

The Food Justice Movement: Moving Forward



Class 1: Defining food justice and food sovereignty— what does it all mean?

What is Food Justice?

How others have defined it:

- Food justice means that the benefits and risks of where, what, and how food is grown, produced, transported, distributed, accessed and eaten are shared fairly.
- Food justice is the right of communities everywhere to produce, process, distribute, access, and eat good food regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, citizenship, ability, religion, or community.
- Food justice transforms the current food system to eliminate disparities and inequities.
- Food justice focuses on issues of gender class and race.

Video clip: LaDonna Redmond TedX Talk <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydZfSuz-Hu8>

Our collective definition:

More definitions

Food insecurity

USDA: Food insecurity is a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food. Hunger is an individual-level physiological condition that may result from food insecurity.

OKT: Food insecurity means:

1. You cannot get healthy foods.
2. You cannot store or prepare healthy foods.
3. Only junk and fast foods are available in your neighborhood.

Have you, or someone you know, ever experienced food insecurity? _____

How did your/their inability to access healthy foods impact their/your lives? (Health, kids' behavior, job/school performance, sleep, emotional stress, etc.)

What caused the food insecurity? Who was to blame?

Is food insecurity an individual issue? Can it be addressed through changes in individual behavior?

Food insecurity is a systemic issue, created by the industrial agricultural and food complex, often with intentionality, in order to increase profit. For example, in your neighborhood, who REALLY profits from SNAP/Bridge card dollars? _____

Are they spent on healthy foods? _____ If no, why not? _____

Children do gain some benefit from free and reduced school lunches. But, who PROFITS from them?

Some more definitions:

- **Food Sovereignty:** People (communities) determine the kind of food system they want, as long as it is ecologically sustainable.
- **Food Desert:** A misnomer describing neighborhoods with little or no access to large grocery stores that offer fresh and affordable foods. However, deserts are balanced, living ecosystems. Neighborhoods are not “accidentally” or “naturally” left without access to food.

OKT describes the policies and systems that impair access to healthy foods in our neighborhoods as **Food Apartheid:** The intentional, systemic marketing and distribution of profitable, nutrient-poor, disease-causing foods to income-challenged neighborhoods, mainly, communities of color (i.e. communities receiving the most food assistance dollars).

Video: Ron Finley: A guerilla gardener in South Central LA

http://www.ted.com/talks/ron_finley_a_guerilla_gardener_in_south_central_la?language=en

Handouts:

Please take and read

- Just Food Dollars
- #2 What Is Food Justice?
- # 3 Women of Color and Food Justice
- #8 Food Justice & Public Health

Textbook: *Our Food, Our Right (First edition)*

Please read pages:

Questions? Comments? Contact Stelle at OKTable1@gmail.com or 616.538.0485.