

**DINNER PLATE VOCABULARIES:  
A COLLABORATIVE SOIL & SEED-BASED LEXICON  
on food systems and justice movements**

***researched/written/compiled/begun by Melina Roise***

*COMMON GROUND focuses on our planetary co-habitants of plants, seeds, soil, and the interwoven ways we develop culture and sustenance. By exploring food injustice and justices, our diverse experiences of relating to land and our dinner plates, and celebrations of bodies and cultures, we work to remember ways of being in community with the human and more-than-human..*

*This dictionary is intended to be an ongoing project drawing from global and local leaders in food and land advocacy. We hope it guides you into deeper engagement with broader topics presented within the projects of the biennial.*

*This project is acknowledged to be definitively incomplete and inadequate. For more resources, reference the footnotes, and see also the Common Ground Collaborative Syllabus and Common Ground network projects.*

**AGROECOLOGY:** an agricultural strategy that focuses on working with local ecological systems to better agricultural outputs without compromising land health. The term can refer to agroecology as a focus of scientific study, an agricultural movement, or a practice. Agroecology does not refer to one method of farming, whether that be organic, intensive or extensive, alternative or conventional.

**APPROPRIATION** (in regards to food): OED describes appropriation as “the action of taking something for one’s own use, typically without the owner’s permission.”<sup>1</sup> Food, as a product of land, is by definition shared and borderless, but has a history of marginalized foodways being appropriated for dominant culture profit.<sup>2</sup> Meridien Mach writes, “if you are going to profit off of food from another culture – especially one that has been historically exploited or oppressed – it is your responsibility to do it in a way that honors the cultural origins of the food.”<sup>3</sup>

**ANCESTRAL HEALTH:** the entanglement of health and traditional ways of eating and being. A return to ancestral foods for physical, cultural, and spiritual wellbeing.<sup>4</sup> The term has also been co-opted to refer to “paleo” ways of eating.

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<sup>1</sup> Oxford English Dictionary. “Appropriation.” 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Examples: Traditional African foodways and cultivation technologies brought to the United States through trans-Atlantic slave trade being used for plantation owner profit.

<sup>3</sup> Meridien Mach, “Food Cultural Appropriation: It’s Personal,” Cornell Daily Sun (2021).

<sup>4</sup> Devon Miheuah, “Challenges to Recovering Health,” in *Recovering our Ancestors’ Gardens*, University of Nebraska Press (2020), pp.75-77.

BIODIVERSITY: the variety and variability of life on Earth. The majority of ecosystem biodiversity worldwide is protected on Indigenous lands by Indigenous communities.<sup>5</sup>

BIODYNAMIC: an agricultural practice rooted in the work of philosopher Rudolf Steiner focused on the incorporation of spirituality into primarily Western farming practices.<sup>6</sup> Credited as the beginnings of Western re-incorporation of organic and holistic agriculture practices, biodynamics has historical roots in nationalism, facism, and hierarchical racism.<sup>7</sup>

BIOPATENTING: The legal control of biological materials. The U.S. patent office began their agricultural division in 1839, eventually leading to the Plant Patent Act of 1930 that allowed patents for novel, non-sexually reproduced plants. Consolidation and control continued to the 2001 Supreme Court Case *J.E.M. Ag Supply v. Pioneer Hi-Bred International* that ruled that plants can be fully patented with utility patents, controlling the use of seed along with its sale.<sup>8</sup> Today, patented seed is illegal to save.

BIOPOLITICS/BIOPOWER: biopolitics is the style of governance that engages biopower, defined as control of basic processes of human life, including reproduction, knowledge, and power. These theories are largely credited to social theorist Michel Foucault.<sup>9</sup>

CLASSISM: discrimination based on social class, specifically economic class. As money controls one's ability to access food, class status is a major factor determining one's food choices and ability to purchase.

CLIMATE JUSTICE: The NDN Collective Climate Justice Campaign writes climate justice "as defined by Indigenous dreaming, is an invitation into complexity, a surrendering to the truth, and a reckoning with extractive society in order to revitalize possibility."<sup>10</sup> An acknowledgement that climate chaos most intensely affects Indigenous global majorities and marginalized peoples.

COMMODITIES: a basic economic good used in commerce that is fully exchangeable. In discussions of food histories and Indigenous food sovereignty, commodities generally refer to basic foods distributed to tribal nations by the federal

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<sup>5</sup> "Why protecting Indigenous communities can also help save the Earth." Climate Academy by Grounded. The Guardian (2020).

<sup>6</sup> The Biodynamic Association, [biodynamics.com/what-is-biodynamics](https://www.biodynamics.com/what-is-biodynamics).

<sup>7</sup> Paull, John (2011). "The secrets of Koberwitz: the diffusion of Rudolf Steiner's agriculture course and the founding of biodynamic agriculture". *Journal of Social Research & Policy*. **2** (1): 19-29. Archived from the original on 2016-03-08. Retrieved 2011-10-21.

<sup>8</sup> Debbie Barker, "History of Seed in the U.S. The Untold American Revolution," Center For Food Safety (August 2012), [https://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/files/seed-report-for-print-final\\_25743.pdf](https://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/files/seed-report-for-print-final_25743.pdf); Percy Wells Bidwell and John I. Falconer, *History of Agriculture in the Northern United States 1620-1860*. (New York: Peter Smith, 1941); Melina Roise "At the Nexus of Resistance, Resilience, and Repair: Agricultural Violences and the Healing Promise of Seed," Bard College (2021).

<sup>9</sup> Foucault, Michel, Arnold I. Davidson, and Graham Burchell. *The birth of biopolitics: lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*. Springer, 2008.

<sup>10</sup> *Required Reading: Climate Justice, Adaptation and Investing in Indigenous Power*. Curated, edited, and produced by the NDN Collective Climate Justice Campaign, 2021. 2.

government, including flour, sugar, and salt.<sup>11</sup> Commodities ("commods") are viewed by some as a process of continued destruction and assimilation of Indigenous foodways, where others see foods made with commodities as a part of ancestral ways of eating (e.g. frybread).<sup>12</sup> See also *FDPIR*.

COLONIZATION: The removal of Indigenous populations and lifeways for the purpose of exploitation of land and resources by the settler. Colonialism can be internal (as in bio- and geo-political management within boundary lines) or external (as in the extraction and transport of Indigenous peoples and environments to build material wealth of the colonizing party).<sup>13</sup> See also *settler colonialism*.

DECOLONIZATION: Franz Fanon writes, "decolonization, as we know, is a historical process: that is to say it cannot be understood, it cannot become intelligible nor clear to itself except in the exact measure that we can discern the movements which give it historical form and content."<sup>14</sup>

ECOSYSTEM: complex community of all living and abiotic (non-living) beings who interact and function as an environmental unit.<sup>15</sup> See also *traditional ecological knowledge*.

ETHNOBOTANY/ETHNOECOLOGY: The study of a region's plant and ecological realms and how they interact, impact, and change with local peoples and cultures.

ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM/ECOLOGICAL APARTHEID: a form of institutional racism in which environmental hazards, especially those caused by institutional rules, regulations, and policies, disproportionately impact people of color.<sup>16</sup>

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: Dr. Robert Bullard writes, "the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for humans and other living things," "the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples," and the "demand that public policy be based on mutual respect and

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<sup>11</sup> Devon Mihesuah, "Challenges to Recovering Health," in *Recovering our Ancestors' Gardens*, University of Nebraska Press (2020), pp. 76-78.

<sup>12</sup> Andi Murphy, "After a Fraught History, Some Tribes Finally Have the Power to Rethink 'Commodity Foods,'" *Civil Eats* (2021).

<sup>13</sup> Tuck, E., and K. W. Yang. "Decolonization is not a metaphor." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, education & society*, 1 (1), 4-6. (2012).

<sup>14</sup> Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 1963, p. 36, via Tuck & Yang, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," who also recognize "decolonize (a verb) and decolonization (a noun) cannot easily be grafted onto pre-existing discourses/frameworks, even if they are critical, even if they are anti-racist, even if they are justice frameworks" (Decolonization is not a metaphor, 3).

<sup>15</sup> Cambridge English Dictionary "Ecosystem," 2023; Encyclopedia Britannica "Ecosystem," 2023.

<sup>16</sup> Julie Sze, *Environmental Justice in a Moment of Danger*, Vol. 11. University of California Press, 2020; Dr. Robert Bullard, "The Quest for Environmental and Climate Justice: Why Race and Place Still Matter," public lecture for receiving the Honorary Geographers Award from the American Association of Geographers, 2018.

justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination or bias."<sup>17</sup> Dr. Robert Bullard is known as the "father of environmental justice."<sup>18</sup>

EX SITU: "out of place." A type of seed saving that keeps plant materials in temperature and light managed storage facilities (seed vaults). Critiqued for failing to allow seeds to adapt to a changing climate, prioritizing calorie dense grain crops over other heritage crops, and disrespecting the livelihoods of seed crops.<sup>19</sup>

FAIR TRADE / EQUAL EXCHANGE: Corporate certifications aim to create alternative, sustainable markets that exchange a high consumer price for the assurance of labor rights and environmental sustainability in production. Critiqued as a consumer and corporate change which does little to shift inequitable systems.

FARMING/GARDENING/AGRICULTURE: Broad terms that refer to the cultivation of land with the goal of food production. Colloquially, the difference between farms and gardens generally lies in scale and intention to sell production, however, there has historically been a gendered differentiation between what is referred to as a "farm" or a "garden."<sup>20</sup>

INDIGENOUS/NATIVE: of origin in a particular place.

FDPIR: The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations. Provides USDA approved foods to income-eligible households.<sup>21</sup> *See also commodities.*

FOOD: any source of nutrition consumed for maintenance of life, growth, and health.

FOOD ACCESS (& barriers to): the ability to obtain, afford, and transport food. Potential barriers include financial barriers, lack of transportation, and few places to purchase food.

FOOD APARTHEID (*previously known as food desert*): Terms used to describe areas of low income and low geographical access to food. Previously referred to as a food desert, the term food apartheid is now being used to emphasize the

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<sup>17</sup> Delegates to the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, "Principles of Environmental Justice," Washington, DC (1991).

<sup>18</sup> Dr. Robert Bullard, "The Quest for Environmental and Climate Justice: Why Race and Place Still Matter," public lecture for receiving the Honorary Geographers Award from the American Association of Geographers, 2018.

<sup>19</sup> Melina Roise, "At the Nexus of Resistance, Resilience, and Repair: Agricultural Violences and the Healing Promise of Seed." Bard College (2021).

<sup>20</sup> When colonists first came to Turtle Island, they saw Indigenous medium to large scale food production projects and called them "gardens," not farms, due to the fact they were run and established by women in the community, not the men. (Helen C Rountree, "Powhatan Indian Women: The People Captain John Smith Barely Saw." *Ethnohistory* (1998): 1-29.)

<sup>21</sup> USDA Food and Nutrition Service, "Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations." Accessed March 15 2023.

systemic segregation that creates these regions of low access. Term largely credited and popularized by food justice activist and farmer Karen Washington.<sup>22</sup>

FOOD GEOGRAPHIES: patterns of food production, distribution, and consumption. Similar to "food system" while emphasizing geographical movement of food.<sup>23</sup>

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: A term coined by the international farmer-led peasant movement La Via Campesina used to describe the ability for communities to determine their own food and food sources.<sup>24</sup>

FOOD SYSTEM: Term referring to all of the processes that impact nutrition, food production, community health, and agriculture, including production, distribution, preparation, and consumption of food.

FOOD JUSTICE: The movement towards access to healthy, sustainable, and culturally appropriate foods, including grassroots organizations, social justice initiatives, and policy advocacy. Food justice, generally, problematizes systemic inequalities and racism as ongoing barriers to food within labor rights, land access, environmental justice, and public health policy. The term was coined in the 1960s by the community food work of the Black Panther Party and popularized during the Greenwood Food Blockade.<sup>25</sup>

FOOD WASTE: food not eaten and discarded. Waste happens at all points in the food system, including production (farms), processing (processing factories and packaging centers), distribution, food service (restaurants), and sales (grocery stores and markets). Acknowledgement that 40% of all food within the United States is wasted confronts us with the fact that hunger is systemic to the functioning of our economy, not a product of population growth.<sup>26</sup>

FORAGE: the act of procuring non-cultivated ("wild") materials for eating, building, or using for medicine. Also referred to as "gathering." Due to environmental degradation, a systemic lack of access to green spaces, and the politicization of the act of foraging itself, foraging is not adequate or accessible for many people.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Anna Brones, "Karen Washington: It's Not a Food Desert, It's Food Apartheid," *Guernica*, 2018.

<sup>23</sup> Ashanté M Reese, *Black food geographies: Race, self-reliance, and food access in Washington, DC*. UNC Press Books, 2019; Pascale Joassart-Marcelli, *Food Geographies: Social, political, and ecological connections*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2022; Michael Winter, "Geographies of food: agro-food geographies making reconnections." *Progress in Human geography* 27, no. 4 (2003): 505-513.

<sup>24</sup> La Via Campesina: International Peasants' Movement. <https://viacampesina.org/en/>. Accessed March 15 2023.

<sup>25</sup> Leah Penniman, *Farming while black: Soul fire farm's practical guide to liberation on the land*. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2018; Hanna Garth and Ashanté M. Reese, eds. *Black food matters: Racial justice in the wake of food justice*. U of Minnesota Press, 2020.

<sup>26</sup> United States Environmental Protection Agency. "Food: Material-Specific Data." Accessed March 15 2023.

<sup>27</sup> Jumana Manna, "Foragers," a film co-commissioned by BAMPFA The Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, BAK basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht; and The Toronto Biennale (2022); Alexis Nikole, "The Black Forager," independent research on Patreon. Accessed March 15 2023.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMO): an organism whose genetic material has been modified using gene editing technologies. GMO foods, pushed during the Green Revolution for their apparent capacity to produce more crops and be more resistant to environmental stressors like pests and drought, continually damage traditional food systems. Enrique Salmon writes, "more people are starving today or going to bed hungry than at any time in the past, despite the increase in genetically modified foods and large-scale agribusiness subsidized by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations (UN). (...) GMOs and large-scale agribusiness decrease soil productivity as a result of farmers having to use Monsanto-based fertilizers that drain the microorganisms from once fertile lands. On top of that, many GMO plants are designed to release toxins for specific pests, which would decrease the harvest."<sup>28</sup>

GLEANING: the act of collecting leftover crops that have not been commercially harvested or sold. Historically, gleaning was a legal entitlement of peasant workers in a number of Christian kingdoms. Today, organizations glean from farms to donate to food pantries. The recent revival of "dumpster diving" is also seen as a form of gleaning.

GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAP): a voluntary certification program run by the United States Department of Agriculture in which farms can be verified as having safe and sustainable practices. The stated goals of the GAP program are to reduce microbial contamination in food products.<sup>29</sup> Due to the audit system costing financial and time resources, many small farms, despite sustainability of practices, are not able to qualify for GAP certification.

GREEN REVOLUTION: A series of international economic policies, primarily implemented in the 1960s-70s by Western powers on peasant and rural workers globally, intended to increase crop yields by incorporating "modern technologies" into rural agricultural communities.<sup>30</sup> Once uplifted and used as a model for other industries, the Green Revolution today is heavily criticized by farmers, economists, and food justice activists today as creating greater wealth disparities that ultimately lead to greater rates of hunger, reliance of local producers on international corporations, destruction of self reliant rural economies, and agricultural consolidation.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Enrique Salmón, "A New American Indian Cuisine," in *Eating the Landscape: American Indian Stories of Food, Identity, and Resilience*, University of Arizona Press (2012), pp. 152-153.

<sup>29</sup> United States Department of Agriculture Agricultural Marketing Service, "Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) audits," Accessed March 15 2023.

<sup>30</sup> Oliver De Schutter, "The right to food and the political economy of hunger," In *26th McDougall Memorial Lecture Opening the 36th Session of the FAO Conference, Rome, Italy*, vol. 18. 2009, pages 6-8. The term "The Green Revolution" originates "in a famous statement made in 1968 by William Gaud, the USAID Administrator, who described the spread of new wheat and rice technology in Asia as containing 'the makings of a new revolution'. 'It is not a violent Red Revolution like that of the Soviets or the White Revolution in Iran', he said: 'but rather, I call it a Green Revolution based on the application of science and technology'. I use the term here with some reluctance, however, since current programmes with the same label present certain significant differences with the model as it was originally conceived." (De Shutter, 6); Robert Paarlberg, "Attention whole foods shoppers." *Foreign Policy* 179 (2010): 80-85.

<sup>31</sup> Secretariat, "African Civil Society And Faith Leaders Say Rebranding The Green Revolution Is No Solution: We Need Agroecology For Food And Climate Action," *Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa* (2022).

HARVEST: the act or season of gathering a crop; the quantity or cumulative store of a crop; to gather or extract. Today, harvest terminology is the name of multiple time-tracking and business organizing softwares.<sup>32</sup>

HEIRLOOM: as the title suggests, heirloom seeds refer to their history of being passed through seasons and generations. Today, heirloom varieties can be purchased from seed companies of all sizes, where the companies themselves decide what determines heirloom status. Heirloom varieties are all open pollinated.

HUNGER: a term in politics and social sciences describing a condition in lack of adequate amounts of food and/or nutrition, but more importantly, a lived experience of continued lack of access to food.

HUNTER-GATHERER: Terminology used to describe methods of gathering food without cultivation practices. The term "hunter-gatherer" emphasizes gendered dichotomies in food procurement roles. *See also: forage and proto-agriculture.*

HYBRID: a variety of seed created by crossing two varieties of the same plant. Hybrid seeds create stable and predictable plants, and are used predominantly in conventional agriculture in the United States. Although attributed with the rise of farm outputs, hybrid plants create unstable seed. Increased use of hybrid seed varieties are in part responsible for decreasing community seed sovereignty and seed saving practices. controlled bred seed by humans where two plants are crossed, also referred to as the first filial (F1) seed. Most commercially available seeds are hybrid varieties due to their high uniformity in plant product and because they are bred for specific traits (ex. tomato roundness and size). Hybrid varieties, when the seeds are saved, will be genetically distinct from the parent plant and highly unstable in variety.<sup>33</sup>

INTRODUCED: A species brought to an area, intentionally or inadvertently, due to human activity, that now lives within its natural distributional range.<sup>34</sup> Also called non-native, alien, exotic, adventive, immigrant, or foreign species.

INDIGENOUS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: The Indigenous Food Systems Network writes, "Indigenous food sovereignty is a specific policy approach to addressing the underlying issues impacting Indigenous peoples and our ability to respond to our own needs for healthy, culturally adapted Indigenous foods." The Indigenous Food Systems Network identifies four primary pillars of Indigenous food sovereignty as 1) sacred and divine sovereignty, food as gift from creator, 2)

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.getharvest.com/>

<sup>33</sup> Melina Roise "[At the Nexus of Resistance, Resilience, and Repair: Agricultural Violences and the Healing Promise of Seed](#)," Bard College (2021).

<sup>34</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Mid-Atlantic Integrated Assessment. September 16, 2003. *Introduced species.*

participatory, based on action, 3), self-determination, and 4) policy, reconciliation of traditional foodways with colonial policies.<sup>35</sup>

INDIVIDUALISM : When needs of an individual are emphasized over the needs of a community or group. In food movements, individualism is primarily witnessed in the desire to help individuals meet their needs rather than change systems that create a lack of resources, e.g. when food pantries are funded over increasing minimum wage.<sup>36</sup>

IN SITU: "in place" seed conservation practices, where seeds are saved and planted almost annually within origin communities. There are three main ways that gene banking ("ex situ") differs from community seed saving ("in situ"): 1) the reinforcement of divisions and inequities (including between the global north and south, farmers and plant breeders, commercial farmers and community farmers), 2) the relationship between humans and nonhuman beings (in one scenario seeds become a resource in stasis for capital gain, and in another seeds are continually autonomous), and 3) in genetic reductionism (in the loss of autonomy during *ex situ* conservation and practices seeds become little more than the subjects of science experiments)."<sup>37</sup>

INVASIVE: an introduced species whose presence in a region causes, or is likely to cause, environmental or economic harm to a region's existing ecosystem. Invasive species lists are argued, and what the general public deems "invasive" impacts policies surrounding their treatment.<sup>38</sup>

IRRIGATION: the practice, systems, and technologies used to apply controlled amounts of water to land, generally for the purpose of growing crops. Irrigation systems are thought to be the primary technologies that lead to the development of agricultural nation-states.

LAND BACK: A movement towards returning land to the Indigenous nations and peoples from which it was stolen. The expansion and re-establishment of Indigenous sovereignty. As defined by the NDN Collective, the landback campaign is "putting Indigenous Lands back in Indigenous hands," and a "mechanism to connect, coordinate, resource and amplify this movement and the communities that are fighting for land back. The closure of Mount Rushmore, return of that land and all public lands in the Black Hills, South Dakota is our cornerstone battle, from which we will build out this campaign. Not only does Mount Rushmore sit in the heart of the sacred Black Hills, but it is an international symbol of white supremacy and colonization. To truly dismantle white supremacy

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<sup>35</sup> Indigenous Food Systems Network, "Indigenous Food Sovereignty," accessed March 21 2023. <https://www.indigenousfoodsystems.org/food-sovereignty>

<sup>36</sup> Alison Conrad and Jennifer Zuckerman, "Identifying and countering white supremacy culture in food systems." Durham: Duke Sanford World Food Policy Center (2020).

<sup>37</sup> Melina Roise "At the Nexus of Resistance, Resilience, and Repair: Agricultural Violences and the Healing Promise of Seed," Bard College (2021); Phillips, *Saving More Than Seeds: Practices and Politics of Seed Saving*; Breen, "Saving Seeds: The Svalbard Global Seed Vault, Native American Seed Savers, and the Problems of Property," 2014.

<sup>38</sup> National Invasive Species Center, "Invasive Species Definition Clarification and Guidance," The United States Department of Agriculture. Accessed March 21 2023. <https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/invasive-species-definition-clarification-and-guidance>



and systems of oppression, we have to go back to the roots.”<sup>39</sup> Nick Tilsen (Oglala Lakota), president and CEO of the NDN Collective, describes land back as “a metanarrative” that ties together many Indigenous movements and organizations. Although the motion, campaign, and fight for land back has existed since the beginning of colonization, the organized use of terminology in reference to the campaign was popularized through use of the hashtag in 2018 by Arnell Tailfeathers (Blackfoot Confederacy Blood Tribe).<sup>40</sup>

LANDRACE: open-pollinated, heirloom seeds that are specific to a bioregional community and adapted to a specific climate.

LOCAL/LOCAVORE: The movement towards replacing industrial agricultural systems food grown, processed, and distributed within a certain range from where it will be consumed (reduced “food miles”). Critiqued as not addressing issues of labor rights, economic accessibility, or seasonality.<sup>41</sup>

MALNUTRITION: A physical state of poor health due to diet, most commonly caused by food insecurity. Malnutrition rates in the United States are estimated to be 10.5%. Globally, malnutrition rates are estimated at about 8%.<sup>42</sup>

NEOLIBERALISM (*in regards to food systems*): A political ideology based on ideals of individual responsibility over government responsibility, resulting in the privatization of many previously public access services.<sup>43</sup>

NATURALIZATION: the ecological process through which a non-native species or population integrates into a given ecosystem.<sup>44</sup>

ORGANIC: In food, organic refers to a mode of production that does not use harmful artificial fertilizers, pesticides, or other agents. The USDA requirements for certified organic products must meet a variety of rules and regulations, be inspected by the USDA, and pay a certification fee. Note that USDA organic certification still allows many artificially produced fertilizers and sprays, and many farms (especially small scale) that follow organic practices may not be certified due to structural and financial barriers.

OPEN POLLINATED: refers to the pollination of a plant from a non-human source, including animals, other plants, wind, or insects. Open pollination creates genetic diversity within plants.

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<sup>39</sup> NDN Collective, LANDBACK. Accessed March 21, 2023, <https://landback.org/>.

<sup>40</sup> Pieratos, Nikki A., Sarah S. Manning, and Nick Tilsen. "Land back: A meta narrative to help indigenous people show up as movement leaders." *Leadership* 17, no. 1 (2021): 47-61; Riley Yesno, "Decolonize How? Land Back," *New Internationalist* (2022), <https://newint.org/features/2022/10/24/land-back-decolonize-how>.

<sup>41</sup> Gray, Margaret. *Labor and the locavore: The making of a comprehensive food ethic*. Univ of California Press, 2013.

<sup>42</sup> World Health Organization, "Malnutrition Fact Sheet," 2021.

<sup>43</sup> Alison Conrad and Jennifer Zuckerman, "Identifying and countering white supremacy culture in food systems." *Durham: Duke Sanford World Food Policy Center* (2020).

<sup>44</sup> Wikipedia, "Naturalisation (biology)," accessed March 21, 2023, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naturalisation\\_\(biology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naturalisation_(biology))

**PATERNALISM:** when an authority prevents full autonomy of those subordinate to them. In food systems, this can look as individual as a boss asking a server to stay late in exchange for dinner, or as systemic as white-run governmental policies preventing BIPOC communities from controlling their own food access.

**PEASANT:** The 2019 UN Rights Of the Peasant describes a peasant as “any person who engages (...) in small-scale agricultural production for subsistence and/or for the market, and who relies significantly, though not necessarily exclusively, on family or household labor and other non-monetized ways of organizing labor, and who has a special dependency on and attachment to the land.”<sup>45</sup> This is specified to include hired workers, Indigenous land-tenders, and all areas of food production. Peasant organizations describe themselves as “rural informal workers.”<sup>46</sup> The Asian Peasant Coalition defines their “we” as “farmers and peasants, poor farmhands, agricultural workers, contract farmers, Dalits, Indigenous peoples, rural women and youth, and land reform advocates across Asia.”<sup>47</sup> Large peasant organizations include Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, Aliansi Gerakan Reforma Agraria, and Andhra Pradesh Vyvasaya Vruthidarula Union.

**PERMACULTURE:** A systems-thinking approach to land management and design whose principles aim to regenerate and maintain land health. Although the term was coined in 1978, permaculture design principles take from Indigenous ways of thinking about body and land that pre-date settler colonialism. Permaculture is critiqued for its white-washing of Indigenous ways of thinking.<sup>48</sup>

**PLANT:** (*n*) any of kingdom Plantae, once included everything that was not considered an animal, including fungi and algae (now excluded), today includes all trees, shrubs, herbs, grasses, ferns, and most mosses. There are approximately 320,000 known species of plants. The vocabulary of a plant is now used to describe a place where manufacturing takes place. (*v*) to plant, to place or fix in a location, to place something in the ground so that it can grow.<sup>49</sup>

**POLLINATOR:** anything that aids in the movement of pollen from the male (stamen) to the female part (stigma) of the same or different flower, allowing fertilization and the production of seeds and fruit. Pollinators include wind, water, insects, and animals (including humans).<sup>50</sup> The decline of populations of

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<sup>45</sup> United Nations General Assembly Seventy-Third Session, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas*, Agenda item 74 (b) (A/C.3/73/L.30), 30 October 2018, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/LTD/N18/350/40/PDF/N1835040.pdf?OpenElement> (Accessed March 22 2023)

<sup>46</sup> Andhra Pradesh Vyvasaya Vruthidarula Union (APVVU), “WHO WE ARE,” <http://www.apvvu.org/>, Accessed March 22 2023.

<sup>47</sup> Asian Peasant Coalition, <https://asianpeasantcoalition.wordpress.com/>, Accessed March 22 2023.

<sup>48</sup> “Whitewashed Hope: A Message from 10+ Indigenous Leaders and Organizations,” *Cultural Survival*, November 23, 2022. <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/whitewashed-hope-message-10-indigenous-leaders-and-organizations>

<sup>49</sup> Oxford Languages, accessed March 22 2023.

<sup>50</sup> National Park Service, “[What is a pollinator?](#)” Accessed March 22 2023.

many pollinators (including but not limited to local honey bees and butterflies) is a threat to food production and access for human and non-human animals.<sup>51</sup>

PRECONTACT FOODS: foods determined to be traditional to diets prior to an increase of trade exchanges with European colonizers. Pre-contact diets to communities Indigenous to Turtle Island were in wide variety and included tomatoes, potatoes, corn, rice, and various nuts and meats. Some claim that a key to Indigenous food sovereignty is a revival of precontact diets.<sup>52</sup> See also: *Turtle Island*.

RADICAL: In plant anatomy, the radical of the plant is the first root to sprout from a seed as it germinates. Angela Davis completed the circle of this analogy when she stated: "radical simply means *grasping by the root*."

REMATRIATION: Rowen White writes, "the word 'rematriation' reflects the restoration of the feminine seeds back into the communities of origin. The Indigenous concept of Rematriation refers to reclaiming of ancestral remains, spirituality, culture, knowledge and resources, instead of the more Patriarchally associated Repatriation. It simply means back to Mother Earth, a return to our origins, to life and co-creation, rather than Patriarchal destruction and colonization, a reclamation of germination, of the life-giving force of the Divine Female."<sup>53</sup>

RELIGION (in relationship to foodways): Many local and global Indigenous cosmologies center foodways and cycles of food.<sup>54</sup>

SEED: That which is planted. A general meaning of anything that is the beginning to another, or anything that is sown (for example "seed garlic" which is planted but not truly seed, or the "seed" of an idea). Seed, more specifically in a scientific sense, refers to a plant embryo enclosed in a shell, or a matured ovary of a flowering plant.

SEED LIBRARY (*sometimes referred to as community seed banks*): a community-based cooperative model for seed sharing. Community members can check out seeds (similar to a library system) and/or deposit seeds from their own gardens. Seed libraries require community participation for diversity and sustenance, and keep communities supported internally. System pioneered in

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<sup>51</sup> Kelsey Kopec and Lori Ann Burd, "Pollinators in Peril?" Center for Biological Diversity (2017).

<sup>52</sup> Devon A. Miheuah, "Traditional Diets and Activities," in *Recovering Our Ancestors' Gardens: Indigenous Recipes and Guide to Diet and Fitness*, University of Nebraska Press (2020), pp. 11-41.

<sup>53</sup> Seedkeeper Rowen White as quoted by Robin Wall Kimmerer, "Corn Tastes Better on the Honor System," *Emergence Magazine*; Rowen M. White, "On Seed Rematriation and Fertile Resistance / 291," for the wild podcast (June 15 2022).

<sup>54</sup> Devon A. Miheuah, *Recovering Our Ancestors' Gardens: Indigenous Recipes and Guide to Diet and Fitness*, University of Nebraska Press (2020), pp.19-20.

Ethiopia, where they have over 40 large-scale community seed banks for all different agro-ecological zones of the country.<sup>55</sup>

SEED VAULT: a "doomsday vault," or a method of seed storage in which seeds are collected in large amounts and stored with the primary goal of saving genetic diversity. They are often referred to as "gene banks." Seeds are stored for up to 50 years in a dormant state without regeneration. Most seed vaults and their accessions, or deposits, are protected under international law.

SEED SOVEREIGNTY (*see also food sovereignty*): The ability of a community to determine, control, spread, save, and grow their own seed stores and seed supply. Seed sovereignty applies to commercial farmers, homesteaders, community groups, and gardeners alike, and is threatened by efforts towards genetic modification, patenting, and other intellectual property laws enacted by seed giants.

SETTLER COLONIALISM: A process and ongoing structure that intends to erase Indigenous lifeways with the goal of replacing them with a new (settler) population. Tuck and Yang write that "in the process of settler colonialism, land is remade into property and human relationships to land are restricted to the relationship of the owner to his property."<sup>56</sup>

SOIL: also referred to as dirt or earth, is a mixture of minerals, living and dead organisms, gas, and water. A biologically active material, soil is one of the principal foundations of life on Earth, working as a source of water, nutrients, filtration of waste, and carbon storage.<sup>57</sup>

STERILE: a term to describe seeds that cannot produce viable seeds even in optimal conditions for reproduction.

TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE (TEK): Melissa Nelson writes: "Indigenous knowledge or "ways of knowing" refers to the multiple knowledge systems, epistemologies, worldviews, and traditional practices of the world's roughly 370 million Indigenous peoples. Called variously Indigenous knowledge systems, traditional knowledge, native science, or traditional ecological knowledge, these rich, time-tested ways of knowing and interacting with the world are valid systems of knowledge that have sustained Indigenous and traditional cultures for millennia. Since colonial times, they have been ruptured and erased and until very recently have been severely marginalized intellectual traditions in the Western Eurocentric educational system and in Western sciences. But finally today they are beginning to be recognized as legitimate and compelling knowledge systems by some Euro-American educators and scientists. The terms "Indigenous Knowledge Systems" (IKS), "Traditional

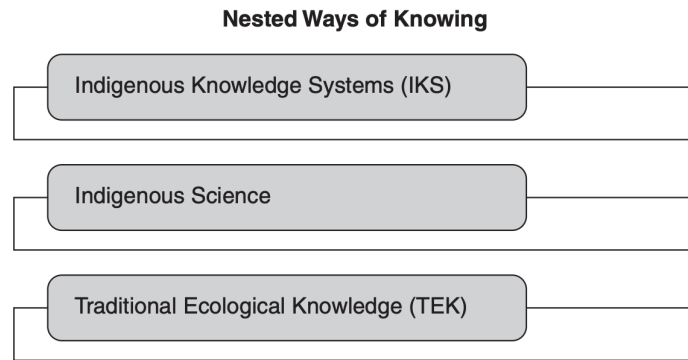
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<sup>55</sup> Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa, "Stories of Seed Activism: JOURNALISTS FROM 14 COUNTRIES REPORTING PEOPLES SOLUTION TO CORPORATE CONTROL OF AFRICA'S LIFE," September 2021. pp. 6.

<sup>56</sup> Tuck, E., and K. W. Yang. "Decolonization is not a metaphor." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, education & society*, 1 (1), 5. (2012); Wolfe, Patrick. *Settler colonialism*. A&C Black, 1999.

<sup>57</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica, "Soil." Accessed March 14th, 2023. "You've seen it! Unless you live under a rock, in which case you have definitely seen it!" - my roommate Hannah.

Knowledge" (TK), and "Traditional Ecological Knowledge" (TEK) even have their own acronyms—definitely a sign of success in the mainstream academy."<sup>58</sup>



**Figure 10.1** Indigenous knowledge systems are multi-dimensional and interconnected through different scales of knowing. TEK arises out of Indigenous science, which arises out of larger-scale knowledge systems.

TREATY RIGHTS: The right for agreements between Indigenous and colonizer nations to be honored and upheld, stated by the United Nations as an "urgent need to respect and promote the rights of indigenous peoples affirmed in treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements with States."<sup>59</sup>

TURTLE ISLAND: A name commonly used to refer to the geographic territories currently referred to as "Canada" and the "United States of America," "North America," and/or "The New World," among other names.<sup>60</sup> The language refers to the creation myth of the Five Nations (Haudenosaunee Confederacy), which is shared with other nations, on which the world was created on the back of a giant sea turtle.<sup>61</sup>

UNION FOR PROTECTION OF NEW VARIETIES OF PLANTS (UPOV): An international governmental organization based out of Switzerland that aims to "provide and promote an effective system of plant variety protection, with the aim of encouraging the development of new varieties of plants, for the benefit of society." (upov.int) The UPOV began in 1961 and has since expanded, being called out by activist movements for working "exclusively and explicitly for

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<sup>58</sup> Melissa K Nelson, "Indigenous Science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge: Persistence in Place." In *The World of Indigenous North America*, pp. 188-214. Routledge (2014).

<sup>59</sup> Karla E. General, "Treaty Rights and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," Indian Law Resource Center, accessed March 22 2023; United Nations General Assembly Sixty-First Session, [United Nations Declaration on the Rights Indigenous Peoples](#), (A/RES/61/295), 13 September 2007, accessed March 22 2023.

<sup>60</sup> Urban Dictionary, a crowdsourced database of English slang definitions, defines Turtle Island as "The name of this giant island that is our nation before all these ridiculous gringos showed up uninvited. God Bless Turtle Island." User: Quitbuggin, "Turtle Island," *Urban Dictionary* (December 2019).

<sup>61</sup> John Norton, "Iroquois Creation Story," in *The World Turned Upside Down: Indian Voices from Early America*, edited by Colin G. Calloway, St. Martin's Press (1994).

the privatisation of seeds around the world, imposing 'intellectual property rights' over plant varieties and enabling companies to monopolise them."<sup>62</sup>

WATERSHED: The water science school describes a watershed as "an area of land that drains all the streams and rainfall to a common outlet such as the outflow of a reservoir, mouth of a bay, or any point along a stream channel."<sup>63</sup>

WEED: generally defined as "a plant growing in a space where it is unwanted," gardeners, farmers and botanists unofficially categorize entire species as "weeds" that generally grow in disturbed soils (think dandelion, clover, plantain, and certain docks). However, the label is not inherent, and depends primarily on locale, human control over spaces, and colonial definitions of what is seen as useful. Many plants deemed "weeds" are often edible, medicinal, or beneficial for soil health.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Alianza Biodiversidad & GRAIN, "The Great Seeds Robbery: Which is Why We Must Defend Them," 6 April 2021.

<sup>63</sup> Water Science School, "Watersheds and Drainage Basins," United States Geographical Survey, June 8 2019.

<sup>64</sup> Jessamy R Luthin, "From Wanted to Weeds: A Natural History of Some of New England's Introduced Plants." *Maine Agriculture* 49, no. 2 (2015): 132-49.