



LET'S LIBERATE DIVERSITY!

6th European Forum "Let's Liberate Diversity!"
February 25-26, 2011

The Let's Liberate Diversity! forums, hosted in rotation by various European countries, are annual gatherings of farmers and associations working on agricultural biodiversity in Europe. These meetings address issues of strategic importance of relevance in all European countries, including:

- The contribution of farmers, in particular of small-scale, family agriculture and organic farming, to the renewal of agricultural biodiversity.
- Farmers' collective rights of use related to crop biodiversity
- The recovery of food sovereignty and farmers' seed-autonomy
- The future of local varieties, farmers' varieties and farm-saved seed
- The promotion of local varieties and crop biodiversity in local food systems

The central theme of the forum's next edition, scheduled in Hungary in 2011, is the question of "farmers' rights" related to the conservation, sustainable use and development of crop biodiversity. These rights are recognized by the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the United Nations Organization for Food and Agriculture Organization. They include the following rights:

- The conservation, use, exchange and marketing of seeds produced on-farm by farmers
- The participation of farmers in decision-making on agricultural biodiversity
- The protection of farmers' traditional knowledge
- The benefit-sharing related to the creation of new varieties from traditional or farmers' varieties

In daily life, the respect and implementation of these rights allow us to have access to diversified agricultural systems and access to food from better quality and a greater diversity of local products. At the same time, they contribute to meeting the challenges posed by climate change, and help facilitate the protection of biodiversity, increase food security and the transition to a green economy, and reduce dependence on chemical inputs and fossil fuels.

Organizers:

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VÉDEGYLET

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The objective of the meeting in Hungary is to facilitate the exchange of experiences among existing initiatives in Europe and inform farmers and the general public about current issues linked to agricultural biodiversity. Workshop topics will include: intellectual property rights and crop biodiversity, animal biodiversity, enhancement of crop biodiversity in local food systems, local community initiatives related to the conservation and renewal of agricultural biodiversity. The debate over farmers' rights to agricultural biodiversity will be explored in a special round table where results from the 24 February "European Workshop on the Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and Farmers' Rights" will be presented and discussed.

At the forum we expect between one and two hundred participants from Hungary and Europe, especially farmers, gardeners, seed artisans, bakers and processors of products derived from agricultural biodiversity, civil society organizations, researchers, breeders and representatives of gene banks. We also seek the participation of informal networks and local communities who are planning to implement or are already working on concrete projects related to crop biodiversity, or are interested to know more about these issues.

We hope that the organization of this meeting in Hungary will allow a greater number of local initiatives from Central and Eastern Europe to share their experience and participate more actively in the international processes. The EU Presidency of Hungary in 2011 will be an opportunity for decision-makers in Hungary and Europe to hear the views of farmers and civil society organizations and exchange with them on European issues linked to agricultural biodiversity.

Location: Hungary

Information: www.liberate-diversity-hungary2011.org

Working languages: Hungarian, English, French

Participants: 150-200

European Organizing Committee:

Réseau Semences Paysannes (France)
Rete Semi Rurali (Italy)
Red de Semillas "Resembrando e Intercambiando" (Spain)
Scottish Crofting Federation (Scotland, UK)
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