Slow Food®
Macedonia

Declaration "Our Food, Our Future"

Adopted at the 1st Congress of Slow Food Macedonia, Skopje, 14 April 2018

Food is the source of life energy, the thread that binds us in happiness and sorrow, the bridge of love, the morning light of dignity when we display our products in the green market, when we present our shiny mastery in the restaurants. With it, we welcome our newborn, and part with our deceased dear ones. It brings us closer to the people whose tongues we do not speak, and it holds the key to telling our story without us saying a thing. With it, we tell the story of our ancestors to the next generations, and through it we feel familiar with the artifacts brought to life anew by archeologists. This heritage has been generated for 10 millennia, ever since human beings first started growing their food, for themselves and other members of their closest community, cultivating myriads of plant varieties, and as many breeds of domesticated animals.

However, food today is endangered to the extent it has never been before.

Our dishes are becoming more uniform; the shelves in the supermarkets are more indifferently repetitive; the act of dining – less ceremonial; and the seasons we used to know - cannot be recognised anymore.

The enraged cyclone of the industrial mindlessness has consumed 10,000 years of gastronomic heritage, irrefutably depleting biodiversity, which is the treasure chest of natural remedies that provide immunity for us to survive the deluge of the industrial age.

Thousands of plant varieties and thousands animal breeds are facing extinction, with 2/3 of them possibly forever lost to our knowledge.

We only know the black-and-white kinds of cows, lined up, like machines, in huge hangars. Arable fields are becoming endlessly uniform; tomatoes and apples are getting geometrically more precise in shape, and the taste we expect to get – fading in memories.

Frankenstein-like seeds crafted in labs are offered as highest scientific achievements, with copyrighted compensations. Food, with sweet-talk brutality, is treated as a merchandise, mass-produced, rendered to worthlessness, and deprived of diversity. Corporate deceits for personal profits!

Our food is endangered! We are losing it every day. We live in times when it has become a fundamental issue for our survival.

The expectations are that climate changes will have a strong impact on the food production in the Republic of Macedonia, affecting mostly the decrease in yields of cultures cultivated without irrigation. The farmers in the rural areas are facing the biggest threats.

All of this considered, we - the delegates of the 1st Congress of Slow Food Macedonia, issue the following

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DECLARATION

To Address the Following Challenges:

- We aim to establish a visible, firm and vital association under the umbrella of the National Organisation "Slow Food Macedonia", which will act in accordance with the principles promoted in the Slow Food Manifesto and The Slow Food International Statute where a great number of people – activists, produces, cooks and experts – will recognize the opportunity for promoting a new gastronomic culture and sustainable food system, based on the local cuisine;
- We aim to inspire and facilitate a nationwide dialog to promote the nutrition system, connecting producers, consumers, science experts and state institutions;
- We aim to offer a sustainable model of food system, which will be governed by the sovereignty of food, as a response to the limitations imposed by the import of food and the ambitions of food merchants and the industry;
- We strive to make pleasure of food available for everyone, regardless of sex, race, language, confession, political views, personal and social status;
- We aim to increase the visibility and availability of the food produced in traditional ways, through campaigns and events providing support to the local producers;
- We strive to protect the seeds, as the basis of biodiversity and as a key to the sovereignty of food in conditions of climate changes;
- We aspire to raise the awareness for the benefits of sustainable, locally produced and seasonal foods, produced in traditional manner, following recipes we have inherited from the previous generations;
- We intend to be an active participant in creating the conditions to overcome the missing links in the system, through our established partnerships with the institutions applying the European practices in Macedonia;
- We aim to protect traditional products by defining production regulations, and providing solutions for access of the products to the market;
- We intend to protect as many products with geographical labels as possible, in defense against the insurgence of imported goods that are declared as domestic;
- We strive to establish a system promoting the use of local products in the catering business through cooperation between the chefs and caterers, on one side, and the local food producers, on the other.
- We aim to create the conditions for constructing a touristic narrative offer of Macedonia, based on a network of local food producers.
- We intend to be the bridge to the producers, activists, science experts, and policy makers, to all the efforts around the globe actively committed to changing the mass production system that affects the biodiversity and gastronomic heritage to a great extent.

Join the growing movement for change! Join Slow Food Macedonia!

Our food, our future!