

Media literacy has been elevated with the advancement of digital video technology. From commercially produced films to community digital storytellers the visual narrative continues to be a powerful tool for exploring in-depth issues of the day. Access to these films can be cumbersome and while there are a few long-standing distribution outlets our research has identified a useful website to assist a search. Take some time and look at www.mediarights.org

This film list offers a selection of media on food and agriculture issues. The list is a sampling of full-length documentaries to short animations that will support anyone's efforts in raising awareness and initiating dialog for social change.

Key words and search terms: Agriculture, Economic Development, Family & Society, Environment, Economic Justice, Environmental Preservation, Identity, Youth, Gender/women, Animal Rights, Health/Health Advocacy, Labor, Migrant Workers, Politics/Government, Pollution, Poverty, Biodiversity, Corporate Violations to the Environment, U.S./Foreign Relations

Deconstructing Food

Marianne Kaplan, director. 48 minutes, 2002. Contact: www.bullfrogfilms.com

Renowned Canadian chef John Bishop takes viewers on an eye-opening odyssey behind the scenes of global food production. His quest, starting from his five-star gourmet restaurant, leads the viewer from organic farms to biotech trade shows and laboratories, in attempts to explore the politics, economics and ethics of food. A changed man, Bishop returns home to serve only organic food and embrace the philosophy, "think globally, act locally."

- www.movingimages.ca/catalogue/Nature/deconstructingsupper.html
- www.bullfrogfilms.com/catalog/decon.html

- www.ffcf.bc.ca/Deconstructing%20Supper/Synopsis.htm

The Future of Food

Deborah Koons Garcia, director. 89 minutes, 2004. Contact: info@lilyfilms.com

The Future of Food examines the complex web of market and political forces that are changing what we eat. From the U.S and Canada to the fields of Oaxaca, Mexico, this film gives a voice to farmers whose lives and livelihoods have been negatively impacted by genetically engineered foods that have quietly filled U.S. grocery store shelves for the past decade. The health implications, government policies and

push towards globalization are all part of the reason why many people are alarmed by the introduction of genetically altered crops in our food supply. As the truth is revealed to how multinational food corporations is attempting to control our food supply farmers are demonstrating real solutions through organic and sustainable agriculture practices.

- www.thefutureoffood.com
- www.wired.com/news/technology/0,1282,64089,00.html
- www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2004/11/07/LVG709K7MV1.DTL

The Real Dirt on Farmer John

Taggart Siegel, director. 83 minutes, 2005. Contact: info@collectiveeye.org

An epic tale of a Midwestern farmer who transforms his farm into a creative hub of activity through community supported agriculture (CSA), an alternative economic model for farming. A true story, farmer and visionary John Peterson bravely resurrects an intergenerational farm in Illinois to a biodynamic and organic food source serving 1,500 families in Chicago. Be prepared for a quirky and emotional story of transformation and the radical shifts in the social, cultural and economic landscape of rural America.

- www.therealdirt.net
- www.washingtonpost.com/

wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/06/AR2006060600307.html

- <http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060119/REVIEWS/60117003/1023>
- www.pbs.org/independentlens/realdirt/qa.html

Super Size Me

Morgan Spurlock, director. 97 minutes, 2003. Contact: eesupersize@hartsharp-video.com

Super Size Me, a tongue-in-cheek look at the legal, financial, and physical costs of America's hunger for fast food. Is it our fault for lacking control, or are the fast-food corporations to blame? Filmmaker Morgan Spurlock takes the viewer on a journey interviewing experts in 20 U.S. cities, including Houston, the "Fattest City" in America. From Surgeon Generals to gym teachers, cooks to kids, lawmakers to legislators, these authorities shared their research, opinions and "gut feelings" on our ever-expanding girth. Spurlock also put his own body on the line, living on nothing but McDonald's for an entire month which adds up to a fat food bill, harrowing visits to the doctor, and compelling viewing for anyone who's ever wondered if man could live on fast food alone.

- http://dir.salon.com/story/ent/movies/review/2004/05/07/super_size_me/index.html
- <http://worldfilm.about.com/cs/documentaries/fr/supersizeme.htm>
- www.mediarights.org/film/super_size_me

The Meatrix

Louis Fox, director. 4 min., 2003. Contact: dhatz@gracelinks.org

The Meatrix is a humorous Flash animation that spoofs "The Matrix" films while drawing attention to the problems caused by factory farming and stars a young pig, Leo. He thinks he lives on a pleasant family farm until he is approached by a trenchcoat-clad cow, Moopheus, who shows him the ugly truth about agribusiness. At the end of the movie, viewers are directed to an "action page" which provides additional information about factory farms and encourages consumers to support local family farmers and purchase sustainably-raised meats through the Eat Well Guide.

- www.themeatrix.com
- www.mediarights.org/film/the_meatrix.php
- www.organicconsumers.org/foodsafety/Meatrix110503.cfm
- www.farm.org.uk/FM_Content.aspx?ID=154

Store Wars: The Organic Rebellion

Louis Fox, director. 5 minutes 2005. Contact: bhaumann@ota.com

This entertaining spoof of the *Star Wars* films features Cuke Skywalker, Princess Lettuce, Chewbroccoli and other organic rebels—played by real vegetables dressed as "Star Wars" characters—battling it out with Darth Tader, the evil lord of the Dark Side of the Farm. The film seeks to educate consumers about the benefits of organic products and in a light-hearted way asks people to think about their food choices.

- www.storewars.org

- www.sciencenews.org/articles/20050521/food.asp
- www.usatoday.com/life/movies/news/2005-05-15-store-wars_x.htm

The True Cost of Food

Free Range Graphics, director. 15 minutes, 2004. Contact: www.truecostoffood.com

The True Cost of Food is an animated short on consumption patterns, showing a family in a "Buy-It-All Mart" racing to get food for dinner. At checkout, the cashier charges them "the true costs" of everything they're buying and then explains in detail of what goes into raising beef from ecological disasters, to energy costs to health concerns.

- www.organicconsumers.org/Politics/foodwaste081005.cfm
- http://angeles.sierraclub.org/news/SS_2004-07/foodcampaign.asp

Young Agrarians

Johanna Divine, director. 8 minutes, 2005. Contact: johanna.divine@nau.edu

Young Agrarians was created to introduce young people to a new way of looking at agriculture and food production and the many opportunities in sustainable agriculture and local food systems. A journey from Palmer, Alaska, to Tumacacori, Arizona, the film relates the stories of small-scale farmers, ranchers and market gardeners of all ages and backgrounds who have been drawn by their love for the land to undertake the most noble of occupations—growing food.

- www.mediathatmattersfest.org/5/young_agrarians/
- www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/newsreleases/2006/011806_colloquium.htm

As We Sow

Jan Weber, director. 23 minutes, 2002.
Contact: janweber@aswesow.com

As We Sow documents the stories of survival and failure in the real heartland, a struggle pitting family against family, neighbor against neighbor, citizens against their government, and small, independent farmers against the giants of global agribusiness. In location shooting and taped interviews with independent and contract farmers, CEOs and large-scale livestock producers, grassroots rural activists and environmentalists the viewer begins to understand the changing uses of land from the conflict between the differences of farming practices in rural America.

- www.mediarights.org/film/as_we_sow
www.aswesow.com

My Father's Garden

Miranda Smith, director. 56 minutes, 1995.
Contact: abigail@mirandaproductions.com

My Father's Garden is about the use and misuse of technology on the American farm. This film tells the true story of two such lives. One of the farmers is Herbert Smith, a dedicated champion of the "miracle" sprays of the 1950s who used these chemicals to fashion a man-made paradise and the other farmer, Fred Kirschenmann of North Dakota, when faced with a shattered farm economy and devastating environmental effects of chemical farming, transitioned to organic farming. This film helps the viewer explore two parallel paradigms in agriculture and two individuals united by their common goal of producing good food.

- www.bullfrogfilms.com/catalog/mfg.html
<http://www.mediarights.org/film/>

my_fathers_garden

- <http://cinema.cornell.edu/fleff/oct99/myfathers.html>

A Time to Act

Michael Sheridan, director. 26 minutes, 1999. Contact: www.cfra.org/resources/publications.htm

A Time to Act is an excellent presentation of solutions to the crisis of America's small farms. Through comparison of practices in soil conservation, animal husbandry, quality of product, and fair labor practices the viewer begins to understand the new type of family farm run by multiple families, which generates a wide variety of sustainable cash crops all year. A thoughtful and sobering examination of negative effects of industrial agriculture contrasted with the new and encouraging examples of sustainable and cooperative farming.

- www.buyindies.com/listings/T/I/VDPJ-TIM-649-V.html
- www.videoproject.com/tim-649-v.html

Broken Limbs

Jamie Howell and Guy Evans, directors. 57 minutes, 2004. Contact: www.brokenlimbs.org

Troubled by the effects of consolidation and globalization, Guy Evans sets out on a journey to find out why once prosperous and pastoral farmland is disappearing. Evans finds hope in a new breed of farmer with solutions applicable not just to farming but nearly every sector in the American economy.

The Luckiest Nut in Town

Emily James, director. 8 minutes, 2005.
Contact: Emily@fulcrumtv.com

The film follows an animated American peanut, who sings about the difficulties of nuts from developing countries. The film helps people to see how the pressure to embrace "free market" economics, with its promise of a wealthy, abundant market place has actually driven many countries further into poverty. A film that explores economics and history creates musical sequences which explain the roles of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

- www.mediatthatmattersfest.org/5/the_luckiest_nut_in_the_world/

Asparagus (A Stalk-umentary)

Kirsten Kelly and Anne de Mare, directors. 72 minutes, 2006. Contact: www.mediarights.org

In 2002, Kristen returned to her hometown with Anne to explore the spring cash crop asparagus, once hailed as the Green King in Oceana County Michigan. What Anne saw was a community's economic survival was threatened and learned a community's identity was at stake. They realized that what was happening in Oceana County brought up really big questions about American identity and global economics for all American industries. As fight for the identity and economic survival of this community ensued we learn how foreign policy can affect America's communities.

- www.mediatthatmattersfest.org/6/asparagus_a_stalkumentary/
- www.vegetablegrowersnews.com/pages/arts.php?ns=296

- <http://sandiego.indymedia.org/en/2006/01/113022.shtml>

The Global Banquet: Politics of Foods

Anne Macksoud and John Ankele, directors. 57 minutes, 2001. Contact: anne.macksoud@valley.net

The Global Banquet reveals the profoundly negative impact of globalization on our food system. It explains how Agribusiness is squeezing out small farmers and how our trade policies are destroying peoples' ability to feed themselves. The documentary debunks underlying myths such as: hunger is the result of scarcity that small countries simply can't feed themselves, that only market driven, chemically based, industrial agriculture can feed the world.

- www.mediarights.org/film/the_global_banquet_politics_of_food
- <http://thewitness.org/archive/june2002/mediareview.html>

Fed Up!

Wholesome Goodness Productions, director. 57 minutes, 2002. Contact: angelo@wholesomegoodness.org

Fed Up! tackles the increasingly important issue of genetically modified foods, answering prevalent questions about the genetic engineering of common foods, the development of modern agribusiness, the threat of genetic pollution, and many other topics while addressing alternatives specific to the San Francisco Bay area.

- www.mediarights.org/film/fed_up

The Greening of Cuba

Ray Burley, director. 38 minutes, 1996. Marilyn Borchardt, Food First Institute/ Food and Development, producer. Contact: www.bullfrogfilms.com

Challenged with growing food for 11 million in the face of the continuing US. embargo, Cuba embarked on the largest conversion to organic farming ever attempted. In *The Greening of Cuba* choices that are healthier for the environment, reminds us that entire small nations can still feed their people. *The Greening of Cuba* profiles Cuban farmers and scientists working to reinvent a sustainable agriculture, based on ecological principles and local knowledge rather than imported agricultural inputs. In their quest for self sufficiency, Cubans combine time-tested traditional methods with cutting edge biotechnology.

- www.mediarights.org/film/the_greening_of_cuba.php
- www.sarep.ucdavis.edu/newsltr/v9n1/sa-10.htm

Contaminated: The New Science of Food

Josh Shore, director. 7 minutes, 2003. Contact: josh@gnn.tv

In *Contaminated*, Fritjof Capra, Paul Hawken, and Vandana Shiva explain the evolution of the new biotech agribusiness and its potential dangers to the sustainability of the global food supply. A campaign for rigorous testing and clear product labeling.

Barn Red

Rich Brauer, director. 1 hour 38 minutes, 2004. Contact: www.porchlight.com

Barn Red was shot on location in the Grand Traverse region and stars Academy Award®-winner Ernest Borgnine. "The story is a dramatic struggle for the land. Faced with the possible loss of his farm, land that has been in his family for generations, Borgnine's character must make some tough decisions as he tries to enlist the support of his neighbors who are tempted by the promise of great wealth from aggressive land developers.

- www.gtrlc.org/happen/hap2003/12/hap1208.htm
- www.brauer.com/pages/prod/cinema/barnred/br_nw.html

Voices of Minnesota Farm Women

Cynthia Vagnetti, director. 29 minutes, 2005. Contact: www.landstewardshipproject.org

Whether by economic necessity or a philosophical choice, more women are entering agriculture, mostly the very small operations or enterprises. This documentary focuses on a different type of agriculture and 10 Minnesota women are successful at it. *Voices of Minnesota Farm Women* tells the story of Minnesota's heritage and legacy through oral history interviews and aired on Pioneer Public Television, April 6, 2005. An educational packet is available.

- www.landstewardshipproject.org/pr/05/newsr_050317.htm
- www.acreagelife.com/articles/acreage_life_articles/dec_04_farmWomen.cfm

Voices of Iowa Farm Women

Cynthia Vagnetti, director. 19 minutes, 2004. Contact: www.wfan.org

Voices of Iowa Farm Women is part of a larger project, *Voices of American Farm Women* conducted by Vagnetti, who has interviewed 30 women from across the United States whose farming techniques promote environmental responsibility, economic stability, and community well-being. See *Voices of Minnesota Farm Women* and forthcoming, *Voices of Michigan Farm Women* and *Voices of Wisconsin Farm Women*. The Iowa project features seven women and has been sponsored by Women

Food and Agriculture Network and utilized as a Humanities program to launch discussions hosted by Leopold Center and Practical Farmers of Iowa.

- www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/newsreleases/2004/voices_092804.htm

Voices of Iowa Farm Women

Cynthia Vagnetti, director. 40 minutes, 2007. Contact: voices@msu.edu

Forthcoming, *Voices From the Field*, featuring the Voices of Upper Midwest Farm Women advancing local food consumption while restoring our agri-food system.