

Manifestos on the Future of Food & Seed *edited by Vandana Shiva*

with contributions by

Michael Pollan, Carlo Petrini, Prince Charles, and the International Commission on the Future of Food & Agriculture

“Compared with a bunch of carrots,” writes the acclaimed author of *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*, “a package of Twinkies is a highly complicated, high-tech piece of manufacture, involving no fewer than 39 ingredients.... So how can the supermarket possibly sell a pair of these synthetic cream-filled pseudocakes for less than a bunch of roots?”

The answer to Michael Pollan’s own question is the US Farm Bill, a “resolutely unglamorous and head-hurtingly complicated piece of legislation, which comes around roughly every five years and is about to do so again, [setting] the rules for the American food system—indeed, to a considerable extent, for the world’s food system.”

In favoring industrial agriculture over local and family-run farms, the current farm bill quite literally underwrites—politically and financially—a devastating exploitation of the earth’s resources. It prepares the soil for what Carlo Petrini describes as “an unsustainable food situation that is beyond madness.” The founder of Slow Food, a worldwide movement of 80,000 people dedicated to food that is “good, clean, and fair,” Petrini has long sought to reveal the deep connections between what we eat and the health of not only our bodies but also our economies and environment—as *Time* notes, he “has changed the way we think about eating.”

In her introduction to *Manifestos on the Future of Food and Seed*, world-renowned physicist and environmental leader Vandana Shiva gives this madness a name and diagnosis of her own: “Industrial food is cheap not because it is efficient ... but because it is supported by subsidies and it externalizes all costs—the wars, the diseases, the environmental destruction, the cultural decay, the social disintegration.”

But are there alternatives? Yes, say the 5,000 farmers, traders, and activists who gathered at Terra Madre to clearly and convincingly lay out a guiding set of principles to reverse perhaps the worst food crisis in human history. Their analysis is presented in *Manifestos*: a pocket-sized and galvanizing collection that grapples with these enormous questions, daring to imagine a food system—a world—that is sustainable, healthy, and ultimately, just.

As Jamey Lionette, who runs a small independent sustainable food market in Boston, writes, “With peak oil and climate catastrophe looming, local and clean food becomes more than just romanticized food culture; it becomes essential.” Plainly, if we are to continue to eat, we must heed the wisdom of these manifestos.

Available in October 2007

978-0-89608-777-4 | paper | \$10

► **Read. Write. Revolt.**