

French Fries and Free Trade

French fries are a popular Canadian food. Fries are the main ingredient in poutine — a staple in Québec. All across Canada, whether they come with a burger or not, everyone loves fries.

But outside Canada, french fries can be controversial.

Companies that grow potatoes and process french fries support free trade agreements like the one Canada is negotiating with Guatemala and three other Central American countries. They write letters to the government and appear before parliament encouraging Canada to sign deals even if local populations reject them.

Free trade deals give power to corporations over people. They allow a company to introduce their goods into a local economy without any restrictions and sell products at cheap prices, undercutting local food producers. Once they control the market they can charge whatever price they want, often affecting people's access to food.

Communities aren't saying NO to french fries but they are saying NO to free trade. At the same time they are saying YES to a fair trade system that protects local markets, allows them to choose how they develop their economies, and prioritizes local, fresh food grown for local consumption.



Facts

- ❖ Canada wants free trade with Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras.
- ❖ Free trade deals contain clauses that allow corporations to sue governments if they obstruct a corporation's ability to make a profit.
- ❖ Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to define their own food and agriculture. It recognizes the right of people to practice safe, healthy and ecologically sustainable production.

Take Action

DON'T TRADE HUMAN RIGHTS FOR FRENCH FRIES!

Free trade hurts farmers. The Canadian government should play a proactive role in developing a new trade model that prioritizes human rights, people, and the Earth.



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