

FOOD TENSIONS: CORPORATE FOOD REGIME VS. FOOD SOVEREIGNTY MOVEMENT

DIGGING IN: FACILITATING DIALOGUE AND ACTION

KEY THEMES AND TERMS

Food security, food sovereignty, food justice, neoliberalism, food systems, Indigenous Lands, industrial agriculture, sustainability, global food system, producers and consumers, capitalism, health, nutrition, culturally appropriate, human rights, Indigenous Ways of Knowing, traditional agriculture, community, non-human and human relations, equitable, accessibility, farming, resilience, resistance, colonialism, urban agriculture, movements (local, national, global), alternative systems, new modes of thinking, grassroots activism, Sacred Medicine, eurocentric productivism, corporate food regime, social justice, identity, self-determination, ecological sustainability, environmental destruction

CATALYZING CONNECTIONS

DECODING QUESTIONS

- *Description:* What definitions of food sovereignty are shared? How did you feel reading them?
- *Personal Connection:* How can you connect this article to your personal experience?
- *Common Themes:* What are the differences among the Legacies collaborators in their experience with and understanding of food sovereignty?
- *Social Analysis:* What are the historical and social processes that created this industrial food system ?
- *Planning for Action:* What can be done in your community to promote food sovereignty?? How does this inspire you to change your actions?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- Thinking about your intersectionality (race, class, gender) and location, how are you participating in the corporate food regime? Similarly, in what ways are you affected by the corporate food regime?
- What do you understand to be "Eurocentric productivist ways of thinking"?
- What can we learn from **traditional practices, ways of knowing** and spiritual values?

- Why are conversations about food sovereignty important at this moment in time?
- What makes culture so central to food systems?
- What are the benefits of including and defending the interests of the next generation? Think about the social, cultural, environmental, and economic impacts of the industrial food system for the next generation.
- Ryan and Rick believe it is imperative to bring a historical perspective about the impact of colonialism to the process of recovering control of their food system. Why do you think that is?

HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

- Grow some herbs, greens, or vegetables of your choice at home. Record the frustrations, elations and obstacles you faced. Compare the experience of eating your homegrown item with a store-bought version. What effect has this process had on you?
- Visit a farm or garden in your neighbourhood/region, a family owned farm (urban or rural) and a farm that uses local, traditional methods of farming. What similarities/differences can you see in their understanding of and approach to growing food?
- Keep a record of the food you eat over a week. Where did your food come from? Was it locally grown? How easy is it to find locally grown food in your community? Is there a price difference between locally grown and imported food? What waste is generated in the process? Try to purchase locally sourced foods. How available are they? What are their costs? Also, make notes on how difficult/easy it was to find direct access to farmers.
- Co-host and co-organize a potluck with family members or friends. At the event, ask participants to share the story behind their dish. For some inspiration please look at this [photo essay!](#)

INTERGENERATIONAL AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

The Legacies collaborators include both settler and Indigenous, rural and urban, Canadian and Mexican food activists. How are their perspectives on food sovereignty different based on their identities and locations?

Consider this quote by Chandra Maracle from the essay '[Mush Hole](#)':

"You are literally eating the trauma of the generations when you eat fry bread. It might sustain you in the short term, but in the long run it's completely unsustainable. And it takes away from the integrity of our traditional culture. It was the survival food that has become known as the Native American food. But what does that mean? If anything, for Haudenosaunee people, it should be boiled

cornbread. We have to acknowledge the role that fry bread played, we can thank it and then we can move on.”

Ask your grandparents (or elders) about their relationship to food growing up. Was it easy or difficult to access? Were there gendered roles regarding preparation? What traditional or cultural knowledge can you learn? How does this compare to your own experiences? Consider home remedies and how they came about. Brainstorm the reasons behind your varied/converging experiences and knowledge. See the photo essay [Medicinal Plants](#) and [Mutual Nurturing](#) for further information.

Interview your parents and grandparents (or any elders in your community) about their experiences of how food agriculture and production has changed within their lifetime (e.g., Green Revolution and agrochemicals, neoliberal trade, global food chains, increasing scale of farming, corporate concentration). What do you think was gained and what was lost?). See [The Alchemy of Agroecology](#) for further information.

Watch this [video](#) on intercultural food relations:

- Why is food being used as a tool for inclusion? Consider how food helps to bridge the knowledge gap across generations and cultures.

INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

[Fulvio Gioanetto](#) and [Diane Kretschmer](#), who are agroecological farmers, both highlight their obstacles with getting young people interested in farming. What are those obstacles? What are those obstacles? What kind of programs initiated by governments, businesses, or communities could help nurture their interest?

Consider how multinational corporations and companies brand their food products to make them appear “healthier” and “culturally authentic”. Why is this regarded as an effective business marketing strategy? Think about the ways in which our decisions regarding food are influenced.

Many leaders and experts identify a community-based approach, collaboration, and partnerships, as [integral in the creation of alternative food systems](#). Volunteer at a local food initiative or community farm/garden. Talk to fellow volunteers or staff about their experiences working in the local community on food projects.

CONNECTING TO OTHER PHOTO & VIDEO ESSAYS

- [La Comida](#)
- [Who Will Feed Us](#)
- [Why Farmers Markets?](#)
- [Mutual Nurturing](#)
- [Food Justice](#)

DIGGING DEEPER: RESOURCES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND ACTION

VIDEOS

Campesina, L. (Director). (2012). *La Via Campesina in Movement... food Sovereignty now!* .

Fraser, E. (Host). (2012). *F9B: The Illustrated Series: Feeding Nine Billion*.

Gayeton, Douglas, (Director). (2016). *A Tale of Two Chickens Sustainable Food Trust*.

Nourish Health. (2019). *Miichim* [Documentary Short].

ETC Group. (2019). *Who Will Feed Us? The Peasant Food Web vs the Industrial Food Chain*.

AUDIO

Berkeley Food Institute. [Audio podcast].

Friedmann, H. (Guest). (2015). *Food Regimes and Their Transformation: Part 1* [Audio podcast].

Hyman, M. (Host).(2020). *The Doctor's Pharmacy: How To Fix Our Food System To Save Humans And The Planet*. [Audio podcast].

Kimmerer, R. (Guest). (2016). *The Intelligence of Plants*. [Audio podcast].

Nordic Talks.(2020). *Food Choices For Change*. [Audio podcast].

The Current with Matt Galloway. (2021,May 27). *Interview with food writer Mark Bittman*. Start at 22:45 to 46:05 minutes for the interview. [Audio podcast].

BOOKS & ARTICLES

Allen, W., & Wilson, C. (2013). *The good food revolution: Growing healthy food, people, and communities*. Avery.

Alkon, A. H., & Agyeman, J. (2011). *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability (Food, Health, and the Environment)* (Illustrated ed.). The MIT Press.

Food Secure Canada. *Five Big Ideas for a Better Food System*. (2019).

- Global Alliance For the Future of Food. *Food Systems Transformation: Promoting Human, Ecological, & Animal Health & Well-being A Shared Vision & Narrative*. (2020, July).
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- Holt Giménez, E., & Shattuck, A. (2011). *Food crises, food regimes and food movements: rumblings of reform or tides of transformation?*. 38(1), 109-144.
- Joy, L. (2014). *Start a Community Food Garden: The Essential Handbook*. Timber Press.
- Kepkiewicz, L., Chrobok, M., Whetung, M., Cahuas, M., Gill, J., Walker, S., & Wakefield, S. (2015). *Beyond inclusion: Toward an anti-colonial food justice praxis*. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 5(4), 99-104.
- Kimmerer, R. (2015). *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Milkweed Editions
- Levi, E. (2021). *Getting Back to Normal? Not if "Normal" means Indigenous Food and Health Insecurity*. Yellowhead Institute.
- McMichael, P. (2009). *A food regime genealogy*. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 36(1), 139–169.
- Shroff, R., & Cortés, C. R. (2020). *The Biodiversity Paradigm: Building Resilience for Human and Environmental Health*. *Development*, 1-9.
- Wittman, H. Desmarais, A. Weibe, N. (2010). *Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature and Community*. Food First Books

ORGANIZATIONS & WEBSITES

- **Slow Food International**
- **La Via Campesina**
- **Grassroots International**
- **The Pollination Project**
- **Farm Link Project**
- **Regeneration International**

- **ETC Group**
- **Indigenous food and agriculture organization**
- **Inuit Circumpolar Council**
- **Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance**
- **Sierra Seeds**