



We Feed the World

We Feed the World is a global photographic project that aims to showcase the success and diversity of small scale family farmers in providing 70 percent of the world's food.

Through a series of beautifully shot images and their accompanying stories, the project joins the dots between global issues and their impact on our food systems, from climate change, to the loss of biodiversity, to the devastating effect of the extractive industries.

Led by the Gaia Foundation, the project brings together an international team of over 40 world-renowned photographers, NGO's and civil society

groups with the aim of reaching out to a mainstream audience and debunking the myth that we need an industrial food system or quick fix technologies like GM to feed a growing global population.

We Feed the World, has given Farming Matters a preview of the work, which will be launched in London in March 2018, before touring a number of international locations. The images capture 50 extraordinary communities, across six continents, who are using an array of agroecological methods to produce food. Here, we present four case studies, from four different continents, of climate-resilient food systems that are successful in finding creative solutions to deal with changing weather patterns and other social and political threats.

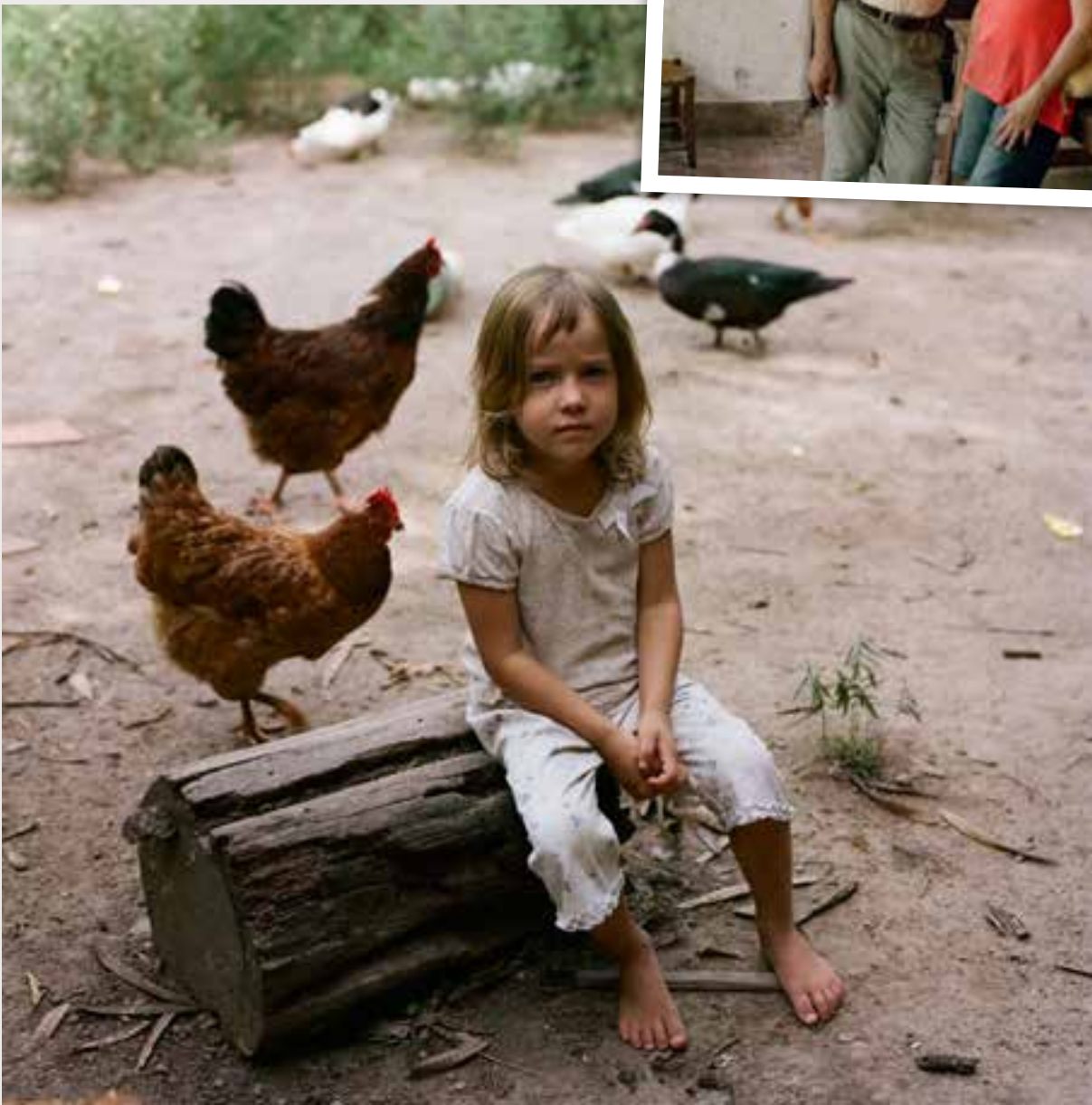
The Gaia Foundation is working with La Via Campesina, GRAIN, Groundswell International, Global Greengrants, Samdhana, the African Food Sovereignty Movement, the International Tree Foundation, Sahel Eco and communities around the world to produce the We Feed the World exhibition. They would welcome new partners and support from those working to promote agroecology.

ARGENTINA

Now in their seventies, Remo and Irmina Kleiner look like an unlikely pair of revolutionaries, but these now doting grandparents spent over ten years on the run and were forced to give birth to two of their four children in the jungle, after speaking out about the rights of peasants in a dictator-led Argentina. Today, surrounded by their extended family and a community of fifteen other families, they run a mixed agroecological, biodynamic farm in Argentina's North Eastern province – an area more commonly known for hectares of genetically modified Soybeans.

Remo knows the value of diversity in creating stable food systems. His farm produces a wide range of dairy and other processed products, grows several grains, fruit, pasture and raises beef cattle and other animals. As a testimony to its success in troubled times, the farm has recently won awards for its ability to withstand hurricanes, drought and months of heavy rainfall. However, Remi believes true resilience comes from social cohesion and collective action as well. Communities must work together if they want to survive the dramatic changes our planet now faces.

Photos: Jordi Ruiz Cirera



Photos:
Andrew Esiebo



BURKINA FASO

Tindano Pabadou leads a women's growing co-operative in the village of Bassieri, in the far east of Burkina Faso. The women here speak their minds and make decisions about how to share the harvest and spend the money it brings. Tindano has even paid for a new house for her family with the proceeds from her share of the co-operative.

This good fortune has been hard fought, however. Seven years ago, Tindano and the other women of her village were forced to skip meals due to a lack of food. In Burkina Faso short-sighted farming practices and drought had depleted soil fertility and degraded natural resources to the point that its population faced malnutrition.

In villages like Bassieri, new agroecological techniques such as 'half moons' or 'zai pits' (where manure is placed in small holes to absorb rain) have begun to revitalise the soil and enable the crops to hold onto the water, when it comes. Now, despite the increasing droughts, there is enough food to eat as well as surplus to sell at the markets.







Photos:
Carolyn Drake

USA

Some years ago, Californian farmer, Mas Masumoto faced a life changing decision – the heritage peach trees his father had planted were still producing beautiful, juicy peaches but they weren't the perfect looking red variety the supermarkets wanted. A bulldozer arrived to rip them out, but at the last moment, Mas had a change of heart and kept them.

Instead of going down the well-trodden commercial route of chemicals and uniformity, Mas embraced the food movement, converting his farm to organic and reaching out to farmers markets to showcase the age old flavour and quality of his peaches instead.

Today, the farm is not only known across California for the quality of its fruit but thanks to a variety of water saving techniques and clever pest control methods, Mas's farm was able to withstand the recent Californian drought better than most of his neighbours. "Organic farming is based on the ability to adapt, whereas industrial agriculture is based on control," he says.





Photos:
Martin Westlake



INDONESIA

It took community leader Maria Loretta quite a bit of searching to even find the first sorghum seeds that have turned this 30 hectares of land in Likotuden into one of the most productive growing areas in East Flores. This crop, that had once grown prolifically in Indonesia, all but died out after the government encouraged everyone to grow rice and corn – and gave them chemical fertilizer to apply to them. Maria travelled from village to village talking to the elders to see who remembered the crop and still had seeds to sow, until she found enough to plant.

Although Sorghum can be more labour intensive to harvest, it requires less water and can be grown on

marginal or even rocky land, which makes it a key crop of the future in areas where rainfall is lessening due to climate change. It is also more nutritious than rice and maize and reduces the risk of obesity related illnesses. For the 62 families now involved in farming the area, Sorghum has become the route to independence, allowing them to break free from reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides, from the devastating impact of drought and a cycle of debt and poverty. Learning how to farm the crop of their ancestors has brought them the food sovereignty they need to create the future they want.

