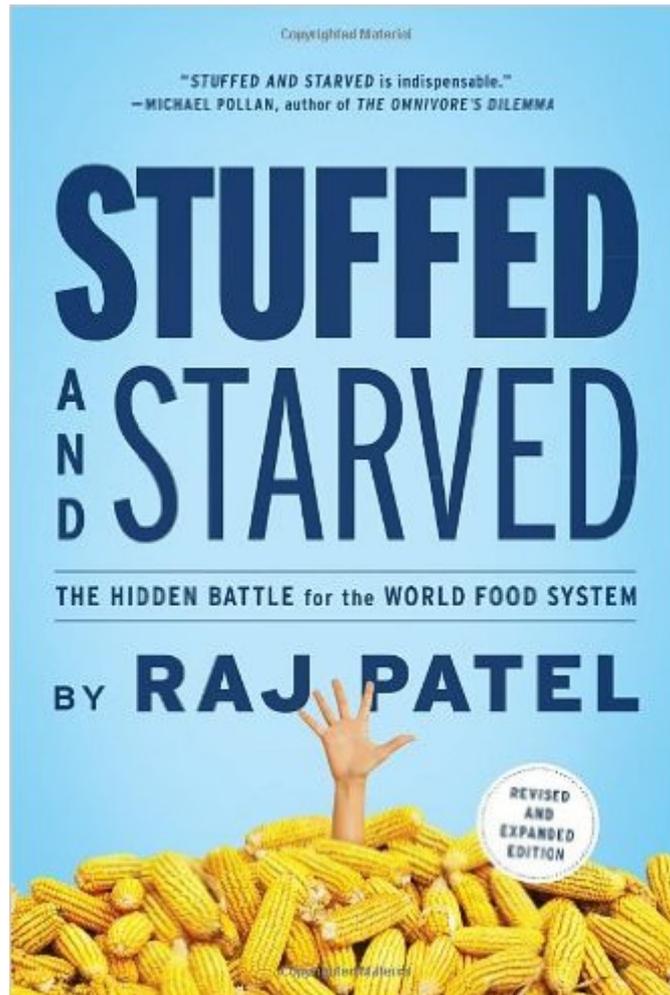


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# Stuffed And Starved: The Hidden Battle For The World Food System - Revised And Updated



## Synopsis

Revised and Expanded Edition"For anyone attempting to make sense of the world food crisis, or understand the links between U.S. farm policy and the ability of the world's poor to feed themselves, *Stuffed and Starved* is indispensable." —Michael Pollan, author of *The Omnivore's Dilemma*™s a perverse fact of modern life: There are more starving people in the world than ever before, while there are also more people who are overweight. To find out how we got to this point and what we can do about it, Raj Patel launched a comprehensive investigation into the global food network. It took him from the colossal supermarkets of California to India's wrecked paddy-fields and Africa's bankrupt coffee farms, while along the way he ate genetically engineered soy beans and dodged flying objects in the protestor-packed streets of South Korea. What he found was shocking, from the false choices given us by supermarkets to a global epidemic of farmer suicides, and real reasons for famine in Asia and Africa. Yet he also found great cause for hope—in international resistance movements working to create a more democratic, sustainable and joyful food system. Going beyond ethical consumerism, Patel explains, from seed to store to plate, the steps to regain control of the global food economy, stop the exploitation of both farmers and consumers, and rebalance global sustenance.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A very digestible read for the consumer that's liable to provoke dyspepsia in the bellies of food giants and governments alike. In taking a moralistic view of starvation and obesity, our media,

governments and many NGOs have condemned those suffering to more of the same. While the institutional causes remain unaddressed - in large part thanks to public sector responsibility being abdicated to private sector interests - we can only expect more headlines about food riots and editorials on farmer suicides, just as diabetes (II) continues apace. The resounding conclusion is that 'free market' policies remain accountable only to shareholders - not to farmers, not to consumers, and certainly not to the governments that unleashed them. But *Stuffed & Starved* is as prescriptive as it is diagnostic. By identifying the grassroots organisations that have come to terms with the problems and begun to enact the social changes necessary for remedy, Patel brings to the page a message of hope and understanding with great clarity. To his credit, he is no less objective or critical in examining these social movements (as they struggle to develop) than he is of the corporations, WTO, and World Bank. If you're interested in a comprehensive overview of what's behind the headlines, of what's causing the paradox of starvation at the same time as an epidemic of obesity, this is the book.

In his comprehensive critique of the global food system, Patel takes his time winding his way through every stage of the food production process, through the experiences and perspectives of all involved--lay and professional--from around the world. Patel ultimately blames both corporations and governments for their complicity in undermining local, cultural, and sustainable foodways and thereby causing the major food-related problems of today, from obesity to starvation. Drenched in details and indictments, Patel's *Stuffed and Starved* is a broad but accessible analysis of global food struggles that aims to inform and incite the general Western public. Despite his heady academic and professional background, Patel keeps the technical and academic jargon to a minimum, using basic reportage and narrative description to convey his ideas, analyses, and anecdotes. As such, the book has the possibility of appealing to an audience beyond the academy. However, based on Patel's political bent, *Stuffed and Starved* is still most likely to play better to a more leftward-leaning and politically-engaged audience. The breadth of *Stuffed and Starved* is both its greatest strength and greatest weakness. Patel does not shy away from his stated task of examining the global food system in all its overwhelming complexity. He does explain in the introduction that he tries to maintain organization by arranging the chapters according to what should chronologically be the beginning of the food cycle--farming--and then winding his way through each of the stages of food production and distribution until he ends up at consumption. However, the complexity of the system, the global scope of the project, and Patel's own intimate knowledge and passion for the subject work against any kind of neat-and-tidy organization or argument. Although such complexities speak

volumes about the current state of the global food system and the major problems within it, they also can be confusing on a number of different levels. Overall, *Stuffed and Starved* is an informative introduction for the lay reader interested in political issues related to food production, distribution, and consumption around the world, particularly those who appreciated Eric Schlosser's *Fast Food Nation* and would like a look beyond the North American context. Academic audiences may also find Patel's text useful for the broad coverage that he gives to various food-related economic and political problems all over the world, as well as his extensive bibliography and research. The book can be used almost like a reference text in this way, indexing an expanse of contemporary food-related issues.

In his new book, "*Stuffed and Starved*," Raj Patel hits a nerve, or rather a whole digestive system worth of nerves. Until late, these two hot topics-obesity and the food crisis- were discussed separately. Patel's research shows why and how there are now more obese people than ever before, and more starving people. Patel takes an original view and places the blame not just on the governments, but on their famous trade agreements that we all thought were so fabulous-NAFTA ring a bell? He discusses how the "consumer" market and trade agreements are what have caused an increase in percentage of farmer suicides, food riots, and starving communities throughout the world. The book is a fast read, full of stuff you definitely didn't know. Although perhaps intended for the political or activist type, it's a worthwhile, interesting read for anyone who shops at a supermarket, a Wal-Mart, is thinking of going organic, or is upset about the rising cost of food. Not only does Patel offer a hearty argument for his points, but he offers a 10-step "fix" for us, everyday folk to start taking to help the problem....that, at least is worth the buy/read-in...

This is an excellent book, logical, full of information and clearly written. For years, I have had serious doubts and alternative thoughts about our modern society, and wondered how it is that most people seem to see it quite differently than I do. It was such a pleasure to read this book and have my thoughts expressed so well, and those doubts and questions answered. I never thought I could read a book about economics and not go to sleep or give up in disgust, but I practically swallowed this one in one gulp and wished for more. My only criticism of the book is that there are a few typos and bungled sentences.

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