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FOOD JUSTICE

An environmental justice approach to food and agriculture

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West Oakland, California has approximately 40 000 residents, but lacks a full-scale grocery store. Historically, the neighbourhood was one of the few places where African Americans could buy homes, and though recent gentrification has brought many new residents, it remains predominantly black and low-income. Life expectancy here in the “flatlands” is approximately 10 years less than in the whiter and more affluent hills (Haley et al. 2012). Violence is certainly one cause, but more pervasive, if less dramatic, are the elevated rates of diet related conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. In addition, there are few opportunities for community-led economic development. The few businesses that aren’t frightened away by the neighbourhood’s tough reputation are largely owned by non-residents. It’s hard to find a job, let alone a career.

This bleakness is the result of structural inequalities that have first created and then hamstrung black urban neighbourhoods across the US. Well-documented processes of racial inequalities in urban economic development include redlining, differential policing, and systemic underinvestment (Massey and Denton 1993; Squires and Kubrin 2006). The de-industrialization of the United States since the late 1970s (Wilson 2011), a result of the spatial reconfigurations of capital due to neoliberal globalization (Harvey 2005), exacerbated already existing racial inequalities by way of massive capital flight, job loss, and economic devastation in the largely black working-class areas of major cities (Wacquant 1995; McClintock 2011). More recently, the 2008 economic crisis has driven black unemployment in these communities to nearly 50 per cent, levels last seen during the Great Depression, and showing little signs of recovery (Walker 2010). In the Bay Area, gentrification and rising rents create additional barriers to both residential stability and community-led economic development.

Since 2008, Mandela Foods Cooperative has stood as an exception to these trends. A small grocery store, Mandela features produce from regional black and Latino farmers, as well as bulk and packaged foods. It is cooperatively owned by four African American neighbourhood residents (though one recently could not afford a rental increase and was forced to move to a neighbouring city). Mandela Foods is also supported by Mandela Marketplace, a non-profit organization which provides the co-op with access to credit, technical assistance and training: resources that entrepreneurs from wealthier communities can often mobilize through banks and social networks.

Mandela seeks to address health disparities by providing neighbourhood residents with access to the “healthy, culturally appropriate food” that the neighbourhood otherwise lacks. It also works to create economic opportunities for community members to participate in the process of supplying that food. In the words of Oakland’s Mandela Marketplace’s Executive Director Dana Harvey, “It’s not about plopping a grocery store down in a community. It’s about engaging and resourcing a community to solve their problems, and own those solutions” (personal communication).

Mandela Foods Cooperative is a prime example of an organization working towards “food justice.” While the movement is still relatively young, and a shared definition of food justice is still emergent, one attempt to delineate the term comes from geographer and activist Rasheed Hislop (2014: 19), who describes it as “the struggle against racism, exploitation, and oppression taking place within the food system that addresses inequality’s root causes both within and beyond the food chain.” The food justice movement consists mainly of local, community-based projects devoted to increasing access to fresh produce and creating economic opportunities in low-income communities of colour, though the movement is beginning to expand in some exciting ways.

As with environmental justice, a burgeoning academic literature on food justice seeks to understand the circumstances that create food injustices, to amplify and substantiate activist claims, and to analyse movement strategies and goals. These scholars view food justice as the confluence of three previous areas of research: environmental justice, alternative agriculture, and food studies. Food justice scholarship argues that food is an important lens through which we can comprehend social, racial and environmental injustices, and that an emphasis on inequalities is a fruitful way to understand the production, distribution and consumption of food (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010). This framework is most relevant to scholarship and activism in North America, and to a limited extent, Europe. In the Global South, parallel desires have been raised through the concept of food sovereignty, which is discussed below (Via Campesina 2002).

In practice, projects and policies designed to achieve food justice have cohered around two goals: increasing access to healthy food among marginalized communities and the establishment of community control over food and agricultural systems. Food justice, then, becomes a way to emphasize and amplify the roles of low-income communities and communities of colour in efforts to reform industrial food systems and create local alternatives.

In this chapter, I offer an overview of food justice focused on its roots in environmental justice, alternative agriculture and food studies. Food justice scholarship and activism combine alternative agriculture’s critique of industrial food with environmental justice’s emphasis on the distribution of benefits and harms and food studies’ attention to the links between food and identity. I will conclude by speculating on future directions for theory and practice.

Food justice and environmental justice: examining impacts and benefits

The environmental justice movement has cohered around the well-substantiated claim that low-income people and people of colour bear a disproportionate share of the burden of environmental degradation. Low-income people and people of colour are more likely to live in neighbourhoods dominated by toxic industries and diesel emissions, or in rural areas burdened by the pesticides and dust that result from agribusiness (United Church of Christ 1987, 2007). Many environmental justice studies are largely quantitative and epidemiological in nature, aiming to prove disproportionate exposure (Pastor et al. 2006; Mohai and Saha 2003), and to link such exposure to public health outcomes (Israel et al. 2005; Petersen

et al. 2003). The academic literature has also followed communities as they have mobilized against incinerators (Cole and Foster 2000), petrochemical facilities (Allen 2004) and toxic waste (LaDuke 2004).

The food justice movement parallels environmental justice in many ways. Both rely on an institutional concept of racism consistent with those of anti-racist activists and the academic literature (Sbicca 2012). Popular approaches to racism in the US tend to assume that an individual must consciously make a biased decision based on race. *Institutional racism*, on the other hand, occurs when institutions such as government agencies, the military or the prison system adopt policies that exclude or target people of colour either overtly or in their effects (see also Chapter 2). From the perspective of environmental justice scholars and activists, the disproportionate burden of toxics borne by low-income people and people of colour need not be linked to intentional discrimination (though the US Environmental Protection Agency has tried to define it in this limited way) if the outcome is a disproportionate burden borne by communities of colour. Similarly, food justice activists point to a variety of institutional policies, such as the US Department of Agriculture's discrimination against African American farmers or the supermarket industry's practice of charging lower prices in suburban vs. urban locations, through which communities of colour have been systematically disadvantaged. An institutional approach claims that racial and economic inequalities are built into the zoning ordinances, mortgage requirements and other policies that determine how industries, human communities, and goods and services come to exist in particular places (Massey and Denton 1993; Lipsitz 1998; Pellow 2002; McClintock 2011). Such institutional understandings of racism do not see it as separable from class, but rather as producing and being produced by economic inequalities. Activists from both movements tend to emphasize issues of race, although they do so with the knowledge that communities of colour are disproportionately poor. Moreover, they have linked food injustices to issues of worker exploitation, immigration and the prison-industrial complex (Alkon and Guthman 2017).

Foundationally, environmental justice scholarship establishes, and the movement seeks to rectify, the disproportionate locating of environmentally hazardous land uses in communities of colour and low-income communities. Food justice activists are primarily concerned not with too many environmental bads, but with access to the goods of environmental sustainability, particularly fresh produce and organic food. Often working closely with activists, food justice scholars have highlighted many of the barriers that make it more difficult for low-income people and people of colour to access local and organic food as both producers and consumers. For example, their work has illustrated the processes through which farmers of colour have been disenfranchised, which range from discrimination by the USDA to forced relocation to immigration laws barring land ownership by particular ethnic groups (Gilbert et al. 2002; Norgaard et al. 2011, Minkoff-Zern et al. 2011). In response, scholars such as Monica White (2017) and Priscilla McCutcheon (2013) work to capture the history of black agriculture in the United States, demonstrating its essential vitality and its importance for civil rights and other social movements. These projects, and others like them, depict agriculture as a proud tradition in communities of colour, connected to both everyday life and essential political work. In addition, food justice scholars call attention to the hardships faced by farmworkers on both organic and conventional farms (Brown and Getz 2011), and highlight efforts these workers make to improve their own food access and working conditions (Minkoff-Zern 2012; Mares and Peña 2011).

Food justice scholars also examine inequalities through the lens of consumption, and argue that low-income communities and communities of colour face a variety of obstacles to the

consumption of local and organic food, and that supporters of sustainable agriculture have not done enough to bridge these barriers. For example, locally grown and organic foods tend to be more expensive than conventional alternatives, especially with regard to canned and packaged items. It is, of course, quite difficult for low-income people to afford these foods, particularly in the context of escalating housing and healthcare costs (Alkon et al. 2013; Lea and Worsley 2005).

Another important barrier is the relative lack of available fresh produce – let alone locally grown and organic options – in low-income communities and communities of colour (Wrigley 2002; Morland et al. 2002). Scholars refer to areas lacking fresh food as “food deserts,” though activists are critical that the desert imagery naturalizes this political and economic process, and that too much emphasis on the presence or absence of supermarkets results in the offering of incentives to chain supermarkets rather than addressing root causes such as racism and poverty (Holt-Giminez 2013). Nonetheless, there is a fair amount of agreement that the lack of available fresh produce is an obstacle to its consumption. Scholars have traced the political and economic processes through which food retailers and other purveyors of necessary resources have abandoned low-income urban communities (McClintock 2011) and described community-based responses (White 2010; Bradley and Galt 2013).

In addition to opposing the permitting of locally unwanted land uses, environmental justice activists have also organized for *procedural justice*, which encompasses the rights of all affected communities to be included in environmental decision making (Fletcher 2004; Shrader-Frechette 2002; also Chapter 9). This concern is embedded in the concept of food sovereignty, which is a cornerstone of food justice activism. Originally coined by peasant rights movements in the Global South, food sovereignty is a community’s “right to define their own food and agriculture systems” (Via Campesina 2002). Like procedural justice, food sovereignty moves beyond the distribution of benefits and burdens to call for a greater distribution of power in the management of food and environmental systems.

As food justice activists translate peasant demands for sovereignty into an urban US context, they have expanded US food movements’ goals beyond support for local/organic farming to more broadly include the lived realities of those communities most harmed by industrial food systems. Food justice activists have highlighted the disproportionate positive coverage received by whites in the organic food and farming scene, and even quantified disparities in funding and political connections between white-led and people of colour-led organizations (Reynolds 2014). While it has become common for activists to declare the necessity of marginalized communities being, in the words of one Oakland activist “at the table, instead of just on the table” (cited in Alkon 2012), successfully advocating for these communities entails a variety of insider and outsider roles, as support from large foundations and the USDA have become more commonplace (Broad 2016).

In sum, like the EJ literature, food justice scholarship locates inequalities in the wider political, economic and cultural systems that produce both environmental degradation and racial and economic inequality. It also highlights the ways in which communities of colour resist these conditions by creating local and organic food systems and practices. Its focus on food access mirrors the environmental justice movement’s emphasis on disproportionate harms while food sovereignty presents a food system-specific notion of procedural justice. Food justice activism and scholarship has roots in environmental justice, but combines this with insights yielded by critiques of alternative agriculture and the wider field of food studies.

A critique of alternative agriculture

In its desire to create sustainable alternatives to environmentally destructive processes and practices, food justice borrows from and has much in common with the movement to create alternative agriculture, an umbrella term that encompasses local, slow, organic and other attempts to create more sustainable food. The two diverge, however, because alternative agriculture pays scant attention to how the harms of industrial agriculture are distributed, and who has access to and sovereignty over sustainable food systems.

In the United States, social movements to reform and transform the food movement cohere mainly around desires for improved personal and ecological health. Though there are earlier antecedents, particularly among Indigenous peoples and those farmers and gardeners who could not afford chemical inputs, Don Worster (2005) traces the ecological critique of US agriculture to the 1930s, when a movement for “permanent agriculture” arose in response to depressed agricultural prices and the ecological effects of the Dust Bowl. This movement resurfaced and gained ground with the growth of the counterculture in the 1960s (Belasco 1993). During that time, opposition to the state and mass production, as well as a budding environmental ethic, led to a desire for foods that were less processed, and for farming methods that countered the chemical dependency of industrial agriculture. Young, countercultural types went “back to the land” in search of this more organic lifestyle, forming communes or developing individual homesteads. Others stayed in the cities and purchased food from these new farmers through co-ops, health food stores, and food conspiracies (buying clubs in which members pooled money for bulk purchases from nearby suppliers). These new farmers and their supporters were animated by a belief that organic farming was a dance between the farmer and the forces of nature, and that cooperation between the two would offer not only sustenance, but a model for an alternative society (Belasco 1993). Early adherents hoped that as the movement grew, demand for local and organic food produced in alternative food systems would cause it to replace the dominant, industrial model.

Today the movement for alternative agriculture is one force driving the explosive growth in markets for local and organic foods. Retail sales of organic products in the United States were only \$3.6 billion in 1997, but reached \$21.1 billion in 2008, and organic acreage more than doubled between 1997 and 2005 (Dimitri and Oberholtzer 2009). Natural food stores were the primary distributor in 1997, but by 2008, nearly half of this food was purchased in chain supermarkets (Dimitri and Oberholtzer 2009). Big-box stores like Wal-Mart and Safeway, which the counterculture once labelled as inherently contrary to organic philosophies, are now major retailers of organic products. Local, decentralized distribution grew as well. For example, the number of farmers’ markets in the United States quadrupled from less than 2000 in 1994 to more than 8000 in 2013 (USDA 2013).

Much of the early social science scholarship on sustainable food systems and food movements seeks to document and celebrate successes and make the case for movement goals (see, for example, Lyson 2004; Hassanein 2003; Magdoff et al. 2000). Scholars argued that industrial agriculture is environmentally, socially, and economically destructive. Ecologically, industrial agriculture depends on mechanization and monoculture, creating increased reliance on fossil fuel-based inputs, decreasing soil fertility, and, through erosion, polluting rivers and streams (Altieri 2000). Economically, reliance on inputs creates economic advantages for those with ready supplies of capital, encouraging the consolidation of small farms into agribusiness corporations (Clapp and Fuchs 2009). Such consolidation is aided by the US Farm Bills (Rausser 1992), which favour large-scale growers and for which agribusiness lobbies heavily (Liebman 1983). Thus, despite a cultural rhetoric depicting farmers as self-reliant and independent (Bradley 1995; Bell 2004), industrial agriculture’s dependence on government

subsidies provides evidence that the industry is not economically viable (Kent and Meyers 2001). This consolidation has had devastating economic and social effects on rural communities (Bell 2004; Goldschmidt 1978[1947]). Farmers are incentivized to undermine their own security – both social and economic – as well as the productive capabilities of the land (Bell 2004).

But perhaps the harshest social effects are felt by farmworkers. Despite numerous attempts to organize, these immigrant populations are often confined to seasonal work for which they are paid minimal wages (McWilliams 2000[1939]; Daniel 1981; Pulido 1996). Farmworkers are particularly vulnerable to pesticide poisoning and, ironically, often lack steady access to healthy food (Nash 2007; Harrison 2011; Brown and Getz 2011). Industrial agriculture, on the other hand, benefits greatly from what Taylor and Martin (1997: 855) call “the immigrant subsidy in US agriculture,” as they pay scant wages and benefits to their workers. Farmworkers’ struggles and working conditions have received some attention from environmental justice scholars (Pulido 1996; Harrison 2011), and this is a foundational area of overlap between food and environmental justice.

While earlier generations of scholars helped to support these claims, a more recent vein of critical work has begun to think through the problems and contradictions embodied by alternative agriculture efforts within the United States. Some scholarship is directly critical of sustainable agriculture activism for the ways that whiteness infiltrates its narratives and practices. Although US agriculture developed on the backs of people of colour, and people of colour have since been present in agriculture in a variety of ways, the increased recognition of farmers provided by the alternative agriculture movement tends to amplify the presence of whites while eliding the contributions of communities of colour.

However, scholarly descriptions of the whiteness of alternative foods do not only refer to the presence or absence of bodies. According to Ruth Frankenberg’s foundational work, whiteness “carries with it a set of ways of being in the world, a set of cultural practices often not named as ‘white’ by white folks, but looked upon instead as ‘American’ or ‘normal’” (Frankenberg 1993: 4, see also Saldanha 2006; Slocum 2006; Kobayashi and Peake 2000; also Chapter 2). This whiteness can inhibit the participation of people of colour in alternative food systems, and can constrain the ability of those food systems to meaningfully address inequality. Thus, such whiteness may prevent alternative food movements, despite their growing popularity, from contributing to food justice.

Guthman, for example, argues that phrases common to the sustainable agriculture movement, such as “getting your hands dirty in the soil” and “looking the farmer in the eye,” point to “an agrarian past that is far more easily romanticized by whites than others” (2008b: 394). Given the disenfranchisement of so many African American, Native American, Latino/a, and Asian American farmers (Romm 2001), Guthman argues that it is likely these phrases do not resonate with communities of colour in the ways intended by their primarily white orators. This cultural barrier can suggest to low-income communities and communities of colour that sustainable agriculture is not for them, especially when combined with the lack of available organic and local produce in their neighbourhoods.

A second scholarly critique of alternative food activism revolves around the concept of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is a political economic philosophy that asserts that human well-being can best be achieved if the so-called “free” market is allowed to function with little to no intervention from the state (Harvey 2005: 2). Prominent social scientists have argued that current modes of food activism may explicitly oppose aspects of neoliberalism in their discourses, but their practices tend to embrace it, primarily by “relying on markets rather than the state to pursue change” (Harrison 2008: 163–64; see also Guthman 2008a; Allen

2008; Brown and Getz 2008). The dominance of such strategies has prompted Michael Pollan (2006) to refer to food activism as a “market-as-movement,” in which supporters “vote with our forks” for the kind of food system we want to see. This ideal moves away from long-standing social movement strategies pursuing state-mandated protections for labour, the environment, and the poor, and posits individual entrepreneurialism and consumer choice as the primary pathways to social change. Activists encourage one another to build and support alternative food businesses, and believe that change will come through shifting market demand. These food justice and neoliberalism critiques are interrelated, as strategies pursued through the market, such as starting a business or buying particular kinds of goods, are by definition less accessible to low-income people (Alkon 2012).

There is much to recommend the alternative agriculture movement, particularly its critique of corporate agribusiness and emphasis on ecological production. But much as the environmental justice movement has been critical of environmentalists’ lack of attention to the distribution of environmental hazards, food justice scholars and activists have attended to questions concerning the disparate impacts of industrial agriculture and access to the benefits provided by sustainable alternatives.

Food studies: race and identity

Food justice scholarship draws upon the broader field of food studies to incorporate a theoretically sophisticated understanding of race that will be useful to many researchers interested in environmental justice. Studies of food justice offer an excellent opportunity to enrich our understanding of racial identity formation because food is deeply intertwined with both personal and cultural notions of who we are. In a now classic piece, Winson (1993) refers to food as an “intimate commodity” that is literally taken inside the body and imbued with heightened significance. It is not only a physiological necessity; food practices – what scholars often call *foodways* – are manifestations and symbols of cultural histories and proclivities. As individuals participate in culturally defined proper ways of eating, they perform their own identities and memberships in particular groups (Douglass 1996). Food informs individuals’ identities, including their racial identities, in a way that other environmental justice issues – such as energy, water, garbage, etc. – do not.

Many food justice projects attempt to tap into this deep relationship between food and cultural identity in order to develop explicitly race-conscious responses to issues of food access and food sovereignty. Norgaard et al. (2011), for example, offer what they term a “racialized environmental history” of the Karuk tribe’s access to their central ancestral food, salmon. This access has been disrupted by the construction of dams on the Klamath River, with disastrous health consequences for tribal members. The authors emphasize the importance of salmon to Karuk physical, spiritual and emotional health. Similarly, Teresa Mares and Devon Peña (2011) and Laura-Anne Minkoff-Zern (2014a, b) all worked with Latino/a immigrant community gardeners, whose deep knowledges of cultivation and cooking help to maintain not only their histories and heritages, but also their resilience against the poverty and exploitation they face as farmworkers.

The relationship between food and identity cannot, however, be reduced to simplistic assertions that certain kinds of people eat certain kinds of food. Food studies teaches that processes of individual and collective identity formation are hardly static, but develop fluidly in accordance with particular cultural moments and movements. Food is culturally essential, yet the relationship between food and culture is not deterministic and cannot be oversimplified. For example, Hayes-Conroy’s work on school gardens and Slow Food Convivia

in Berkeley, California and Nova Scotia, Canada describes the ways in which particular groups have projected different notions of good food onto particular cultural moments, and how these can vary across social difference (2014). Similarly, the work of black vegan activists and chefs such as Bryant Terry and Breeze Harper seeks to create plant-based cuisines that speak to their black identities and experiences (Terry 2009; Harper 2010).

Food justice advocates such as those at Mandela Food Cooperative also argue that links between food and cultural identity can serve as sources of wealth for their communities, providing culturally relevant underpinnings for economic development (for other examples see White 2010; Sbicca 2012). This is the same argument that food scholar Psyche Williams Forson (2006) made historically, as she examined the practice of selling chicken by black women, though now the kind of food being sold has shifted. Creating good jobs in the food system has been an essential component of later food justice activism, which has prompted increased alliances with farmworker organizations and labour unions working to improve pay and conditions across the food system (Alkon and Guthman 2017; Myers and Sbicca 2015; Minkoff-Zern 2014b).

Broadly, scholars have established a relationship between food, social status and cultural identity that is extremely fluid and certainly not proscriptive or straightforward. This complexity, however, is precisely the reason why studies of food have so much to offer to the environmental justice literature, which has thus far rarely engaged with social science understandings of race that conceptualize it not as biologically determined, but as learned, performed and practised through social interaction (cf. Pulido 1996, 2000; Park and Pellow 2004, 2011; Sze 2006; also Chapter 2). Moreover, the field of food studies has devoted significant attention to the relationships between food and cultural identity, but has rarely examined the structural context in which these relationships occur. In the contemporary US, this context consists of an environmentally and socially destructive centralized agribusiness system in which race and class inform inequalities of material resources and decision-making power. Neither has the food studies literature addressed the power of deeply held and meaningful foodways to inspire culturally resonant social movements against this agribusiness system. It is only in this newly emergent body of work on food justice that the racialized political economy of food production and distribution meets the cultural politics of food consumption.

Future directions

In just a few short years, the burgeoning literature on food justice has brought together key concepts from environmental justice, alternative agriculture and food studies to attempt to understand how inequalities affect the production, distribution and consumption of food. It has incorporated the environmental justice literature's emphasis on the distribution of environmental toxins and benefits, and used this as a lens to critique the alternative foods movement, which has previously explored this all-important aspect of the food system. Simultaneously, it borrows from food studies scholars' sophisticated understandings of the relationship between food, race and identity to produce a nuanced, constructed notion of race. Food justice activism began primarily as community based alternatives that were rooted in and attempted to serve communities of colour. Future directions include a broadening of strategies and a move beyond efficacy and evaluation.

First, projects have varied in the degree to which they are truly rooted in the communities they seek to serve. Some are started by local residents, while others are initiated by well-intentioned outsiders. Claims of cooptation often fly fast and furious between organizations,

especially when forced to compete for scant funding. Researchers have often concluded, along with activists, that community control is essential for success. But more sophisticated work is beginning to examine the effects of insider versus outsider leadership (Reynolds and Cohen 2016) or to analyse the ways that insider-ness and outsider-ness are constructed (Broad 2016). These are but a few strategies through which researchers can move beyond questions of evaluation and efficacy to better understand the complexities of social life.

In addition, scholars have begun to move beyond a narrow focus on individual, community-based projects toward analyses of collective campaigns that foster the aims of food justice. Scholars have examined efforts to address pesticide drift (Harrison 2011), ban pesticides and GMOs (Alkon and Guthman 2017; Eaton 2017) and improve the wages and working conditions of those who labour throughout the food system (Minkoff-Zern 2014a, b; Lo and Koenig 2017). This scholarship helps to strengthen links between supporters of alternative food and food justice projects and those who have historically preferred more confrontational strategies (Sbicca 2017).

Beyond labour, food justice activists have begun exploring connections to a variety of progressive social issues and researchers have found these intersections to be fertile ground for scholarship. Labour, as described above, is one key area, and food justice activists have been working with labour unions and other workers' groups ranging from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (a farmworker organization) to the OUR Wal-Mart struggle to organize workers at the nation's largest food distributor. In addition, two prominent food justice scholars are each researching the ways in which farms served as an essential asset for the Civil Rights Movement (White 2017; McCutcheon 2013). Another movement with recent ties to food justice is prison reform. Several food justice projects in Oakland have begun to train former inmates for food-related jobs as a way to provide opportunities not often afforded this population (Sbicca 2017). Additionally, a number of scholars are examining the links between food justice and migration. A soon-to-be released edited volume called *Food Across Borders* (DuPuis and Mitchell) contains several chapters to this effect, including Mares' work on how migration policy affects workers on Vermont Dairy farms and Minkoff-Zern's analysis of how immigrant farmworkers transition to farm ownership.

Lastly, North American food justice activists are increasingly connecting with allies rooted in peasant movements for food sovereignty throughout the Global South. Food First, a non-profit policy research organization has developed food sovereignty tours that bring US activists into contact with activists across the globe, and is also a founding member of the US Food Sovereignty Alliance. In addition, North American communities increasingly discuss their struggles in terms of sovereignty and independence, even as they engage the state and corporations around issues of land use. Each of these areas is an important future direction for food justice scholarship. Clearly food justice scholarship and activism has roots in the environmental justice and alternative agriculture movements, but its wings touch a variety of progressive causes.

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