



ALLIANCE OF RELIGIONS AND CONSERVATION

launched in 1995 by HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh KG KT

'If you care about what you put on your plate, this is a book to savour'

– Clare Balding, broadcaster, author and presenter of BBC Radio 2's Good Morning Sunday programme

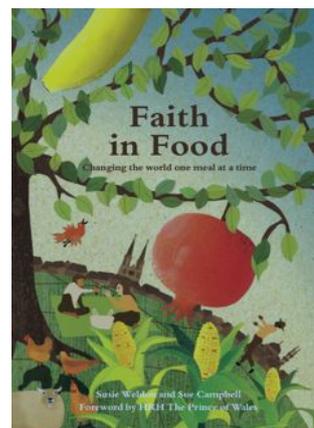
Faith in Food: Changing the world one meal at a time

Foreword by HRH The Prince of Wales

Edited by Susie Weldon and Sue Campbell, ARC

£14.99, Bene Factum Publishing, 256 pages

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When a young boy says: 'It's easier to get a gun in our neighbourhood than it is to get a salad,' and he's not standing in the middle of a war zone, then we know there is something wrong with our attitude towards food and where it comes from.

This lad was in Philadelphia, USA, and he made this wry yet shocking comment to a man who plants gardens in concrete jungles and introduces youngsters to the wonders of growing vegetables from seed and the pleasures of eating a freshly picked carrot.

That many children believe milk comes from a plastic bottle rather than a cow or have no idea that a hen lays eggs illustrates how we have become distanced from the reality of food – that every mouthful we take has a story to tell. And a new book called *Faith in Food – Changing the world one meal at a time* tells those stories – including that of the salad-free Philadelphia neighbourhood – in an unusual and highly colourful way. From the Fairtrade bananas grown in the Caribbean that help fund a community school to the tomatoes tended by nuns to feed the homeless, *Faith in Food* combines essays, storytelling, recipes, and pioneering initiatives to form a guide to eating more mindfully and sustainably.

But what is different about this 'food and farming' book is that it also examines importance of food within six major faiths – Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism. It poses the questions: If you are a person of faith, do your food choices always reflect your beliefs? Have you considered the impact of your food choices on the environment, other people and animals? Do you know that up to 30% of our individual carbon footprint comes from the food we eat, calculating from farm to fork?

Faith in Food, which is produced by the Alliance of Religions and Conservation, asks readers to consider how making a few simple changes to their daily diet could easily lead to improvements in their own health, animal welfare, producers' livelihoods and our planet. Even if you don't belong to any faith at all you can still find rich pickings in *Faith in Food* because it is more of a tempting array of tapas than a ten-course banquet of facts and figures. There are plenty of them, but they are presented in a bright and breezy way thanks to the light touch of designer Grace Fussell.

With a foreword by HRH The Prince of Wales, who is himself a farmer of 30 years and a passionate advocate of sustainable agriculture, and articles by key people in organisations including the Soil Association, Compassion In World Farming, WaterAid, the Sustainable Food Trust and the Fairtrade Foundation, *Faith in Food* offers plenty to get your teeth into.

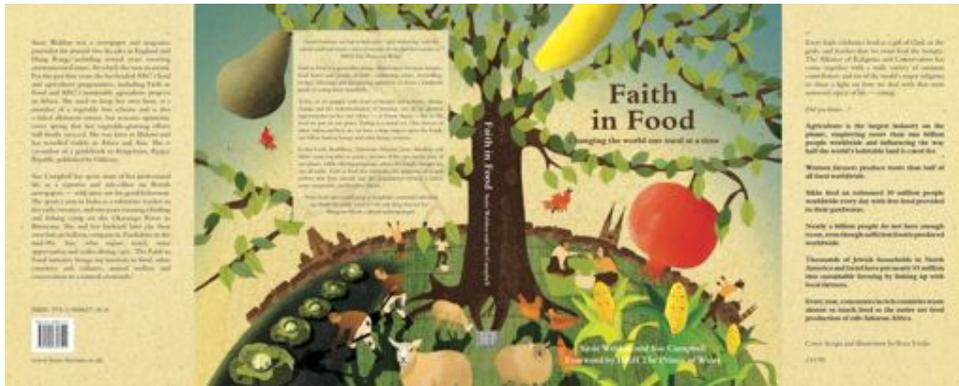
Notes to editors:

ARC is a secular body that helps the major religions of the world to develop their own environmental programmes, based on their own core teachings, beliefs and practices. It was founded in 1995 by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. ARC's share of any profits from *Faith in Food* will go to support faith-based food and farming projects. For more information visit: www.arcworld.org

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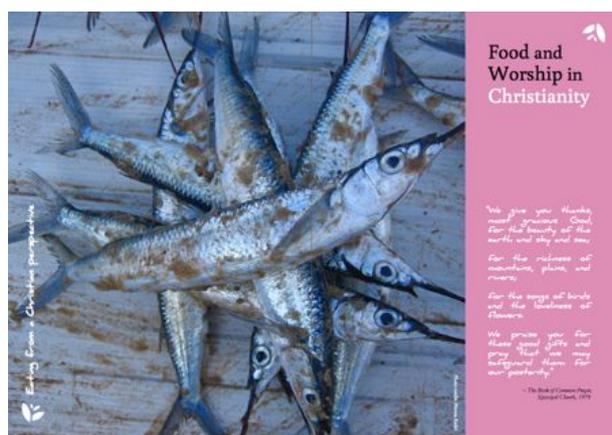
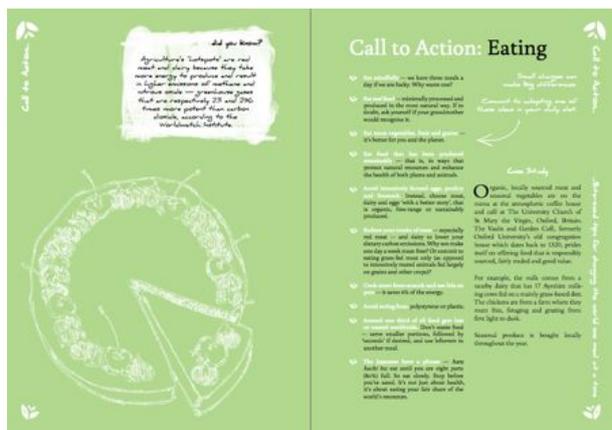
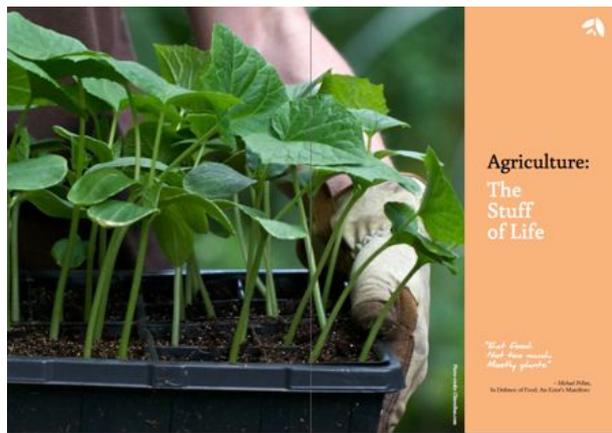
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‘Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed individuals can change the world; indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.’
 – Margaret Mead

Did you know...?

- Agriculture is the largest industry on the planet, employing more than one billion people worldwide and influencing the way half the world’s habitable land is cared for.
- Women farmers produce more than half of all food worldwide.
- Sikhs feed an estimated 30 million people worldwide every day with free food provided in their gurdwaras
- Nearly a billion people do not have enough to eat, even though sufficient food is produced worldwide.
- Thousands of Jewish households in North America and Israel have put nearly \$5 million into sustainable farming by linking up with local farmers through Community Supported Agriculture.
- Every year, consumers in rich countries waste almost as much food as the entire net food production of sub-Saharan Africa.
- When the New Psalmist Baptist Church in Baltimore, USA – an American ‘mega-church’ – began thinking about food and faith issues, it calculated how many events it holds at which food is served. The total was 9,000 a year.
- Up to 30% of our individual carbon footprint comes from the food we eat, from farm gate to dinner plate, including transport and storage, says Patrick Holden, founding director of the Sustainable Food Trust.
- Daoists in China have banned the use of ingredients from endangered plants and animals in food and Traditional Chinese Medicine.
- Replacing red meat and dairy with vegetables one day a week would be the equivalent of driving 1,160 miles less per year, according to a 2007 Carnegie Mellon University study.



Examples of food prayers:

Hymn to the Earth – Hindu prayer

Set me, Earth, amidst the nourishing strength
That emanates from the body.
The Earth is my mother, her child am I;
Infinite space is my father,
May he fill us with plenty.
Peaceful, sweet-smelling, gracious Earth.
Whatever I dig from thee, O Earth,
May that have quick growth again,
May we not injure your vitals or your hearts.
Full of sweetness are the plants
and full of sweetness these my words.

– Atharva Veda, Book XII

Christian Prayer

“We give you thanks, most gracious God,
for the beauty of the earth and sky and sea;
for the richness of mountains, plains, and rivers;
for the songs of birds and the loveliness of flowers.
We praise you for these good gifts and pray that we
may safeguard them for our posterity.”

– The Book of Common Prayer, Episcopal Church, 1979

Sikh Prayer

You are the Ocean of Water, and I am Your fish.
Your Name is the drop of water,
and I am a thirsty sparrowhawk.
You are my hope and You are my thirst.
My mind is absorbed in You.
Just as the baby is satisfied by drinking milk,
and the poor person is pleased by seeing wealth,
and the thirsty person is refreshed
by drinking cool water,
so is this mind drenched with delight in the Lord.

– This prayer is part of Raag Maajh, the second raga,
or classical religious melody, in Sikhism’s holiest text,
the Sri Guru Granth Sahib

Buddhist Grace

This food is the gift of the whole universe,
Each morsel is a sacrifice of life,
May I be worthy to receive it.
May the energy in this food,
Give me the strength,
To transform my unwholesome qualities into
wholesome ones.
I am grateful for this food,
May I realise the Path of Awakening,
For the sake of all beings.
Namo Amida Buddha.



‘It’s Easier to Get a Gun in this Neighbourhood than a Salad’

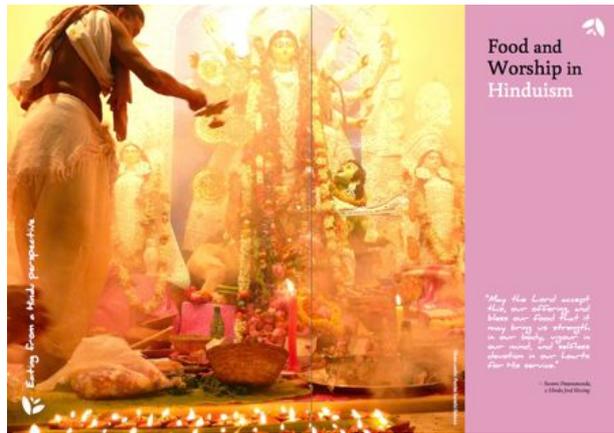
“It’s completely possible to have a salad in this neighbourhood. It’s just a matter of where you go to get it.”

—John Moe, author of “Salad in the Hood”

While I write I eat. That’s a fact. My eating is not for the body, it’s for the soul. It’s for the love of life. It’s for the love of the earth. It’s for the love of the people. It’s for the love of the world. It’s for the love of the universe. It’s for the love of the God who made it all.

When a kid gets a gun out of the hood, it’s a tragedy. The hood is not a place for a gun. The hood is a place for a salad. The hood is a place for a love. The hood is a place for a life. The hood is a place for a hope. The hood is a place for a dream. The hood is a place for a future. The hood is a place for a better world.

Let’s get back to the hood. Let’s get back to the love. Let’s get back to the life. Let’s get back to the hope. Let’s get back to the dream. Let’s get back to the future. Let’s get back to the better world.



Food and Worship in Hinduism

“May the Lord accept my food and drink as a sacrifice. May the Lord accept my food and drink as a sacrifice. May the Lord accept my food and drink as a sacrifice.”

—Sri Bhagavan, Bhagavad Gita



Love is: A Growth Industry...

Some, more and which are being produced for the poor and hungry of our world. In the Sikh tradition, the Sikh Gurus have been growing and sharing their produce in the form of the Khanda, the Sikh sword, and the Sikh community.

For the past few years, the Sikh Gurus have been growing and sharing their produce in the form of the Khanda, the Sikh sword, and the Sikh community.

When a Sikh grows a plant, it is a symbol of love. It is a symbol of life. It is a symbol of hope. It is a symbol of a better world.

Let’s get back to the hood. Let’s get back to the love. Let’s get back to the life. Let’s get back to the hope. Let’s get back to the dream. Let’s get back to the future. Let’s get back to the better world.



Epilogue: Buddhist Grace

“This food is the gift of the whole universe, Each morsel is a sacrifice of life, May I be worthy to receive it, May the energy in this food, Give me the strength, To transform my unwholesome qualities into wholesome ones, I am grateful for this food, May I realise the Path of Awakening, For the sake of all beings, Namo Amida Buddha.”