

## THE LITTLE RED HEN

(A play based on a story in the One World Week Resource pack, 'Recipes for Justice,' October 1985)

### ACT 1

(The little red hen enters carrying some wheat.)

HEN: Hello everyone, I'm the little red hen. I live on a lovely little farm and eat the food that grows on it. But look, I found some grains of wheat, so I think I'll plant them to store up some extra food for the winter, yes? But who will help me plant these grains of wheat? (Enter Cat)

CAT Miaow..

HEN Oh, hello cat, will you help me plant these grains of wheat?

CAT Not I... but I'll sell you some coffee bushes. You'll make a lot of money if you grow coffee instead of wheat you know...

HEN Will I? As much as you?

CAT Well, you'll certainly earn a lot more than you're earning at the moment. (Exit)

HEN Mmm... well I haven't got any money to buy coffee with have I? Ah well, he's gone now so who is going to help me plant these grains of wheat? (Enter Pig)

PIG Hello

HEN Oh, hello Mr Pig, will you help me plant these grains of wheat?

PIG Not I, but seeing as how you're such a cute chick, I'll tell you what I'll do. Everyone around here is growing coffee and there's a lot of money to be made in it. Why don't you grow coffee too and when it's ready, I'll be more than happy to buy it off you at my own special prices. You'll make a fortune and then you'll be able to have someone plant those little old grains of wheat for you kid. Take my advice, grow coffee! (Exit Pig)

HEN Oh dear, whatever is he talking about? All I need is someone to help me plant these grains of wheat. (Enter Rat)

RAT Oh, hello

HEN Hello Ratty, will you help me plant these grains of wheat?

RAT Not I, but I can lend you money - all the money you'll need to start... growing coffee. Think about it (Exit Rat)

HEN Coffee, coffee ... doesn't anyone talk about anything else? Alright, if you can't beat them, join them. (Exits)

## ACT 2

The hen bought some coffee bushes from the Cat with the money she borrowed from the Rat.

HEN Hello everyone, here we are again. Who will help me grow this coffee? (Enter Cat) Will you help me?

CAT Not I, but I'll sell you some fertilizer to help it grow. (Exit)

HEN Typical, I ask for help and he offers me a load of...fertilizer! That's all I need. (enter Pig) Oh, it's you, seeing as how I'm such a cute chick, will you help me grow this coffee?

PIG Not I, but I'll sell you some pesticides to keep it free from disease. How's that honey? Just for you?

HEN Hmm, pesticides... whatever next? (Enter Rat). What about you? Do you want to help me grow this coffee?

RAT Not I, but I'll lend you all the money you need to buy the fertilizer and pesticides.

HEN Well, I might have guessed you'd say that. Okay I've got the coffee bushes now, I might as well have the rest. (Exit both).

### ACT 3

So the little red hen worked long and hard. She spread the fertilizer and sprayed the insecticide on her coffee bushes. Even though it was costing her so much more than it would have done to grow wheat, she kept thinking about all the money she would get for it. Then came harvest time.

HEN Right, who will help me sell this coffee? (Enter Cat) Will you help me sell this coffee?

CAT Not I, but you'll need my factory to roast and pack it. And I've more than enough to be getting along with just now. (Exit Cat)

HEN Oh, dear maybe all of growing coffee wasn't such a good idea? (Enter Pig). Remember me? The cute chick you were going to buy the coffee from? You will help me sell my coffee now won't you?

PIG Not I, lady, you must be crazy! Everyone's growing coffee now and the price has hit rock bottom. That stuff ain't worth a dime! (Exit)

HEN Well, he's the right crook now ain't he? (Enter Rat) and here's another. I don't suppose you would j help me sell my coffee?

RAT Not I, but you have to repay all your debts now... with interest, yes? (Both exit).

### ACT 4

So the little red hen realized that she had made a terrible mistake growing coffee instead of wheat, because she was deep in debt and had nothing to eat. (Enter Cat)

HEN Will you help me find something to eat?

CAT Not I, unless you can find some money to pay for it. We all have to live you know.

HEN Won't anyone help me find something to eat? (Enter pig). I was hoping someone would help me find something to eat?

PIG Not I. Don't you realize there isn't enough food to go around since everyone started growing coffee? (Exit)

HEN Oh dear, now look at the mess I've got myself into. (Enter Rat) Can you help me to find something to eat?

RAT Not I, but I'll take your land instead of all the n money you owe me and perhaps I'll let you stay and work for me?

HEN Why didn't I say, the I'll plant the grains of wheat myself but I didn't.