



LAND STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

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LSP Board of Directors Policy Statement on Racial Equity

As the Land Stewardship Project board of directors, we recognize that we are living in very challenging economic times. On the farm, in small towns, and in our larger cities, we are witnessing a level of economic distress not seen since the Great Depression. There is considerable financial uncertainty for many individuals and families, much of which has been brought about by an economy that has been based on excessive corporate profits, the extraction of wealth from rural communities, and the exploitation of people and the land. Faced with high unemployment and foreclosure rates, and a lack of access to meaningful, well-compensated work, many white, middle class and low-income people are hurting.

Similarly, middle-class and low-income people of color and American Indians, already saddled with huge disparities in access to health, education, jobs, land, nutrition, housing, and deep unfairness in our criminal justice system, face deeply challenging economic prospects as well. Throughout our nation's history, we note that times of deep economic uncertainty have often fueled bigotry, scapegoating, anti-immigrant sentiment and racist public policy. In this current economy, we have already begun to see these elements take root once again.

We urge LSP's staff, board and members to now begin to speak out evermore clearly on matters of economic and racial injustice, to do so with a depth and public commitment we have not exercised before, and to use this opportunity as a way to point out, for both our members and the general public, examples of economic and racial injustice in a way that teaches about the unfairness of our current system and helps pave the way for a society based on stewardship, sustainability, economic justice and racial equity.

— Land Stewardship Project board of directors, July 2010