

# The Congregational Study/Action Issue Process: HOW CAN WE USE WHAT WE LEARN TO INFLUENCE THE ASSOCIATION?

The many facets of ethical eating and countless methods to explore them present both an opportunity and a problem.

**The opportunity:** you can use the resources of this Guide (and beyond) to tailor a program specifically for your study group or congregation. Some groups like their presentations spicy and controversial, while others do better with more muted flavors. Some congregations will be hungry only for *hors d'oeuvres*, while some will prefer a seven-course meal. You can treat this Resource Guide like a well-stocked kitchen pantry, and use its ingredients to whip up home-cooked programs of a taste, texture, and quantity to please the people of your own particular region.

**The problem:** the overabundance of choices. This resource guide lists scores of resources, and there are infinite ways to combine them. Figuring out how to plan a coherent, well-balanced meal from scratch is a joy to some, but an overwhelming burden to others. For that reason, we provide

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some “recipes” and “menu plans” to help you get started. They use some of the finest ingredients available, presented in a form sure to please a variety of palates.

After the “Menu Plan,” below, we list “Substitutions and Alternate Dishes”—appetizers and main courses you may use to replace items

listed on the Menu Plan. Feel free to combine dishes however you like!

Whether you create your own home-made program, or adapt the following recipes and menu plans to your particular region, your group will have plenty to chew on.

**A Word on Tracks:** The menu plan below can follow a variety of

“Tracks,” depending on your group’s specific interests. The “Ethical Eating” Track is comprehensive, and touches on all the major areas of ethical eating named in this Guide. Other Tracks focus on specific subtopics. Choose the Track you think will galvanize the highest level of participation from your group.

The Congregational Study/Action Issue (CSAI) process is designed to engage individuals, congregations, and districts in an ongoing process of study, action and reflection on pressing social issues to deepen our faith, to foster a greater sense of association among Unitarian Universalists, and to proclaim our vision of justice in the world. The process has been important in our Association since the merger of the Unitarian and Universalist organizations in 1961. The process is congregationally driven and it is facilitated by the Commission on Social Witness with support from the UUA Washington Office for Advocacy.

The more you know about the official CSAI process, the more you can influence it with what you have learned about ethical eating. A summary of the process follows

on the CSAI. One CSW workshop includes reports on successful practices and discussions about future possibilities. Other groups present workshops that continue the conversation.

**Summer 2009 through Spring 2010:** Congregations and districts continue programs of education and reflection, community organizing, advocacy, and public witness on Ethical Eating.

**March 1, 2010:** Deadline for congregations to submit second round of comments on the Ethical Eating CSAI. All of the comments received will be reviewed. These comments assist in refining this Resource Guide. and. help the CSW prepare for the GA workshops on this issue.

**General Assembly 2010:** The CSW conducts workshops on the Congregational Study/Action Issue. One workshop includes reports on successful practices and discusses future possibilities.

**November 15, 2010:** Deadline for the CSW to prepare draft Statement of Conscience (SOC) on Ethical Eating. The draft SOC, and a ballot to place the draft SOC on the Final Agenda of GA 2011 will be included in the Congregational Poll, with congregations notified of its availability.

**February 1, 2011:** Deadline for Congregational Poll ballots (a quorum of 25% Participation required) to include the draft SOC on the Final Agenda of GA 2011.

**March 1, 2011;** Deadline for submittal of Comment Forms on draft SOC. The CSW then prepares a revised draft of the SOC on Ethical Eating, taking into consideration comments received by the member congregations and districts, and places this revised draft on the Final Agenda (GA 2011).

**General Assembly 2011:**

General Assembly considers the SOC. Approval requires 2/3 vote. The Assembly may also, by a 2/3 vote, refer the Statement for an additional year of study. If approved, congregations and UUA staff conduct a year of implementation, and new CSAI will be selected at the UUA GA in 2012.

## WHAT’S THE BEST WAY TO USE THIS RESOURCE GUIDE?



## KEY DATES

**The June 2008 General Assembly (GA) adopted Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice** as our Association’s new Congregational Study/Action Issue (CSAI). See page 6 for the text. That completed the first cycle year of the CSAI process, so Ethical Eating is now in the second year of the process. For a complete explanation of the CSAI process, see the Commission on Social Witness (CSW) website at [www.uua.org/csw](http://www.uua.org/csw).

**March 1, 2009** is the deadline for congregations and districts to submit comments on the Ethical Eating CSAI and this Resource Guide (feedback forms available at [www.uua.org/csw](http://www.uua.org/csw)). These comments help improve this Resource Guide, exchange discoveries among our congregations found during study and action on Ethical Eating,

and provide resources for the CSW to prepare for the 2009 GA workshops on this issue.

**General Assembly 2009: June 24–28 in Salt Lake City, Utah.** The CSW conducts workshops

“Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.”  
- Fifth principle of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations.