

Food Systems

**A local community garden
for food and relaxation**



Emmy's Earth: Food Systems

Goal: Urban Farming:
Produce a diversity of the
best quality and most
ethically produced food I
can. In my yard you will
see:

1. a seasonal variety of
different food and
herb plants,
2. three different
growing areas, and
3. backyard chickens.



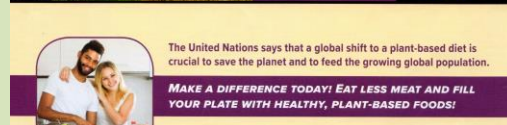
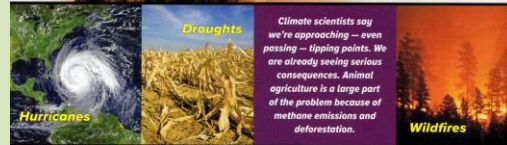
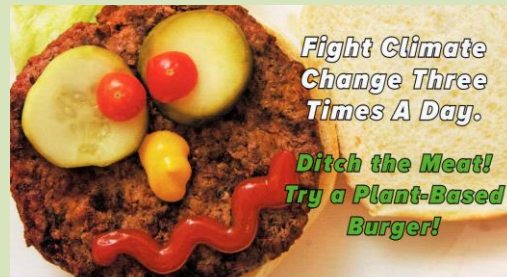
[Plants](#)



WHY? Because we have an unhealthy food system and food culture!

Documentaries such as Fresh, Food Inc, King Corn, Polyface, and Fork and Knives and books such as Michael Pollan's Omnivore's Dilemma or Barbara Kingsolver's Animal, Vegetable, Miracle brought awareness to the unhealthy and unsustainable, food systems in the US.

Eat Real Food!



Food embeds us in the fabric of Nature
Michael Pollan

- Agribusiness vs small family farms.
- Monoculture dependent on corn.
- Dependence on chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides.
- Unhealthy mass production of meat animals.
- Human obesity and unhealthy eating habits.
- Increased transportation costs for food.
- Complicated and unequal food distribution systems.
- Environmental degradation.

Health risks associated with obesity

Obesity increases the risk of:

- Stroke
- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Sleep apnea
- Certain cancers
- Arthritis
- Cardiovascular Diseases

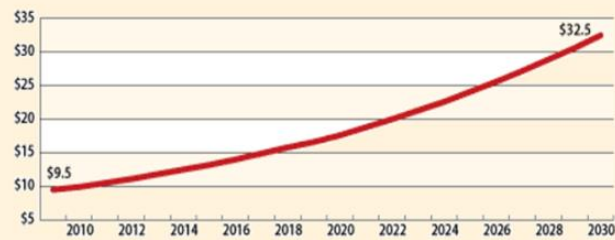


Source: Texas Medical Association

Cost of obesity

Left unchecked, obesity could cost Texas employers **\$32.5 billion** annually by 2030

Total Projected Obesity Costs to Texas Businesses, 2009-30
(in billions)



<https://www.health.harvard.edu/heart-health/the-high-cost-of-a-poor-diet>

Figures are equally grim for the US where obesity from unhealthy eating habits increases health care spending by \$149 billion annually.

From:

<https://www.tfah.org/report-details/state-of-obesity-2020/#:~:text=Obesity%20is%20estimated%20to%20increase,are%20ineligible%20for%20military%20service>

Chronic Disease Burden

- 31.2% of children overweight or obese
- Childhood obesity predicts adult morbidity
 - 55% of obese children remain obese into adolescence
 - 80% of obese adolescents remain obese into adulthood

Adult Obesity - 2015-2016 CDC Data

71% Overweight or Obese (BMI >25)

4.0% Obese (BMI >30)

Obesity Complications

Diabetes Mellitus type 2

Hypertension - 11% of US children have elevated blood pressures

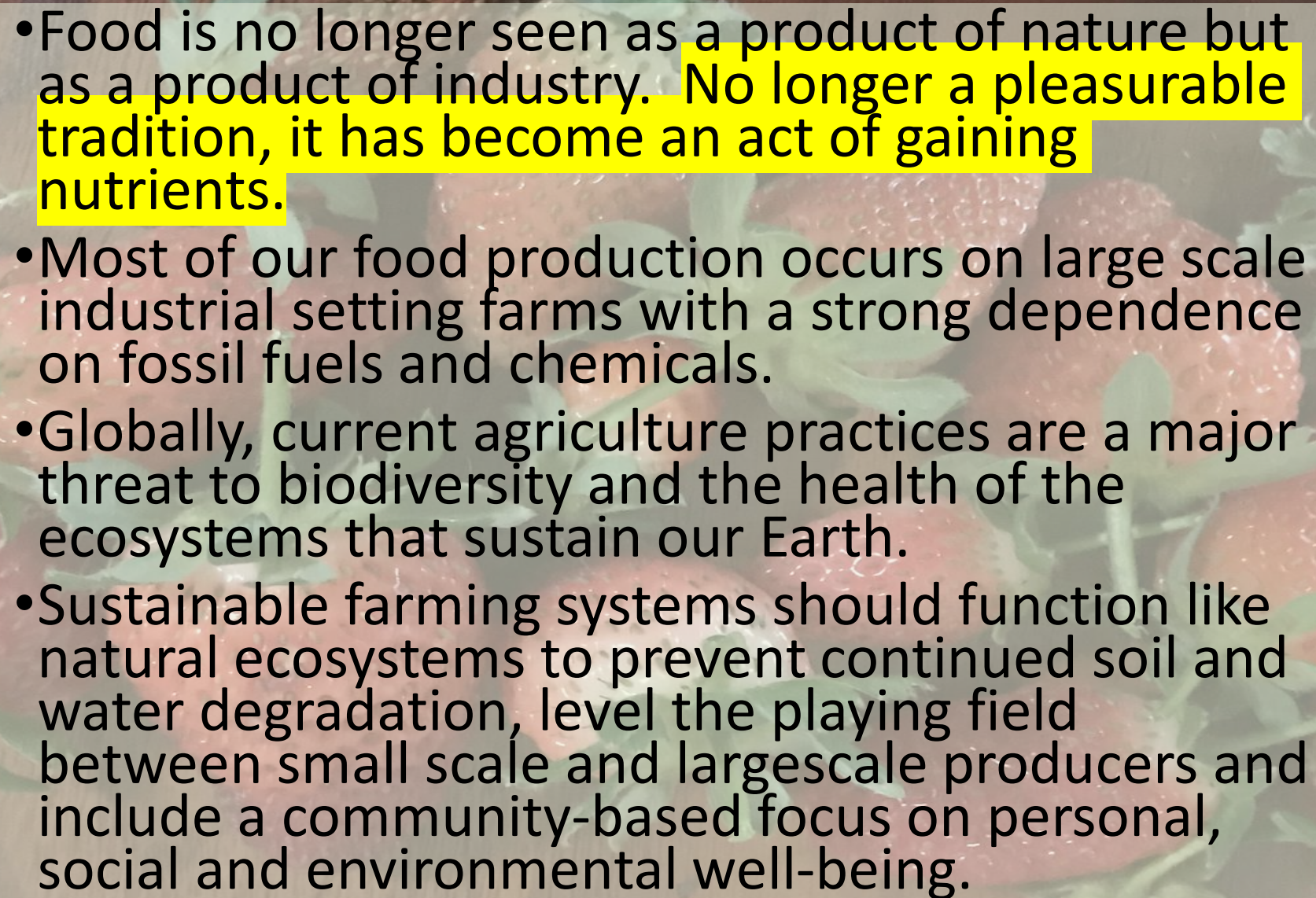
Cardiovascular disease

Chronic lung issues including asthma

Obstructive sleep apnea

Osteoarthritis and many others

From: Forests and Human Health Connection. All about trees Virtual Webinar. 5/14/2020. John Warner. jwarner@tfs.tamu.edu

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- A top-down photograph of several ripe, red strawberries with green leaves, scattered on a dark brown wooden surface. The strawberries are the central focus, with some showing their characteristic seeds. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the fruit and the wood grain.
- Food is no longer seen as a product of nature but as a product of industry. No longer a pleasurable tradition, it has become an act of gaining nutrients.
 - Most of our food production occurs on large scale industrial setting farms with a strong dependence on fossil fuels and chemicals.
 - Globally, current agriculture practices are a major threat to biodiversity and the health of the ecosystems that sustain our Earth.
 - Sustainable farming systems should function like natural ecosystems to prevent continued soil and water degradation, level the playing field between small scale and largescale producers and include a community-based focus on personal, social and environmental well-being.

If....farming systems functioned like natural ecosystems to prevent continued soil and water degradation, levelled the playing field between small scale and large-scale producers and included a community-based focus on personal, social and environmental well-being, it would look like this...



.... We would see an increase in local farmers markets, community, home, school gardens, and an awareness of the pleasures of eating!



[Paidom Meats](#)



[Midland Health Community Garden](#)



- Chickens are fascinating; mine are from 2 to 7 years old. All are Barred Plymouth Rocks or Barred Plymouth Rocks crosses.
- Up to about two years they lay an egg every 27 hours. After two years, egg production drops. My oldest chicken, Esther, who lived about seven years laid about an egg a week.
- Chickens are fed layer pellets, vegetable food scraps, and greens and fruits from the garden and yard. Eating a wide variety of greens makes their eggs very yellow!
- They free range in their yard and are occasionally let out to free range in the whole backyard.



Chicken Basics



Chicken Housing

- Chickens are outside year-round.
- In the winter there is a heater in their coop at night.
- In very hot summer temps over 100° F, the irrigation comes on in their yard to wet the earth for them to lie in.
- Chickens are put up each night at dusk in their coop and let out at dawn the next morning.
- I also use the chickens to “graze” selected areas of my native habitat.



Winter



Summer



In the words of Michael Pollan,
“Eat food, not too much,
mostly plants!”

