

LET'S LEARN ABOUT FOOD JUSTICE

What is Food Sovereignty?

What's this lesson all about?

Food sovereignty is a "people-centered" approach to food systems. This concept asks us to consider social justice not simply as an additive to a sustainable food system, but as the very foundation from which such a food system must be built. In this lesson we'll discuss why food sovereignty matters.



LET'S START WITH VOCAB

Food Access: Access by individuals to adequate resources for acquiring appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. This includes structural limitations such as policies, economic standing, and social arrangements.

Food Apartheid: Refers to a policy or system of intentional segregation or discrimination on grounds of race, which directly impacts access to food.

Sovereignty: Supreme power or authority, a self-governing state. To have food sovereignty is to have supreme power and authority over your food system.

WHAT IS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY?

Food sovereignty is having the resources such as time, money, support and community to plan and create food systems that will serve the community for years to come. It is the creation of communal food systems that are sustainable to both the environment and the people it nourishes.

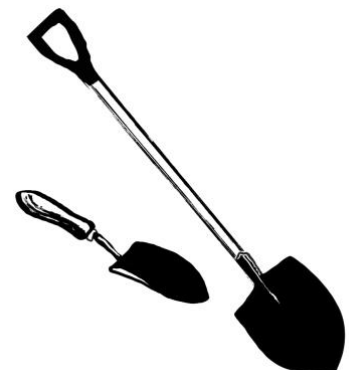
Here's how two other experts define food sovereignty:

- "Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems." - Declaration of Nyéléni, the first global forum on food sovereignty, Mali, 2007
[\[Click here to read the Six Principles of Food Sovereignty\]](#)
- "Food Sovereignty is the power to control food security." - Raj Patel, fellow of the Institute for Food and Development Policy in the U.S.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Food sovereignty provides individuals an opportunity to take control of their nutrition and to make changes in their community that result in a more just system for everyone. Who we are and who we can become relies largely on our access to food. Gardening and food knowledge are tools in self-reliance.

"To change the community, you have to change the composition of the soil." - Ron Finley, gardener and activist.



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STILL CURIOUS?

WATCH: If you'd like to learn more about how growing your own foods works and why it matters, check out these videos.

- [Teaching Kids how to Respect the Animals we Eat for Dinner](#)
- [Agroecology: Farming with Nature](#)

READ: Learn about the specific role of children in all this as well as the separate components, that when combined, create what we understand to be food sovereignty.

- [The Role of Kids in Food Sovereignty](#)
- [Food Sovereignty, broken down](#)

¹A 2009 healthy school meals campaign found that when fed freshly prepared, healthy meals at school, students scored higher in both English and Math (Belot and James, 2009).

¹Nutritional deficiencies early in life have been proven to negatively impact cognitive development in children (Sorhaindo and Feinstein, 2006).

¹Even indirectly, nutrition still impacts performance in school. Students with lesser access to regular, healthful meals, are more likely to fall ill and miss class (Brown, Beardslee, & Prothrow-Stith, 2008).

LET'S EXPERIMENT!

[Milk jug greenhouses](#) are a great way to practice and experiment with gardening. All you need is a clear or translucent milk jug or large plastic bottle, some potting soil, and seeds. Click the image below to check out our video to walk you through the steps.

