

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Consolidation in the Heartland: The State of Midwest Farmers

Presented by Joe Maxwell, Organization for Competitive Markets

We have written and spoken at length about the alarming pace and scale of corporate mergers and acquisitions in the U.S. But what has been the human and cultural impact of this consolidation that a corporate-controlled Congress has fostered? How has the concentration of economic and political power in the hands of a few agribusiness behemoths affected hundreds of thousands of family farmers, livestock producers and farm workers? Joe Maxwell, the Executive Director of the Organization for Competitive Markets is a fourth generation hog farmer from Missouri. He has served his state as a state representative, state senator, and Lt. Governor. Joe will combine first-hand knowledge with a much deeper examination of key agricultural sectors in the Midwest.

Creatures in our Ecosystem: ATOs Banding Together to Survive and Thrive

Presented by Rink Dickinson, Equal Exchange, Nicole Vitello, Oke USA, Kelly Storie, La Siembra, Senga Gall, Equal Exchange UK

If you wandered the hallways of Equal Exchange you would occasionally hear the words “creatures” and “ecosystem” banded about. And the subject would not be endangered elephants or bleaching coral reefs. Rather, we are talking about our interconnected network of sister Alternative Trade Organizations (ATOs)—us, Equal Exchange UK, La Siembra Cooperative and Oke USA. What forces prompted our organizations to formally integrate? In a market and fair trade environment that has driven other ATOs under, can integration better position us to survive and in fact to thrive? This workshop will test the best thinking from these four organizations, and from you.

From Seed to Cup: A Deeper Look at the Equal Exchange Coffee Supply Chain

Presented by Kim Coburn, Equal Exchange

You wake up to the wonderful aroma of freshly roasted coffee beans and start your day with a cup prepared in your favorite style. It's Equal Exchange coffee and you feel good about what you are sipping. But who exactly are the key players behind this experience? Where was it grown and by whom? And what are the challenges and risks those farmers experience that few of us ever even know about? What happens once those 150 lb. burlap sacks arrive at Equal Exchange? EE's green coffee buyer Kim Coburn will demystify this journey and share an unvarnished look at what is behind your daily libation.

Oxfam: Behind the Barcodes

Presented by Sarah Zohen & Oliver Gottfried, OXFAM

Equal Exchange and Oxfam have had a long standing history of solidarity working together to help mobilize the power of people, to shed light on the exploitation and human rights violations in our food system. Oxfam launched the Behind the Barcodes Campaign to raise the voices of the people who produce our food and demand supermarkets take accountability for the workers in their supply chains. This session will focus on how Oxfam influences the private sector, through campaigning and engagement, to fix our broken food system. It will include an overview of the successes and lessons learned from the Behind the Brands campaign (2013–2016), and how those lessons have informed Oxfam's current private sector food justice campaign, Behind the Barcodes.

Creating Alternative Markets in Cheese

Presented by Terry and Paula Holman, Owners of Red Barn Family Farms

Equal Exchange is slowly entering the world of cheese and collaborating with family farms in the U.S. As the dairy industry consolidates family farmers are under increasing pressure and often forced to sell their milk below the cost of production. Come and learn about small dairy farmers in Wisconsin, cheese products, the work of Red Barn, and how Equal Exchange and Red Barn are partnering to find solutions in the midst of the dairy crisis.

Building Small Farmer Power in Northern Peru: The Story of Norandino

Presented by Santiago Paz López, Export Manager, Coop Norandino

Equal Exchange has always interpreted its fair trade commitment as helping organized groups of small-farmers gain economic independence and greater political power in their regions. Coop Norandino is perhaps the strongest example of this approach since our trading partnership began over twenty years ago. Santiago Paz López has been a key leader in this organization since its founding and in this workshop he will share in detail the many initiatives—including successes and failures—that have contributed to their standing today and the new challenges they face in the coming decade.

Success, Failure, and Forward Progress: EE's 20 Year Experience with Co-Directors

Presented by Rink Dickinson and Rob Everts, Equal Exchange

In 1999, year thirteen of the Equal Exchange experience, our board approved what at the time was a rare form of executive leadership in this country, Co-Directors. Co-founder Rink Dickinson and Rob Everts assumed these roles in what became known as the Office of Executive Directors (OED). The hiring of Rob to this role marked a first – a non-founder sharing the highest management accountability in our worker cooperative. Sales in 1999 were \$6.3m and we had 26 worker owners. Today those numbers are \$74.6m and 130, respectively. What have we learned? What worked and what didn't? What are the critical ingredients for a successful collaboration over a sustained period of time? What from our past can guide our approach to critical future challenges? How can Equal Exchange succeed as an ATO of scale in the increasingly concentrated market? Find out here.



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Franchising Immigrant Worker Coops: The Need, Challenges, and Promise

Presented by Phyllis Robinson, Cooperative Developer, Center For Family Life

Across the U.S., immigrant domestic worker cooperatives have proven to be an effective strategy to provide greater opportunities for dignified work, higher salaries, improved working conditions, entrepreneurship, leadership development, and much more. While many examples of successful cooperatives exist in pockets across the country, significant barriers remain to scale impact, transform the domestic work industries, and reach many more workers who more often than not face wage theft and other forms of exploitation. In this dark period in U.S. history, immigrant coop development is particularly important and a critical path forward. Since 2006, the Center for Family Life in Sunset Park (Brooklyn, NY) has been at the forefront of the movement to incubate and support immigrant cooperatives. To date, 15 immigrant worker cooperatives are in business, generating over \$13 million in annual revenues. In 2017, CFL created the first worker-owned tech booking platform in the country (Up&Go.coop). In September 2018, the NY Attorney General's Office approved CFL's application for the Brightly (R) Cleaning Franchise; paving the way for the first worker owner cooperative franchise in the U.S. Since then, the first two Brightly Cooperatives have joined, a third is in the franchise signing process, and a fourth is underway. Next year, we plan to expand the Brightly (R) Franchise to locations beyond New York. Come learn about this new strategy to scale impact for domestic workers in immigrant communities across the United States. We will discuss the promise they hold, challenges they face, and achievements and successes to date

Food Cooperatives: Transforming the Food System

Presented by Dan Ridgway from Brattleboro Food Cooperative, Roux Nolan from Rogers Park Food Cooperative, and Mo Valko from Boise Food Cooperative

Have food cooperatives succeeded in transforming the food system? What are some successes? Challenges? How can we do better? Join Equal Exchange, Dan Ridgway from Brattleboro Food Coop in Brattleboro, VT, Roux Nolan from Rogers Park Food Coop in Chicago, IL, and Mo Valko from Boise Coop in Boise, ID. Together we will discuss the challenging market conditions for the natural foods world, how it influences the ability for small independent businesses to operate, and learn from different models that exist around the country.

Tools and Techniques for Activists: Creating Solidarity in Faith-Based and Secular Communities

Presented by Hope Kolly, Peter Buck, Susan Sklar, Bethany Karbowski, Equal Exchange, and special guest Rev. Tim Schenck

The Equal Exchange Interfaith Team (Susan, Peter, Bethany, and Hope) will share its best resources and tips for engaging people at a food justice related presentation, a coffee or chocolate tasting, or sales and information table. This workshop is geared towards participants from faith-based congregations and secular community groups who want to get their members fired up on issues concerning small farmers, food justice, or sustainable agriculture. Special guest Rev. Tim Schenck will also speak briefly about his recent success at organizing within the Episcopal Diocese in Massachusetts. Come to the workshop with all of your questions. This presentation starts a conversation between interested participants that may continue on during the rest of the summit and into the future.

Spices: Farming, Sourcing, and Why We're So Far Behind Coffee

Presented by Ethan Frisch, cofounder of Burlap & Barrel

Spice supply chains are outdated and exploitative, with multinational corporations pitting farmers against each other to drive prices down and grow for quantity rather than quality. Spices like black pepper and cinnamon are ubiquitous in our food but consumers know virtually nothing about how they grow, the complex agricultural process needed to produce them, or the logistical supply chains that deliver them to our tables. Join Ethan Frisch, cofounder of Burlap & Barrel, for a hands-on discussion of the problems with the current and historical supply chains and some of the solutions he's implementing, as well as a tasting of spices sourced from Burlap & Barrel partner farmers around the world.

Demystifying Cooperative Models within our Supply Chains: Producer and Worker-Owned Coops

Presented by Danielle Robidoux and Em Ambrose, Equal Exchange

When you hear cooperative, what's the first thing you think of? Are you a member of a consumer-owned foods cooperative? Do you work for a worker-owned cooperative? Equal Exchange is one of the largest worker-owned cooperatives in the U.S. and partners with 46 producer cooperative groups and around 200 consumer-coop retailers. In this session, organizers Emily Ambrose and Danielle Robidoux will delve into the various cooperative models in EE's supply chains.



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