

Title: Seeking Empirical Evidence of Food Sovereignty

Hosts: Karim-Aly S. Kassam, Rebecca Nelson

Date: February 17, 2015, 12:00-1:00 pm

Abstract: Although scholars often position food sovereignty and security as alternative paradigms, food security is one important outcome of food sovereignty. By definition, food sovereignty is a process that is context specific. Therefore, food sovereignty must take into account ecological possibilities, knowledge capacity, cultural values, nutritive significance, rights to self-determination, and effective social governance structures. Furthermore, historically, trade between ecological regions has facilitated food sovereignty. As a consequence of these diverse elements, it has been challenging to assess food sovereignty based on empirical data. However, assessment tools for food sovereignty may help households, communities, civil society organizations and government agencies identify their accomplishments and prioritize policies and actions. Such empirical studies can enable cross-contextual evaluation and facilitate collaboration between regions with complementary strengths. The goal of this topical lunch is to build a transdisciplinary approach to gather empirical evidence to examine food sovereignty as a mechanism to achieve sustainable food security.