

# **Organizing 101: Farm & Food Advocacy**

Curriculum Created by Rogue Farm Corps

<http://roguefarmcorps.org/>

## **Learning Objectives**

- Understand the purpose, types, and functions of various forms of organizing and activism.
- Examine usefulness and role of goals, strategies and tactics in organizing & activism within the food and agricultural system.

## **What are Organizing, Advocacy and Activism?**

- Activists are individuals who dedicate their time and energy to various efforts they hope will contribute to social, political or economic change.
- Organizers are activists who, in addition to their participation, work to move other people to take action and help them develop skills, political analysis and confidence (Andy Cornell). Organizers recruit, identify and develop leadership; build community around that leadership; and build power from that community.
- Movement building: long-term strategy, patient base-building, personal engagement between people, full democratic participation, education, development of people's leadership capabilities and coalition building. (Mark Rudd)
- Change the relations of power. (Mike Miller)
- Advocacy by an individual or group normally aims to influence public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions; it may be motivated from moral, ethical or faith principles or simply to protect an asset of interest. (Wikipedia)
- Rights may be advocated and served, but responsibilities cannot.

## **What Purpose Can These Activities Serve In the Food and Agriculture System?**

- Create clear solid platform from which to present convincing message.
- Impact targeted audiences to produce change or improvements.
- Influence public perception and attitude.
- Empower people to enrich and impact their farm community.
- Foster teamwork, collaborative projects and create social well-being.
- Representation in the agri-political system and process.
- Right to have a say in what we eat and how we procure it.
- Come up with a set of agricultural policies that stimulate the kind of agriculture that leads to a different kind of diet, health and economy.

## **Why Is This Necessary?**

Brainstorming exercise:

1. Describe the existing "Industrial Food System"
2. Describe the system we are trying to build and nurture

### **How Can We Organize or Advocate for What We Would Like to See?**

- Overview of approaches to include:
  - o Media
  - o Political campaigning
  - o Protest (demonstration, direct action, theater, music)
  - o Strike/boycott
  - o Civil disobedience
  - o Lobbying
  - o Modeling
  - o Propaganda

### **What Can This Accomplish?**

- Greater public understanding of the disconnect between producer & consumer.
- Challenge affordability/accessibility misconceptions.
- Change regulations to accommodate small-scale farms.
- Understand the true cost of food.
- Understand how subsidies work and what they do.
- Understand the role of consumers in the food system.
- Revive community-based food production.
- Local and seasonal food verses convenience consumerism.
- Understanding of the importance and benefits of a local economy.
- Address challenges that new and young farmers face.
- Others?

### **Assessment/Review**

- Why are the various types of organizing & activism important and how do they serve the movement?
- What are the benefits of organizing & activism?
- Impossible to address all food/agriculture system issues with one solution, campaign or tactic.
- Organizing can establish shared goals and communication between groups.