

OEFFA Racial Justice Statement

Adopted October 2016

OEFFA affirms its commitment to a racially and socially just and equitable food system.

At its founding, OEFFA's bylaws emphasized the value that our organization places on diversity. Diversity is key to cultivating symbiotic and sustainable relationships both in ecological and human communities, including the plants, animals, soil, and people that comprise agricultural systems. OEFFA's respect for ideological, political, and personal diversity fosters an inclusive community which allows the individual members the freedom to contribute their unique perspectives. We all benefit by being exposed to varying viewpoints. Often, those viewpoints which seem unfamiliar have the most to teach us. Our entire community is enriched as a result.

We also affirm that creating opportunities for all is foundational to a sustainable food and farm system. For many—regardless of race—the challenges to begin farming and, once established, succeed, are great and OEFFA has long worked to assist them. We must, however, also rise to challenge those existing structures that make it even more difficult for farmers of color to have access to the same farming opportunities. We must work for a food system that is fair to all involved in its production and distribution, and ensure that everyone, regardless of race or class, has access to fresh, local, and healthy food.

We commit to: cultivating our own habits of thought so that we actively reflect on how cultural, structural, and institutional racism impede a truly just and sustainable food system; challenging ourselves in our own work to ensure that it contributes to racial equity rather than perpetuates inequities; working to increase diversity within our own organization's membership, staff, and leadership; and striving to be effective and allies to the organizations working to right the wrongs of a racially unjust food and farming system.

A truly sustainable and resilient agricultural system depends on the three pillars of environmental, economic, and social sustainability. To ignore one imperils our ability to achieve any of them.