

Las Mujeres Hablan: The Women Speak

Women's Declaration for New Mexico 2010, 2014

Preamble

The Earth community stands at a defining moment in time. Injustices, poverty, ignorance, corruption, crime and violence have deepened and our Earth Mother is suffering. These offenses have led to values that have become hurtful and a destructive way of living.

We believe that women are sacred unique human beings of the Earth. We believe that female and male energy is found within the other. We believe that all people belong to one earth community as a human family.

We, therefore, declare the following:

1. Whereas, women are the nurturers of the human seed within their wombs and bearers of the blessing of creation through the process of giving birth,
2. Whereas, because of the profound role of women in creation, ancient cultures and civilizations throughout human history and today have revered the earth as our Mother, the source of all life,
3. Whereas, women's bodies are intimately connected to Mother Earth as reflected in our moon cycles that are the basis for procreation and birthing of children,
4. Whereas, mothers and grandmothers continue to be the primary caregivers of children through breastfeeding, feeding, and nurturing, from infancy through all the stages of our human lives,
5. Whereas, women have also nurtured other women historically and traditionally serving as midwives and helping one another raise their children along with their extended families,
6. Whereas, women are believed to have been the first seed savers and contributed to the cultivation of crops in a way that transformed human existence and, today, in our families and communities mothers and grandmothers have continued to be the primary caretakers of seeds,
7. Whereas, women have a special relationship with food in their role as farmers, nurturers, seed savers, and cooks and, therefore, they are the holders of culturally significant recipes and methods for storing and preparing food,

8. Whereas, many of the increasing numbers of small scale, independent farmers are women farmers from various backgrounds who are dedicated to growing clean, healthy, and fair food and to restoring harmony to the earth,
9. Whereas, women provide an important support system for all the activities of operating our *ranchitos*, the family farms and ranches, including serving as part of the labor essential to the process, providing meals for other laborers, and teaching children the values of land-based culture and way of life,
10. Whereas, women are often the teachers of life skills to their children and are therefore important to ensuring that traditional knowledge is passed from generation to generation.
11. Whereas, women play important roles in our communities as spiritual leaders who offer blessings at important times in our lives and who offer guidance on important life decisions,
12. Whereas, women in traditional communities hold essential traditional knowledge including teachings about medicinal plants, where they can be harvested, and how they should be used,
13. Whereas, historically, women's role as homemakers was broad and included helping one another to build, periodically plaster and re-plaster, and maintain their homes,
14. Whereas, for millennia, women have harvested foods such as *piñon*, *quelites*, *tsimaja*, asparagus, *verdolagas*, *chocoyole*, and many varieties of berries, which we regard as special gifts and blessings,
15. Whereas, historically and traditionally, women's roles in families and communities were highly valued and the equally important role of men included providing the needed support system in order to raise healthy families,
16. Whereas, women today are often not respected as they were traditionally and are often subjected to violence in their own homes by those closest to them,
17. Whereas, historically and in modern times, women have, out of the love of their children and men in their families, been at the forefront of resisting all forms of violence, including war,
18. Whereas, because of the nature of women's bodies related to procreation and our intimate relationship with the earth through farming, herb gathering, and earthwork, we are particularly sensitive to exposure to pollutants from various sources,
19. Whereas, the parts of our bodies meant to nurture and nourish our children are also most susceptible to **heart** disease and cancer considering that elevated levels of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, and other deadly diseases result from exposure to toxins,

20. Whereas, mothers and grandmothers who feed and nurture their children are concerned about the existence of synthetic hormones and pesticide residues in foods resulting in unprecedented effects on boys and girls such as **diabetes**, premature puberty, cancer, **heart disease**, and other long-term effects that are unknown,
21. Whereas, our families are also threatened by the unknown health and ecological effects of genetically engineered seeds, plants, and animals, and we are gravely concerned about the patenting of human life which could have unintended consequences for our families and future generations,
22. Whereas, New Mexico is home to various polluting industries, mining operations, power plants, and nuclear facilities that, although serve as a source of financial income for some of our families, also are responsible for pollution that harms all of our families and are part of a pattern of economic development that displaces traditional peoples from the land,
23. Whereas, women are often low-wage workers in these same polluting industries exposed to certain toxins and women are often low-wage agricultural workers who are exposed to pesticides and herbicides in industrial agriculture,
24. Whereas, women have played a key role along with men in social movements to achieve social, economic, and environmental justice by voicing concerns about the threats of toxins to our families and by calling for livelihoods for ourselves and our families that are clean, healthy, and dignified,

Be it resolved;

1. That we are gathered to declare our reverence for our women ancestors that nurtured generation upon generation so that we could be given the blessing of life,
2. Be it further resolved that we will collectively and intentionally work to carry on the seed saving, farming, and ranching traditions of our ancestors and to pass these teachings on to the younger generations,
3. Be it further resolved that we will resist the genetic engineering and patenting of life so that we may maintain the integrity of our seeds, our right to grow our own food, and the sacredness of life itself,
4. Be it further resolved that we will raise our children to be conscious human beings mindful of the sacred gift of life we have been granted by the creator, to be reverent of our Mother Earth, and to be respectful in their relations,
5. Be it further resolved that we will work in solidarity with each other in our struggles to defend the land, air, and water from contamination, exploitation, and commoditization,

6. Be it further resolved that we honor, respect, and recognize the dignity of women and their families throughout the world and here at home who are subjected to exposure to toxins through their work, their food, or their proximity to pollution and that we resolve to speak and act in solidarity with them in efforts to defend the health of their families and communities,

7. Be it further resolved that we will continue to play an important role in reshaping our communities to achieve a vision of safe, healthy, and joyful lives for our families and communities with good, healthy, locally grown food, good livelihoods that honor the dignity of every human person, and a meaningful, spiritual relationship with Mother Earth.

8. Be it further resolved that we will support the work of the **New Mexico Food and Seed Sovereignty Alliance**. (*New Mexico Acequia Association (NMAA); Traditional Native American Farmers Association (TNAFA); Tewa Women United (TWU); Honor Our Pueblo Existence (HOPE); and other collaborators.*)

Mission: To continue, revive, and protect our native seeds, crops, heritage fruits, animals, wild plants, traditions, and knowledge of our indigenous, land- and acequia- based communities in New Mexico for the purpose of maintaining and continuing our cultural integrity and resisting the global, industrialized food system that can corrupt our lives, freedom, and culture through inappropriate food production and genetic engineering.

9. Be it further resolved that we will support the work of **Las Mujeres Hablan (The Women Speak)**. (*New Mexico Acequia Association (NMAA); Honor Our Pueblo Existence (HOPE), Tewa Women United (TWU), and other collaborators*). The current focus of LMH is to address past, present and future issues arising from the nuclear industry and other releases of toxic chemicals that causes pollution and contamination to our land, air, and water; and to restore justice to the Peoples who have been impacted by this industry and other polluting activities within the Sacred Mountains of New Mexico and other places in the world.

Mission: Las Mujeres Hablan (The Women Speak) is an Indigenous and land-based women led network that creates connections between women in New Mexico to protect our people, traditional knowledge and sacred places. We believe the truth that all life is inherently interconnected with Mother Earth.

10. Be it further resolved that we will honor and respect the women in our lives including our mothers, grandmothers, and great-grandmothers by thanking them for giving us life and for nurturing us throughout our lives,

AND:

May it be further resolved that we the undersigned, have read this document and are in support of Las Mujeres Hablan: The Women Speak; Women's Declaration for New Mexico 2014. We find it to be true and will assist wherever possible to learn and teach the children, boys and girls, the importance of living close to the land, having respectful relations with one another and act with dignity and respect to protect Mother Earth, so she in turn can continue to care for us.