



PRESS RELEASE

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Celebrating Nutrition on Food Day

Worldwatch Institute's Nourishing the Planet team supports Food Day events to raise awareness of healthy, sustainable agriculture and nutrition

Washington, D.C.—Hamburgers, pizzas, french fries, and sugary drinks—in today's fast-paced world, these foods have become staples for many Americans. But this unhealthy diet has led to an increase in chronic health problems such as obesity, diabetes, heart attacks, strokes, and high blood pressure. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 34 percent of adults and 17 percent of children and adolescents are now obese, staggering numbers that the organizers of Food Day, a nationwide event taking place on October 24, hope to decrease dramatically.

But promoting safe, healthy and affordable food is only one aim of Food Day, which is sponsored by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a nonprofit watchdog group that fights for food labeling, better nutrition, and safer food. The organizers also want to support sustainable, humane farming, and fair trading conditions.

“Food Day is a good time to pause between bites and consider the unfinished business in our generally well fed country,” said Robert Engelman, President of the Worldwatch Institute. “Much of our food is produced in environmentally unsustainable ways, and millions of Americans don't have the means or the information they need for healthy diets. We should be working to fix these problems.”

Around the United States, cities and communities are coming together to showcase the benefits of eating healthy, locally grown, and organic food. Philadelphia is organizing a city-wide event focused on ending hunger and food "deserts"—areas where healthy, affordable food is difficult to obtain. In California, organizations are building a statewide Food Day partnership to promote new food policies, and in Iowa, conferences are being held to highlight how small and mid-sized farmers can get their produce to markets.

In addition to these forums and celebrations, nearly 400 individual events are being sponsored by communities, groups, and companies across the United States. These include:

- **San Francisco.** The organization savenature.org is hosting benefit dinners on October 20-22 to show how delicious earth-friendly food can be.
- **Boston.** Boston Food Swap is organizing a crowd-sourced potluck-where they will provide the venue, and attendees will provide local, organic food to show that responsible food is both nutritious and tasty.
- **Phoenix.** In a "Lunch and Learn" session for students and the general public, a panel of local farmers and chefs will demonstrate how they work together to provide sustainable food.
- **Miami.** The city will hold its annual Food & Recreation Expo, offering health screenings, fitness demos, diet and nutrition sessions, giveaways, free massages, and more. The host of "Dinner: Impossible," Robert Irvine, will perform a live cooking demonstration.
- **Seattle.** On October 24, the restaurant Fresh Starts and filmmaker Severine von Tscharner Fleming will screen "The Greenhorns," a film about the spirit, vision, and stories behind new farmers, followed by an interactive information session on the Farm Bill.
- **Universities.** Events are being planned at the University of Vermont, University of Pennsylvania, University of Minnesota, University of North Carolina, New York University, Stanford, Yale, and Harvard School of Public Health, among others.

These events are all steps toward healthier and more sustainable farming systems in the United States. "As obesity continues to rise nationwide, it's more important than ever that we teach kids how to eat well and take care of themselves so they can be healthy adults," said Danielle Nierenberg, director of Worldwatch's Nourishing the Planet project.

Researchers with Nourishing the Planet (www.NourishingthePlanet.org) recently traveled to 25 countries across sub-Saharan Africa, shining a spotlight on communities that serve as models for a more sustainable future. The project is unearthing innovations in agriculture that can help alleviate hunger and poverty while also protecting the environment. The project's research findings are published in the report *State of the World 2011: Innovations that Nourish the Planet*.

State of the World 2011 is accompanied by informational materials including briefing documents, summaries, an innovations database, videos, and podcasts, all available at www.NourishingthePlanet.org. The project's findings are being disseminated to a wide range of agricultural stakeholders, including government ministries, agricultural policymakers, a farmer and community networks, as well as to the increasingly influential nongovernmental environmental and development communities.

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Notes to Editors:

For review copies of *State of the World 2011: Innovations that Nourish the Planet*

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About the Worldwatch Institute:

Worldwatch is an independent research organization based in Washington, D.C. that works on energy, resource, and environmental issues. The Institute's *State of the World* report is published annually in more than 18 languages. For more information, visit www.worldwatch.org.

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