

# Food and Us – Gardening Locally and Globally (Spring 2010 – Volume 23, Number 1)

By Angene Wilson

*Our family has always had a garden and in recent years we have grown sweet potato greens for Liberian friends. Farmers markets have multiplied in our city and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and school gardens are gaining popularity. Our church houses an ecumenical preschool and a daytime Alzheimer's program that share a small garden. Kentucky Proud, meaning Kentucky grown, products are widely advertised. I've also read Barbara Kingsolver's book, Animal, Vegetable, Miracle, about her family's year of living off the land and local resources as much as possible – becoming "locavores." Several weeks ago I heard the owner of a local CSA tell the story of a new CSA member who confessed in embarrassment that she hadn't realized strawberries were seasonal, only available for less than a month in late May, early June in Kentucky – she was accustomed to buying them year-round from California or Florida in the grocery stores.*

*Thus the articles in WorldView Magazine's current issue (Vol. 23 No. 1) focused on agriculture and food security caught my attention. Perhaps the referenced articles and the following teaching ideas could spur a high school class or club to participate in or start a garden and also think about why that might be an important thing to do.*

## **Objectives**

After reading the *WorldView* articles "Global Gardens" and "Food Sovereignty," students will discuss the value of gardening locally and globally and be encouraged to get involved themselves locally.

## **Materials**

Articles in the Spring 2010 *WorldView Magazine*:

- "Global Gardens: It Takes a Community to Raise a Garden" by JoAnna Haugen
- "Food Sovereignty" by Kyle Freund

## **Procedure**

As before or in-class homework, ask half the class or club to read "Global Gardens" and half to read "Food Sovereignty."

If the classroom has web access, show pictures on the Idaho Refugee Garden Program website at [www.idahorefugees.org/Home/Global\\_Gardens](http://www.idahorefugees.org/Home/Global_Gardens) of Somali, Russian and other refugees working in gardens and selling their produce. Ask students who read that article to fill in for the rest of the class the information about how the community-supported gardens work and the value for the refugees and for the community. Be sure students understand the term CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) and make reference to local CSAs, if any, and how they work.

Ask a student who read "Food Sovereignty" to define that term. Be sure students understand why food scarcity is a problem for families in the state of Veracruz, Mexico. Ask questions such as:

1. In what ways are we in the same boat as the families in Mexico, buying cheap, processed foods instead of locally produced and healthier foods?
2. What are the advantages and constraints for the consumer to buying as much food locally as possible?
3. How do CSAs fit in the local economy?

Finally, ask students: “So what?” Create a list of possible individual and group actions which might include such options as talking to local refugees about food crops they grew in their home countries, visiting a local CSA or inviting a CSA manager or member to talk, and even starting a school garden.