



**The Global Politics of Food and Water  
February 21-23, 2014**

**Suggested Reading & Viewing for the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Camden Conference**

Our 27th annual Camden Conference will focus on challenges and implications surrounding the global politics of food and water. In preparation, we recommend the following books, videos, readings, online documents, and websites. They are listed alphabetically by first mentioned author's last name. Confirmed 2014 Camden Conference speakers are designated\*.

**I. Books**

**Brown, Lester R. *Full Planet Empty Plates: The New Geopolitics of Food Security*. W. W. Norton & Company. 2012**

With food scarcity driven by falling water tables, eroding soils, and rising temperatures, control of arable land and water resources is moving to center stage in the global struggle for food security. "In this era of tightening world food supplies, the ability to grow food is fast becoming a new form of geopolitical leverage. Food is the new oil," Lester R. Brown writes. What will the geopolitics of food look like in a new era dominated by scarcity and food nationalism? Brown outlines the political implications of land acquisitions by grain-importing countries in Africa and elsewhere as well as the world's shrinking buffers against poor harvests.

**Cribb, Julian. *The Coming Famine: The Global Food Crisis and What We Can Do to Avoid It*. University of California Press. 2011**

In *The Coming Famine*, Julian Cribb lays out a vivid picture of impending planetary crisis--a global food shortage that threatens to hit by mid-century--that would dwarf any in our previous experience. His comprehensive assessment describes a dangerous confluence of shortages--of water, land, energy, technology, and knowledge--combined with the increased demand created by population and economic growth. Writing in brisk, accessible prose, Cribb explains how the food system interacts with the environment and with armed conflict, poverty, and other societal factors. He shows how high food prices and regional shortages are already sending shockwaves into the international community. But, far from outlining a doomsday scenario, *The Coming Famine* offers a strong and positive call to action, exploring the greatest issue of our age and providing practical suggestions for addressing each of the major challenges it raises.

**Danson, Ted and Michael D'Orso. *Oceana: Our Endangered Oceans and What We Can Do to Save Them*. Rodale Books. 2011.**

Most people know Ted Danson as the affable bartender Sam Malone in the long-running television series Cheers. But fewer realize that over the course of the past two and a half decades, Danson has tirelessly devoted himself to the cause of heading off a looming global catastrophe—the massive destruction of our planet's oceanic biosystems and the complete collapse of the world's major commercial fisheries. In *Oceana*, Danson details his journey from joining a modest local protest in the mid-1980s to oppose offshore oil drilling near his Southern California neighborhood to his current status as one of the world's most influential oceanic environmental activists, testifying before congressional committees in Washington and helping found *Oceana*, the largest organization in the world focused solely on ocean conservation.

**Esty, Daniel C. and Andrew S. Winston, *Green to Gold: How Smart Companies Use Environmental Strategy to Innovate, Create value, and Build Competitive Advantage*, Yale University Press, 2006**

Though "no company the authors know of is on a truly long-term sustainable course," they label the forward-thinking, green-friendly (or at least green-acquainted) companies WaveMakers and set out to assess honestly their path toward environmental responsibility, and its impact on a company's bottom line, customers, suppliers and reputation. Following the evolution of business attitudes toward environmental concerns, Esty and Winston offer a series of fascinating plays by corporations such as Wal-Mart, GE and Chiquita (Banana), the bad guys who made good, and the good guys—watchdogs and industry associations, mostly-working behind the scenes. A vast number of topics huddle beneath the umbrella of threats to the earth, and many get a thorough analysis here: from global warming to electronic waste "take-back" legislation to subsidizing sustainable seafood. For the responsible business leader, this volume provides plenty of (organic) food for thought.

**Friedman, Thomas. *Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution--and How It Can Renew America*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 2008.**

Thomas Friedman explains how global warming, rapidly growing populations, and the astonishing expansion of the world's middle class through globalization have produced a planet that is "hot, flat, and crowded." Already the earth is being affected in ways that threaten to make it dangerously unstable. In vivid, entertaining chapters, Friedman makes it clear that the green revolution we need is like no revolution the world has seen. It will be the biggest innovation project in American history; it will be hard, not easy; and it will change everything from what you put into your car to what you see on your electric bill. But the payoff for America will be more than just cleaner air.

**Gore, Al. *Our Choice: A Plan to Solve the Climate Crisis*. Rodale Books. 2009**

As he did in *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006), Gore matches clear and ringing explanations and commentary with superb supporting diagrams and illustrations and striking photographs from around the world, documenting the dramatic impacts of human industry and climate change. He begins by providing the straight facts about the sources of the pollutants causing global warming and the disastrous energy inefficiency of our buildings, vehicles, appliances, and industrialized agriculture. After spending three years convening "solution summits" and assessing the fruits of those productive discussions, Gore turns away from blame and despair and toward answers and encouragement. The result is a veritable catalog for a better world and a practical guide to solar, wind, and geothermal power and smart "super grids," endeavors China is already pursuing. Gore

also eloquently explains how the harnessing of renewable energy sources will solve an entire matrix of global traumas.

**\*Guzman, Andrew T. *Overheated: The Human Cost of Climate Change*. Oxford University Press. 2013.**

In *Overheated*, Andrew Guzman writes not as a scientist, but as an authority on international law and economics. He takes as his starting point a fairly optimistic outcome in the range predicted by scientists: a 2 degree Celsius increase in average global temperatures. He shows in vivid detail how climate change is already playing out in the real world. Rising seas will swamp island nations like Maldives; coastal food-producing regions in Bangladesh will be flooded; and millions will be forced to migrate into cities or possibly "climate-refugee camps." Even as seas rise, melting glaciers in the Andes and the Himalayas will deprive millions upon millions of people of fresh water, threatening major cities and further straining food production.

**Hauter, Wenonah. *Foodopoly: The Battle Over the Future of Food and Farming in America*. The New Press. 2012.**

Through meticulous research, Hauter presents a shocking account of how agricultural policy has been hijacked by lobbyists, driving out independent farmers and food processors in favor of the likes of Cargill, Tyson, Kraft, and ConAgra. She demonstrates how the impacts ripple far and wide, from economic stagnation in rural communities at home, to famines in poor countries overseas. In the end, Hauter illustrates how solving this crisis will require a complete structural shift, a grassroots movement to reshape our food system from seed to table—a change that is about politics, not just personal choice.

**International Food Policy Research Institute. *2012 Global Food Policy Report*. IFPRI Books. 2012.**

This 2012 Global Food Policy offers an overview of the food policy developments that have contributed to or hindered progress in food and nutrition security. It reviews what happened in food policy and why, examines key challenges and opportunities, shares new evidence and knowledge, and highlights emerging issues. In 2012, world food security remained vulnerable. While talk about hunger and malnutrition was plentiful, it remains to be seen whether current and past commitments to invest in agriculture, food security, and nutrition will be met.

**\*Juma, Calestous. *The New Harvest: Agricultural Innovation in Africa*. Oxford University Press. 2011.**

Africa faces three major opportunities that can transform its agriculture into a force for economic growth: advances in science and technology; the creation of regional markets; and the emergence of a new crop of entrepreneurial leaders dedicated to the continent's economic improvement. The *New Harvest* outlines the policies and institutional changes necessary to promote agricultural innovation across the African continent. Incorporating research from academia, government, civil society, and private industry, the book suggests multiple ways that individual African countries can work together at the regional level to develop local knowledge and resources, harness technological innovation, encourage entrepreneurship, increase agricultural output, create markets, and improve infrastructure.

**\*Kirschenmann, Fred and Constance Falk. *Cultivating an Ecological Conscience: Essays from a Farmer Philosopher*. University Press of Kentucky. 2010.**

In *Cultivating an Ecological Conscience* follows Kirschenmann's personal and professional evolution as a lifelong proponent of new agrarianism. Together with agricultural economist Constance L. Falk, Kirschenmann has compiled a collection of his essential writings on farming, philosophy, and sustainability. In this fascinating blend of personal history, philosophical discourse, spiritual ruminations, and practical advice, Kirschenmann shares candid, valuable insights about the agricultural challenges facing the modern world and the necessity of achieving ecologically sound and responsible stewardship of the land. This rich book follows the development of Kirschenmann's long and distinguished career, from childhood lessons learned on the family farm to his inventive approaches for addressing contemporary agrarian issues. More than a mere retrospective, these these essays serve as an introduction to the life and work of an extraordinary agricultural thinker.

**Lonborg, Bjorn. *Cool It; The Skeptical Environmental Guide to Global Warming*. Knopf. 2007.**

Bjorn Lomborg argues that many of the elaborate and staggeringly expensive actions now being considered to meet the challenges of global warming ultimately will have little impact on the world's temperature. He suggests that rather than focusing on ineffective solutions that will cost us trillions of dollars over the coming decades, we should be looking for smarter, more cost-effective approaches (such as massively increasing our commitment to green energy R&D) that will allow us to deal not only with climate change but also with other pressing global concerns, such as malaria and HIV/AIDS. And he considers why and how this debate has fostered an atmosphere in which dissenters are immediately demonized.

**McDonald, Bryan L. *Food Security*. Polity. 2010.**

Throughout history, human societies have struggled to ensure that all people have access to sufficient food to lead active and healthy lives. Despite great global effort, events of the early 21st century clearly demonstrate that food remains a pressing challenge which has significant implications for security. In this book, Bryan McDonald explores how processes of globalization and global change have reshaped food systems in ways that have significant impacts for the national security of states and the human of communities and individuals. Over the past few decades, local, regional, and national food systems have increasingly become intertwined in an emerging global food network.

**Ogle, Maureen. *In Meat We Trust: An Unexpected History of Carnivore America*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013**

Ogle lucidly demonstrates how the American meat-making machine came to span the entire continent, from the grass-rich range of the Far West to slaughterhouses and wholesale markets at the other , with farmers squeezed throughout the middle. Ogle tracks the rise of factory farming, the introduction of subsidies for farmers, and the use of chemicals in animal husbandry, each in light of the consumer-advocacy backlash that spawned the organic and alt-agriculture movements. Ogle's quick wit helps her corral such a large topic, keeping the involved history to an easily digestible format. Given the recent onslaught of publications picking sides on the issues of food production, Ogle's bipartisan approach is a breath of fresh air. In fact, if Ogle has issue with anyone in the food

chain, it is the American people and our sense of entitlement and the way it contributes to the high cost of cheap living. This type of straightforwardness might make the book hard to stomach for some, but it can't be denied that Ogle has served up a lot of truth.

**\*Paarlberg, Robert. *Food Politics: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press, USA. 2013.**

The politics of food is changing fast. In rich countries, obesity is now a more serious problem than hunger. Consumers once satisfied with cheap and convenient food now want food that is also safe, nutritious, fresh, and grown by local farmers using fewer chemicals. Heavily subsidized and underregulated commercial farmers are facing stronger push back from environmentalists and consumer activists, and food companies are under the microscope. Meanwhile, agricultural success in Asia has spurred income growth and dietary enrichment, but agricultural failure in Africa has left one-third of all citizens undernourished - and the international markets that link these diverse regions together are subject to sudden disruption. Paarlberg's book challenges myths and critiques more than a few of today's fashionable beliefs about farming and food. For those ready to have their thinking about food politics informed and also challenged, this is the book to read.

**\*Paarlberg, Robert, *Starved for Science: How Biotechnology Is Being Kept Out of Africa*. Harvard University Press. 2009.**

Nearly two-thirds of Africans are employed in agriculture, yet on a per-capita basis they produce roughly 20 percent less than they did in 1970. In *Starved for Science* Robert Paarlberg explains why poor African farmers are denied access to productive technologies, particularly genetically engineered seeds with improved resistance to insects and drought. He traces this obstacle to the current opposition to farm science in prosperous countries. Having embraced agricultural science to become well-fed themselves, those in wealthy countries are now instructing Africans—on the most dubious grounds—not to do the same. In a book sure to generate intense debate, Paarlberg details how this cultural turn against agricultural science among affluent societies is now being exported, inappropriately, to Africa. Those who are opposed to the use of agricultural technologies are telling African farmers that, in effect, it would be just as well for them to remain poor.

**Randers, Jorgen. *2052: A Global Forecast for the Next Forty Years*. Chelsea Green Publishing. 2012.**

Jorgen Randers, one of the coauthors of *Limits to Growth*, issues a progress report and makes a forecast for the next forty years. To do this, he asked dozens of experts to weigh in with their best predictions on how our economies, energy supplies, natural resources, climate, food, fisheries, militaries, political divisions, cities, psyches, and more will take shape in the coming decades. He then synthesized those scenarios into a global forecast of life as we will most likely know it in the years ahead. The good news: we will see impressive advances in resource efficiency and an increasing focus on human well-being rather than on per capita income growth. But this change might not come as we expect. Future growth in population and GDP, for instance, will be constrained in surprising ways-by rapid fertility decline as result of increased urbanization, productivity decline as a result of social unrest, and continuing poverty among the poorest 2 billion world citizens. Runaway global warming, too, is likely.

**Solomon, Steven. *Water: The Epic Struggle for Wealth, Power, and Civilization*. Harper Perennial. 2011.**

In *Water*, esteemed journalist Steven Solomon describes a terrifying—and all too real—world in which access to fresh water has replaced oil as the primary cause of global conflicts that increasingly emanate from drought-ridden, overpopulated areas of the world. Meticulously researched and undeniably prescient, *Water* is a stunningly clear-eyed action statement on what Robert F Kennedy, Jr. calls “the biggest environmental and political challenge of our time.”

**United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. *Climate Change Mitigation and Agriculture*. MICCA Review Paper. 2012.**

This book reviews the state of agricultural climate change mitigation globally, with a focus on identifying the feasibility, opportunities and challenges for achieving mitigation among smallholder farmers. It includes chapters about experiences in developed countries, such as Canada and Australia, where these efforts also have lessons for mitigation options for smallholders in poorer nations, as well as industrializing countries such as Brazil and China. Its authors present a synthesis of current knowledge and research activities on this emerging subject. Together the chapters capture an exciting period in the development of land-based climate change mitigation as attention is increasingly focused on agriculture's role in contributing to climate change.

## II. Readings

**Ingram, John, Polly Ericksen and Diana Liverman (Eds.). *Food Security and Global Environmental Change*.**

Global environmental change (GEC) represents an immediate and unprecedented threat to the food security of hundreds of millions of people, especially those who depend on small-scale agriculture for their livelihoods. As this book shows, at the same time, agriculture and related activities also contribute to GEC by, for example, intensifying greenhouse gas emissions and altering the land surface. Responses aimed at adapting to GEC may have negative consequences for food security, just as measures taken to increase food security may exacerbate GEC. The authors show that this complex and dynamic relationship between GEC and food security is also influenced by additional factors; food systems are heavily influenced by socioeconomic conditions, which in turn are affected by multiple processes such as macro-level economic policies, political conflicts and other important drivers.

**Camden Conference Discussion Series schedule, readings and other materials may be found on our website at [www.camdenconference.org](http://www.camdenconference.org). Join the Conversation! Topics include: *The Coming Food Crisis - Fresh Water Scarcity - Oceans at Risk - GMO Foods - Climate Change and Conflict*.**

## III. Films

*King Corn* examines America's healthy eating crisis through the multifaceted lens of one humble grain. Director Aaron Woolf offers evidence that the U.S. is virtually drowning in corn. Corn meal, corn starch, hydrologized corn protein, and high fructose corn syrup fuel a multitude of products,

from soft drinks to hamburgers. The starchy vegetable grows with ease and government subsidies insure over-abundant production.

***Our Daily Bread*** presents the world of industrial food production and high-tech farming. To the rhythm of conveyor belts and immense machines, the film looks without commenting in the places where food is produced and an industrial environment, which leaves little space for individualism. People, animals, crops and machines play a supporting role in the logistics of this system, which provides our society's standard of living.

***Flow*** is about the global crisis we face as Earth's fresh water supply constantly diminishes. The film presents top experts and advocates to make a case that every aspect of human life is affected by pollution, wastefulness, privatization and corporate greed as it relates to water. The film's message is that if we continue to abuse our water supply, earth will become uninhabitable and humankind extinct. The investigation points fingers at global water companies such as Nestle, Vivendi, Coca Cola and Pepsi.

***Blue Gold: World Water Wars*** examines how major corporations and financial institutions are buying up territories where large water supplies can be found, the fight to protect the Great Lakes, and what ordinary citizens can do to keep the water supply free and shared fairly by all.

***What's on Your Plate?*** is a witty and provocative documentary about kids and food politics. Over the course of one year, the film follows two eleven-year-old multiracial friends from New York City as they explore their place in the food chain and the origin of the food they eat, how it's cultivated, and how many miles it travels from farm to fork.

***Food Inc.*** examines the costs of putting value and convenience over nutrition and environmental impact. Director Robert Kenner takes his camera into slaughterhouses and factory farms where chickens grow too fast to walk properly, cows eat feed pumped with toxic chemicals, and illegal immigrants risk life and limb to bring these products to market at an affordable cost.

***Symphony of the Soil*** is a documentary by Deborah Koons Garcia that explores the soil community from the microscopic to the global. Filmed on four continents and sharing the voices of some of the world's most esteemed soil scientists, farmers and activists, the film portrays soil as a protagonist of our planetary story.

***The End of the Line*** is a sobering documentary for anyone who loves fish and the ocean that makes the case that the earth's oceans must be preserved, like great areas of the land, for future generations, to prevent the emptying of the seas of fish. It examines modern fishing practices, and the lack of agreement in the global community on what's acceptable.

***Tapped*** is a behind-the-scenes look into the business of bottled water that aims to privatize and sell back the one resource that ought never to become a commodity: our water. Is access to clean drinking water a basic human right, or a commodity that should be bought and sold like any other article of commerce?

**Food Beware** follows an experiment in a small village in the mountains of France, where - in opposition to powerful economic interests - the town's mayor has decided to make the school lunch menu organic, with much of it grown locally.

***The World According to Monsanto*** is an in-depth look at the domination of the agricultural industry by one of the world's most powerful companies. Monsanto's genetically modified products were only introduced in 1996 when their Roundup Ready Soybeans were approved for use in the USA. Today, Roundup Ready Soy Beans account for 90% of all the soybeans grown in American and 70% of the food in American stores contain bio-engineered elements.