Witnessfor Peace Delegation to Colombia February 8th-17th, 2013

Seeds of Resistance: U.S. Policy Impacts on Food Sovereignty in Colombia



"For us, peace is moving from the exploitation of nature to respect for the earth as the source of all life. It is anchored in a community economy in which production processes are geared towards meeting basic and lasting needs and not towards consumerism and waste. It requires discarding a development model based on obtaining the greatest business benefit in the shortest amount of time by exploiting labor and nature. Peace is promoting the reduction of military expenditures and instead investing in social needs that ensure harmony with the Mother Earth." —Association of Indigenous Councils of Northern Cauca (ACIN)

With negotiations over the new Farm Bill in Congress and the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement recently implemented, our government has made it clear that neither domestic nor international policy is aimed at protecting small-scale producers or the healthful food systems they seek to support. Instead, they are strengthening a neoliberal economic model that favors large-scale monoculture crop production over food security and communities' autonomy over land and social processes. In both countries, patterns of land concentration and the displacement of small-scale farmers has resulted from this model. On May 15th, 2012 the US-Colombia Free Trade Agreement went into effect, including seed patenting regulations and tariff arrangements that will have serious consequences for small-scale producers throughout Colombia. Many of these growers are the same people whose efforts to provide alternatives to a coca-growing economy have been trampled since 2000 under the US anti-narcotics and insurgency program, Plan Colombia.

What to Expect:

- Explore firsthand the impacts of U.S. Drug War and economic policies on communities in Colombia
- Learn about Indigenous, Afro-Colombian and campesino struggles to preserve their territory, culture, and environment
- Meet with different communities who are carving out a new path forward based on principles of food sovereignty
- Exchange seeds, growing strategies, marketing techniques, and stories that will help us to develop strategies for building a movement based on international solidarity that ensures the food security of our communities
- Learn to educate and advocate U.S policy makers and citizens
- Discuss ways to act in solidarity with communities affected by US policies and practices



For more information or to apply, please contact: Verena Wieloch: 857.222.6463, magicbean73@gmail.com—or—Jessye.Weinstein@gmail.com

Expenses: \$1450 + airfare. Expenses include the cost of food, lodging, and transportation while in Colombia, along with translation throughout the delegation. Scholarships and fundraising opportunities are available. Academic credits for college students may be available with an additional fee. Application and deposit of \$150 due by December 15th, and final payment is due by January 15th.

Witness for Peace (WFP) is a politically independent, nationwide grassroots organization of people committed to nonviolence and led by faith and conscience. WFP's mission is to support peace, justice and sustainable economies in the Americas by changing U.S. policies and corporate practices which contribute to poverty and oppression in Latin America and the Caribbean.