

WORLD FARMERS UNITE WITH ROOTS OF PEACE

Solutions for Cultivating Peace Through Agriculture

ROME, ITALY, July 15, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The World Farmers Market Coalition ("WFMC") gathered this week for the General Assembly in Rome, Italy, bringing together over 100 agricultural leaders from 60 countries.

Heidi Kuhn, Founder of Roots of Peace, 2023 World Food Prize Laureate, and Nobel Peace Prize Nominee, was invited as the Keynote Speaker and called forth global farmers to cultivate peace through agriculture on war-torn lands. Heidi Kuhn is also a proud Ambassador of the Agricultural Institute of Marin, California (AIM), embodying the phrase 'Think locally, act globally'.

Italian dignitaries addressed the conference, including Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Antonio Tajani; Minister of Agriculture, Francesco Lollabrigida; and Mayor of Rome, Roberto Gualtieri.

The global meeting among farmers contributing to the development of sustainable local food systems highlighted the urgency to renew the link between rural and urban areas to benefit local economies, public health, and biodiversity.

"In a world where there are an expected 9-10 billion people by 2050, we must sow healthy seeds to feed a growing population. In a world where there are an estimated 110 million landmines in 60 countries, the land is held hostage from growing viable agricultural crops. We must remove these seeds of destruction from both the soil and soul, so that development may flourish on former war-torn lands worldwide," stated Heidi Kuhn, "Peace through agriculture is my battle-cry!"

Carmelo Troccoli, Director General of WFMC, highlighted, "The second assembly of the World



Heidi Kuhn , Founder Roots of Peace at WFMC

Farmers Markets Coalition emphasized the need to invest in the development of local food systems and the regeneration of biodiversity to ensure, on one hand, the achievement of sustainable development goals and, on the other, to restore dignity and peace to those who work the fields around the world."

Richard McCarthy, President of WFMC, added, "In this time of cascading crises, the gathering of the world's Farmers Market leaders was a gathering of the protagonists who regenerate communities, broken food systems, and the hope among farmers and consumers who are recovering from trauma and conflict that a better world is possible. The steps are small but practical, and ultimately profound."

At the gathering, attendees witnessed the convergence of inspiring stories from agricultural communities around the globe, each embodying resilience, hope, and the relentless pursuit of peace through farming.

Women in Ukraine shared the harrowing reality they face while harvesting fruits and vegetables in suspected minefields. With over 30% of their land contaminated by landmines since the war began, these women have become the primary providers for their families as their husbands defend the country on the frontlines. Despite the constant danger, their commitment to feeding their children and communities remains unwavering.

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Heidi Kuhn, Founder of Roots of Peace

In Israel, amidst ongoing conflict, markets continue to operate where Israelis and Palestinians come together to share their agricultural bounty. These brave individuals bring their lavender and other produce to market, even as bombs drop from the sky, showcasing the power of agriculture in fostering unity and resilience.

South Korean attendees showcased their products with pride, expressing hope for a future where sustainable

agriculture flourishes on former war-torn lands. They envision a day when Roots of Peace can transform the demilitarized zone (DMZ) into fertile fields, turning "MINES TO VINES" and bridging the divide between North and South Korea.

Highlighting the immense agricultural potential of Africa, representatives from Ghana spoke



Group Photo World Farmers Market Coalition

about their country's resilience. Despite being one of the nations with the highest concentrations of landmines, Ghana is poised to become the breadbasket that feeds the world. These determined individuals are ready to overcome challenges and harness their land's bounty to ensure food security for future generations.

These narratives not only underscore the critical role of agriculture in fostering peace and sustainability but also inspire a global audience to support and amplify the voices of courageous individuals. "These stories are a powerful reminder that even in the face of adversity, the spirit of farming can cultivate a more peaceful and prosperous world," stated Heidi Kuhn.

ABOUT ROOTS OF PEACE: Roots of Peace supports the world's most vulnerable farmers and traders, removing the remnants of war and restoring agricultural productivity and prosperity. Roots of Peace is a humanitarian organization dedicated to the removal of landmines and the subsequent replanting and rebuilding of war-torn regions. Founded in 1997 by Heidi Kuhn, the goal of Roots of Peace is to turn minefields into farmland and support victims of landmine accidents.

ABOUT WORLD FARMERS MARKET COALITION: WorldFMC is a Rome-based non-profit organization, launched in July 2021 during the Pre-Food System Summit in Rome and in the presence of the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nation Mrs. Amina J. Mohammed. It is one of the ten projects selected under the Food Coalition Program of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Officially recognized as an international association in June 2022, it represents over 70 associations from more than 60 countries, encompassing 20,000 markets, 200,000 farming families, and over 300 million consumers.

Join us in Rome as we work together to revive local food systems and cultivate healthier communities.

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