

Bringing the Food Economy Home

Strategies for social & ecological renewal

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LOCAL FUTURES

International Society for Ecology and Culture

Big Picture: the Global Industrial Food System



Expanding global trade

- 32 times greater than 1950 (by volume)
- Free trade agenda (WTO, NAFTA, TTIP, TPP)
- Export-oriented model of development



Industrialization of agriculture

- Post-WWII Green Revolutions

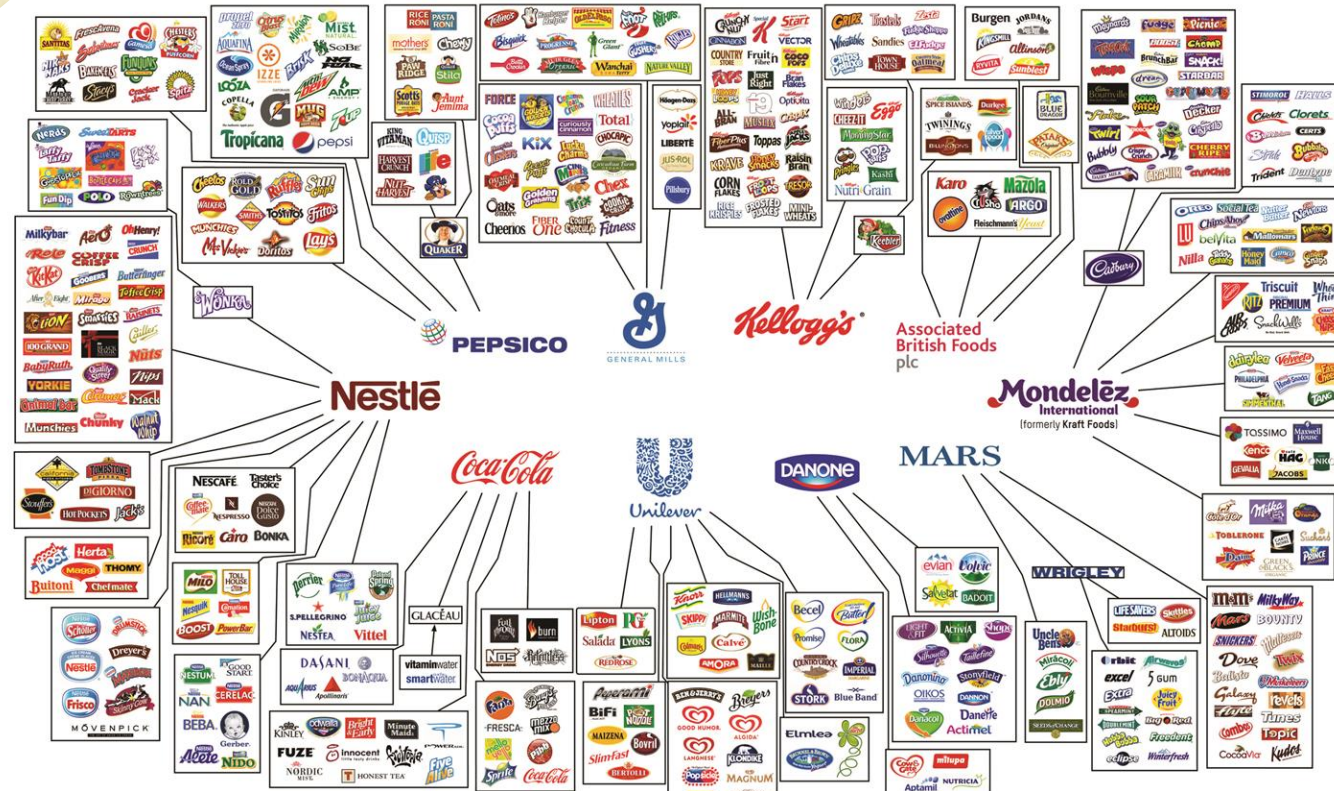


Subsidies & dumping

- US crop subsidies = US \$256 billion from 1995-2012. In 2012 alone the EU spent US \$67 billion, and China spent \$160 billion
- Disproportionately benefit large export agribusinesses

Corporate control

- Large corporations dominate nearly every sector of the global food economy



The Global Food System...

Price volatility

- 2008 global food crises, 'food riots'

Global land grabs

- 550m people from Asia, Africa and Oceania could be fed from land grabbed for export crops, biofuels, carbon markets, and speculation = area of France

Redundant trade & 10,000 mile diet

- In a typical year Britain exports thousand of tons of wheat and lamb, millions of liters of milk, while importing nearly identical amounts
- The distance between producers & consumers has grown immensely



“Cod caught off Norway is shipped to China to be turned into filets, then shipped back to Norway for sale. Argentine lemons fill supermarket shelves on the Citrus Coast of Spain, as local lemons rot on the ground. Half of Europe’s peas are grown and packaged in Kenya.”

from Rosenthal, E., 'Environmental cost of shipping groceries around the world', *New York Times*, Apr 26, 2008

Counting the Costs: The Global Food Economy

Ecological costs

- Monoculture, loss of biodiversity
- Land degradation: soil erosion, deforestation
- Unsustainable water use
- Food and packaging waste
- Rising GHGs, climate change
- Toxic pollution from chemical-intensive agriculture

Social costs

- Massive social displacement, forced migration, growing slums
- 'Stuffed and starved': hunger and malnutrition still prevalent, diet-related diseases on the rise.



From Global to Local: *Bringing Our Food Economies Home*



localization.

1. the removal of fiscal and other supports that currently favor giant transnational corporations and banks.
2. reducing dependence on export markets in favor of production for local needs.

At its core, localization is about:

- Democratizing the food economy, regaining ownership and control – *food sovereignty*
- Rebuilding local supply chains to reconnect small producers with local consumers
- Strengthening diversity – adapting food systems to diverse cultures and ecosystems
- Reconnecting to each other and the natural world

The multiple benefits of localization



- o Social
- o Psychological
- o Cultural
- o Ecological
- o Economic
- o Democratic

Localization is a strategic ‘solution multiplier’

Localization & Food Sovereignty



- Food sovereignty is a core ingredient of localization
- Localization is a critical strategy for gaining food sovereignty
 - Greater local ownership & control = less dependence on volatile global markets
 - Local self-reliance empowers communities to challenge corporate power and centralized bureaucratic control
 - Locally adapted seeds, traditional knowledge and agroecology reduce dependence on external inputs and corporate-controlled technologies
- There are *strong synergies* between localization, food sovereignty, agroecology, and diversified small-scale farming

Moving Forward: Key Elements for Strengthening Local Food Systems Around the World

1. Policy change

- New treaties – re-regulating international trade & investment
- Community rights – banning GMOs, factory farms, absentee-owned farms
- Local de-regulation – e.g. re-zoning or local food sovereignty laws (Maine, US)
- Shifting subsidies & taxes to support local food economies
- Local procurement policies & programs (Farm to School/food security systems)
- Local food infrastructure (e.g. food hubs)
- Land reform
- Support for agroecology, traditional agroecological knowledge, farmer-to-farmer training networks



2. Grassroots Initiatives: Rebuilding Local Food Systems

Local Food
Policy
Councils

Local Food
Infrastructure
(Food Hubs)



Community
Supported
Agriculture,
Fisheries

Agroecology,
Permaculture



Community
Seed Banks



Community
Food
Enterprises



Consumer-
Producer
Co-ops



Farm to
School



Farmers'
Markets



Young
Farmers
Movements



Urban
Farming,
Community
Orchards



Collective
Farms, Land
Co-op



3. Building a ‘movement of movements’



La Via Campesina leading the charge

- The local food & food sovereignty movements are part of a larger ‘movement of movements’ calling for a systemic shift in direction.
- Recently launched: **International Alliance for Localization (IAL)**

Join us!



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