

Local Food Hero: Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Their Food Story: The Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help are a religious congregation of Catholic Sisters who support ecological stewardship through their [Franciscans for Earth](#) Effort. As stated on their website, “In 2007, the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help chose Earth as their corporate stance! Through witnessing to the Franciscan value of conversion, the Sisters work to realign their own perspectives toward living life more sustainably and invite others to do the same.” To further their commitment to Planet Earth, they host Earth Events, including their upcoming [2015 Fall-Winter Eco-film Series](#). Beginning on September 15, 2015, the Sisters will have monthly Eco-film showings at their office in Kirkwood, Missouri. The Sisters reside on 40 acres outside of DeSoto, Missouri where they also use the space as “a center for ecological education, eco-spirituality and an organic demonstration garden.” The Sisters recently plowed a portion of their front lawn to convert it to a demonstration garden for sustainable food production. The Sisters are also major sponsors of [Get Healthy DeSoto](#), a non-profit organization that seeks to promote a variety of healthy lifestyle activities in the DeSoto community, including community gardening.

A Person Behind the Project: Maurice Lange is the Eco-Justice Director of the Franciscans for Earth and has a long-standing passion for sustainable agriculture. In 2001, Maurice founded the [La Vista Ecological Learning Center](#) and the [Community Supported Garden at La Vista](#) located in Godfrey, Illinois. Among other things, Maurice conducts outreach for the Sisters in DeSoto and organizes the Sisters’ Spring Evening Event in Kirkwood. MCE’s Food and Farm Coordinator Melissa Vatterott was very fortunate to be invited by Maurice to present on the [St. Louis Regional Food Study](#) at the 2015 Spring Evening Event in April. You can also find Maurice and the Sisters at the [DeSoto Farmers Market](#) on Saturday mornings between May and October.

Organization Websites: Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).