

# A Research Agenda for Food Systems

*'In a lucid and timely call for new research, Colin Sage has curated chapters from leading food scholars on major issues affecting the global food system, and offers hope that both pragmatic and visionary solutions are emerging, which will benefit from a targeted research agenda. Sage's book is vital, compelling reading for students, scientists, and the wider world of people concerned about our future food system.'*

Molly D. Anderson, International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems and Middlebury College, USA

*'A clarion call to anyone desiring more sustainable and just food systems, emphasizing such outcomes cannot be had without insights from the social sciences. The chapters interrogate barriers and opportunities for change; analyses that are as comprehensive as they are enjoyable to read.'*

Michael Carolan, Colorado State University, USA

*'This is a fine and wonderful book. We know that food systems worldwide have been transformed in recent decades. They have made food a raging success, more people fed than ever.*

*They also cause vast ill-health and planetary harm, and leave hundreds of millions of people still hungry. This is a book about the urgent need for redesign and collective action. It brings vital clarity to the right questions, and shows how improvements in social justice can occur.'*

Jules Pretty, University of Essex, UK

**Elgar Research Agendas outline the future of research in a given area. Leading scholars are given the space to explore their subject in provocative ways, and map out the potential directions of travel. They are relevant but also visionary.**

Illuminating the global food system as a highly dynamic set of interconnecting interests and sub-systems that drives rapid technological, societal, and cultural change, this cutting-edge *Research Agenda* examines the pressing issues that confront food systems, and the emerging responses to them.

Chapters from internationally renowned specialists address the pressing issues facing food systems, including the growing concentration and power of large agri-food corporations, the contribution of food production to climate breakdown, the exploitation of agricultural labour, food poverty, and the reconfiguration of animal bodies. Reviewing possible 'solutions', chapters then examine the potential for a digital agricultural revolution, the contribution of alternative proteins in dietary change, and the emergence of regionalized and regenerative food systems. The book concludes with a look towards hybrid foodscapes, exploring how design can help us to re-imagine our stake in food systems of the future.

Interdisciplinary, holistic, and accessible in its approach, this innovative book will prove vital to students and scholars engaged in the study of food – from production to consumption – as well as those concerned with policymaking in the fields of public health and nutrition, food governance, sustainability, and environmental advocacy.

**Colin L. Sage** is an Independent Research Scholar.

**Edward Elgar**  
PUBLISHING

The Lyptatts, 15 Lansdown Road, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 2JA, UK  
Tel: + 44 (0) 1242 226934 Email: [info@e-elgar.co.uk](mailto:info@e-elgar.co.uk)

William Pratt House, 9 Dewey Court, Northampton, MA 01060, USA  
Tel: +1 413 584 5551 Email: [elgarinfo@e-elgar.com](mailto:elgarinfo@e-elgar.com)

[www.e-elgar.com](http://www.e-elgar.com) [www.elgaronline.com](http://www.elgaronline.com)

ISBN 978-1-0353-2035-6



9 781035 320356



<i>List of figures</i>	vii
<i>List of contributors</i>	ix
<i>Foreword: The urgency of food systems research</i> Tim Lang	xiii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xix

## PART I INTRODUCTION

1	<i>Introduction: A Research Agenda for Food Systems</i> Colin L. Sage	3
---	--	---

## PART II ISSUES

2	<i>The rise of big food and agriculture: corporate influence in the food system</i> Jennifer Clapp	45
3	<i>The food system, planetary boundaries and eating for 1.5°C: the case for mutualism and commensality within a safe and just operating space for humankind</i> Colin L. Sage	67
4	<i>Agricultural labour in the global food system</i> Alicia Reigada and Carlos de Castro	89
5	<i>Food systems and food poverty</i> Martin Caraher	111
6	<i>Reconfiguring animals in food systems: an agenda for research</i> Lewis Holloway	129



## PART III 'SOLUTIONS?'

7	The fourth agricultural revolution: technological developments in primary food production <i>David Christian Rose, Mondira Bhattacharya, Auvikki de Boon, Ram Kiran Dhulipala, Catherine Price and Juliette Schillings</i>	151
8	Of fake meat and an anxious Anthropocene: towards a cultural political economy of alternative proteins and their implications for future food systems <i>Alexandra E. Sexton and Michael K. Goodman</i>	175
9	Urban food systems: the case for municipal action <i>Jess Halliday</i>	199
10	Circular food systems: a blueprint for regenerative innovations in a regional UK context <i>Steffen Böhm, Rebecca Sandover, Stefano Pascucci, Laura Colombo, Sophie Jackson and Matt Loble</i>	221
11	Design at the end of the food system: hybrid foodscapes in the realm of consumption <i>Kata Fodor</i>	243
	<i>Index</i>	259