



Movie Sheet: Hijacked Future

Introduction

🕒 43 min

For 10,000 years, farmers have planted and saved their seeds, but now the control of seeds and our food crops have shifted into the hands of a few multinational corporations.

Themes

1. Mass production and unsustainable agriculture
2. Decrease in biodiversity
3. Affected by climate change
4. Multinational corporations extracting wealth
5. Infringements on farmers rights and their control of seeds
6. Intellectual property rights and the future of agriculture
7. Creating partnerships between farmers and scientists

Quick Facts

- It takes about **1000L** of oil to grow food on 1 Ha of land in North America.
- There is currently over **100 million Ha** of GM crops in the world.
- From 1985, farmers net income = **\$0!!** Yet farmers produce a gross revenue of 2/3 of a trillion dollars, all of which goes to the transnational companies.
- In the 1960s, there were 65 pesticide companies globally. Today, they are **barely 10** who own about **80%** of the total industry. These companies also happen to be seed companies.
- Sales of pesticides **tripled** in the last ten years.

Questions & Discussions

1. **GMO:** Genetically Modified organisms are being sold in supermarkets without labeled as being "Genetically Modified". If Canada made labeling of GM foods mandatory, do you think people would still buy them? How do you feel about eating Genetically Modified food?
2. **Corporate Control:** A handful of large transnational corporations are involved in every part of Canadian agriculture; from seeds and fertilizers, to livestock breeding and veterinary medicine. Mechanization on farms and assembly line food processing has changed what farmers grow and how they grow it, and ultimately have made producers dependent on a system over which they have little control. Is this system good for Canadian agriculture? For farmers? How has it changed the food we eat?
3. **Seed Saving:** Farmers are struggling to protect their rights over the seeds they grow, as companies modify the seeds they claim to "own". The Supreme Court of Canada has agreed that the rights of a seed patent holder should be upheld, even if a seed blew onto a field it wasn't planted on. Should anyone be able to put a patent on a life form? Why or why not?
4. **Climate Change:** Climate change has made some of the problems in our farming system even worse. Seventy per cent of the world's food is produced by small scale farmers. They contribute the least to greenhouse gas emissions, but they suffer the most from the effects of changing weather. However, these same farmers may also hold the key to agricultural survival because they grow diverse crops. How can biodiversity help protect our food supply? What are some of the dangers of planting only a small variety of crops?
5. **Terminator Seeds:** To protect their patents, companies are developing terminator seeds that grow plants that can't produce good seeds. Meanwhile, farmers and scientists in Ethiopia are creating community seed banks to make sure that they have viable seeds to grow, year after year. What are some of the consequences of planting seeds that can't reproduce themselves?

"...because who controls the seed, controls the food...Who will control the seeds we plant and the food we put on our tables?"

Take Action

1. Reduce the foodmiles your food goes through:

- Buy food **directly from farmers**. Shop at farmers' markets and/or sign up with a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm: <http://usc-canada.org/storyoffood/what-you-can-do>
- Buy **fair trade** products when you can.
- Ask your grocer to clearly indicate the **origin of food products**, and to give preference to local products.
- Go to a Seedy Saturday and get **seeds from a local farmer** who knows what grows best in your area: www.seedsofdiversity.ca
- **Grow your own food!** Join a community garden www.cityfarmer.org
- Be an **agri-tourist**: visit farms, food fairs and festivals, EconomuseumsTM.

2. Reduce the packaging/processing your food goes through:

- **Read your food labels.**
- **Cook from scratch** and use more whole foods.
- Support small-scale farmers - Donate to USC.

3. Inspire others to take action:

- Hold a **pot luck** dinner with food from your local farmer's market.
- **Share this activity** with others.
- **Be a food champion!** Change government policy on food: <http://peoplesfoodpolicy.ca>
- Support small-scale farmers - **Donate** to USC.

*Want to hold a **movie night**? Find out how at : <http://usc-canada.org/resources/creative-campaigning/>*

Dig Deeper

- **Who Will Feed Us?** – report on the crisis of food and climate change: http://etcgroup.org/upload/publication/pdf_file/ETC_Who_Will_Feed_Us.pdf
- **Fighting against GMO contamination** (interviews): <http://grain.org/videos/?id=195Grain>
- **People's Food Policy Project**: <http://www.peoplesfoodpolicy.ca>
- **Banking Diversity** - USC Canada presents the critical role of seeds: [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGG09BHIMV4>]
- **Story of Food** - USC Canada presents the issues with our broken food system : [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzGSHTP-U20>]
- **Look** at the issues from the perspective of a community other than your own www.indigenousfoodsystems.org



For more information, visit : <http://usc-canada.org/resources/creative-campaigning/>