STANDING STRONG TOGETHER

SEE THE DIFFERENCE YOU’VE MADE

30,000 FARMERS
140,000 FAMILY MEMBERS
670 COMMUNITIES
60% WOMEN
47% YOUTH
12 COUNTRIES

Bontu Haji Hussein (in blue), a seed bank member in Arsi, Ethiopia.
We owe you a huge thank you.

Thanks to your support, our movement reached a new milestone in 2017: 30,000 farmers strong!

These farmers are growing better food and saving the world’s seed diversity. They are also solving some of their communities’ most pressing problems and sharing solutions with other farmers and governments.

None of this would be possible without you. As Josefina, a Seeds of Survival participant in Nicaragua, said so beautifully, “We are together, like grains on a corn cob.” Here are a few things your support accomplished this year.

**Canadian farmers grow better food for you through seed breeding**

Would you be surprised to learn Canada does not produce enough vegetable seed to meet farmers’ needs? The vast majority of vegetable seeds Canadian farmers plant are imported, year after year. For organic farmers, seeds bred to grow well in Canadian organic conditions are even harder to find.

With your support, this is starting to change. Our Canadian program, The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security, teams up with farmers across the country to harness the power of seeds. Together, we’re breeding new organic varieties of wheat, oats, potatoes and corn. We’re testing 400 varieties of vegetable seeds for local conditions. We’re also training interns who then bring their new abilities back to their farms.

Former intern Rebecca Ivanoff is now working with farmers Gretta Kryger, Annie Richard and Katherine Rothenhal (above) to breed a flavourful new red pepper adapted to organic farms in southern Ontario. Within a few seasons, this bred-in-Canada pepper variety – grown without synthetic pesticides, adapted to Ontario’s growing conditions and delicious – could land on your plate!

**Women’s knowledge gets a chance to shine**

Dig deep enough into a community’s seeds and you’ll usually find women as key holders of seed diversity and wisdom.

For several years, we’ve worked with communities to take stock of their seeds using a tool we call a “seed security assessment.” It starts with a workshop in which farmers list all the seeds they save. They sort varieties according to how many people grow them, and on how much land. The end result shows which seeds are safe in numbers, and which are at risk.

In Mali, where your donations supported 10 assessments last year, an interesting pattern emerged. Men knew a lot about the varieties used to grow crops for market, but women brought the knowledge of traditional varieties. When women talked, the seed list would grow and grow, revealing rare and valuable varieties.

For example, during one workshop, Fanta Traoré, from Zorokoro, surprised everyone by revealing seeds from a sorghum variety called Ngoué which was thought to have been lost.

Your support helps communities get a clearer picture of both the seeds and the expertise they hold. Then farmers of all genders can work together to protect their precious agricultural heritage.

**Farmers build contingency plans for a changing climate**

The climate is changing, making it difficult for farmers everywhere to anticipate the growing season ahead. When crop failures hit communities with limited government support and no formal insurance, community seed banks are where farmers turn to bounce back.

For the last three years, farmers in Arsi, Ethiopia have been stocking their new community seed bank with local grain varieties able to cope with a whole range of conditions. So if a crop of wheat, teff or sorghum fails due to drought or disease, they can quickly sow another variety with different traits and a shorter growing season.

Of course, community seed banks do more than help farmers adjust to climate change. They also preserve the flavours and diversity cherished by each community.

**Rural youth find meaningful work close to home**

It may look like basic seed saving training, but for young participants, the Seeds of Survival program is a school of life. Seed work requires discipline, problem-solving skills and teamwork. So does starting a small business – a key activity for many of the youth who participate.

“Doing something” in their own community means more to youth than going away for a “higher education.”

“Through their new youth cooperative, Geovania, Osiris, Daybin and Bayardo from La Coфridia, Nicaragua, are diversifying their family farms with garden vegetables like the Pipián squash seen here.”

“Women from the community of Arsi, Ethiopia grow rice.”

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**IN 2017**

| 14,000+ | YOUNG FARMERS IN OUR GLOBAL PROGRAM |
| 61 | COMMUNITY SEED BANKS |
| 330 | IN-HOME SEED BANKS |
| 18,000+ | WOMEN FARMERS IN OUR GLOBAL PROGRAM |
| 30 | SEED SECURITY ASSESSMENTS |
| 184 | CANADIAN FARMERS WORKING TO ADAPT OR BREED LOCAL SEEDS |
“We are together, like grains on a corn cob.”
- Maria Josefina Zambrana, from Nicaragua

USC Canada seeks to change the food system so farmers today can live better lives, so the food on your plate can be healthier for you and the planet, and so tomorrow’s children can grow up in a fair and sustainable world.

Our vision: an equitable world sustained by just and resilient food systems.

Funding our work

Revenue $7,132,483
- Global Affairs Canada: 43.6%
- Support from general public: 31.2%
  (including through USC Foundation)
- Other (including investment income): 25.2%

Expenses $7,132,290
- Program expenses: 87.3%
- Non-program expenses: 12.7%

Visit usc-canada.org/accountability for complete audited financial statements of both USC Canada and the USC Foundation. You can also call 1.800.565.6872 and press 1 for fundraising or email fundraising@usc-canada.org.

Leave a Legacy

Over the years, hundreds of caring Canadians have generously left gifts in their wills to USC Canada. These gifts are deposited into the Lotta Hitschmanova Legacy Fund of the USC Foundation, and are prudently invested to support farming communities for generations to come.

Visit usc-canada.org/donate for more information about leaving a legacy gift, or contact Brian McFarlane at 1.800.565.6872 ext. 249.

DONATE TODAY | We can’t continue this life-changing work without your help.

Donate online. It’s easy, fast, safe and secure.
usc-canada.org/donate

Call our toll-free number: 1.800.565.6872

Please mail your cheque to USC Canada,
56 Sparks Street, Suite 600, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5B1

@usccanada | How we grow our food matters

USC CANADA

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USC Canada was founded in 1945 by Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova as the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada.