

And the journey continues...



# RECLAIM THE FIELDS

Bulletin No. 3

February 2011



**Reclaim the Fields Gathering**  
**13th of March - 18th of March**  
**Grow Heathrow, UK**

**When?**

Arrive in the evening of the 13th of March  
Departure in the morning of the 18th of March

Arrive earlier for preparation of the meeting, or stay longer to clean up and join P.E.D.A.L. workshops of storytelling, creative disobedience, legal, and the Occupation of Palestine- 19th and 20th of March. P.E.D.A.L. starts their 100 day cycle to the West Bank on the 21st of March from Grow Heathrow. For more info see article.

**Common Discussions**

- x Planning for the Summer Camp 2011
- x Round of introductions. Our collectives, our projects, our struggles, our hopes
- x Planning for RTF International Days of action for 17th and 18th of April

**Working Groups**

- x Access to Land
- x Food autonomy
- x Carrots
- x Seeds
- x Website and Communications
- x Beet the System
- x Farmers network

**Workshops (ideas till now, contributions welcome)**

- x Presentation on history and politics of RTF by ?
- x Consensus workshop run by UK collective Seeds for Change  
(<http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/>)
- x Resistance eviction training (tunneling, tree houses, scaffolding towers, emotional support) by Grow Heathrow
- x Seed swap



### Practicals

- x Practicals at the collective (seed sowing, raised bed-making, structures and defence building)
- x Movie evening open to public with presentation of RTF
- x Collective direct action

### What can you do? What to bring?

- x Spread this information to food growers outside the RTF constellation- build the network!
- x Prepare a workshop/input
- x Bring RTF-related movies and also fun ones (like Kung Fu Panda)
- x Bring your own seeds and delicious food from your regions
- x Bring warm clothes, waterproofs, a cosy sleeping bag, a thermomat, and a tent!
- x Some indoor sleeping space is available but nearly everyone will be sleeping in tents amongst ancient greenhouses being reclaimed by nature)
- x We have indoor meeting spaces.
- x Bring swimwear if you're brave! - we have a lake nearby but will be cold in March!
- x Zines and publications for an InfoStall

### What is Grow Heathrow?

Grow Heathrow is a squatted community garden in the heart of Sipson- one of the five villages surrounding Heathrow airport- which is one of the largest pieces of carbon-emitting infrastructure in the UK.

For fifty years Heathrow airport has been expanding more and more to the detriment of local people's lives. From noise and air pollution to the plans of a third runway that would mean the destruction of 700 homes, a school, a cemetery and an ancient barn house.

One year ago a group of friends who had been living in the area, and fighting with the community to stop the third runway, swooped on an abandoned market garden that had turned

into a dumping site by the owners.

Our intention was to turn it into a thriving permaculture site and community hub as part of a sustainable future for the Heathrow communities and to take a piece of land on the planned runway to defend it.

Soon after we started work on the site the UK government dropped the plans for the Third Runway. It was down to the hard fight of the local people and we all partied in the greenhouses to celebrate.

Over the year we have cleared 30 tonnes of rubbish from the site, repaired the main greenhouses, held permaculture courses and banquets, film nights, and conker championships. During the summer we had a flourishing harvest of delicious fruit and vegetables which we would put in large collective meals, and give to our friends in the community.

Our collective works by consensus to question authority in our own organizing and to create the world we want to see. We do this in the way we live on the land and want to build a beacon at Grow Heathrow of ecological living.

We have fun together- singing songs by the fire, raiding supermarket bins at night, swimming in the lake during the summer and exploring the wilderness around our site of underground war shelters, crumbling greenhouses and following wild horses!

We are inspired by the idea of Occupy, Create, Resist. To take land back that is misused for profit of the few, to create the worlds we want to see in our space, and to resist when the courts, the state, and the landlords try to take it away from us.



We have just found out that we have our next court date in November, and so we are very excited to host you as we begin our second growing season in the greenhouses- and look forward to share with the network again and make a bright star as part of the constellation.

## Another Call for Nyeleni

**Dear landless, peasants, gardeners and food activists!**

We are building up a grassroots organized forum on food sovereignty which will take place from the 16th to the 21st of August 2011 in Krems, Austria.

This forum is one step in the process towards food sovereignty in Europe. A big part of the forum will be contributed by youth.

There will be a youth "caucus", aiming at:

- x Make sure everybody have same basic knowledge on food sovereignty
- x Identify what is our speciality except being youth, define problems youth are specifically facing
- x What do we want to do and how can we do it together?
- x Exchange of practices in how to involve youth
- x Exchange of practices on how to promote FS in your own country



Therefore we need your participation in defining the content for the forum. What are the concrete claims and needs of young people in this process. It's time to develop concrete strategies and tools to build up the world according to us!

A group of young people is already working on this, so please contact

**Claire Quintin:** ([c.quintin@mijarc.net](mailto:c.quintin@mijarc.net))



dominance of industry and private interests in the production, transformation and distribution of food for European citizens.

Across Europe people are organizing from the grassroots to take back control of their food and agricultural systems. These forces of resistance make up a wealth of experiences which is still vastly dispersed, ignored, hidden and sometimes clandestine.

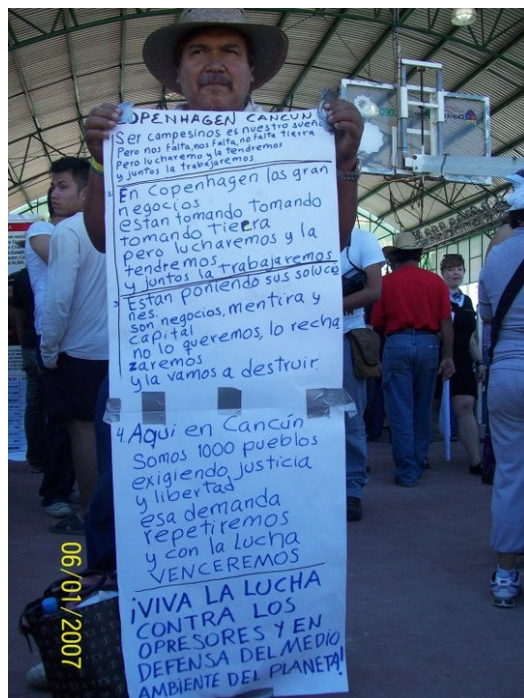
It is time for these forces to come to the fore and build a new way of organizing our food systems – from the seeds in the fields to the food on our plates – which will nurture the biodiversity, environment and local cultures and traditions of our regions, as well as reversing the disappearance of European food producers.

The Nyeleni Europe Forum in Austria should act as a catalyst for this, opening a space in Europe to define the struggles and strategies necessary in order to create a movement for Food Sovereignty which can challenge the dominant forces of production and consumption present in today's society.

In the knowledge that the road is as important as the destination, we call on organizations and groups in every state, region, province and county to come together and define their vision of food sovereignty for Europe, based on the principles defined at Nyeleni forum in 2007, and above all to participate in the organization of the forum itself.

**Whoever you are, if you are interested in participating, please contact:**  
[nyelenieurope2011@gmail.com](mailto:nyelenieurope2011@gmail.com)

**More information on the objectives of the Nyeleni Forum in Mali in 2007:**  
<http://www.nyeleni.org/spip.php?article15>



## How to reach us

There is a map on our website [www.transitionheathrow.com](http://www.transitionheathrow.com)

With public transport from London:

from Central London: Go to Paddington Railway station (on the Circle tube line) and take a 20 minute train journey to West Drayton.

From West Drayton either take the 222 bus towards Hounslow and get off in Sipson Village or follow the cycle path towards Sipson. Our site is a 1 minute walk from the King William Pub which is in the middle of town.

By car:

Our address is Grow Heathrow, Vineries

Close, Sipson, West Drayton, UB7 0JG

Contact

E-mail us with the direction you are coming from and we can give you detailed directions.

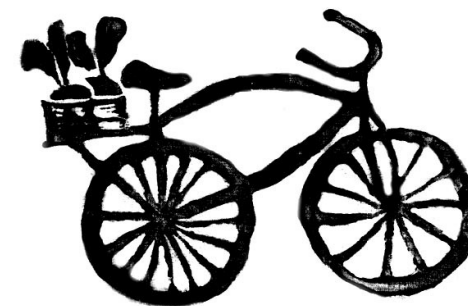
Contact Rob

0044 7890751568 (Site phone)

0044 7870559652

[info@transitionheathrow.com](mailto:info@transitionheathrow.com)

[www.transitionheathrow.com](http://www.transitionheathrow.com)



## Stars in the constellation – RTF Projects in Europe

From Slovenia, Spain, France, Austria, Belgium, Germany, UK and Hungary we had made our way to Wieserhoisl. It was an incredibly nice sunny weekend in late autumn when we met. About thirty people, many familiar faces, many new ones as well. All of us involved in a variety of collective farms, collective gardens,.... To get to know each other better and to get a grasp of what initiatives make up the RTF constellation, some of the initiatives were shortly presented during the meeting:

### Potager collectif des Lentillères, Dijon, France.

Since March 2010, a mix of people re-appropriated abandoned agricultural land in the city of Dijon. The cultivation of this land, adjacent to the existing squad "la Villa", has generated a lot of energy and new dynamics between associations and collectives of Dijon. (info/contact: [tierraylibertad@potager.org](mailto:tierraylibertad@potager.org))

### **Grow Heathrow, Heathrow, U.K.**

During spring 2010, Transition Heathrow members transformed an abandoned market garden near London into a collective garden. They aim is to return the site to its original use, allowing it to provide the community with locally produced organic fruit and veggies. The site is also a meeting place to share transition knowledge and practical transition skills. (info/contact: [www.transitionheathrow.com](http://www.transitionheathrow.com) , [info@transitionheathrow.com](mailto:info@transitionheathrow.com))



### **Wieserhoisl, Deutschlandsberg, Austria.**

Since almost 4 years people have been living again at the Wieserhoil farm and turned it into a collective farm. Its apples are eaten again, its soil is providing food for the collective, its visitors and neighbours. Street theater initiatives are born at the farm, jungle conventions and critical film screenings are organized, and the collective fosters and hosts a number of stimulating encounters. (info/contact: [wieserhoisl@riseup.net](mailto:wieserhoisl@riseup.net))

### **Le Début des Haricots, Brussels, Belgium.**

Since 2005, the activities of this non-profit organization focus on linking up food producers and consumers locally. Setting up and supporting collective gardens, food box schemes, an urban farm, providing food and environmental education are different ways of involvement to move closer to an environmentally and socially just food system. (info/contact: [www.haricots.org](http://www.haricots.org); [timothee@haricots.org](mailto:timothee@haricots.org))

### **Common Ground & SOAS Food Coop, London, U.K.**

Meeting places are created at a derelict piece of land that has been transformed into a community garden and a food coop in the centre of London. With students and the community, space is reclaimed, veggies are grown and shared, and quality food is distributed at whole sale prices to students and community members. (info/contact: [goodfood.soasunion.org](http://goodfood.soasunion.org) ; [beccaberrycrumble@gmail.com](mailto:beccaberrycrumble@gmail.com))

### **Casa Calabaza, Alpujarras, Spain.**

This small collective farm (10 adults and 5 children) seeks to create conditions for autonomy and self-management, sustainability and community-life, respect for nature and personal development. Selling organic sourdough bread on local markets and organic shops in the nearby town Orgiva forms the farm's main source of income. The collective also organizes, as well as makes space available for, courses and workshops that share their ideas of life. (info/contact : [calabaza.alpujarra@gmail.com](mailto:calabaza.alpujarra@gmail.com) / 0034646527527).

### **Earth Rise Garden, Budapest, Hungary.**

The Earth Rise gardeners organised a hot and great regional RTF summer camp in the mountains of Bakony in July 2010. Practical workshops and inspirational plenary sessions were all pointing towards re-establishing a direct relationship with the earth. The Earth Rise

We are excited that the RTF gathering is the week before our weekend of P.E.D.A.L. and departure from Grow Heathrow.

We invite you to stay for the extra days to join in the participative workshops on storytelling, creative disobedience, popular education, and presentations about the Occupation. We invite you to join us on the ride and to create ways your collectives and RTF can join in sending messages of solidarity, stories of hope and ideas to build strong networks to support each other in our struggles.



Bring your bike and fill your panniers with your hopes, dreams and skills for change, and your plans for solidarity with those also fighting injustice.

[www.100daystopalestine.org](http://www.100daystopalestine.org)

## **Building a European movement for food sovereignty Call to Nyeleni Europe Forum and Camp in August 2011, Austria**

We, the organizers of the International Nyeleni Forum for Food Sovereignty in Mali in 2007 ([http://www.nyeleni.org/?lang=en&lang\\_fixe=ok](http://www.nyeleni.org/?lang=en&lang_fixe=ok)), call on all those who resist and struggle throughout Europe to join us in the construction of a European movement for Food Sovereignty.

On the 16th - 21st August 2011 in Krems, Austria we hope to bring together a mass meeting of groups, unions, associations and collectives of farmers, students, activists, ecologists, agricultural workers and landless youth and any others who are working for food sovereignty in Europe and in the world.

Europe has become integrated into an unsustainable global food system controlled by corporate interests and based on environmental degradation, the exploitation of resources of other peoples and social and economic inequality – facilitated through the impunity of transnational corporations and financial markets. The consequences of this model are visible everywhere in our food and agricultural systems and policies.

It is time to change the framework of European agricultural policies from those based on WTO rules to those based on people's food sovereignty. A new food and agricultural policy for Europe should be based on re-localizing agricultural production, supporting small producers and facilitating access to land for new farmers and collectives, while challenging the

## Contact

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To sign up to our list, please email [zad-occupation@lists.aktivix.org](mailto:zad-occupation@lists.aktivix.org)

## P.E.D.A.L. - 100 days to Palestine

### A call-out to RTF

**P** opular resistance movements  
**E** nvironmental justice  
**D** irect action on B.D.S.  
**A** rt & Culture  
**L** inking stories of struggle

P.E.D.A.L. is a living, breathing, cycling tool-kit mapping communities of resistance from the UK to Palestine on it's 100 day journey leaving Grow Heathrow on the 21st of March.

The bicycle caravan will be working in solidarity with Palestinian and Israeli popular resistance movements-responding to the call-out from Palestinian civil society to support the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions campaign (<http://bdsmovement.net/>) The ride will trace a trail of corporations complicit in the Occupation, and support activists on trial for BDS actions.

The group will join the dots of counter-cultures fighting injustice through Europe to the Middle East sharing stories, skills and strategies of resistance to create a cultural document for those working to end the illegal Occupation and the wider Global Justice movement.

P.E.D.A.L. will focus on environmental justice issues such as access to land, water and seeds. Members of Grow Heathrow are going on the ride and will be working to build networks between farmers in Europe to Palestine and will be focusing on food autonomy work when arriving in the West Bank.

A seed bank trailer will be carried on the journey collecting seeds along the route to share with farmers and spread peasant seed varieties between different communities.



group also created a permanent meeting place at their collective garden. (info/contact : [carnica375@gmail.com](mailto:carnica375@gmail.com))

## Longo Mai, Europe and beyond.

The cooperative farms of the Longo Mai network share a basic grassroots philosophy of collective life and autonomy. The cooperatives are all based on agriculture, cattle breeding, crafts and the transformation of raw material and direct sales. The income the collective farms generate is collectively managed to guarantee a future in solidarity for the cooperative and its members. The farms are also meeting places where skills and knowledge are shared. ...and this is just a glimpse of the ideas and projects that were (re-)presented at Wieserhoisl. More collective gardens, farms and food co-ops have been discussed while cooking, while doing some work at the farm, or sitting around the campfire; all of them sharing desires and ideas to reassume control over our life and food production.

## Report of the French RTF-Gathering in Dijon

In late october 2010 about forty people gathered at the self-managed space named « Les Tanneries » in Dijon, for the first gathering of the RtF french-speaking local group. The lines that follow are a piece of a collective testimony of the rich intercommunications that took place for two days.



Friday, in the late afternoon people living and involved in the Tanneries welcomed new coming people by introducing the place and its human history as well as their engagement with the social movement taking place in france at that time. Following introductions revealed people from cities, rural areas and/or interested by links between the two; people with or without direct agricultural activities; with different degrees of involvement in militant struggles; people interested by traditional agricultural installation and other by squatting land... All different and interested by access to land. For most of us this was a first contact with the RtF constellation.

Talks were first focused on Reclaim the Fields, the history and functioning of the constellation. Then different known experiences about access to land with a collective and militant dimension in France were shared, so as the RtF links and connection at the european scale. It was a

great feeling to see that many initiatives are happening in many places. Brains were already giving out heat when meetings and talks continued while sharing dinner.

On Saturday, four questions were discussed in small groups. Each question was quickly discussed and groups would alternate. In the afternoon we headed to the « Lentillères » collective garden (opened and cultivated since spring 2010, cf. Bulletin n°1) to share the morning collective reflections. Here are the four discussed questions and a summary of the elements of answers that came up.

### Why fighting for land access in Europe and locally?

The first goal of fighting for land is to live! And then to fight ...

- x AGAINST: cities extension, private property, massive concreting, land concentration in the hand of a few agro managers, dependency on world market and capitalism!
- x FOR: food autonomy, re-localisation of rural economy, recreate fertile land, to convey and keep living various know-hows, common or shared property, avoid point of non-return (e.g. Soil death and erosion), for an equilibrium between cities and countryside (virtuous circle: making rural areas more dynamic can attract urban people blocked in cities and lead to more legitimacy from conventional peasants), to stop moving our problems to others places and countries, to allow space for different social experimentations, to create a basis for emancipation, anticapitalist struggle, to enhance fruitful practices based on exchange and solidarity, for life rather than survival !

### Struggle for whom? And what for?

On the first question two answers that can be complementary rose:

- x For one self and close people (to be self sufficient)
- x For everyone on a global scale, to be united with fighting people (share food production) and with all those who die by working for others' food supply.

The question « struggle with whom? » seems to make more sense but we ran out of time to go further in that direction.

On the «what for? » question we talked about the agricultural dimension as a tool to develop autarky, know-hows, to try out. But agriculture allows the development of collective and political dimensions in our lives. It is a tool going much further than satisfying the need for food. On the collective and social levels we talked about link building, exchanges, hosting capacities, promote solidarity... And on the political level ideas were on practically questioning private property, to create links and convergences among various struggle and fights.

### What shapes to give to these fights?

#### What technical and juridical tools do we need?

There is a difference between Tools needed for access to land by squatting and by using conventional ways. In both cases a juridical knowledge is needed in order to use well the law

Since the announcement of the plans, local residents and farmers have organised their resistance through petitions, demonstrations and a tractor occupation in the centre of Nantes. In spring and autumn '09, the area was in a state of military guard, as 150 military cops were sent out to protect machines involved in the early works of core drilling and soil sampling. This is not a normal course of action; rather it was the response of the local government to acts of sabotage that occurred earlier on during the works.

In September '09, after a climate camp in the ZAD, a call was made to occupy the abandoned houses and threatened areas of the ZAD, with support of local people in resistance to the airport. This call has been answered, and already there are some 13 occupied areas on the ZAD, including empty farmhouses, caravans on abandoned land, forests and collective gardens. On July 15th 2010, authorities delivered papers to 5 occupied areas, warning the occupiers that they should vacate these places by the 30th July or face legal proceedings and evictions. Earlier that day, an agreement was signed by 5 unimportant bureaucrats to finance the construction of the airport. On 29th July 2010, about 40 people occupied the council offices in Nantes. The next day, it was made public that the multinational construction company Vinci had been awarded the contract to build the airport. Already the first works have begun on the Barreau Routier, a highway bypass being built to serve the airport. In August 2010 the city of Nantes made public their search for a security company to be on constant guard on the construction sites and areas around the ZAD.

But we won't be moved so easily. Busily growing food to support us over the next years, looking for further areas to occupy and building defenses within the ZAD, we are digging our heels in even deeper and preparing for the fight.

If you would like to join, or even come and visit, we are always open. There are many houses, fields, trees, caravans that are to be occupied and defended when the time comes. If you have your own project to contribute, like setting up a new space, garden, action ideas, or any other useful resources or talents, even better. We are encouraging people to try and be as self sufficient as possible within this space, as well as wanting to be inspired to become part of this ever growing struggle against the machine of progress. Or if you can't come and visit us, maybe you feel the wish to visit some sites or offices of Vinci in your area.....



### Wish list / ideas of stuff to bring....

bicycles and trailers, tarps, tools, building and barricading materials, climbing materials, computer and technical skills, wheelbarrows, rope of all kinds, books, vans/trucks, media resources, ideas, inspiration, fighting energy, donkeys, dragons and dentists.....



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## A community fights on against the invasion of the bulldozer empire....



**And as the empire grows, the community must also grow, and look for those to join the fight ...**

For over 40 years, a storm cloud has been gathering, 25km north of the city of Nantes, France, over a rural area of farms, fields, houses, marshlands and forests. As an integral part of the massive expansion of the so-called "eco metropole" of the grand-ouest, the local government has been buying up an area of over 1860hectares of land to make way for the construction of a so-called "high quality environmental" project a new airport, highway bypass and tgv train line. This

zone is officially known as the "ZAD", "Zone d'Amenegment Diffère, and by us who resist as the "Zone A Defendre".

or to by pass it efficiently, especially when combined forms of access to land are picked (e.g. living spaces in a bought piece of land while farming in squatted land around.

This subject brought various ideas on the necessity of creating shared tools and web like organisation (to mutualise experiences, competences and support – especially for squatted places); on the necessity of internal communication (act in order not get overwhelmed by relative distances, remoteness and differences in life contexts), and external communication (especially about promoting the idea that squatting is a lever for land access).

It was strongly underlined that creating a confrontation based on a power struggle is indispensable and that the use of juridical tools or juridical strategies are far from sufficient.

### **Which peasantries and small farming for which society? What kind of solidarities should we develop on these struggles?**

Time was missing to get more in depth with these questions. Ideas went around "small farming" (local scale, collective functioning...) to replace mass agriculture but without reducing agriculture only to a production act. Small farming is a way of living. Changing peasantry and agriculture forms is seen as a basis to change society and its rhythm toward production re-localisation, less urbanisation and wage system, toward the emancipation of the market system, more responsibility awareness and autonomy of individuals.

Then, two persons shared experiences relating to the time they had passed in the many squatted villages of the Spanish Pyrennees mountains. We came back to the Tanneries and struggles testimonies went on with people living the occupation of Notre Dame des Landes (see the ZAD occupation call). After this rich and well-filled day, everyone relaxed having dinner and partying.

Saturday exchanges and debates brought many questionings and ideas that inspired the three sunday workshops. In small groups we talked about sharing juridical knowledge, the RtF formation network and the potential connections between RtF and the NDDL occupation movement.



On juridical aspects of access to land a need to share all the knowledge we already have and to develop new tools was expressed. In particular all the aspect concerning risks taken when squatting land, agricultural status, the different ways of land acquisition and collective property. We decided to start by listing known collective experiences orientated towards how access to land was gained, how the power struggle went on and which juridical tools were used or passed by to succeed. At the same time a gathering of all the existing tools we have launched, means that can be used to store and share information are food for thinking as well.

About the RtF farm network it was decided to set up a charter in three versions in order to define the objectives and modalities of the agricultural and political approach to the training by using existing thought and documents. One version would concern people from the hosting farm, one other the person willing to be trained and the third for the RtF intermediary. Information collection on farms interested on being part of the network and their agricultural activities has started, as well as collection of contacts of local groups and people that can relay information and put interested people in touch.

A questioning exists on the formation framework. Is there a need for an associative status in order to give a cover for trained persons?

About Notre Dame des Landes occupation we talked about what we would like and could do there. This struggle is globally linked to RtF concerns (land access, agricultural settling, fight against land destruction, anticapitalism, global and practical ecology...). Proposals are the organisation there of the next French speaking RtF gathering and to check the possibility of having a European gathering there and to stay aware and active on this struggle, there and elsewhere.

It was pretty difficult to get closer to the finishing of the weekend since tons of discussion subjects had not been tackled, but we agreed on a next French speaking meeting (in NDDL and around February 5 and 6<sup>th</sup>). Various groups were formed to list farms for the network interested by RtF, to work on the charter. The objective of sharing our tools, knowledge and references on questioned juridical tools was also set.

Anyway it was frustrating to end everything quickly on the sunday afternoon, next gatherings could be organised on 3 to 4 days with a weekend in the middle where decision taking process would be concentrated.

**To be continued...**

## Collective Farms

### We are building up a network of free spaces

From 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> of october 2010 there was a meeting on collective farms taking place on the collective farm Wieserhoisl (Deutschlandsberg) Austria. It was called – living and working

the ones from the Reclaim the Fields Movement to come to East to learn and share. In East some of the mistakes done in West haven't been completely done and here peasant farming still exists as a way of life. Romania has 50% of the peasants from Europe and our neighbor Bulgaria also counts a significant number. Also at the moment, the most important decision maker on agriculture from Europe – the Agriculture Commissioner is Romanian. Members of our group have done already lobbying at the Commission to promote small peasants in the frame of the CAP debate.

For sure we have different ways of working in a team. This is why, in case you choose Rosia Montana we need to act soon and together on how to be efficient.

Our team decided to organize again this year a new FanFest edition. In function of the final date that you guys wish to establish for the Camp, we will organize the Festival just before in the opening for 3 days. This will give us the chance to share resources and logistics.

Rosia Montana is the most media covered village in Romania. If you ask any Romanian if he/she ever heard of Rosia Montana, they will be able to say where it is and what is the problem there. The Save Rosia Montana Campaign is the largest grassroots movement in the country.

Links (we didn't wanted to insert links in the description above so that you can read it cursively so here they are – please check them as they are very important, each of them):

- x Routes map Transylvania:  
[http://www.fanfest.ro/img\\_upload/1d064d99efcec9104f95ec355a4fdbb7/harta\\_mare.gif](http://www.fanfest.ro/img_upload/1d064d99efcec9104f95ec355a4fdbb7/harta_mare.gif)
- x Map locations for FanFest Festival 2010:  
[http://fanfest.ro/img\\_upload/1d064d99efcec9104f95ec355a4fdbb7/hartaRM\\_ultima.jpg](http://fanfest.ro/img_upload/1d064d99efcec9104f95ec355a4fdbb7/hartaRM_ultima.jpg)
- x Relevant picture FanFest Plateau: <http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=137392086272751&set=a.137391289606164.23590.137108306301129>
- x Public transport schedule – direction towards Rosia Montana from various cities in Romania (available only in Romanian): <http://www.fanfest.ro/index.shtml?apc=ri1n32>
- x Organization of accommodation for participants at FanFest 2010 in tents, at people's houses, gardens etc. (available only in Romanian): <http://www.fanfest.ro/index.shtml?apc=ri1n39>
- x The Save Rosia Montana Campaign [www.rosiamontana.org](http://www.rosiamontana.org) – english section
- x The FanFest Festival 2010 – [www.fanfest.ro](http://www.fanfest.ro) – available only in Romanian
- x Other initiatives of our team: The Ban Cyanide Campaign – [www.faracianura.ro](http://www.faracianura.ro) – english section
- x Photo Galleries:  
FanFest editions '04, '05, '06, '07 : <http://www.fanfest.ro/index.shtml?apc=ri1n31> and <http://www.facebook.com/#!/album.php?aid=23590&id=137108306301129>  
FanFest 2010 : <http://www.fanfest.ro/index.shtml?apc=ri1n160>

#### Contact us

For any further communication, please feel free to contact any member of our team from the list below (This is not the full list of our team, just people that are willing to take part to the

announcing their performances, practical information for participants, etc. Internet promotion is also complemented with a Facebook page of the event.

In addition to promotion on the internet, Fanfest has also been promoted via media partnerships agreed with independent and well-respected Romanian central newspapers and magazines. Fanfest's media partners agree to give Fanfest free publicity space and in return have their logos exposed on the event's website and main banners on the stage. Their journalists also have privileged access for interviews with artists, organizers, special guest and usually publish pre-event or post-event advertorials.

### Volunteers coordination

The entire Fanfest team works on a volunteer basis, in the sense that they are not remunerated for their work. The team is made of approximately 30 organizers (who's work start some 6 month in advance) and 60 volunteers (who's work start some 10 days prior to the event and continue for some of them for another 5 days after the event). Tasks and responsibilities are divided in several fields of organization (fundraising, media, promotion, transport, logistics, cooking, waste management, artists and guests, program, etc). Each year one or two organizers are responsible for volunteers' coordination. Fanfest has a stable traditional team of volunteers build over several editions. In addition to those, each year the event opens its door to new people, inviting them to submit a short electronic letter of intention, pointing out their intention to become volunteers, the field in which they want to volunteer and their experience and talents that qualify them as a Fanfest volunteer. A very open and non-discriminative selection process follows, after which all new volunteers are contacted and explain all practicalities necessary to reach the place and start their role. Most Fanfest volunteers are students or young parents, aged between 18 and 30, and nurture a deep passion for ecology, traditions' preservation, traditional agricultural work, mountaineering, etc.

### Proposals for the Reclaim the Fields camp

For the Reclaim the Fields Camp we can contribute with organizing logistical aspects, the program – artistic – underground groups of music, theater, poetry; activist – Romanian environmental and farming speakers / trainers, the communication with locals in order to organize farming works in the community – September is the month for the last hay, fruits and vegetables preserving, and other permanent works – taking care of animals, cheese making, bread making, tours in the area and many others. This might not be a very structured proposal of activities but we feel that the specifics of the location and the experience of our team show what we can do together. The fact that we know what the local conditions are and that you guys are organizing the Reclaim the Fields in unconventional locations since many years should blend our experiences together in a great Reclaim the Fields Camp. Organizing this Camp in Rosia Montana could bring more eastern activists and now, more than ever to have East-West solidarity, to better connect with each other. It is definitely the time for people like

on collective farms – development of common strategies. It turned out to be different then we planned it – nevertheless it was a tremendous success.

It should have been a meeting of [collectivist@s](mailto:collectivist@s), a space for exchange of experiences for people that are living in equal systems like us on the Wieserhoisl – farm collective. Only three people from other collectives came - two from the french Longo mai Kooperative Grange Neuve and one from the Kollektive Ecole de Suc in the Ardeche. To invite people to a meeting in the end of september is for sure a very bad date – as it is harvesting season everywhere at the farms. Next time in winter!

It turned out to be a meeting for people that are interested in collective structures in the countryside or that want to initiate collective farms. More than 40 people came to discuss, exchange, develop ideas, cook and have party together. Most of all things we did, we dug on to show the societal majority that it works out differently.

We worked on different topics – financing of collective structures, collective ownership, social solidarity, solidarity on other levels, possibilities in collectives, locations, soil, dreams, visions, objectives...



### Why such a meeting?

The aim of meetings like this could be to be infectious as the meeting on collective farms at the Wieserhoisl – collective was. To create space for young farmers, gardeners and new landless to share their dreams and build up perspectives. It was great that people that already live in collective structures could support newcomers through concrete support to build up new collectives as well as making transparent their every day life. Beyond infectiousness the goal for people that already live in collective structures is to build up persistent perspectives to work in solidarity and friendship on the change of the societal framework, to build up a network of farms and to force an international process.

Even though every day life for the participants may be back since a long time, some things stayed:

- x Motivation and enthusiasm to build up parallel structures
- x Bigger and new networks
- x New groups that want to put collective farmlife into practice



- x A working group that works on the implementation of a financing body (syndicate) for collective projects
- x A wiki site about collective farming and everything around this (<https://we.riseup.net/hoko>);
- x An initiative to bring cooperative and collective life into everyday life of others (caravan)
- x The wish to organize another meeting next year to make the formation of collectives a continuous process



### Continuative questions

How could networking inbetween projects and collective farms work on different levels of solidarity? How can we implement this now? (foodcoops, diverse projects in cities and collective farms)

Why did so many experiences fail? What could facilitate our successful collective living?

We are not used to live collectively because we grew up in an individualistic society, so how do we deal with this?

We, the weezelz also step forward and are intensively working on possibilities to free the place we are living at. We got to buy it. Any ideas?

### Vision/Imaginaire

We are building up a parallel system, a network of free spaces ( farms, workshops, squatted houses, foodcoops, houseprojects, free/self governed schools, kindergardens etc.) and try to live autonomy, dependent on our needs.

We want to create enduring spaces for those who do not want to live inside the system any more and for those who do not want to be absorbed of it.

More then just life at a place it concerns the idea to build up an outreaching network to constitute a front opposing state, multinationals and any form of governance.

locations where you could possible organize an activity that involves heavy use of electricity; authorization is needed and the consumption has to be payed to the electricity company – we know the procedure and the location where the bureaucratic work has to be done is in the town of Campeni – 15 km from Rosia Montana; big generators can be rented from the electricity company from Alba Iulia (75 km away) at reasonable prices; smaller generators can be rented from the electricity company in Campeni.

- x Large tents for presentations / movie projections etc. – one solution is the Army which rents big tents at reasonable prices; other solutions – friends.
- x Kitchen for hundreds of people: a wonderful location is the FanFest Plateau, at Eugen David's farm where our team practically built a summer kitchen from wood, with walls and a roof were with a bit of imagination 100 people can eat at once; behind the kitchen there is a great space for cooking for as many people you can – in this location our team cooked for more than 300 people; the other kitchen location is down in the center of the village at a young local's cabana – in this kitchen our team cooked for 120 people. What we usually do is that we don't serve all the people at once, but in an determined schedule – let's say breakfast between 07:00 to 09:30 and so on. Kitchen tools – from friends, we buy some, locals help for others.
- x Access to water – for the kitchen from the FanFest Plateau – the water comes from a source nearby; our team organized a big plastic baril in which we stored water. Water for shower – same thing with storing water from the source improvised by a hay stack; shower bags if existing – can be easily installed by hay stacks. For the kitchen from the cabana in the village – there is current water in the house both for the kitchen and for 1 shower. An improvised shower can be organized outside the house using water from the cabana.
- x Waste management – we usually rent special services for bins and portable toilets including transport and compaction of waste. We payed 600 euros for waste management for 2000 people for FanFest 2010, without considering the plastic garbage bags that we used to collect the waste 3 times a day for 3 days. Garbage collection points can be installed everywhere. On the FanFest Plateau we also built 2 permanent toilets from wood.

### Media experience

FanFest has been traditionally mediatized via alternative communication channels, mostly the internet. The event has a website [www.fanfest.ro](http://www.fanfest.ro), with only a Romanian version. The website's design changes at every edition, at the same time maintaining link to the previous edition's content. The website's sections display the event's program, presentation of all it's activities (cultural, environmental, music, arts and crafts, outdoor activities), presentation of all artists performing at Fanfest, of all the event's partners, practical information for participants such as accessing the area, transport routs and public transport means's schedules, accommodation and food offers in Rosia Montana and the surrounding areas, contact details, etc. Each new Fanfest edition is announced together with the launch of the event's new website, usually some 3 months in advance the event takes place. After the launch of the event and it's website, regular press releases are sent to Fanfest's press list, both in English and in Romanian, containing all relevant news about activities, artists



## Fundraising experience.

In order to make FanFest happen, we always worked with very little financial resources so everything we do is based on personal abilities to obtain services / logistics for free or with significant costs reductions, personal contributions and connections, local support. In terms of fundraising, we are proud to say that we are very selective with where we take money from. Until 2007 we received money on project proposals from international independent foundations, private donations from people and very small businesses and refused lots of money from Coca Cola, a cement factory, a steel factory and surprise – the mining company. We don't take money from the Romanian Government. In 2010 the fundraising was extremely difficult, managing to raise only 6500 Euro from personal donations from Romanians.

## Location experience

There are 2 main locations where we have experience in organizing the Festival. One is on a high Plateau at 1100 m altitude from where you can see the valleys around, and a big part of the Rosia Montana village. We and the locals call this plateau the FanFest Plateau since we organized the 2004 – 2007 FanFest editions there. This location is public, it has 5-6 usable hectares land and it has the advantage of having there the household of a local family which would welcome there for very cheap the headquarter of a festival or a camp. The household has many facilities for storage, a house with 4 beds, an attic which can become bedroom, a little kitchen in the house and a big kitchen outside, a hay storage facility which can become bedroom, lots of space behind for lots of tents. The rental of the plateau can be done at the local council.

The other location where we have experience is the Brazi Lake, amazing nature, amazing view, less space than on the Plateau. The location where we organized concerts, the NGO Fair and other things at Brazi Lake belongs to a private person. It can be rented for very cheap and it has about 1 hectare.

## Logistical experience

Most of the activities in the FanFest programme take place in open air, in large tents or other facilities. We shall list below the most important aspects of this section:

- x Access – public transportation towards the village– the program is listed below; access to Brazi Lake – by private car is possible, by foot is enjoyable; access to the FanFest Plateau – by private car is possible; a bit challenging for extremely big trucks; the road on the plateau was built by our team from rocks. By foot the Plateau can be accessed through the forest on a little mountain path – it is very very enjoyable.
- x Electricity – there is three-phase connection from public electricity wires in most of the

overgrow the government.



# Compost Sexism and Gender

At the last gathering at Wieserhoisl in Austria I hosted a workshop on “Sexism and Gender Issues” with which we are confronted with in our collectives, activist networks and in peasant / organic agriculture more generally. I felt that the workshop went really well, the atmosphere was relaxed, conscious and respectful which was the basis to handle such a sensible issue. Much was talked about but the time we had wasn’t nearly enough. We need to follow up on this and repeat these sessions at coming gatherings, camps and at home in our collectives.

This article is thought to be a first cautious step forward, trying to sum up and structure the results of our workshop and deliver a basis for ongoing reflections.

When I use the terms “men / male socialised” or “women / female” I mean people who have been socialised to fit into these constructed gender identities and / or identify with these and therewith bear different privileges and embody specific behaviours or not. The \* is thought to pay tribute to the diverse gender identities beyond these hetero-normative categories.

## The Problem: Patriarchy, Sexism, Gender stereotypes in everyday life.

It turned out, surprise, surprise, that our own collectives are far from having overcome sexist behaviours, patriarchal social structures and gender stereotypes.

One of the issues we touched upon is the division and visibility of different types of labour. Most obviously this is the case for productive versus reproductive labour. Doing household work and child care is still, frequently rendered invisible (we called it “shadow work”) when opposed to “productive” therefore manual, heavy, physical work or paid wage labour. And even though, especially in agriculture (the example was from Austria), this productive farm work is increasingly done by part-time women\* farmers, while the men\* work in wage labour, this increased visibility does not necessarily mean more acknowledgment for women\*. This is the case because doing farm work plus reproductive shadow work and child care leads to a double or triple work load which is still not consciously discussed. On the other hand a patriarchal division of labour still sustains, which is not least because of male paternalism towards women\* who (want to) do heavy “men\*’s work”: Either she is laughed at, thought of as “cute / sweet” or defined as “too weak” needing a sexist



gentleman to take over the work. Hence, we need to talk about “work” and what we define as such and re-think patriarchal definitions of “efficiency”: Why does digging often seem more “efficient” as weeding, cooking or looking after the kids?

During this strand of discussion it was also noted that parents (mostly mothers) often feel discriminated, also in “emancipatory” spaces, which are not child-friendly, have no collective child care and where an intellectual, rational atmosphere renders children and their parents “annoying” and “disturbing” without offering reasonable alternatives.

The second big issue we came across was gender stereotypes and the problems connected therewith. We noted that these are deep ingrained and also rendered invisible. It therefore takes a conscious effort to dig them up and try to deconstruct them. And even if many collectives claim that they have them in mind, this doesn’t mean that we have overcome them. It was noted that there is a lack of talk about this and a lack of safe spaces where we can honestly talk about our feelings.

Interestingly enough we talked a lot about male gender stereotypes with which many of the male socialised people didn’t feel comfortable. These included a very strong work ethic and connected therewith a need to feel tired and “worked out” at the end of the day, demanding both a lot of emotional and physical strength of them. These norms were felt to always make men\* adjust to the work pace and load of the strongest and override the real needs and limits of the weaker / sensible male socialised beings. Maybe we should adjust to the latter. While these issues are based on the competitiveness of male stereotypes, similar mechanism is at work when men\* avoid physical body contact with each other, may it be because of homophobia or the fear that, to relate intimately and lovingly to other men\*, rather than competitively, might make their very identity as men\* shake and tumble. Another patriarchal pattern was observed in discussions where men\* are present, they try to dominate others instead of empathetically reacting to contributions. This seems to be once again connected to competitiveness and the will to “be right” and “to win” over others and force their egos upon others. In the end it seemed like getting rid of patriarchy, sexism and to reflect male privilege might indeed be rewarding for men\* as well.

Another question that remained is whether there is an interconnection between different modes of production (industrial, peasant, subsistence, family, collective farming etc.) and the social relations that exist within them. Here once again the term “peasant farming” remains unclear. If by it we mean conservative, nuclear family-based “peasant” farming then maybe this rather reproduces sexism and gender injustices. And even if by it we mean emancipatory, collective, “peasant” farming then unless an honest and practical focus is put on these issues, it remains doubtful if we will overcome these patriarchal mechanisms of oppression.

Lastly it should be noted that (as we note at the Wieserhoisl as well) all of these issues are interrelated with other broader mechanisms of



## Past activities together

The activities that we organized together in the last almost 9 years are extremely various, managing to influence decision makers, investors, scientific forums, the public opinion and the media. We shall mention a few of the types of the activities that we carried together: direct legal and illegal actions (demonstrations, marches in the cities and in the country – 135 km, bike tours in the country, vigils, poster actions in the entire country), bureaucratic actions (hundreds of thousands of petitions signed, open letters, press releases, calls, research, etc.) cultural events (documentary movies, charity movie projections, concerts and poetry recitals etc.), cyber activism (support letters, petitions, photo calls, opinion polls, websites etc.), tourism projects, mobilization of independent personalities, boycotts of people or businesses affiliated with the mining company, lobby meetings, calls, court actions (over 50 court cases since 2003 either initiated by us, or by the “others”).



## Relevant Experience - FanFest

The event organized by our team that has the best relevance for the Reclaim the Fields Movement is the FanFest Festival (in English is “the Hay festival”) from Rosia Montana. Up to date we organized 5 editions starting with 2004 and taking a break in 2008 and 2009. The goal of this festival is to awaken the activist spirit in Romanians across the country and to celebrate the cultural heritage and the life of Rosia Montana which resists every year to oppression. FanFest brought to Rosia Montana thousands of people at every edition. The highest participation was in 2006 – with 15000 people and the lowest in 2010 – with over 2000 people. People are drawn into this event because of its political message, and because of the beauty of Rosia Montana. The festival is a 3 days event and the program of the festival slightly differs from one edition to the other, but at large it includes: an NGO fair with green initiatives, political and cultural debates, tourism activities, movie projections, various workshops of crafting, usual and extreme sports, theater, poetry, music and prose representations, a peasant market. With all the activities that we organized we tried to transmit a message, to involve the public in political debates, to get them to understand the Save Rosia Montana perspective and to know the people and the beauty of the village on one hand and to make the people of Rosia Montana feel the solidarity that exists, to contribute to the local economy, to create the premises of alternatives to mining on the other hand.

As you can imagine, the program of the festival has behind it huge efforts of organization.

generosity, love, unconditioned help coming from fellow Romanians and people around the world. You might say they have seen it all.

Due to the manipulations tactics used by the mining company in the area, the social context is divided. The rosienii people are either pro or against the mining project and their positions are tremendously influencing their social relationships. If you are not from the village rosienii people will see that instantly and their first question will be: “are you pro or against”. Since 2001, hundreds of families sold their houses to the mining companies and left the village. Some of their stories are dramatic. Thus, the nucleus of the opposition against the mining project is stronger than ever as it consists of people that if they wanted to leave, they would have done it by now. They are people for which Rosia Montana is now their life and will be the future for their children.



#### Our team

Who we are and actually who makes this proposal to the Reclaim the Fields Movement? Our team consists at the moment of 30 active people, but the volunteers that we can mobilize is much larger, in fact when we organize a large event we have to do a selection, due to the very high demand. Our team has an old core of 10 young people (still young at heart after all this time) that answered the call from the local people and got involved in the Save Rosia Montana Campaign back in 2002. The others joined the team in time. Our team closely works with local people from Rosia Montana which are organized in an association named Alburnus Maior (the Latin name of Rosia Montana).

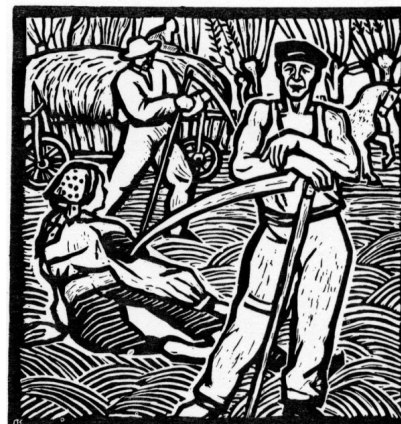
discrimination like racism etc. or more specific ones, based on the political culture where people come from, different expectations, language and problems around the open- or closedness of meetings.

#### **Solutions - Reflecting and surrendering male identity, supporting the feminist struggle, creating safe spaces and the feminist revolution of everyday life.**

Now that you have read all this, you might feel theoretically “aware” of these issues. But that doesn’t necessarily mean that they get practically challenged or tackled. We have to consciously reflect about gender issues and the division of labour. We need to be aware of gender balances in the groups we work in. And all of this needs time and space. Consciously taken time and created space. Not 5 minutes during lunch break. In these spaces we need to develop methods and rituals to reflect and create the change we wish to see.

As we have seen the problem is diverse and complex. Nevertheless solutions might seem rather straight forward. But by really attempting to overcome this shit we will have to challenge our very personalities, the ways we are programmed. Especially as men\*, “we” should be challenged and our behaviour questioned and criticised. This might leave some, frustrated and

confused as it shakes the very foundation of our socialised identity. But instead of resorting once again to patriarchal masculinity and behaviour we should try liberate ourselves from male (sexual) identity while staying aware of the privileges that this socialisation gave us. These anti-sexist, empathetic spaces, which might be helpful to express our emotions and feelings, they have to be once again consciously created. This and the active intervention into sexist and patriarchal behaviour might be a first step in supporting the feminist struggle.



Maybe the most practical way to handle these privileges is to share knowledge, skills and experiences horizontally with those who don’t feel proficient with them and wish empowerment. Once again, consciously take time and create space for it.

This could, for instance, mean a women\* / lesbian / trans-only workshop on how to dismantle, repair and properly run a tractor (or a chainsaw, or an axe). By the way: This actually already happened, as it turned out in the workshop. Maybe these workshops can be the beginning of an active dismantling of symbols of patriarchy in agriculture?

When it comes to such protective space, actively encourage or at least passively respect them. As a result men\* in our collectives should be questioned in their “traditional roles” (wood-chopping, chainsaw-wielding, tractor-driving ... alpha-male) and challenged as abusing their privileged position. When women\* question their gendered work patterns and want to take over these “male” tasks, it might often lead to conflicts where men\* react defensive to these attempts to “take away” “their jobs” that are constitutive to their identity. A feminist collective

would support women\* in this conflict as “they” are less well positioned and more likely to “give in” during this process.

When it comes to shadow work (cooking, household, kids) there was the idea to spread it justly or evenly between genders, taking into account both personal needs and desires as well as socialisation and privilege. There was also the proposal to put this shadow work more in the centre of attention and acknowledgement. This could also mean to celebrate it and find ways to give it as much value as to all other work.

On a more visual and atmospherical level it definitely makes a difference, if in our collectives we make feminist, queer and trans politics more visible. May it be through posters, flyers or other queer and feminist symbols.

Another debate about solutions we had was centred around explicitly matriarchal / women\*-only / feminist collectives. Are the oppressive because they turn hierarchies upside down and replace one form of domination with another? Or are they rather necessary protective spaces? I would argue that men\*'s perception of these places are once again strongly effected by the identity crisis they experience when they enter a space where they feel like losing their privileges. To me to criticise these spaces from their privileged standpoint is rather unacceptable. Rather men\* should see these spaces as opportunities and experience. As a space where they get mirrored quiet effectively and experience what it means and feels to not have the everyday privileges.



### What this means for RTF and its gatherings / camps concretely.

We also collected some action points for coming RTF events:

#### Parents / child care

- x Offer collective child care / children's space
- x Include male socialised in this process

#### Practical Work

- x Avoid or make visible classical division of labour
- x At Wieserhois it looked like this: Seed sorting – women\* / Bean harvesting – mixed / Shoveling shit – men\*)

complete ignorance of people's rights to property.

The struggle of Rosia Montana. Rosia Montana finds itself at the moment in the most difficult time in its history. Since 10 years Rosia Montana is threatened to be destroyed by the largest mining project proposal in Europe. The mining proposal belongs to a foreign investor Gabriel Resources. Also, some of the most important players in this industry bought shares in Gabriel Resources in the last years (example – Newmont Mining – the largest mining company in the world owns over 20% in Gabriel's shares). Needless to say that the mining project is planned to destroy the life in the Apuseni Mountains. It involves an unprecedented use of cyanide, destruction of 4 mountains, forests, pastures, houses, churches, archaeological vestiges, relocation of people, cemeteries, animals.



The village is very large and has a contradictory appearance with inhabited households, houses that were sold to the mining company and are deserted at the moment and buildings transformed in offices for the mining company. When U arrive in Rosia Montana you see the struggle at every step. The inhabited valleys are surrounded by mountains, pastures and forests of an amazing beauty which give travelers a moment of peace. Autumn is the best moment in the year to observe the various colors of the nature in Rosia Montana.

### The people of Rosia Montana

The local population consists mostly of former miners and people that work exclusively in agriculture. A few work for public services or small private business. The mining company, even though is not operational employs seasonal workers for seasonal PR jobs and they also have a few permanent jobs as car drivers and pro-mining NGOs. Nevertheless, whatever the jobs in Rosia Montana might be, people are strongly connected to their land and animals. Being a mountain area, the peasants in Rosia Montana are focused more on animal growing – mostly cows, sheep and horses. Traditionally they also have small vegetables gardens and orchards. The food processing is very traditional, non mechanized due to the poverty in the area and also to strong traditional customs. Rosienii people preserve vegetables and fruits for winter in various delicious ways such as zacusca, pickles, jams, syrups. Also, the men from the village make a famous brandy from plums or apples or the best combination – brandy with sour cherries – highly appreciated by activists when engaged in philosophical discussions with locals. The rosienii peasants love their tradition and to share their practices and they are very curious and enthusiastic to work with young people. The work is very hard but very rewarding. Due to various procedures that the mining project had to fulfill in the last 10 years, the people from Rosia Montana faced great pressure and manipulation coming from the mining company, the Romanian and European authorities and the media. But they have also experienced



village from the Apuseni Mountains where since 10 years a gold mining project is threatening the existence of Rosia Montana and large mountain areas around it.

This is the location where our team wishes to propose the organization of the Reclaim the Fields Camp 2011.

The idea of organizing this activist event in Rosia Montana came from 3 members of the Reclaim the Field movement which visited the village at the end of November, 2010. Following that, our team had a planning meeting at the beginning of December 2010 in which we concluded unanimously that we are willing to partner in organizing the camp in Rosia Montana. In the attachment of this message you will find our proposal which describes location, it's political context (the Save Rosia Montana Campaign), the logistical resources and the organizational capacity of our team and of the locals.

We realize that there are numerous details to discuss in the very near future with regards to how will we work together, in case you guys will decide for this location. In the hope that you will strongly consider our proposal, we wish you good luck in choosing the location and in all of your activities.



### **Rosia Montana – the perfect location**

Short description of the location: Rosia Montana is a village placed in the Central – Western part of Romania, in the Apuseni Mountains. The closest small towns are Abrud (11 km away) and Campeni (15 km away) and the closest large cities are Alba Iulia (76 km away) and Cluj Napoca (135 km away). There is public transport (bus) towards Rosia Montana from various towns and cities from Romania. The road towards Rosia Montana is in acceptable condition – practicable in all seasons, especially summer and autumn.

### **History**

Rosia Montana is the oldest documented mining settlement in Romania (about 1,870 years old). The village of Rosia Montana contains hundreds of households, a historical center with beautiful architecture, various administrative and social-cultural buildings, memorial houses, a mining museum with a unique collection of ancient artifacts, an archaeological reservation with kilometers of roman and pre-roman underground galleries, mausoleums and many geological wonders. Rosia Montana is of industrial interest especially for it's gold and silver resources. Mining activities have been conducted since pre-roman times (more than 2000 years), leaving behind archaeological proves uniques in the world. During communist times, the gold was exploited in Rosia Montana using “modern” technologies in the form of open cast mining, with the use of cyanide and other dangerous substances, violating people's rights to a healthy environment and culture heritage and in the given conditions at the time with

### **Analysis of the style of discussion at Wieserhoisl**

- x men\* dominant
- x Wanting to “be right”. Pushing through their ego.
- x Intellectual / rational more dominant than emtional / personal stuff → male gendered values
- x Argument to justify this: “Too little time”.

### **Political position**

- x Critique conservative peasant agriculture and it's politics

### **Methods / Workshops**

- x Emotions- / Gender-focussed small groups and workshops
- x Budy up with newcomers / people for whom we can't translate

## **The access to land working group Directions and a call for contributions**



As a warm autumn sun tickled the backs of our eyes, and the forest grew softly all around, a motley crew at Wiersehoisel set about pruning the unruly bush that is the access to land working group.

It was decided that the aim of the working group will be to research and publicise information on accessing land in different legal and cultural contexts in order to provide both a living archive of relevant information and a point of

comparison between contexts. Through the collection of histories and narratives, and the investigation of models, supportive organisations, tools, techniques and useful information, we aim to compile a comprehensive collection of resources on the issue of access land. This work is aimed at both helping people who are seeking to access land for agricultural projects as well as those attempting to understand the varied histories of land distribution and use that shape the societies we live in.

The research is built on the premise that anyone who has access to land has access to food, water, energy, shelter, healing, and wisdom. Anyone who has access to land therefore has the

key to autonomy from the fiscal and political hierarchies of capitalism. For this reason, democratised access to land is not simply a threat to landowning elites – it is a threat to the ideology of the free market and the power structures that depend on it. Facilitating access to land by sharing experiences, information and advice is an essential step in the direction of food autonomy and a sustainable future, one turning on the path away from capitalism.

The access to land research will be divided into subjects that will be published on the RTF website, categorised by both country and content. This will allow the archive to function as a point of comparison across different places and as a library of information on specific legal and historical contexts. The substance of the information will be constituted by the research that we do, and the steps we take to share it.

### **This is a call and an invitation for your contribution!!!**

The categories we have identified for research are:

- x Histories of land distribution and use; a bibliography of useful articles and texts
- x Details of organisations that work to link people and places
- x Sources of information on the state of planning law, available grants and useful legal precedents
- x Information on projects that have successfully gained access to land and the techniques they found useful.

If you can contribute to this research please send articles or information to [malte@riseup.net](mailto:malte@riseup.net). We would like to have contributions in a format that is ready for publication. The first set of documents will be uploaded by January and from then on the process will be rolling.

The question we should be asking is why is land not a political discussion? And what can we do to reconnect the wealth of the earth to the people who want to reap, grow and sow? The market is a web of illusion and promise, and yet concealed behind every new commodity lies a truth; the ultimate source of all wealth is the land. When capitalism fades the earth will remain.



### **Various remarks about the place of the camp**

The last camp was organized remotely, but if it's possible, it's important to make an evolution in the organization of the 3<sup>rd</sup> camp : it's important to maximize the implication of the local groups , and more if the place for the camp is linked to a local struggle ; it's obvious that a local group can easily take care of the logistic, but it's also important that they would be able to take part of the contents elaboration, to be able to make proposals, would this be to propose that we would help them with their struggle, but also to be able to propose various workshops, direct actions, practical exchanges...And more in the NDDL context, a fight against an infrastructural project, far from being the only one in europe. We could make the net bigger thanks to that, share and communicate on our experiences of this kind of struggles, create solidarities between these struggles, imagine new forms of resistances...

It's important to make the proposals as clear as possible : it's obviously a good idea to integrate the eastern countries, but not if this would compromise the quality and the organisation of the camp. For instance we can question the pertinence of organizing a camp at the East while a big work on making contacts there still has to be made – further than having contacts to have a place for the camp there. The idea of organizing the assembly in Austria was to create connections around there, but this doesn't work so easily, and a real proactive work has to be made. Maybe this would be better to begin with from that, rather than wanting absolutely to set the camp there, that could be downright above-ground, both for eastern and western people. Maybe it's important to take our time, and we will be more able to support these proposals in 3 years.



The other proposals should be built on the fact that they are a geographical alternative to France. It's the content of the proposal that should be important, what it represents for the RtF dynamics, our perspectives, it's opening to other individuals, collectives, countries, struggles...

To get integrated to a local struggle when it's possible seems to be important in our net process, to support dynamics and get inspired by them, enlarge our perspectives of struggle, to have the opportunity of acting concretely together, to meet each other and learn to know each other acting.

### **Proposal for Reclaim the Fields Camp 2011 in Romania**

Dear Friends / Carrots,

We are an activist group from Romania, working together since 2001 on environmental issues. One of the most visible campaign on which we work together is the Save Rosia Montana Campaign. It is an anti-mining with focus on Rosia Montana, an amazing mountain

RTF's campaigns. The historical context of this place can inspire us and enrich our perspectives on future struggles. As in Brittany, successful fights against nuclear plants were carried out by coalitions the inhabitants, activists, and peasants.

Members of RTF are contemplating occupying a piece of land in the ZAD area to establish a farm to produce food for the inhabitants of the zone and to support the resistance projects. First the available land will be checked, and a call to set up a food focussed rural squat will be released. The idea to holding the camp in NDDL is to involve ourselves in this struggle, to support the inhabitants, and to contribute to the resistance. Why not begin and support a collective land occupation if the moment is ripe? Furthermore, there is a 2 hecter collective garden that has been feeding over 60 people for more than 10 years. The garden was set up in 1998 during a strike by the unemployed with the support of local peasants, especially landless peasant labours. To substantiate the context of this proposal, there are two good French documents that we will send to you. They both come from the Z magazine and describe the actors, history, stakes and limits of the struggle. It is important that they are translated so that we can gain a deeper insight into the aspects of this struggle when deciding the location of the camp. It would be good to do this before the bulletin is released so that we are not forced to decide under time constraints. There is also a (French) radio programme on the occupation.

To summarize what has led us to propose NDDL as a site for the next camp:

- x A strong local history of peasant struggles.
- x A fight against an airport which poses a certain number of question on access to land, and more largely, on anticapitalists struggles
- x The possibility for RtF to support this local struggle concretely, and also to take part of it by releasing the calls for ocupation, supporting the squatters, and particularly a pssible squat of land.
- x A RtF France group and and NDDL collectives motivated in taking part in the preparation of this camp.
- x The will in RtF to act concretely, to make connections and facilitate convergences between RtF and other struggles, resistances, anticapitalist movements.

As that was said during the assembly, the principal weak point of the proposal is that the camp would happen one more time in france : "Perfect proposal, Wrong country". Is it enough to refuse the proposal? To our mind, it will mainly depend on the quality of the other proposals.



## A critical analysis of Terre de Liens

This article try to give some precisions on Terre de Liens and its limits, in order to complete the presentation made in bulletin n°2, which appeared a bit idyllic.

Terre de Liens links different people: farmers, people from social economy, urban alter-consumption trandy citizen, popular education people. It is supported by local council which pay part of the salaries through grants, in the framework of sustainable development, yada yada yada.

### Weakness of dependency

Terre de Liens is an association which build links, search, and support agricultural projects, especially thanks to the employees. The foundation « Foncière » ( ground rent) is the capitalist tool elaborated to buy land and to launch support campaign. Today the association is going well, growing quickly, with a national network which is almost covering the whole territory. Fundraising trough the fondation is working partly thanks to the Madelin law which give fiscal advantages (tax deduction) for investing in new enterprises for more than five years.

This mixture, support of local politics for salaries, diversity of people in the association, and importants gifts from people because of fiscal advantages, made a possible and fast development of the structure.

### But is this structure strong?

To gather so many places, buy lands and have so much money in a single structure is a danger; it increases the risks of beeing an aim for the state, internal power conflicts, hijacking.

### What would the people living on the places become if the association would collapse or change course?

In France, the lease right is on the favour of the tenant, until the end of activities, but the lease of Terre de Liens, as the Larzac one, don't mention the retirement period (the slogan: ground for the one who works on it), especially that agricultural retirements are miserable.

Terre de Liens' purchasing land strategy is depending on market prices. This strenghten speculation even if the association doesn't sell again afterwards.

Purchasing land with Terre de Liens remains a possibility for a small number of projects, presentable one, maybe with a collective agriculture but profitable one.

## About special beets, turnips and squashes...



800-1000 people, especially if the camp is at NDDL.

Minutes of the camp decision process will be in the next bulletin. Although for information the next assembly will be in March, either in the United Kingdom at Heathrow, London or near Budapest, Hungary at the site of the 2010 camp.

### An RTF camp at Notre Dame Des Landes, close to Nantes, France?

NDDL is currently the most substantial proposal, both in logistical terms and political details of the struggle. The two other proposals came to fruition during the last day of the assembly, without any detailed information (we don't yet know the opinions of the people in the places concerned or even have contacts). It was decided that we would send a representative to meet the people in Romania.

### Who is behind the NDDL proposal?

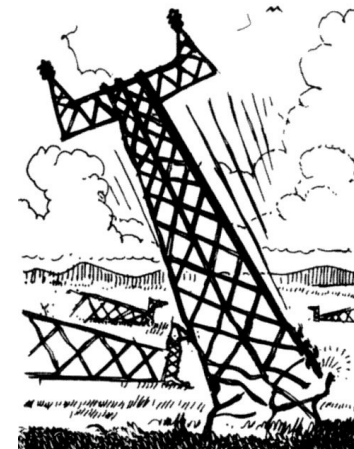
The proposal to hold a camp at NDDL was made following a presentation on the ZAD struggle during the Dijon meeting.

During the meeting (which was attended by approximately 50 people) the French group agreed on this proposal and a group of about 12 people said they were ready to be involved in camp preparations. The next Francophone meeting will be held at NDDL in February, with the potential for dedicating a large section of the agenda to the organisation of the camp, if it is decided that that shall be the camps location.

The ZAD activists, (approximately 60 people grouped in 16 collectives) have given their support to the proposal before the Austrian assembly. The area has already hosted a camp for climate action in 2009 following which the land was occupied.

### Context of the NDDL struggle

The NDDL struggle is a campaign against an airport which has been running for 40 years. The airport project was in hibernation until 2000 when it was reactivated and the resistance rose again. Since then the council has purchased many houses and land holdings in the area and pushed out the inhabitants. Because of this there are many empty houses and farms which have been occupied by a group of about 60 squatters who aim to revitalise the resistance to the project. Beyond this campaign, the area of Loire-Atlantique has a rich tradition of peasant struggles. Especially with 'peasants-worker' movements (catalysed by the book "Peasants in the class struggle", a text written by a local peasant calling for unified actions by peasants and factory labourers). With this history of peasant struggles, the area fits into





## Next Reclaim the Fields Camp(s)

### Summary of 3 location proposals

#### Summary of the decision making process for the camps location

During the assembly we set around christmas as a deadline for proposed camp locations to be submitted to the carrot group. The decision will then be made by the carrots by the end of January. This is set to be finished before the February francophone RFT meeting so that the organisational wheels can begin to turn. Proposals must be formulated clearly, and contain several points decided upon during the assembly, they are:

- x A description of the site in geographical terms, and a summary of logistical issues.
- x The capacity of the local group to organize the camp?
- x The political relevance of the site and the situation of local struggles.
- x The relevance of the site to RTF processes and political issues (from the expansion of the network to struggles we should be involved in).

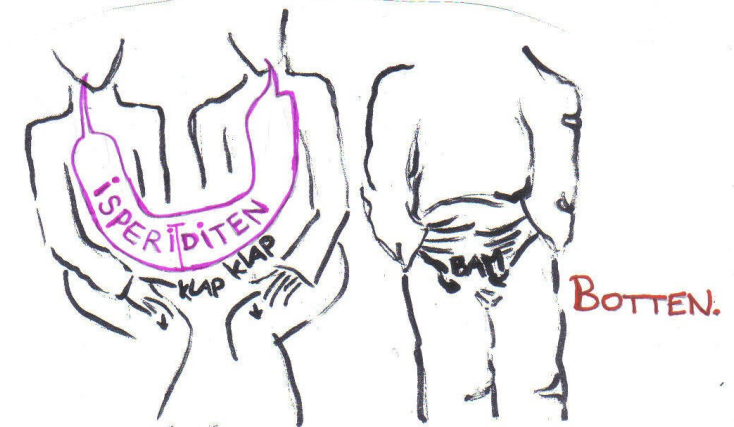
To specify the role of the carrots and the local group in the organisation of the camp, it was proposed that:

- x The carrots manage invitations, communication, publications, advertising, translations, camp structure, camp content, and camp finances.
- x The local group manages the more concrete logistic aspects including kitchens, transport, first aid, water, electricity, establishing links to local struggles and possibilities for direct action.

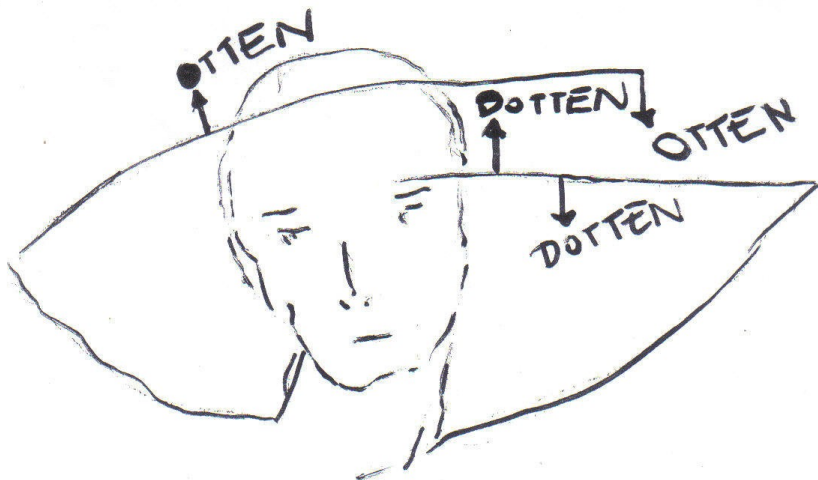
An open source Google Document has been created which includes proposals for the content of the camp emerging from a brainstorming session during the Wieserhoisl meeting. This can be added to by anyone. It is important that people from local RFT groups and the camp organisers be part of the carrot list because, along with the next assembly, this list will be the main medium for decisions and communication about the camp. We should also bear in mind that it is possible that we will have a larger group than at the Cravirola camp. It is important to plan for a group of between



## The Song „Battandzu“



## The Song „Battandzu“



## A critical analysis of Terre de Liens

(continued from page 19)

The small farmer agriculture that we want is wider and transcend this frame.

The power struggle through the purchase of land remain losing, meanwhile Terre de Liens buy a farm, multinationals get a lot more. Bourgeois' ideal of property has to be attacked and a real collective property of the land has to be tried.

Terre de Liens support atypical projects and enable collective/common farming projects to settle down since few years. This is a new phenomenon, before most of the supported projects were familial organic farming.

The current question is to see an evolution (this is already happening with few non organic certificated projects) towards projects without the required unit production number, or even towards non directly profitable projects (often the farms installation are operating progressively).

For me, Terre de Liens is one of the numerous possible Solution for the land access, but not miraculous one.

Terre de Liens can hold an interesting place in a global strategy with other groups (like Reclaim the Fields) through alternative practise. Terre de Liens is a solution coming from elder people (with a militant experience and a bit of money) with an «owner citizen» logic.

As we are a bit younger, we can dare to get into the action, and train on the places.

The aim is not to have an only strategy but plural and thought together.

