



Canadian Association for Food Studies

Welcome to Issue 14: Summer 2013 Newsletter

Greetings CAFS Members,

Congress & the annual CAFS/ ACÉA assembly have come and gone – another exhilarating few days amidst inspiring people from far and near. The program was so jam-packed that I didn't even have time to visit family, despite being from Victoria. I did manage, however, to take in a tour of a City of Saanich-supported 'incubator' farm for new farmers and enjoy many stimulating sessions. It was wonderful to see at least 60 participants (across streams 1 & 2) in the student & emerging researcher pre-conference on June 1st. This was a great way to build an even stronger sense of community and inclusion for students involved in CAFS/ ACÉA. And I was delighted that our conference had several sessions on issues of teaching food studies, transformative learning, and university-community partnerships.

Among other highlights of the conference, in a session on municipal food policy, I learned that there are 64 food policy councils (or their equivalents) across Canada, according to the recent report *Municipal food policy entrepreneurs: a preliminary analysis of how Canadian cities and regional districts are involved in food system change* (http://capi-icpa.ca/pdfs/2013/Municipal_Food_Policy_Entrepreneurs_Final_Report.pdf), which was launched during CAFS/ ACÉA. And in our keynote presentation, "Dancing with (not around) the elephants in the room: Building sustainable and equitable food systems for all", Patricia Allen made a hard-hitting call for us to talk more head-on about exploitation, oppression, privilege and powerlessness. She also admitted that there seemed to be far more engagement with these 'elephants' at CAFS/ ACÉA than at any other food studies conferences she had attended in US—quite a compliment.

At our AGM, we established a conference committee (our biggest yet!) for next year that—on top of organizing a fantastic program for us at Brock University in St Catherine's, Ontario—hopes to enable parallel regional mini-conferences that could take place concurrently with our main conference. We are exploring this for a dual purpose: to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of our conference—by having fewer people fly around the country—and also to allow even more people to participate. We had to turn down a lot of great submissions this year due to lack of space in our program. I look forward to seeing what kind of creative ideas the conference committee can come up with to help us meet these objectives. In the meantime, please savour this installment of the CAFS/ ACÉA newsletter. It is brimming with information on exciting research from across the country and beyond: a new 'virtual academy' repository of food system videos, an overview of the CAFS/ ACÉA pre-conference for students and new researchers, an update on the new by-laws, recipients of two CAFS/ ACÉA awards, and updates on recent publications and research projects. Happy summer, everyone.

Steffanie Scott, CAFS President
Associate Professor & Director Department of Geography
& Environmental Management, University of Waterloo



Upcoming Events & Recent Publications

Summit:

Meal Exchange Student Food Summit

Meal Exchange is very happy to announce that the annual *National Student Food Summit* will be taking place this year August 16-18th in Toronto! The CAFS/ ACÉA sponsored Summit continues to be the only Canada wide youth leadership conference concerning food security and food systems issues. This year's Summit will again feature a dynamic mix of panel discussions, workshops, and seminars designed to connect student food leaders from campuses across the country to each other as well as with local and regional leaders within the Canadian food movement. If you know of any students who would be interested in attending, or even presenting at the Summit about an innovative campus food system project they've been working on, please feel free to pass the word along! Visit the website: <http://www.mealexchange.com/>

Journal:

Canadian Food Studies/ La Revue canadienne des études sur

CAFS/ ACÉA will launch a new journal at the end of August, 2013. *Canadian Food Studies/ La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation* will be open-access, on-line, and built on the University of Waterloo's publishing platform. The journal welcomes contributions that address Canadian topics and/or are produced by Canadian authors, in both English and French. Student submissions are encouraged. The journal will publish a range of peer-reviewed material as well as viewpoints and debates, representing both geographic diversity and the breadth and depth of academic, community- or individual-driven, institutional, and transgressive food-related actions and ideas. Work from all contexts will be considered, including food-related policy; food production, distribution, transformation, preparation, consumption and decomposition; nutrition; food issues in history, art, culture, religion, psychology and society; as well as meaning, discourse, methodologies, academic practice, culinary practice and media – and

hybridities of any of these. Accepted material will appear under the following categories: commentaries and perspectives, original research articles, review articles, field reports or narratives, digital creations (graphic, video, audio), art and design works, and book/art/event reviews. We encourage CAFS / ACÉA members and others to prepare contributions to submit to the journal, starting in early fall. You will be notified when the journal's submission page becomes active!

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New Publication:

CuiZine Magazine: 4.1

Contributors to the seventh issue of *CuiZine: Overlooked: Uncovering, Assessing, and Inventing the Everyday* take an interest in what is very familiar yet often goes unnoticed: the quotidian. They offer us depictions and explorations of the banal fried egg, the humble leek, the unloved Brussels sprout, the little-lauded community cookbook, and the underdeveloped plot of urban land. This issue is a looking over of the overlooked. The result? Such food items, publications and practices are given pride of place. This batch of contributors is taking a step back, probing practices, uncovering histories, and assigning or assessing value. Come feast upon the alimentary offerings of Rachel Black, Kristine Kowalchuk, Julia Christensen, Jean-Pierre Lemasson, Yannick Portebois, Rita Taylor and Nicole Gastonguay. Visit website: <http://cuisine.mcgill.ca/>



2013 Assembly Summary

Pre-Conference Stream 1 Report

Irena Knezevic and Lisa Ohberg

Stream 1 of the pre-conference was workshop-based, with four sessions and five fabulous presenters addressing various areas of professional development. Stream 1 of the preconference was well attended by 30 graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, new faculty and community-based researchers.

The day started with Stephane McLachlan (University of Manitoba) who led us through an exercise where we each wrote down what we thought were some of the best and worst characteristics of an academic supervisor. We then looked at some of the most common ‘best’ and ‘worst’ supervisor characteristics as a group and discussed strategies that can help produce well-matched relationships that stimulate student development effectively. Perhaps the most important outcome of this exercise was not the list of characteristics it generated, but self-reflection and stories of common experiences shared among participants.

The next workshop of the day focused on teaching food studies. Lenore Newman (University of Fraser Valley) and Steffanie Scott (University of Waterloo) facilitated a discussion on the challenges of teaching in food studies and helped us work through some innovative strategies for developing, pitching, and teaching food studies modules and courses. The session also addressed strategies for developing and managing appropriate expectations for food-related curricula among our students, departments and ourselves.

Following lunch, Aleck Ostry (University of Victoria) led a discussion on navigating inter-disciplinarity in the world of academia – since much of food studies cuts across traditional disciplinary boundaries. He provided us with practical tips on grant writing, research profile development, and nurturing research

partnerships. He generously shared years of experience and insight into the world of research that, in his case, spans health and social sciences across multiple disciplines.

The day ended with an hour with Bruce Wallace (University of Victoria) who discussed ways to move our research beyond academia. Bruce shared an inspiring and mesmerizing story of his journey across two decades of community-based research and anti-poverty activism that led him to enter the academic world with an ‘on-the-ground’ insight that still drives his work.

A more detailed report on Stream 1 is being prepared and will be circulated later this summer along with more on Stream 2, and the results of our evaluation survey.

Pre-Conference Stream 2 Report **“Collaboration – Making Things Happen?”**

Colin Anderson, Jennifer Brady, Charles Levkoe

We work in an academic culture that tends to lean toward (and reward) independence. This is evident in practices such as tenure and promotion which privilege sole-authorship. The publication treadmill dissuades scholars from the longer-term and complex nature of collaborative projects. The necessity of delivering both academic and community outputs in community-university partnerships is daunting for already overwhelmed scholars.

Through the primarily independent dissertation process, emerging scholars are pre-conditioned to an individual approach to research and writing. But there is always room to maneuver. Indeed, at the CAFS/ ACÉA emerging research pre-conference in Victoria on June 1st, thirty intrepid scholars endeavored to transgress the culture of individualism in the academy through a day of imagining and enacting a more collaborative approach to research,

writing and publishing. The day-long workshop was designed to create an interactive space to develop emerging collaborative writing ideas into publishable manuscripts (for an edited book) and to build skills around collaborative research and writing.

Prior to the event, participants formed writing groups and submitted proposals for manuscripts. After a plenary introduction, participants gave one-minute presentations of their manuscript ideas, followed by five minutes of flash feedback (a process we termed the “snuggle pit”). These were recorded on chart paper and additional comments, suggestions and ideas were written on sticky-notes and adhered to the chart paper for each manuscript idea. This exchange of ideas resulted in the discussion of new collaborations, the shaping of ideas and a collective appreciation for the diversity of important and cutting-edge work underway in food studies.

After lunch, Patricia Allen (Marylhurst University) discussed her experience with collaborative research, proposing best practices and lessons learned. For Patricia, effective collaboration requires transparency and an ongoing dialogue regarding the terms of collaboration. Hannah Wittman (University of British Columbia) and Annette Desmarais (University of Regina) then shared their adventures in collaborative publishing. Their experiences further highlighted the importance of clear expectations and good communication and the need to be prepared for contingency and change throughout the publishing process.

The day ended with a discussion of an edited book that will explore the theme: *Problematizing Food Studies: Transgressing Boundaries Through Food and Critical Inquiry*. What emerged most prominently in this dialogue was an interest in a publishing process that was participatory and would involve peer-editing, writing clusters, communication through new media and generally a highly interactive process.

Throughout the day, participants discussed how the atomizing conventions of academia often constrain effective collaboration and how early stage academics

are particularly limited by the pressures of a tight job market and the need to conform to conventional academic norms to be more widely marketable. Yet, within this structure, there is room to maneuver, and associations like CAFS/ ACÉA offer a platform to explore and support collaboration. We can see through this year’s pre-conference and the book project, new forms of collaboration are enabled and supported by mentoring senior CAFS/ ACÉA scholars.

Visit <http://transgressingfoodstudies.wordpress.com> to share your thoughts in the comment section, and to follow this evolving collaborative publishing project. If you are interested in getting involved, e-mail emergence@foodstudies.ca.

CAFS/ ACÉA Federal Continuance & New By-Laws

David Szanto

On June 4, 2013, at the CAFS/ ACÉA Annual General Meeting in Victoria, BC, the membership passed a special resolution giving the Board of Directors approval to submit an application to Corporations Canada for a Certificate of Continuance under the new Canada Not-for-Profit Act. This legislation, passed in 2009, created a new structure under which not-for-profit corporations (such as CAFS/ ACÉA) are regulated, and required us to undertake a number of administrative processes in order to be in compliance (2014 is the deadline for all Canadian not-for-profits to complete this process).

Of greatest relevance to the membership was the creation of a new set of by-laws. While no significant changes to our previous by-laws were made, a number of key points are now explicitly spelled out, which may be of interest to members. These include the creation of two classes of members (voting and non-voting), processes for the Board to follow in leading the organization, as well as those for members to follow in their collective oversight of the Board. Most of the regulations governing not-for-profits, however, are included in the NFP Act itself and are not spelled out in CAFS/ ACÉA’s own by-laws. The CAFS/ ACÉA by-laws can be found on the association’s website:

www.foodstudies.ca and any specific questions can be directed to cafs@foodstudies.ca

**CAFS / ACÉA Public Service Award:
Ellen Desjardins**

CAFS/ ACÉA recognized Ellen Desjardins with a Public Service Award at our recent conference in Victoria. The award recognizes those who have had a significant public service impact in programmes and policies affecting the food system.

Ellen's leadership and dedication to public service on community food security and healthy and sustainable food systems has been exceptional. Ellen has been working tirelessly behind the scenes as Editor of the CAFS/ ACÉA new journal, *Canadian Food Studies*, which is being launched this year. She was also a founding member of Food Secure Canada in 2005. Ellen worked for many years promoting community food security through her work at the Region of Waterloo Public Health, with a combined interest in food, health and equity. She has done pioneering

work on linking food with community health, environmental considerations, and local economic development.

Ellen's work is well-respected by researchers, planners and other practitioners across and North America on these issues. She and a small team from the Region of Waterloo Public Health unit were responsible for championing a vision for a 'healthy food system', which adapted the work of Trevor Hancock on healthy communities to encompass a healthy rural economy and the agriculture and food sector. With the Region of Waterloo Public Health, Ellen helped to found Foodlink Waterloo Region, an NGO that produces a "BuyLocal!BuyFresh!" map. She left Public Health to pursue her PhD in 2006 at Wilfrid Laurier University, and then completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Waterloo's Department of Geography & Environmental Management in 2011.

She served as co-Chair of the Waterloo Region Food System Roundtable from 2007 to 2012. In that capacity, she provided input into the Regional Official Plan



Canadian Association for Food Studies
Award for Excellence in Public Service

presented to

Ellen Desjardins

In recognition of an outstanding contribution towards public service in building a sustainable food system

presented in 2013 by Steffanie Scott, President

of the Region of Waterloo to promote healthy food environments for residents and to protect farmland for food production. Ellen has also made presentations to the City of Waterloo Council to provide feedback on improving access to healthy and local food within the draft Official Plan. In recent months, Ellen was part of a well-orchestrated public participation process to establish a food charter for Waterloo Region.

In past years, CAFS/ ACÉA has also given out a Lifetime Achievement Award for Food Studies (to Harriet Friedmann of the University of Toronto) and an Award for Excellence in Food Studies (to Jennifer Clapp of the University of Waterloo).

**CAFS/ACÉA Student Paper Award:
Sarah Berger Richardson**

Congratulations to Sarah Berger Richardson, recipient of the CAFS/ ACÉA Student Paper Award. This award recognizes the best paper by a student that is presented at the CAFS/ ACÉA annual conference.

Ms. Richardson's paper, entitled "Large-Scale Land

Acquisitions: Reconciling International Investment Law with the Human Right to Food" provides an excellent analysis of the ways in which international law can be utilized to protect the right to food in countries where large-scale land investments are taking place. The paper argues that a stronger universal protection of the right to food can help to strengthen international legal mechanisms to mitigate possible negative impacts from these investments.

Ms. Richardson holds a B.A and B.C.L/LL.B from McGill University, in Montreal, Canada. With an interdisciplinary background in the fields of law, economics, sociology and anthropology; her academic area of interest is food security, and agricultural law and policy. Ms. Richardson recently completed her law articles in Ottawa, dividing her time between the National Judicial Institute and the Canada Agricultural Review Tribunal. In September 2013, she will begin an LL.M. at Tel Aviv University with a focus on international law and food security.

The Canadian Association for Food Studies extends its warmest congratulations to Ms. Richardson and wishes her ongoing success in her future work.



Canadian Association for Food Studies

Student Paper Award in Food Studies

presented to

Sarah Berger Richardson

In recognition of scholarly excellence in the field of food studies

presented in 2013 by Steffanie Scott, President



2013 Assembly Photo Gallery







Journal Article:

Bond, D., & Feagan, R. (2013). *Toronto farmers' markets: Towards cultural sustainability?*. Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development. Advance online publication. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2013.032.005>

Abstract:

This paper accomplishes two interrelated objectives. The first is a qualitative assessment of the level of interest and accommodation of culturally appropriate foods at 14 farmers' markets (FMs) within the multicultural urban core of Toronto Ontario. The second objective acquires insights from key public "food commentators" and from new agricultural initiatives in this region that help us develop recommendations relative to the outcomes of the first objective. Results from the first part of the study indicate that the level of provision of culturally appropriate foods at these FMs in Toronto is at an embryonic stage. The results of the second part of the study point to a range of initiatives oriented to support increased provision and accommodation of culturally appropriate foods along the FM chain, while also pointing to the existing constraints to these efforts.

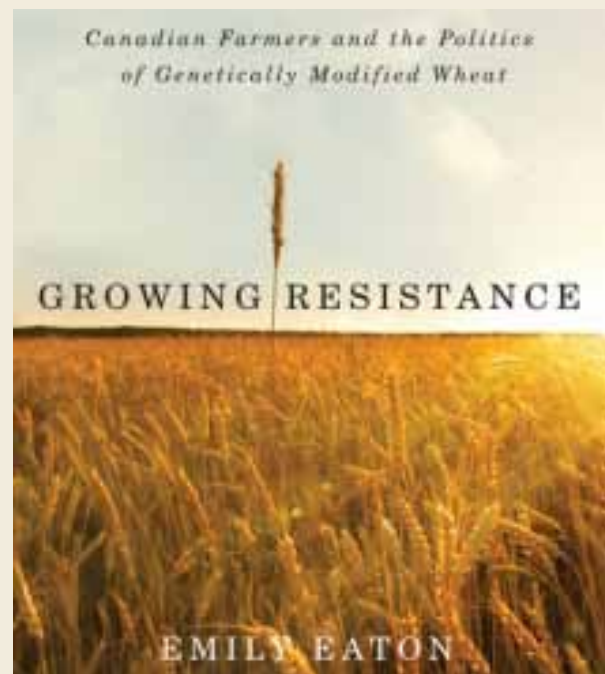
Broad recommendations include supporting emerging agricultural innovations and the diversity of partnership possibilities in this work; increasing awareness of such efforts for cultural sustainability objectives; and attending to FM vendor needs around this shift in demand. Policy efforts could focus on incentives and training for agricultural nonprofits and for partnership building, on supporting cultural groups hoping to increase their access to such foods grown in this region, and on existing farmers and those interested in farm access for these purposes. At the same time, advocacy for such shifts needs to recognize challenges in Canada to growing such new crops, the reality of farmer/vendor bottom lines, and broader global food system realities that constrain such efforts.

Book:

Growing Resistance (University of Manitoba Press, 2013) by Emily Eaton

In *Growing Resistance*, Emily Eaton reveals the motivating factors behind farmer opposition to GM wheat. She illustrates wheat's cultural, historical, and political significance on the Canadian prairies as well as its role in crop rotation, seed saving practices, and the economic livelihoods of prairie farmers.

Through interviews with producers, industry organizations, and biochemical companies, Eaton demonstrates how the inclusion of producer interests was integral to the coalition's success in voicing concerns about environmental implications, international market opposition to GMOs, and the lack of transparency and democracy in Canadian biotech policy and regulation. *Growing Resistance* is a fascinating study of successful coalition building, of the need to balance local and global concerns in activist movements, and of the powerful forces vying for control of food production.



Book:

The Industrial Diet: The Degradation of Food and the Struggle for Healthy Eating (UBC Press, 2013) by Anthony Winson

The Industrial Diet chronicles the long-term transformation of food from essential nutrients into edible commodities that far too often fail to nourish us. This book reveals how a combination of technological changes, population growth, and political and economic factors helped constitute and transform mass diets from the nineteenth century to the present day. In *The Industrial Diet*, Anthony Winson details how the dominant economic logic of pushing product for profit has resulted in the systematic degradation of food and led to the saturation of our food environments with nutrient poor edible commodities.

This book argues that this degradation of our food can be boiled down to three basic processes: the simplification of food, the speed-up of food making, and the widespread adulteration of food, notably with sugar, salt and fat. Each of these related processes is given a detailed examination, as is the mass marketing and spatial colonization of a suite of problematic edible products that constitute the industrial diet. Particular attention is given to the globalization of the industrial diet in contemporary times, and the

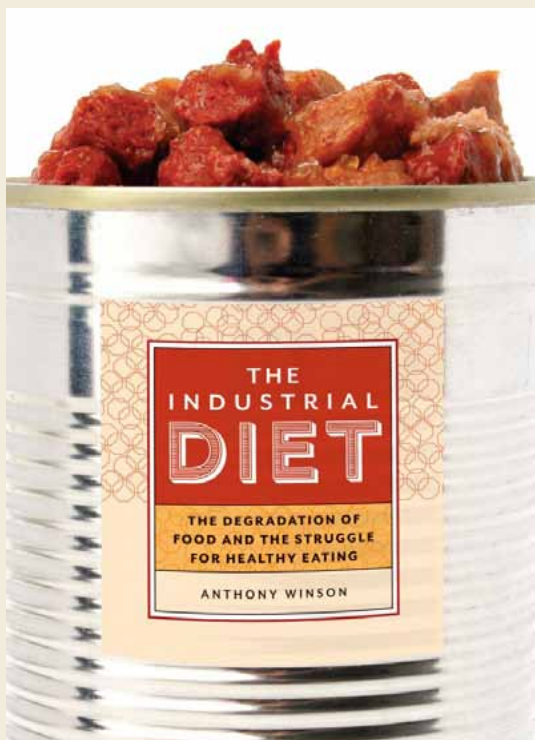
emerging health burden of this diet in the developed and developing world. Not surprisingly, there has been an ever-increasing resistance to this industrial diet, and this book seeks to give the reader some idea of its scope and promise by providing American and Canadian case studies of 'transformative' alternative food organizations that offer realistic and innovative strategies for a healthier future.

Winson chronicles the forces that have transformed a natural resource into an industry that produces edible commodities, an industry that far too often subverts our well-being and promotes disease instead of nourishing us. Tracing the industrial diet's history from its roots in the nineteenth century through to present-day globalism, Anthony Winson looks at the role of technology, population growth, and political and economic factors in the constitution and transformation of mass dietary regimes and provides new evidence linking broad-based dietary changes with negative health effects in the developed and developing world. With its focus on the degradation of food and the emergent struggle for healthful eating, this book encourages us to reflect on the state of our food environments and to create realistic and innovative strategies that can lead to a healthier future. Paperback forthcoming.

Book:

Resistance Is Fertile: Canadian Struggles on the BioCommons (UBC Press, 2013) by Wilhelm Peekhaus

For decades, government, industry, and the mainstream media have extolled the virtues of biotechnology. Their dominant message -- that biotechnology can improve everything from our health and diet to our environment and economy -- is unmistakably celebratory. We hear about biotechnology's power to reverse environmental degradation, help medical researchers identify disease genes, and increase industrial efficiency, output, and jobs. Government and industry rarely tell us about biotechnology's negative side effects. Not only are genetically engineered crops still failing to deliver consistently higher yields; there is also mounting evidence that genetically engineered organisms come with a host of safety and environmental risks. Focusing on agriculture, *Resistance Is Fertile* challenges the dominant rhetoric surrounding biotechnology by offering a critical analysis of the role of capital and



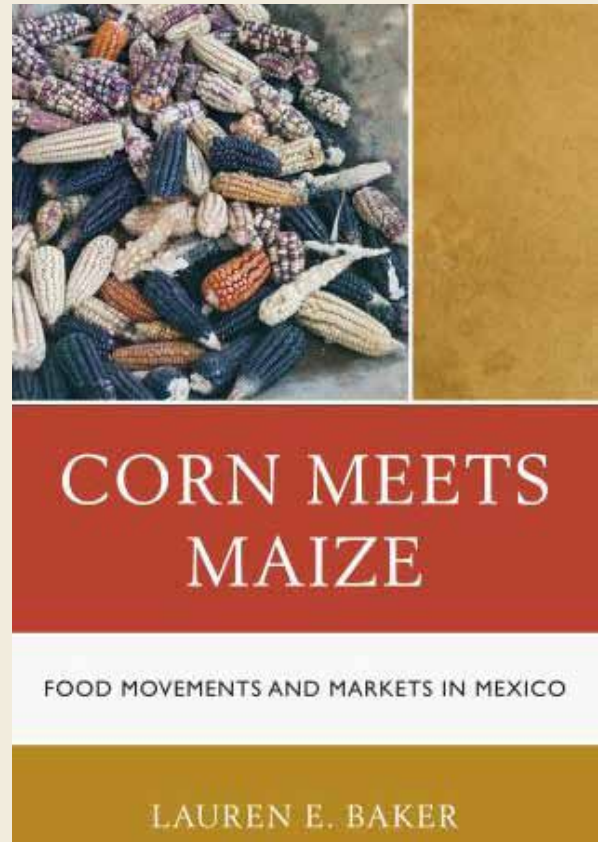
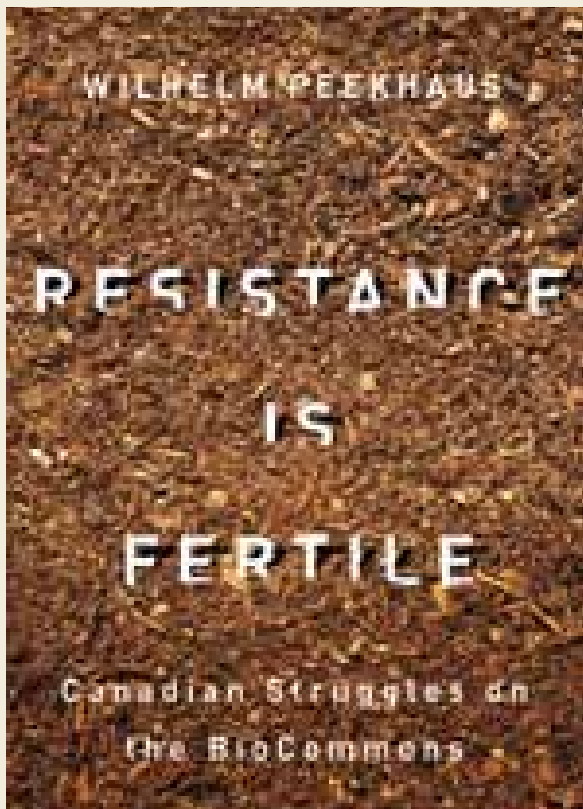
the state in the development of this technoscience. In particular, Wilhelm Peekhaus analyzes the major issues around which opponents of agricultural biotechnology in Canada are mobilizing -- namely, the enclosure of the biological commons and the knowledge commons, which together form the BioCommons. What emerges is an empirically and theoretically informed analysis of topics such as Canada's regulatory regime, the corporate control of seeds, the intellectual property system, and attempts to construct and control public discussions about agricultural biotechnology.

Reviews

"*Resistance Is Fertile* is an outstanding contribution to the field of biotechnology. Wilhelm Peekhaus weaves the empirical content brilliantly into an enlightening discussion of both political economy and social resistance."

-Rodney Loepky, Department of Political Science, York University

To read about the book, visit http://www.ubcpres.ca/search/title_book.asp?BookID=299173751



Book:

Corn Meets Maize: Food Movements & Markets in Mexico (Rowman & Littlefield, 2012) by Lauren Baker

This compelling book explores the intimate connections between people and plants, agriculture and cooking, and the practical work of building local food networks and transnational social movements. Lauren Baker uses corn and maize to consider central debates about food security and food sovereignty, biodiversity and biotechnology, culture and nature, as well as globalization and local responses, in Mexico and beyond. For the author, corn symbolizes the commoditization of agriculture and the cultural, spiritual, ecological and economic separation of people from growing, cooking, and sharing food. Conversely, maize represents emerging food movements that address contemporary health, environmental, and economic imperatives while rooted in agricultural and culinary traditions. The meeting of corn and maize reveals the challenge of, and possibilities for, reclaiming food from its commodity status in the global context of financial turmoil, food crises, and climate change.

Comments on Corn Meets Maize by CAFS members:

“*Corn Meets Maize* offers interesting glimpses into some of the social relations and structures that are being created in Mexico in efforts to revalue nature and food, promote campesino agriculture, foster food cultures, and build viable livelihoods. The book sheds light on the cultural, ethical and ecological values driving the creation of alternative food networks while also signaling the constraints they face.”

-Annette Desmarais, University of Regina

“Baker’s concept of ‘place-based but not place-bound’ moves brilliantly beyond false dualities such as global versus local. The hope she offers is that a deep culture such as maize can adapt to new conditions, renewing all the maize varieties threatened by homogeneous corn. At the same time, Baker wisely draws on her Canadian experience as a pioneer of agrodiversity and cultural diversity to illuminate the work of maize innovators in Mexico.”

-Harriet Friedann, University of Toronto

Book:

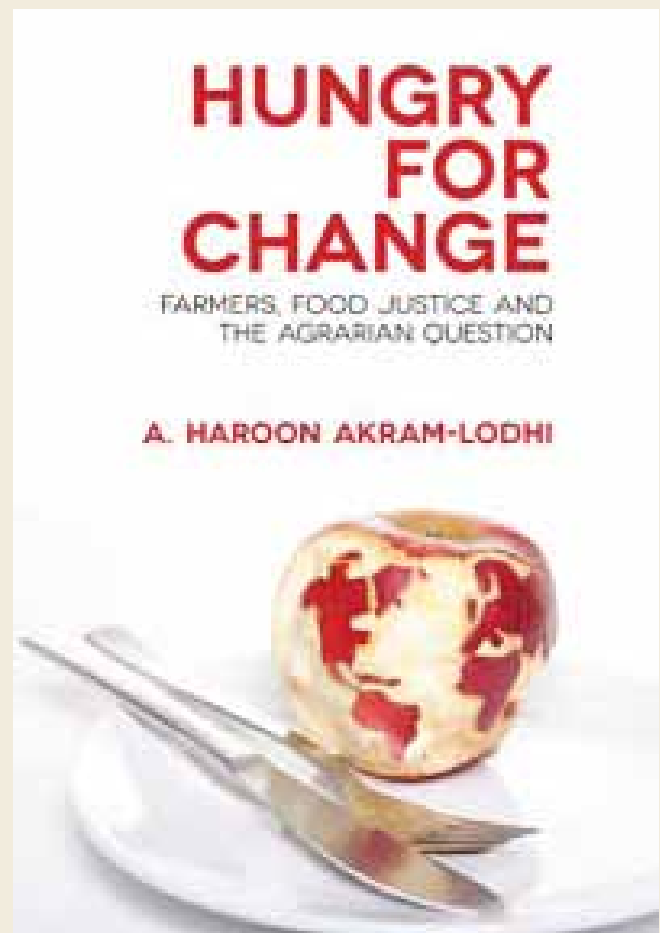
Hungry for Change: Farmers, Food Justice and the Agrarian Question (Fernwood 2013) by Haroon Akram-Lodhi

In *Hungry for Change*, Haroon Akram-Lodhi of Trent University uses the stories of farmers, farm workers and food consumers from China, Fiji, Haiti, Honduras, Kenya, Mexico, Pakistan, Uganda, Australia, Canada and the United States to explain how the world food system is marginalizing family farmers, small-scale peasant farmers and landless rural workers even as it entrenches a global subsistence crisis. Drawing upon more than two decades worth of research and fieldwork, *Hungry for Change* explains the colonial origins of the world food system, and examines how a global industrial agricultural system was created through failed land reforms, the Green and gene revolutions, food dumping, and supermarketization.

In the midst of the crisis faced by both the underserved and the overserved, the book explores visions for the future of the world food system as well as the way

in which has brought forth, in the middle spaces of the global agricultural crisis, peasant resistance and, more recently, an alternative future that is not only being envisioned but is being built by global food movements. In order to build that future, it is suggested that food sovereignty can only succeed when it is embedded within a series of additional reforms to the food system, which Akram-Lodhi calls ‘agrarian sovereignty’: the independent and exclusive de facto practical authority of broadly-defined agrarian populations of producers and consumers over food and the resources necessary to produce and consume nutritious, healthy and cultural appropriate food.

Written in an accessible style, the book will be of interest to scholars, students, practitioners as well as those generally interested in global food issues, and has already been adopted by several universities for courses on the world food system. Raj Patel calls *Hungry for Change* ‘a must-read for anyone who cares about understanding food and the planet today.’



Upcoming Research Project:

Perspectives on Revitalizing and Supporting Sustainable Food Systems and Improving Food Security from Three Remote First Nations Communities in Northern Ontario
Kelly Skinner, Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, ON

Local food production in remote and northern communities is a potential avenue for improving food security. However, there is still very little information known about how to develop, revitalize, and support sustainable local food systems in remote and northern First Nations communities. Re-building and maintaining traditional harvesting and food acquisition practices such as hunting, fishing, gathering, gardening, and farming are critical to improving food security and re-establishing sustainable local food systems to work towards more self-sufficiency in these communities.

Starting June 1, 2013, Dr. Kelly Skinner will hold an 18-month CIHR postdoctoral fellowship at Lakehead University under the supervision of Dr. Connie Nelson. The two main objectives of the CIHR postdoctoral research project are:

- (1) To gain a better understanding of the factors that help a community collectively move towards greater food security by their improvement of local food systems from the perspectives of community members in three remote, northern First Nations communities. To document the beliefs, current progress and the barriers to and supports for improving food security and re-vitalizing more sustainable and local food systems.
- (2) To create a conceptual model for each community that depicts key demographic, social and personal (belief and values) variables at the participant level as well as barriers to and supports for food security and local food systems at the community level.

This proposed research can improve the health of First Nations populations living in northerly locations by identifying factors that can support local northern food systems and policies to strengthen community food security initiatives. An additional and related project carried out by Dr. Skinner will investigate how crowdfunding/sourcing, social enterprise, and social financing may assist in building the resilience of northern local food hubs.

Research Project Update:

Food Security Research Network
C.H. Nelson, Ph.D. and M.S. Stroink, Ph.D
Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, ON

As a research project for year 1 of the Community Food Security Hub of the SSHRC funded Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE), we (Nelson, C.H. & Stroink, M.L.) have carried out two community-academic collaborations between October 2012 and March 2013 to explore the engagement process itself. The first collaboration looked at the workforce multiplier effect of local food production in northwestern Ontario. Specifically, we looked at the current local food production supply, demand, and its multiplier effect on the workforce throughout the economy in three districts (Thunder Bay, Rainy River and Kenora) of Northwestern Ontario. (For more details, see <http://fsrn.lakeheadu.ca/About/What'sNew/Workforce%20Multiplier%20Effect%20Study.html>).

The second collaboration focused on two separate community gatherings to explore the wicked problem



(Conklin, 2005; Head, 2008) of how to enhance vulnerable people's access to local nutritional foods while ensuring viable incomes for local farmers. (For more details see <http://fsrn.lakeheadu.ca/About/What'sNew/Community%20Gatherings.html>)

We utilized the theoretical lens of complex adaptive systems (CAS) theory as a framework to explore both of these community-academic collaborations.

One of our key findings is that our collaborations began as relationships around shared interests that are dynamic, fluid and emergent. Secondly, these community-university engagements self-organized in what we refer to as an 'in-community' approach. Through service learning, as we operationalize it, both students and faculty step outside the campus and participate in a holistic, integrated way with both their academy knowledge and their personal knowledge, operating collectively as members of the larger community. Faculty are members of the community and academy; and students are members of the community and are transitory members of the academy. Thus, the community and the academy are both 'in-community' where space is created for dialogue and exchange to emerge around shared interests.

We call our 'in community' CAS inspired approach Contextual Fluidity, and it is characterized by five core dimensions: (i) context-based, (ii) fluid in embracing the richness of the complexity of multiple community perspectives engaging with many disciplines and numerous student learning needs, (iii) driven by vision to deepen the regional local food system, (iv) organized as networks of relationships and (v) open

to new interconnections, which we term strange attractors for their unanticipated nature.

Additional information on our preliminary findings from the study of engagement processes for community-academic collaborations can be found as a CFICE sponsored webinar February 28, 2013.

<http://foodsecurecanada.org/webform/community-academic-collaborative-cfice-february-28-2013-webinar>. We suggest that our research findings demonstrate that community-academic interactions are multilayered complex systems that can best be nurtured and supported from a complex adaptive systems perspective.

References

Conklin, J. (2005). *Dialogue Mapping: Building Shared Understanding of Wicked Problems*. Toronto: Wiley.
Head, B. W. (2008). *Wicked Problems in Public Policy* [online]. *Public Policy*, 3,(2): 101-118.

Research Project Update:

Nourishing Ontario, Sustainable Local Food Systems Research Group

Nourishing Ontario conducts research on local sustainable food systems designed in collaboration with regional and provincial advisory committees made up of representatives from the farming community, academia, farm organizations, local governments, and food councils, as well as non-profit, cooperative and for-profit food initiatives.

From the process of knowledge exchange and



*Nourishing
Ontario*

*Sustainable
Local Food Systems
Research Group*

consultation in our earlier research, a number of critical issues emerged as potential avenues for improving the viability and sustainability of community food initiatives. Over the next year, the research team will explore a number of overarching themes through three regional research nodes – the Northern, Eastern and Southwestern Research nodes – with each node focusing on different sets of themes.

The Northern Research node is examining innovative models for financing community food-related infrastructure that is desperately needed in northern communities, particularly for those operating at small and mid-scale production levels. The Eastern Research node is investigating three themes: tensions between food and housing security; land access for new/young farmers; and assessing the opportunities for family farms to transition into local food markets. The Southwestern Research node will also look at three themes: land tenure and access for local, sustainable production; improving access through aggregation, processing, distribution and procurement; and alternative supply management options for sustainable regional food systems. Each researcher will also investigate alternatives that offer scale-appropriate regulation.

Each regional research node will produce policy-relevant recommendations, and an assessment of the regional relevance of the various alternatives assessed through this research. This will serve as a complement to the report “Models and Best Practices for Building Sustainable Food Systems in Ontario and Beyond”, now available on the Nourishing Ontario website: <http://nourishingontario.ca/models-and-best-practices/>

The research group has also coordinated the development of a web-based Community Food Toolkit with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and University of Guelph Partnership / Knowledge Translation and Transfer (KTT) Funding Program: http://www.uoguelph.ca/omafra_partnership/ktt/en/localfoodhub/ToolkitLanding.asp

A workshop took place on April 4, at the OMAFRA

and MRA- U of G Partnership Knowledge Exchange: KTT Toolbox. At this event, the processes involved in gathering and responding to user feedback, and the positive changes in the digital toolkit that resulted were discussed. At the same event, Jordan Vander Kloek won the Student Video Contest with his video “Building Regional Food Hubs in Ontario: A Micro-Dairy Case Study” – part of a series of video case studies currently being conducted by Nourishing Ontario: http://youtu.be/_Q2UPvQ4idQ

This video is available on our YouTube channel, and can also be accessed via our website: <http://nourishingontario.ca/blog/2013/05/02/micro-dairy-case-study-video/>

Several group members also recently presented at the panel “Towards Sustainable Resource Governance”, at the American Association of Geographers annual conference. Finally, the results of the group’s previous research project will be featured as a collection of ten papers in a Local Environment themed issue, to be published this month.

Research Update:

Activating Change Together for Community Food Security (ACT for CFS), Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, NS

Activating Change Together for Community Food Security (ACT for CFS) is a SSHRC-funded participatory action research project with over 60 diverse partners that aims to increase community food security for all Nova Scotians and beyond by amplifying and broadening conversation, research, and action to strengthen capacity for policy change (www.foodarc.ca/actforcfs).

To answer one of our three research questions – “What are the components of, and factors contributing to, community food security in NS?” – ACT for CFS has nearly completed participatory community food security assessments in four communities in Nova Scotia. These case studies use a mixed methods approach with 11 co-developed indicators of

community food security. The four communities have collected:

- Surveys with service providers around supports for populations vulnerable to food insecurity;
- Interviews with local food producers about opportunities and barriers to selling locally;
- Focus groups with mothers about their breastfeeding experiences;
- Focus groups with people vulnerable to food insecurity about their experiences;
- Storysharing sessions about experiences with community participation in food-related activities;
- Photovoice sessions exploring how people get to their food and how their food gets to them;
- Developing food costing affordability scenarios plus inventories and maps (through spatial analysis) on a range of demographic indicators and community food assets;
- Each community is also collecting information on a unique aspect named as a community priority;
- Structured interviews exploring challenges and barriers of accessing food for special diets in Spryfield;
- Interviews and an inventory of opportunities & supports exploring changes in farming in Kings County, focusing on current and new farmers, and migrant workers;
- Interviews to provide an in-depth look at various aspects of barriers and opportunities to selling lobster in Eastern Shelburne County;
- Pictou Landing First Nation is leading a project exploring community food security/insecurity in this community through photos and stories, food costing affordability scenarios, and an inventory.

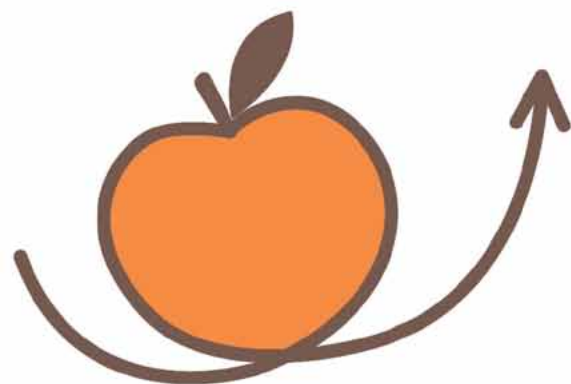
Collaborative community-university teams have been created to analyze and interpret the information, which will yield a picture of community food security within each community and across the province.

On March 22, 2013, our Policy Working Group held a webinar to share draft results from 37 interviews with provincial civil society organizations identifying opportunities and barriers for policy change to improve community food security (<http://foodarc.ca/actforcfs/activities/#Policy>). Additional interviews are underway with local jurisdictions. The next phase of research will explore different models of food distribution systems with specific commodities as case studies.

Other activity highlights include:

- Engaging over 400 individuals in communities and across Nova Scotia to identify priorities to better understand community food security.
- Hosting interactive learning workshops with 50 community-based researchers and students to build skills and knowledge of research, ethics, and qualitative methods.
- Engaging 65 students through a range of internship, co-op, independent studies, and thesis-related work, and as volunteers.

At our upcoming full team gathering, we will reflect on preliminary findings to deepen analysis and interpretation and prepare for the next phase of action and policy change to contribute to improved community food security in Nova Scotia.



Community University
Research Alliance

**Activating Change Together
for Community Food Security**

Working Paper Brief:

Runnels, Vivien. (2012) *Local food charters and policies in Canada: a collection and a guide for analysis*. Population Health Improvement Research Network Exchange Working Paper Series, Volume 3, Number 2. University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada.

Policies and by-laws that impact food production and food availability can have impacts on local food systems and food security, and may also potentially affect the nutritional status and health of local populations. In order to get a picture of items being included in the content of Canadian food charters and food policies (and by extension, items being excluded or omitted), we developed a tool for systematically analyzing food charter and policy content, and collected as many Canadian food policies and charters as we could find. The tool contained items designed to determine: the intentions of the policy (indicated by a problem and/or values statement); whether there were any direct connections drawn with health; the audience(s) for the policy; the suggested means of change (action); costs of implementation; allocation of responsibility for the policy; and recommendations and desired outcomes. The tool was applied to each policy.

Analysis showed that:

- Human rights formed the underpinning of many of the policies;
- A majority of policies contained direct references to health;
- Most policies included a description of the means to achieve food security or other goals and made policy recommendations to achieve these goals;
- Only one policy included an item relating to the costs of implementing any of the proposed plans;
- Most policies were unclear about who would be responsible for implementation;
- While policies were not specifically rated for accessibility, the importance of ensuring that policy documents are accessible to all, including people with disabilities and people with age-related impairments was noted.

Furthermore, as some policies used language that is specific to knowledge of food security, food sovereignty and other particular terminology, they were not always amenable to a public audience.

This working paper is designed to stimulate discussion and development of the content of food policies and charters in Canada. The tool provides some guided assistance to those who are considering policies, are in the process of developing their own, or who are reviewing existing ones. We hope to encourage individuals and groups thinking about food policy and health to critically assess the policies of others, and be able to make some decisions as to what is important for their own.

Available at www.rrasp-phirn.ca.



Planning Ahead:

CAFS / ACÉA Assembly 2014

by Lisa Ohberg and Maria Nunes

Wow, what a great conference this year in Victoria, B.C.! We're already excited about next year's conference in St. Catherine's at Brock University, and pleased to introduce you to the CAFS 2014 Conference Organizing team! We are:

Jennifer Brady, Queen's University
Chantal Clement, Carlton University
Virginie Lavallée-Picard, Concordia University
Heather Lee, University of Waterloo Alum
Charles Levkoe, University of Toronto, CAFS executive
Maria Nunes, York University, CAFS 2014 Conference Organizing Committee Co-Chair
Lisa Ohberg, University of Guelph, CAFS 2014 Conference Organizing Committee Co-Chair
Daphne Pawluczuk, Ryerson University
Rebecca Schiff, Memorial University
Tammara Soma, University of Toronto, CAFS executive
Rita Hansen Sterne, University of Guelph
Charles Sule, Ryerson University
David Szanto, Concordia University, CAFS executive

Kate Bezanson and Mary Beth Raddon of Brock University will be our invaluable local coordinators this year. We will all be working under the indispensable guidance and support of the CAFS executive!

This year's conference organizers did an absolutely wonderful job and we are excited to be following in their footsteps.

Next year's conference is already shaping up to be a fantastic event with exciting sessions and tours in the lovely Niagara region. We are also aiming to host a few parallel regional meetings to coincide with the national conference - so stay tuned! We welcome suggestions

for themes, field trips, session formats, themed sessions, and everything in between at assembly@foodstudies.ca. Looking forward to seeing you all in St. Catherine's in 2014!

Lisa Ohberg and Maria Nunes
Co-chairs, CAFS / ACÉA 2014 Assembly Organizing Committee

Letter of Appreciation Regarding the CAFS/ ACÉA Award for Excellence in Public Service

by Ellen Desjardins

I would like to express my sincere thanks to CAFS/ ACEA members for honouring me with this award. What it means to me is a true sense of belonging in this big family where we are both colleagues and friends. We share a common playing field in food studies, where diversity is our biggest strength. I owe my career to learning from and working with (and having fun with) so many of you in the community and in academia, and that continues. I, in turn, honour all of you ... let's collectively keep on transgressing boundaries!

Closing Remarks:

CAFS / ACÉA Newsletter Team

Thanks to everyone that made contributions to the spring/summer 2013 edition. The CAFS / ACÉA newsletter is published twice annually - we look forward to more great content from the food studies community for the fall/winter 2013-2014 issue. Please send any comments, questions, concerns or future submissions to newsletter@foodstudies.ca.

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