

## Food Justice

**M**odern agriculture requires massive amounts of water, land, and energy to feed the world's 7.3 billion people and, as a result, produces unintended environmental and social impacts. A good example is livestock production which is responsible for almost 15% of annual global greenhouse gas emissions, and nearly one half of domestic water consumption.

In their engagements with food and agricultural companies, ICCR members advocate for “agroecology”, i.e., sustainable production practices that minimize environmental and social impacts, and urge

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the adoption of policies that respect the universal right to food, and the responsible sourcing of commodities.

Meat production frequently uses extraordinary methods to increase yield, such as the routine, non-therapeutic use of antibiotics – medicines essential to human health. In the fall of 2014, the Congregation of Benedictine Sisters of Boerne filed a resolution asking McDonald's to prohibit the use of antibiotics used in human medicine for purposes other than control of veterinarian-diagnosed illness. The company made a first step and adopted a new policy prohibiting its poultry suppliers' routine use of antibiotics.

ICCR members also seek to decrease and eventually eliminate industrial reliance on pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides, which threaten human and environmental health. A coalition of a dozen ICCR members engaged Dow AgroSciences regarding their



concerns about the company's Enlist Duo, a mixture of glyphosate and 2,4-D, whose adverse health impacts include cancer. As a result, Dow has agreed to monitor and report annually on grower compliance with protocols for the use of Enlist, leading to safer use of pest-resistant seed.

Neonicotinoid (“neonic”) pesticides are thought to be exacerbating alarming declines in honeybees and the other pollinators that support our global food system. ICCR member Domini Social Investments filed a shareholder resolution asking Lowe's to conduct a risk assessment of its neonic-containing products; as a result, Lowe's agreed to phase out sales of neonic-treated plants and flowers.

Palm oil is a ubiquitous ingredient found in a host of food products and cosmetics, and its production is rife with forced/child labor and mass deforestation, a major driver of climate change. Yum! Brands had been particularly slow to address these critical environmental and social issues, and so Trilium Asset Management filed a shareholder resolution. As a result, the company agreed in March to commit to sourcing 100% of its palm oil from responsible and sustainable sources by 2017. In addition, Sysco released one of the most progressive sustainable palm oil sourcing policies in its industry. Panera Bread also plans to issue its first palm oil policy after a year of dialogue, while International Flavors & Fragrances will commence public reporting on its efforts to source sustainable palm oil.