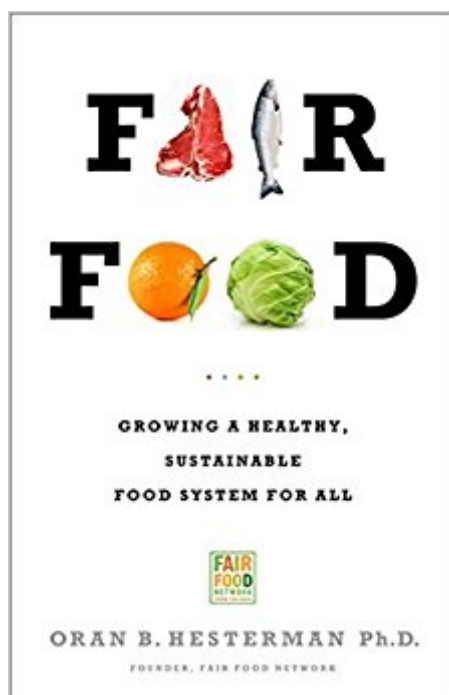


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# Fair Food: Growing A Healthy, Sustainable Food System For All



## Synopsis

Our food system is broken, and it's endangering what's most precious to us: our environment, our health, our soil and water, and our future. In recent years, a host of books and films have compellingly documented the dangers. But advice on what to do about them largely begins and ends with the admonition to 'eat local' or 'eat organic.' Longtime good food pioneer Oran Hesterman knows that we can't fix the broken system simply by changing what's on our own plates: the answer lies beyond the kitchen. In *Fair Food* he shares an inspiring and practical vision for changing not only what we eat, but how food is grown, packaged, delivered, marketed, and sold. He introduces people and organizations across the country who are already doing this work in a number of creative ways, and provides a wealth of practical information for readers who want to get more involved.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

New York House Magazine, June, 27, 2011 "A must read for those who wish to go from conscious consumer to food activist." Edible Buffalo, Summer 2011 "Level the playing field with the next generations of Americans by adopting what Fair Food and Hesterman promotes. With Fair Food we will be able to apply a solution to one problem in our broken food system at a time." New York Times (Business Day), June 4, 2011 "[Hesterman] displays a wide-ranging knowledge of production, consumption, natural resources and public policy. He also writes about reform efforts with contagious energy and palpable authority...this is an important, accessible book on a crucial subject. Food for thought and action." Serious Eats, July 29, 2011 "Hesterman's

upbeat outlook and gentle push toward activism inspired me to further my own engagement. His book is one of the best I've read on how we as individuals can be involved in the future of America's food system." • *Civil Eats*, June 1, 2011 • Unless you travel in food policy or agronomy circles, you probably haven't heard of Oran Hesterman. It's time you had. Hesterman, who runs the Ann Arbor, Michigan-based nonprofit Fair Food Network, has written a book that just might wake you up and get you to care about what's going on with the food you eat and how it gets to your table. *Fair Food: Growing a Healthy, Sustainable Food System for All* is what Hesterman is talking about, and I've got to admit, this reporter covering food news cracked open his book (which landed in bookstores yesterday) a tad wary. • Would this highly educated and well-meaning agronomist-activist guy really offer anything new to the sustainable food conversation, I wondered, and more importantly, would he speak to regular people trying to feed their families in a tough economy and who might not understand the difference between grass and grain-fed (or why it matters)? Boy was I wrong and thrilled to stand corrected. Hesterman breaks free from a tradition of densely written, muddled prose intended for inside baseball players and instead speaks to us all, loud and clear. • *Ode Magazine*, June 5, 2011 • Timely and inspiringly optimistic, *Fair Food* challenges and guides readers toward sustainability and health, for themselves and their communities. • *Publishers Weekly*, April 18, 2011 • Intended as a practical guide for community food activists who want to take the locavore movement across race, class, and city lines, this book illuminates ways in which consumers can become "engaged citizens." Especially important (and rare) is Hesterman's willingness to work constructively with corporate giants like Costco and the Kellogg Foundation. The dedication to social justice is clear, genuine, and logically argued as a food issue. A helpful and hefty final chapter of "Resources" provides readers with a comprehensive national listing of organizations to join, support, or replicate. • *Next American City* website, August 24, 2011 • Fair Food covers a lot of territory, which also means it doesn't dive too deeply into any one subject. He touches on everything just enough to enhance the reader's understanding, but not enough to be hard hitting on many of the topics he cares most about. And that seems to be the point. This book is not intended to serve as an encyclopedia for the food movement, but more of a practical guide for concerned citizens and budding activists. It fails to conjure up some of the emotions similarly positioned books do, but doesn't leave you wondering "what can I do to change things?" • Hesterman's goal for *Fair Food* is not to shock the masses, but to mobilize them to action." •

Dr. Oran B. Hesterman is the president and CEO of Fair Food Network. For fifteen years he co-led

the Integrated Farming Systems and Food and Society Programs for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. A native of Berkeley, California, and a former professor of agronomy at Michigan State University in East Lansing, he currently lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

This book makes an important contribution to the movement for food justice. Unlike many who write about food systems issues, Hesterman highlights issues related to poverty, hunger, race, and class. He firmly (but politely) takes to task well-heeled "foodies" who, all too often, overlook these vital concerns, consumed only by their personal pursuit of the perfect heirloom tomato. In contrast to some writers who want to patronizingly limit the kinds of food that low-income people can obtain, Hesterman understands that the prime reason low-income people don't eat more healthily is that nutritious food is often unavailable and/or unaffordable in low-income neighborhoods. He offers a number of practical policy and programmatic suggestions for increasing the ability of all people in all neighborhoods to afford and obtain the highest quality food. Given his expertise in both the science of agriculture and the practicality of scaling-up community food projects, Hesterman is particularly persuasive in arguing against making "small is beautiful" the one and only ethos of all food systems work. He explains that simply expanding small pilot projects will never be enough to ensure just food for all. His reasoning builds the case for a new type of food system that can be large, efficient, mass-produced - at the same time it is just for food workers, producers, consumers, the environment alike. Most importantly, the book offers a compelling case for all citizens to be involved in public policy advocacy to improve government policies and economic systems.

In some ways, Fair Food is a great book to read after reading *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. *Omnivore's Dilemma* enlightens us so that we might make better choices in the foods we eat by understanding where our food comes from. Fair Food enlightens us about food policy and its implications. (For instance;) Not how we can make better personal food choices but how we can be sure that all Americans will have healthy food choices in their local communities. Fair Food enlightens us in how we can make a better world for everyone by educating us about the various aspects of food policy. A recent New York Times review of this book (June 4, 2011 - Fresh Tomatoes for Inner Cities by Nancy Koehn) took the book to task for failing to discuss certain food policy related subjects. The NY Times reviewer recommended the book in spite of these shortcomings. I agree with the NY Times reviewer. It would've have been nice if the book was longer and covered the additional topics that the reviewer thought should have been covered but Fair Food is still a very very worthwhile read in spite of this. It covers lots of important issues that

should inform and influence our views on issues that impact everyone. I hope this book is read by those (theoretically all of us) who will have influence on the next Farm Bill. As said in other reviews, this book is very "accessible" (not assuming great technical knowledge of the subjects covered) and relatively short. It has a large resources section at the end should one wish to look further into any of the subjects discussed in main part of the book. It is also a great book for those who wish to advocate for better food policies (improving the world and not just your personal meals). As with many other public policy issues, the more the public knows about an issue then the more likely that a good policy will be created as a result.

If you are interested in providing healthy food for all, read this book. It is loaded with references for people who want to get involved in encouraging the US to provide a sustainable food system instead of the catering to agribusiness firms.

Really great condition reasonable price

A book to be read for the point of view of the author on the topic of how ideal food systems might be achieved in our country; not for literary merit. While I did not find his policy arguments convincing, others certainly may. This is a short book, given a good amount of space at its end is given over to a simple listing of resources. Much of it is anecdotal stories on various special, small agricultural projects funded over the years by the Kellogg Foundation. Dr. Hesterman often claims the sustainable farms he highlights pay their employees a "living wage" without citing what this magic amount is. He is a big proponent of "local" buying without defining local. Is "Buy Michigan" really local? The book sidesteps food safety issues and the realities of feeding a nation of over 300 million people. The material explaining the Farm Bill is good. It was of interest to me that the sustainable agriculture interests intend to spend over \$6 million over four years in Washington, D.C. to influence this federal legislation.

needed for class. excellent merchant

Purchased for my daughter who works tirelessly at improving eating and nutrition for children, primarily those who live in poverty. She found the book to be very helpful in her efforts.

A must read!

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