

Statu Quo: Food

...ve to work outside of those rules because the legal pathways
— Tim DeChristopher



...uit against
: Peter Robbins

Maine in the following years as more towns adopted the LFCSGO (see pages 18-19).

We began accepting invitations to share our efforts with people all over Maine, and beyond. People from as far away as Pennsylvania, California, Utah, Arizona, Virginia, New Mexico and Texas called to learn more. Eventually, our proposal to society was included in a global forum at the Yale Food Sovereignty Conference in 2013 and at the first Food Freedom Fest in Virginia in 2014. The support for our work grew nationally to organizations like the National Family Farm Coalition, The Greenhorns, Family Farm Defenders, Why Hunger in NYC, and the Farm to Consumer Legal Defense Fund.

Our proposal to society started moving up as well. In 2012's legislative session, there were two bills put forward that mirrored the ordinance in content. By 2014, there were close to half a dozen bills that aimed to create or preserve a legal space for small-scale farmers and their customers to continue to exchange food directly and determine the parameters for those exchanges.

In the LFCSGO, we have asserted that the communities in which we live have the authority to define ourselves and protect our traditional ways of exchanging food and knowledge. We have acted under home rule in our state law, which provides that town ordinances shall be "liberally construed to affect their purposes." Our message keeps spreading out. As our farming practices return, necessarily,

to decentralized production, so too must the decision-making about that food. Local Rules for Local Food!

Heather Retberg owns and operates Quill's End Farm together with her husband Phil and their three children, Alexander, Benjamin and Carolyn. Quill's End is a 100 acre, grass-based farm founded on ecological principles of stewardship of land and animals. Heather homeschools the children and is the campaign organizer for the continuing work of Local Food RULES, the organization formed to promote the passage of the Local Food and Community Self-Governance Ordinance.



photo: Kyle Chick



Mass pig burial as South Koreans fight disaster caused by their Industrial agricultural system

photo: kbmaeil.com

LFCSGO Brings Family to Penobscot

By Andy Felger

In August of 2010, our son was born in Korea, and when he was 6 months old, our young family decided it was time to move back to the US. We were on the lookout for someplace beautiful, clean, affordable and safe to raise a family, where we could produce pottery and have a small farm to feed ourselves and our neighbors. We started to look around the Blue Hill Peninsula in Maine

As we were looking for a place in the US, foot-and-mouth disease was sweeping Asia. The South Korean government killed masses of animals, including 1.4 million pigs — many buried alive — in an effort to stop the spread of this deadly disease. Simultaneously, Korea was dealing with H5N1 bird flu. Millions and millions of chickens and ducks were culled in South Korea over the years of 2007-2010 to stop the spread of bird flu. Government workers rolled down streets, spraying disinfectant from massive tanker trucks.

Korea's repeated disease outbreaks seemed like a logical result of an industrial agricultural system based on animal confinement. I knew that Korea's modern industrial agricultural system was a post-war import of America's industrial agriculture complex, which continues to forge down the same path: confine animals; sterilize; spray, modify genes if necessary.

This model of industrial agriculture, with a toxic soup of abiotic soil and synthetic chemicals, was the opposite of what we wanted when we decided to put down roots in Maine's strong organic farming community.

In the spring of 2011 we chose a small, tight house in Penobscot that faced the sun and had a masonry wood heater. On March 11, 2011 the citizens of Penobscot became one of the first to pass the Local Foods and Community Self-Governance Ordinance. This forward-thinking town decided it was time to take back control of food safety and on-farm processing. They asserted the right to produce, process, sell, purchase and consume local foods; to promote self-reliance; preserve local traditions; and asserted their inherent right to self-governance. This was our kind of community.



Andy Felger gives his son Tobyn a close look at safe, small-scale animal husbandry in Maine