



Rooted In Community
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Youth Nationwide Declare Violation of Rights from Farm to Table

80 Rally to Demand Policies Promoting Fair, Local, and Healthy Food

When: Saturday, July 28, 2012 at 4:30 pm

Where: Corner of Lincoln Way and Welch Avenue, Ames, Iowa

(AMES – Saturday, July 28) A network of youth leaders representing more than 50 organizations throughout the U.S. will rally for a press conference to call for a transition to a food economy that upholds their rights to healthy, affordable, and sustainable food. Part of the annual Rooted in Community summit, the youth will hold a press conference and demonstration with street theater and puppets.

The youth will share a 17-point Youth Food Bill of Rights they created outlining their rights to fair, local, and healthy food in their schools and communities which challenges the use of genetically modified organisms and pesticides while affirming the rights of small farmers, farmworkers, and food workers have to safe and fair conditions. "We are serious about what we want and what we think is right for our food system" said Laquanda Dobson of the Urban Nutrition Initiative based in Philadelphia.

Each of the youth leaders are striving to change the conditions in their own communities by reversing trends of obesity and diabetes through gardening, farmers markets, and increasing access to affordable healthy food. "As youth, we are on the frontlines of our broken food system – that's what motivates us to make real change. Like all movements for justice in our country's history, we believe youth are the catalyst for systemic change", says 19-year old youth organizer Maya Salsedo from Oakland, CA.

The Center for Disease Control predicts that 50% of children of color born this decade will develop diabetes in their lifetime. Experts say that these astounding rates are due to a disparity in access to affordable, healthy foods. Many of the youth involved in creating the Bill say that they can't access healthy food in their schools. "Without nutritious food at school, we can't perform. Then we get into trouble" says 16-year old Solomon Potter of Los Angeles-based Community Services Unlimited.

The youth are also calling on Congress to revamp food policies like the omnibus \$300 billion Farm Bill to address economic revitalization, public health, and the environment, while also supporting small and socially disadvantaged farmers, fair labor laws, and nutrition assistance programs.

The youth are firm in their stance: "This is what we should have. This is what we should get. This is what we deserve," says Mathew Johnson of the Urban Nutrition Initiative.

For more info: www.youthfoodbillofrights.com, www.rootedincommunity.org

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