

Sow Much Love

Small family farmers feed the world



Talking points for meeting with your Member of Parliament

- For small family farmers in the Global South, seeds are fundamentally important.
- For thousands of years, farmers and peasants have selected and preserved the best seeds from each harvest that were adapted to the local climate and conditions.
- This work of seed-saving allowed them to feed their families and their communities, while preserving the biodiversity of the world's food supply.
- Over the past few decades, multinational corporations have taken increasing control over seeds. This change means that:
 - The agro-food industry is gradually replacing the immense diversity of farmers' seeds with industrial varieties, which is creating homogenous crops.
 - This decrease in diversity reduces the number of seeds that can resist climate changes, and it affects the ability of family farmers and peasants to feed their communities.
- Corporations are obtaining patents on more and more seeds, which limits the access of small family farmers to what was once part of the common good.
- As a result, small family farmers and peasants must pay for, and sometimes go into debt for something that was part of their shared heritage.
- In addition to the patents, some free trade agreements and international conventions are imposing severe restrictions on the way that farmers can use seeds.
- For example, with the ratification of UPOV's most recent International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants in many countries, these ancestral rights have become, in some cases, criminal and punishable by law.
- Without family farmers and peasants doing the labour-intensive work of preserving our seeds, the biodiversity of our food supply, and the future of our food are at stake.

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- This is why I support the Sow Much Love campaign lead by DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE, and I ask you to make a commitment to:
 - Adopt international aid policies that support small family farmers, especially women, and recognize their vital role in the fight against hunger and poverty.
 - Ensure that Canadian policies and programs are developed in consultation with small family farmers, and that they protect the rights of small family farmers in the Global South to preserve, use and freely exchange seeds.
- Across Canada, hundreds of other members of DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE are also meeting with their MPs to discuss this issue. Canadians from coast to coast support this campaign. We insist that the right of small family farmers in the Global South to save, use and exchange seeds be respected.
- I am calling on you, as my MP, to actively support this urgent call, and to ask the members of your caucus for their support.
- I would like to know your perspective on this issue, and what steps you are taking as my MP to fight global hunger and preserve the biodiversity of the world's food supply.