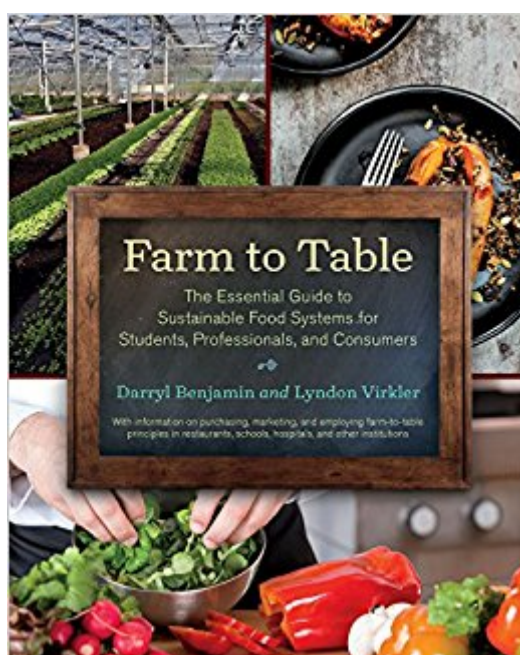


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Farm To Table: The Essential Guide To Sustainable Food Systems For Students, Professionals, And Consumers



Synopsis

With information on purchasing, marketing, and employing farm-to-table principles in restaurants, schools, hospitals, and other institutions Nearly a century ago, the idea of “local food” would have seemed perplexing, since virtually all food was local. Food for daily consumption—fruits, vegetables, grains, meat, and dairy products—was grown at home or sourced from local farms. Today, most of the food consumed in the United States and, increasingly, around the globe, is sourced from industrial farms and concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), which power a food system rife with environmental, economic, and health-related problems. The tide, however, is slowly but steadily turning back in what has been broadly termed the “farm-to-table” movement. In *Farm to Table*, Darryl Benjamin and Chef Lyndon Virkler explore how the farm-to-table philosophy is pushing back modern, industrialized food production and moving beyond isolated “locavore” movements into a broad and far-reaching coalition of farmers, chefs, consumers, policy advocates, teachers, institutional buyers, and many more all working to restore healthful, sustainable, and affordable food for everyone. Divided into two distinct but complementary halves, “Farm” and “Table,” *Farm to Table* first examines the roots of our contemporary industrial food system, from the technological advances that presaged the “Green Revolution” to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz’s infamous dictum to farmers to “Get big or get out” in the 1970s. Readers will explore the many threats to ecology and human health that our corporatized food system poses, but also the many alternatives—from permaculture to rotation-intensive grazing—that small farmers are now adopting to meet growing consumer demand. The second half of the book is dedicated to illuminating best practices and strategies for schools, restaurants, healthcare facilities, and other business and institutions to partner with local farmers and food producers, from purchasing to marketing. No longer restricted to the elite segments of society, the farm-to-table movement now reaches a wide spectrum of Americans from all economic strata and in a number of settings, from hospital and office cafeterias, to elementary schools and fast-casual restaurants. *Farm to Table* is a one-of-a-kind resource on how to integrate sustainable principles into each of these settings and facilitate intelligent, healthful food choices at every juncture as our food system evolves. While borrowing from the best ideas of the past, the lessons herein are designed to help contribute to a healthier, more sustainable, and more equitable tomorrow.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Farm to Table" is one of the most comprehensive looks at the problems and opportunities in the sustainable food movement, with something to offer both novices and seasoned participants. Its depth and breadth amazed me, from specific statistics to general themes. Every food service outfit needs to make sure their team members read this book in order to be informed, inspired, and included in the burgeoning integrity food movement." --Joel Salatin, owner, Polyface Farm; author of *The Marvelous Pigness of Pigs*

"What took me twenty years to figure out, you can learn by spending several hours with Darryl and Lyndon's terrific book. Succinct without being superficial, yet in-depth without being wonkish, Farm to Table is an invaluable tool for chefs who are curious about food beyond the edge of their plates." --Peter Hoffman, chef/owner of Savoy and Back Forty restaurants

"In a world where most writers address complicated public and food policy issues with the shallow rhetoric of evangelists, Benjamin and Virkler have created a thoughtful, well researched book worthy of the complexity of sustainable agriculture, business, and food systems. Farm to Table is a book for thinkers and for all eaters who care for the people who grow, raise, harvest, transport, sell, and prepare our food." --Craig Rogers, PhD, shepherd, Border Springs Lamb Farm

"The amount of information that exists about the food system can be overwhelming, but Farm to Table draws on the knowledge and lessons of many and organizes them in a simple way. The numerous examples of farmers, chefs, and businesses that provide wholesome food while respecting nature, seasonal ingredients, and people are especially valuable. There's no book out there right now quite

like *Farm to Table*. Chef Jim Dodge, director, Special Culinary Programs, Bon Appetit Management Company “Benjamin and Virkler’s *Farm to Table* is destined to become the resource for all manner of food professionals seeking to create food that is tasty, healthy, and fair. Their guide synthesizes issues facing the entire food system and proposes helpful and practical ways to build a more sustainable one. First-hand knowledge is combined with case studies of those successfully building the farm-to-table movement. This guide is a must-read for everyone making and serving food!

Amy Trubek, author of *The Taste of Place: A Cultural Journey into Terroir* “Farm to Table is an essential primer for anyone who wants to understand our current food system and work towards creating a better one. Through clear, concise descriptions of contemporary agricultural practices, Darryl Benjamin and Lyndon Virkler illuminate challenges and offer a range of pragmatic and inspired solutions, showing how we can bring the farm to tables, restaurants, hospitals, schools, and other institutions.

Simran Sethi, journalist; author of *Bread, Wine, Chocolate* “Farm to Table is one of the most comprehensive looks at the problems and opportunities in the sustainable food movement, with something to offer both novices and seasoned participants. Its depth and breadth amazed me, from specific statistics to general themes. Every food service outfit needs to make sure their team members read this book in order to be informed, inspired, and included in the burgeoning integrity food movement.

Joel Salatin, owner, Polyface Farm; author of *You Can Farm* and *The Marvelous Pigness of Pigs*

Darryl Benjamin is a passionate educator and advocate for sustainable food systems. He holds a Leadership for Sustainable Food Systems Professional Certificate from the University of Vermont, an MFA in Writing from Vermont College of Fine Arts, and a BA in English Literature from McGill University. Benjamin is cofounder and president of The GMO Breakthrough Education Project, a 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to transforming global food systems through education. Benjamin has taught at over a dozen universities and colleges in Massachusetts and Vermont, including six years in food sustainability, writing, and marketing at New England Culinary Institute. He currently lectures and conducts seminars on sustainable food systems, GMOs, and farm-to-table principles.

Chef Lyndon Virkler is dean of faculty at New England Culinary Institute. He holds a Master’s Degree in Adult and Higher Education from Vermont College of Union Institute and University, a BA in American Literature from Middlebury College, and an Associates of Occupational Science from The Culinary Institute of America. Since joining New England Culinary Institute in 1988, Chef Virkler has been active in a number of issues related to food and agriculture. He is a founding member of

the Vermont Fresh Network and the Vermont chapter of Chefs Collaborative. He currently serves as co-chair of the food education committee of the Central Vermont Food Systems Council, an organization focused on developing a sustainable food system within Washington County. He is an avid skier, home gardener, and composter and has been involved in incorporating the sustainable food systems component into New England Culinary Institute's curriculum. He has also worked on a number of recipe development projects for food companies including Bruegger's Bagels, Cabot Cheese, and the Vermont Apple Grower's Association. Lyndon lives in Waitsfield, Vermont with his wife, Joanne, and has two daughters and two grandchildren.

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