

# CFGB Good Soil Campaign PP

Please see the end of PP for the notes that correspond to the slides.



# GOOD SOIL

Strengthening Support for Small-Scale Farmers



**Canadian  
Foodgrains  
Bank**  
A Christian Response  
to Hunger

# Sylvesta Lembris



Farmer education:

- vegetable gardening
- intercropping
- natural pesticides



Greater food security

# Hunger in the World

## Highlights

Number of undernourished declining Millions of people



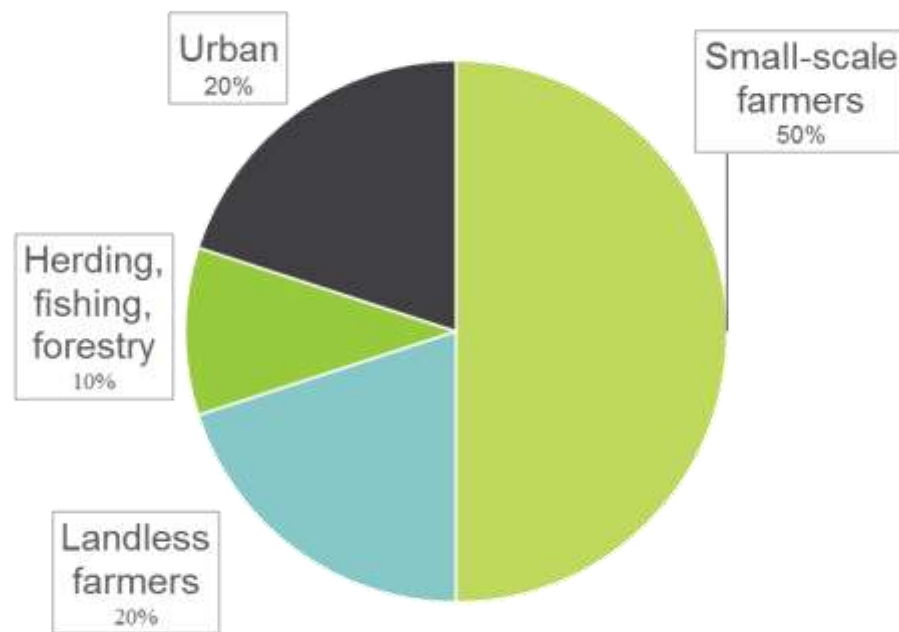
# 1 in 9 people are still hungry







Most hungry people are  
food producers



70% are farmers



# Hungry Farmers?



## Why?

- Degraded soils
- Lack of land tenure
- Poor infrastructure
- Lack of public investment
- Environmental risks
- Lack of access to inputs, insurance, credit





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## **Goal:**

For Canada to increase its aid for agriculture, with significant benefits to small-scale farmers, especially women.

# Agriculture: part of the solution



- Agriculture contributes to reducing hunger and poverty
- Agriculture contributes to economic growth



# Small-scale farmers

- 500 million small-scale farms worldwide
- Involves around 1.5 billion people
- Produce 80% of the food in developing world





# Focus on women



Women have less access to land, credit, markets and agricultural extension services

# Why government investment?



“Eradicating hunger sustainably will require a significant increase in agricultural investment and, more importantly, it will require improving the quality of investment.” - FAO



# Investment in agriculture can:

- Improve food security
- Increase economic growth
- Enhance nutrition
- Empower women
- Benefit the environment





# What can you do?



You can contribute  
to Good Soil in  
two important  
ways:

Pray

Advocate

# Advocate: Why?



- Called as Christians
- Privileged as Canadians
- It works!

# Advocate: How?

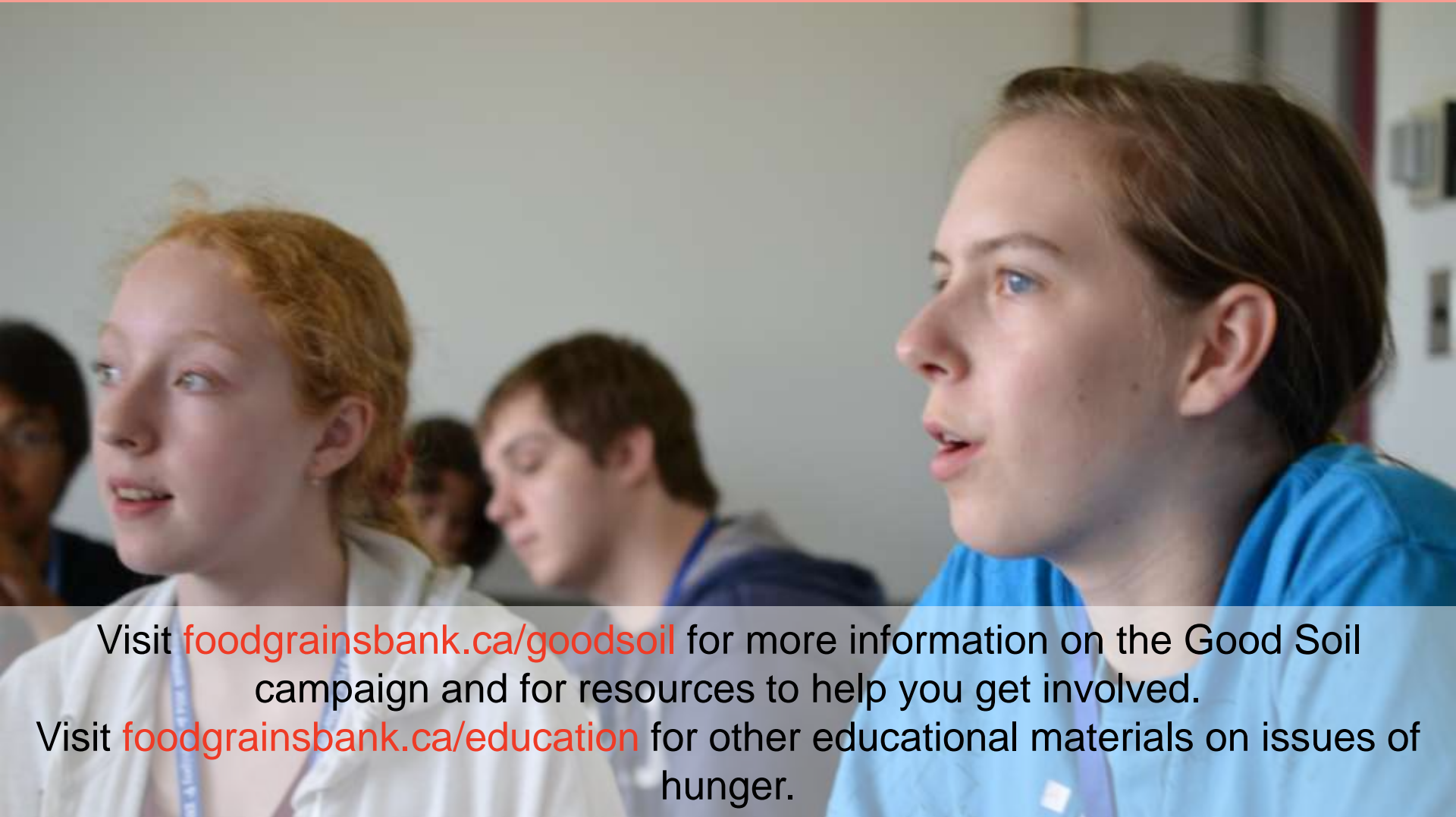


Communicate with your Member of Parliament

- Write a letter
- Send an Email
- Call
- Meet in person



# Learn more



Visit [foodgrainsbank.ca/goodsoil](https://foodgrainsbank.ca/goodsoil) for more information on the Good Soil campaign and for resources to help you get involved.

Visit [foodgrainsbank.ca/education](https://foodgrainsbank.ca/education) for other educational materials on issues of hunger.



# Canadian Foodgrains Bank

A Christian Response  
to Hunger





# Matthew 13:8



“Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop – a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”



## Notes for CFGB Good Soil Campaign PowerPoint

**Slide 1:** Instruction page

**Slide 2:** Title page

**Slide 3:** Sylvesta Lembris is a small-scale farmer in Tanzania. Her region of Tanzania is dry, and climate change is making rains unpredictable. Thanks to a farmer training project supported by Mennonite Central Committee, she has learned vegetable gardening, intercropping, and how to make a natural and cost-free pesticide.

Her efforts, together with the training projects, mean that she doesn't depend exclusively on her drought-vulnerable maize crop. Her vegetable garden produces a surplus, and she sells vegetables to her neighbours. Now, when it is dry and her harvest does not last all year, Sylvesta can sell vegetables to buy maize. She also has money for school fees for her children, and other necessities. Sylvesta is always working to improve her farm, and recently started a small tree nursery. Because of her farmer training, Sylvesta and her family now enjoy greater food security.

**Slide 4:** The number of people living with hunger has been decreasing for many years. In 2014-15 there were 795 million people with long-term hunger. This is down more than 150 million over the last decade.

**Slide 5:** However, 1 in 9 people in the world still experience hunger. There is ongoing work to be done to ensure that more people like Sylvesta can bring themselves out of the cycle of hunger.

**Slide 6:** Most of the people living with hunger in the world are food producers. The Food and Agriculture Organization calculates that around half of the world's hungry people are small-scale farmers. Another 20 percent belong to landless families who work on other farms and about 10 percent make their living from herding, fishing or forest resources. That means that 70% of the world's hungry are farmers, and 80% are involved in food production.

**Slide 7:** But why would farmers be hungry? Despite their hard work, many farmers struggle to grow enough for their families for a full year or earn enough to purchase the necessary food. There are several factors that contribute to this struggle, such as:

Degraded soils

Lack of land tenure

Poor infrastructure

Lack of public investment

Environmental risks

Lack of access to inputs, insurance, credit, etc.

**Slide 8:** Canada has been a global leader in supporting food security through its aid programs. In 2009, the Canadian government rolled out a Food Security strategy which prioritized nutrition, food assistance, and agriculture. This raised the previously low levels of support up to the levels needed to achieve aid goals. Today, support for nutrition and food assistance is still strong, but support for agriculture has fallen significantly. Funding in 2014 was 30 percent less than the average funding for the years 2009-2011.

**Slide 9:** The goal of Good Soil is that Canada will increase its support for agriculture in its aid program, with significant benefits to smallholder producers, especially women. (Smallholder producers includes small-scale farmers, pastoralists, agricultural labourers and small-scale primary processors.)

Organizations like Canadian Foodgrains Bank and PWRDF have contributed to the reduction of global hunger, but in order for greater improvements to be made, we need governments, such as Canada, to support and invest in the people who experience hunger, primarily small-scale farmers like Sylvesta. But why do we want to focus on agriculture, and small-scale farmers?

**Slide 10:** Clearly, investing in agriculture is a big part of the solution to global hunger. Agriculture contributes to reducing hunger and poverty, and contributes to economic growth.

**Slide 11:** Focusing on agriculture in general is not enough. Investing in small-scale farmers is where the biggest difference can be made.

- There are over 500 million small-scale farms worldwide (farms of 2 hectares of land or less). They represent roughly 85 per cent of the world's farms and involve about 1.5 billion people.
- Most farmers in Africa, Asia and Latin America are small-scale. (In Africa about 95% of farmers are small-scale farmers; of these, about half operate with less than one-and-a-half hectares of land.)
- And furthermore, small-scale, family farms produce 80% of the food in the developing world.

**Slide 12:** In our work to alleviate hunger through supporting agriculture, it is also vital to focus on women. Women make up nearly half of the agricultural labour force in developing countries, and many rural households are headed by women. However, women farmers receive only 5% of agricultural training worldwide. They consistently have less access than men to seeds and other inputs needed for farming: they are less likely than men to own land or livestock, have access to new technologies, use credit or other financial services, or receive farm training. Vast improvements in food security can be made if efforts focus on women farmers.

**Slide 13:** We've explored why focusing on small-scale food producers is important for alleviating hunger, but why do we need the Canadian government to make this investment?

- Aid and development organizations such as Canadian Foodgrains Bank and PWRDF do great work, and help alleviate hunger, but to eradicate hunger sustainably, we need governments to increase their investment in agriculture. Typical non-governmental development organization



projects on agriculture reach a few thousand people. With appropriate resources, governments can reach millions.

- Furthermore, public (government) investment in agricultural research and development, education and rural infrastructure yields much higher returns of both agricultural productivity and poverty reduction than other expenditures. It is an effective use of dollars.
- To alleviate global hunger, we need the Canadian Government to invest aid dollars where it can make an enormous difference. Not only does Canada's financial input have an impact, but Canada's influence is also vital. Canada's support for agriculture can influence other donor countries, and can encourage developing country governments to invest in agriculture in their own countries.

**Slide 14:** Investment in Agriculture has many essential benefits. It can:

- Improve Food Security: By improving productivity and the availability of food in the markets, and by keeping consumer prices lower.
- Increase Economic Growth: In agriculture-based economies, agriculture generates 29 percent of the country's GDP on average, and employs 65 percent of the overall workforce. Agriculture employs over 1.5 billion people, and 86 percent of the rural population in the developing world.
- Enhance nutrition: Good nutrition begins with food and agriculture. More productive, diverse farms can enhance the nutrition of the farming family.
- Empower women: If women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20-30 percent. This means that closing the gender gap in agriculture could reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12-17 percent, or by 100-150 million people.
- Benefit the environment: Agricultural development can help build healthier soils, conserve water, and respond to climate change.

These arguments link to the Canadian government's development priorities.

**Slide 15:** We've spent a lot of time talking about why investing in agriculture is important, and why our government should support it. So what has that got to do with you? Canadians like you already contribute to global food security through your generosity and hard work. The Good Soil campaign is working to encourage the Canadian government to increase its support for agriculture in developing countries. And for this to work, your support and your voice is also needed.

There are two main ways you can support Good Soil, by praying and by advocating. As Christians, we have been called to love our neighbours. Pray for our sisters and brothers around the world who struggle with food insecurity. As citizens and voters of this country, we have the tools to influence our government. You can show your support by communicating with your Member of Parliament on this issue.

**Slide 16:** Why work on influencing policies? It can seem like an impossible task. However, there are 3 very good reasons to work on this:

1) We are called as Christians to be advocates. The Bible contains many inspiring stories of advocates, such as Moses and Esther. In these stories God calls people to an awareness of an injustice, and these people respond by speaking out on behalf of others. Jesus advocated for impoverished and marginalized people in his ministry. His teaching and example gave us the command “love your neighbour as yourself,” which calls us to extend our compassion to neighbours throughout the world. Advocating in support of people affected by hunger is truly a biblical call.

2) It is our privilege as Canadian citizens to communicate to our representatives in government about issues that are important to us. It is our role as members of a democratic society. We are privileged to live in a democracy, and need to take this privilege and its obligations seriously. We each have the power to influence our government and the elected officials expect to hear from us. Your Member of Parliament is there to represent your needs and concerns in the government. MPs listen closely to voter concerns, especially in the lead-up to an election. They will only know what matters to you if you tell them.

3) Finally, it is important because it works! Canadian Foodgrains Bank has had successes in influencing government policy thanks to constituent support. For example, in 2008, constituents meeting with the Minister of Development at that time gave Canadian Foodgrains Bank a big “in” to influence the food security strategy that was made public in 2009. Constituents have also helped influence the government to improve policies around food assistance and climate change adaptation.

Your voice makes a big difference.

**Slide 17:** There are a few ways in which you can make your voice heard by your Member of Parliament.

- Write a letter: personal letters are an effective way to reach your Member of Parliament. Foodgrains Bank staff hear from MPs and the Minister of Development how much letters mean to them – much more than postcards or petitions. Letters show commitment to an issue, and you can write several! You can arrange for your church or community to all write letters to your MPs to make the message go further. You can do this a few times. Letters spaced over a period of time, such as the length of this campaign, keep the issue fresh in the minds of MPs. Postage to the House of Commons is free, and if you include your return address, your MP must write you back!
- Send an email: personal emails are also a good way to reach your Member of Parliament. They work well as follow-up to letters, and other correspondence with your MP on this issue.
- Phone call: calling your MP to talk about the issue is also great. Even leaving messages with your MP’s assistant brings attention to the issue. Feel free to have a few notes, or your letter, available to you to discuss the issue.



The most effective way of advocating is to meet your MP in person. Call your MP's constituency office to find out when she or he is around, and arrange a time to meet. Bring a friend or two from the same riding for support and to reinforce the importance of this issue. And bring notes and information for your meeting. For assistance on any of these endeavors, please visit [foodgrainsbank.ca/goodsoil](http://foodgrainsbank.ca/goodsoil), or contact a Foodgrains Bank staff. Foodgrains Bank staff are always ready and willing to help you communicate with your MP.

**Slide 18:** You can also support Good Soil by learning more. Visit the Good Soil website at [foodgrainsbank.ca/goodsoil](http://foodgrainsbank.ca/goodsoil) and find more resources to educate yourself and others at [foodgrainsbank.ca/education](http://foodgrainsbank.ca/education).

**Slide 19:** With your support, agriculture can become a priority again. As we've explored here today, supporting agriculture is vital to alleviating hunger. Your voice is needed to ensure that farmers have the opportunities to bring themselves out of hunger and poverty.

**Slide 20:** Matthew 13 gives us the parable of the sower. A farmer was out sowing seed. Some seeds were eaten by birds, some found rocks and shallow soil, and some fell among weeds. Yet "other seeds fell on good soil, where it produced a crop – a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Jesus is talking about people hearing the message of the reign of God. In some, the seed does not grow. In others it withers. But in some, it flourishes. Just like the one who listens and understands Jesus' message, we can all be the good soil upon which the seeds of justice fall – to grow a world where all people have enough to eat. And just as good soil is foundational for a good farm, the right conditions need to be there for small-scale farmers to thrive. The "good soil" needed requires a variety of essential nutrients such as farmer training, land tenure and access to markets.

Canada can do much more in its aid activities and priorities to address food insecurity with these small-scale farmers. Together we can all build up the foundation of good soil for small-scale farmers to bring themselves out of poverty and hunger.