properly managed – can finance broad-based development."

The President of the World Bank, Robert Zoelich, weighs in: "The 80% of Africans earning \$2 a day or less need to earn enough to buy basic consumer goods. Agriculture is the main employer and can jump-start boosts in production and income. Investment is needed across the value chain: property rights; seeds; irrigation; fertilizer; finance; storage and getting product to market. Once more Africans are earning slightly higher incomes, local manufacturers can customize for the local market, and eventually for export. . . To grow further, Africans need the things Europe needed after 1945: infrastructure; energy; integrated markets linked to a global economy; and a vibrant private sector. With the right policies and investments, African can join the multi-polar global economy."

"Africa is becoming a bigger lure for investors than for aid donors. Africa's poverty rate has been declining by 1% annually since the 1990s, and investment is growing dramatically. A decade ago Africa was receiving less than \$5 billion in foreign

investment annually. By 2008 it was attracting nearly \$40 billion in direct foreign investment. . . Some of Africa's economic advantages are obvious. It contains 30% of the world's mineral reserves."

– *G&M Africa correspondent Geoffrey York*

Creating Dependency

Francis Thicke, Fairfield, Iowa, Democratic candidate for Iowa secretary of agriculture:



"Is it surprising corporations that sell genetically modified (GM) seeds are telling us they can save Africa with their patented seeds? In the United States, one corporation, Monsanto, owns the genes of more than 90 percent of soybean and 80 percent of corn seeds. That monopoly power in the seed market is causing sources of non-GM seeds to dry up. . . Now Monsanto is telling us with a straight face that it wants to give its patented GM seeds to African farmers, royalty free. That is reminiscent of the Nestlé ploy of the 1970s, offering free breast-milk substitute to Third World mothers until their breast milk dried up, making the mothers dependent on Nestlé.

– *Des Moines Register, 15/5/10*

THE RAM'S HORN

Published 10 times a year by
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2746 Cassels Street
Ottawa ON, K2B 6N7, Canada
phone: (613) 828-6047
cheques payable to The Ram's Horn

Subscriptions:
Canada, \$25(regular), \$50 (patron)
United States: US\$25, CDN \$27
outside North America: \$28 (airmail)

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Published 10 times a year; subscriptions expire with the issue number on the label.