

An open letter from:

Ronald L. Huff, Founder/Chairman Slow Food MN

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Dear Members and Friends of Slow Food Minnesota:

Some may have thought this day would never come; but here it is. It's been eleven years, for me, since founding Slow Food Minnesota, and the time has come to move over as other competent hands take the reins.

One individual may found an organization, but it requires many hands, heads, and hearts to make it grow. We began with a total of four members, including myself, and though membership continues to vacillate for a number of reasons, including the current state of the economy, we have exceeded — again — 360 memberships. We can take pride in being the eighth largest of more than 250 Slow Food chapters in the United States. The larger chapters are either on the west or east coast. We are truly the “heartland” of the U.S. “slow” food movement. Please know that I am grateful to each of you for the support you have given this past decade. Your generous time, talents, financial contributions, and hard work are the ingredients that led us to this place. Your support has made it possible for Slow Food Minnesota to make an impact on our states small, sustainable. family farmers and all those who seek good, clean, and fair food from quality, local, “slow” producers. So what have we wrought?

Below is but a **brief list** of the accomplishments of the past decade. SFMN has provided:

- education, awareness, and great local foods and beverages at our past 60+ events to nearly 5,500 people. Attendance at our events ranges from 20-180,
- numerous board members, and others, who have made appearances at local, national, and international events/conferences, and film showings promote the “Slow” philosophy, all at no cost,
- the SFMN Web site, an active site that brings news, featured farmers, local foods, current-season events and archives of past events with photos and stories. Check it out by logging on to: www.slowfoodmn.org,
- aid to Minnesota farmers in crisis; our chapter raised more than \$11,000 for the flood relief in Southern Minnesota, and provided more than \$7,500 since arson nearly destroyed the farm of one of Minnesota's premiere cheese makers,
- opportunities for thousands of farmers, producers, and consumers to become acquainted.
- “exposure,” through our Web site and other means, and help bringing exceptional local products to the marketplace, and some members have provided marketing expertise and counsel to local food producers at no cost,
- nearly \$24,000 for, the past three — and the upcoming — 2010 Terra Madre: travel funds to selected Minnesota and Third World delegates to attend Slow Food International's, “life altering” world forum of farmers and chefs in Turin, Italy,
- All the above, and more, has been accomplished for less than 4 percent in annual administrative costs. All SFMN Board members **serve without financial compensation.**

We have not solved the world's problems this past decade; but we can take pride in having helped sow some seeds and plow some furrows in a few Minnesotan minds (perhaps others' as well). There is always much more that needs to be done. As I step aside I ask you to continue to support Slow Food Minnesota and its new team of leaders, and to continue your

support of the wonderful and dedicated local family farmers that bring you good, clean, fair food. I shall not be too far away from Slow Food Minnesota as I ply my hands, head, and heart in other adventures. From my very soul — thank you for being part of my family.

Slowly and with passion,
Ronald L. Huff,
Founder/Chairman Slow Food Minnesota