

# Food

"The global food economy may seem remote from daily experience, but it affects every aspect of what we eat and, therefore, our health and welfare. Jennifer Clapp explains what happens when food is no longer considered a mere source of nourishment or cultural element but is transformed into a fungible commodity. Clapp unpacks and clarifies the mind-numbing complexities of transnational corporations, international trade, and financial markets. Best of all, the book provides precisely the information and tools advocates need to redesign the global food economy to promote fair trade, food justice, and food sovereignty."

Marion Nestle, *New York University*

"A sharp, concise, and satisfyingly detailed field-guide to the hegemony of the world food economy."

Raj Patel, *University of California Berkeley*  
and author of *The Value of Nothing*

"This excellent book explains why food has become a hot political issue on the global stage. The author clearly knows her subject and offers an insightful, engaging, and highly accessible introduction to the global food economy."

Robert Falkner, *London School of Economics and Political Science*

Food is one of the most basic resources that humans need for daily survival. Forty percent of the world's population gains a livelihood from agriculture and we all consume food. Yet control over this fundamental resource is concentrated in relatively few hands. The 2008 food price crisis illustrated both the volatility and vulnerability built into the current world food economy; at the height of the crisis, the number of hungry people on the planet climbed to over one billion. At the same time, there are serious ecological consequences that stem from an increasingly industrial model of agriculture that has spread worldwide.

This book aims to contribute to a fuller understanding of the forces that influence and shape the current world food economy. Author Jennifer Clapp explores how corporate control, inequitable international agricultural trade rules, and the financialization of farm commodities have each had a fundamental influence on the practices that dominate today's world food economy. By contrast, farmers and consumers, particularly in the developing world, have had little voice to change the rules of the game. But movements are emerging to challenge the dominant global system. The extent to which these alternative movements can displace it, however, remains to be seen.

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# Contents

*Acknowledgments* page viii

*List of Abbreviations* x

*List of Figures and Tables* xiii

1 Unpacking the World Food Economy I

2 The Rise of a Global Industrial Food Market 24

3 Uneven Agricultural Trade Rules 57

4 Transnational Corporations 90

5 Financialization of Food 125

6 Can the World Food Economy Be Transformed? 158

*Notes* 184

*Selected Readings* 203

*Index* 210