

INTRODUCTION

The motivation behind this paper is the realization that we live within an unjust global food system. However, the realization that the food system is fluid and changing allows for meditations leading to change. As the global food system is relatively young its direction and ultimately its outcomes are far from set-in-stone. Economists would have us believe that the current food system is a natural progression, the end result of a perfectly functioning economic system. However the current food regime is controlled by a relatively small percentage of the world's population and therefore may be challenged by concerned people and their organizations. To these ends this paper looks at the actors that make-up the global food system.

A survey was conducted of the relevant actors in order to ascertain whether a just and sustainable food system can be made available to all. Further I develop an argument for viewing food as a human right. In the first section of the document I look at the actors within global food conglomerates and the degree to which the market has consolidated into fewer and fewer players, what this means and who realizes the benefits of this system and who suffers its consequences. The paper looks at the structure of some of the leading U.S. agricultural transnational corporations (TNC's). I then argue that the food system is determined by a set of rules ensconced within firm theory, a set of rules determined by modern and traditional applications of procedures residing within the firm. Moreover I contend that food supply, just as human rights, constitutes a social good. Therefore I argue that organizations such as the WTO and World Bank (and sub-bodies living within these organizations) have failed in their mandates to protect such rights. I make an analysis of neo-liberal policy formations and free trade agreements as well as transnational corporations to examine the power dynamics between transnational business and the state. Further I suggest that private enterprise can deliver stakeholder

and public goods through norms setting within CSR mechanisms. I look at small scale producers and the global food events shaping their realities as well as their critiques of the global food meta-narrative such as fair trade, to ascertain if these critiques amount to viable alternatives to present global models. The belief that food is a basic human right demands an examination of exploitation in global food supply to determine how and why abuses take place. I look at the social drivers of exploitation, discover to whom it is happening and importantly where. Finally I look at the current global food crisis, its motivating factors and probable outcomes and explore how all the pieces of the global food chain fit together in order to avoid global catastrophe, especially for those living at its margins. Ultimately the survey was conducted to illustrate how such an analysis can be used to lay the foundation for a more just food system while raising some important questions concerning the impacts global food chains have on vulnerable populations. To these ends this paper consists of a background profile of the significant players, protocols and organizations to ascertain if food supply can be managed in a way which is beneficial to all members of society.

Without significant changes in global food supply, food will become a trade commodity and consumer good for the world's affluent and not a fundamental right of all to be free from hunger.