



Hamburgers in Paradise: The Stories behind the Food We Eat

By Louise O. Fresco

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For the first time in human history, there is food in abundance throughout the world. More people than ever before are now freed of the struggle for daily survival, yet few of us are aware of how food lands on our plates. Behind every meal you eat, there is a story. *Hamburgers in Paradise* explains how.

In this wise and passionate book, Louise Fresco takes readers on an enticing cultural journey to show how science has enabled us to overcome past scarcities--and why we have every reason to be optimistic about the future. Using hamburgers in the Garden of Eden as a metaphor for the confusion surrounding food today, she looks at everything from the dominance of supermarkets and the decrease of biodiversity to organic foods and GMOs. She casts doubt on many popular claims about sustainability, and takes issue with naïve rejections of globalization and the idealization of "true and honest" food. Fresco explores topics such as agriculture in human history, poverty and development, and surplus and obesity. She provides insightful discussions of basic foods such as bread, fish, and meat, and intertwines them with social topics like slow food and other gastronomy movements, the fear of technology and risk, food and climate change, the agricultural landscape, urban food systems, and food in art.

The culmination of decades of research, *Hamburgers in Paradise* provides valuable insights into how our food is produced, how it is consumed, and how we can use the lessons of the past to design food systems to feed all humankind in the future.

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Editorial Review

Review

Winner of a 2017 Gourmand World Cookbook Award, National Winner in "Sustainable, for the Public"

"[A] fine [book]; the author aims to engage the readers in issues that are crucial to our future existence and well-being, and show us how we can apply them in concrete and meaningful ways."--**Amy Bentley, *Times Literary Supplement***

"In *Hamburgers in Paradise*, Ms. Fresco offers a thought-provoking, encyclopedic analysis of contemporary food issues. . . . Her international perspective is refreshing, her explanations clear and non-technical, and her refusal to endorse easy answers in favor of weighing the costs and benefits of different options a welcome change from the succession of simplistic ideas often found in the media. . . . *Hamburgers in Paradise* could not come at a more opportune moment."--**Rachel Laudan, *Wall Street Journal***

"A pro-capitalist, pro-globalization, pro-technology food book, or so it seems. I am eager to spend more time with this one."--**Tyler Cowen, *Marginal Revolution***

"A painstaking study."--**Francis Wilson, *The Telegraph***

"In this painstaking study, Fresco has piled her plate high."--***New Zealand Herald***

"A gorgeously produced and fascinating book."--**Diane Coyle, *The Enlightened Economist***

"A history of the many foods we eat, the state of global agriculture and a very optimistic view of sustainability in spite of the challenges facing humanity in the near future."--**John Farrell, *Forbes.com***

"The abiding and remarkable lingering taste of the book is optimism. This isn't the anticipated rant about food, retail, petrochemical industries, GM Farming, climate change, and every political hot potato, but an enjoyable collection of stories, recollections (and statistics) with an ultimately uplifting tone."--**David Haslam, *British Journal of General Practice***

From the Back Cover

"An extraordinary, engaging, and culturally informed volume. Read it and be freed from the shackles of many mistaken ideas that obscure genuine solutions to the puzzle of feeding a growing world population in a sustainable and just fashion. Fresco invites us to leave our preconceived ideas at the threshold and become better stewards of mankind's future."--**Harold T. Shapiro, Princeton University**

"An insightful and incisive book that examines the facts and mythologies of food production, ancient and modern. Fresco moves seamlessly from early concepts of paradise to contemporary issues such as factory farming, GMOs, and organic agriculture. She concludes with a balanced and optimistic view of the future of sustainable farming."--**Gordon Conway, Imperial College London**

"In a mesmerizing tour de force by an author who has clearly established herself as the Renaissance Woman

of Global Agriculture, Louise Fresco tracks the ten-thousand-year evolution of human agriculture in search of the paradise of abundance. Throughout this book, she weaves the extraordinary cultural intersection of art, poetry, and religion with science and technology, and confronts the dichotomy of a 'hamburgerized' twenty-first-century world of overabundance and painful scarcity."--**Kenneth M. Quinn, president of the World Food Prize Foundation**

"This erudite and wide-ranging book is the result of Fresco's four decades of work and reflection on how our food is produced and consumed. In contemporary literature about the future of the food chain, I have not come across a more convincing, irresistibly organized, and thorough overview of what we all need to digest. This book is a must-read."--**Victor Halberstadt, Leiden University**

About the Author

Louise O. Fresco is president of Wageningen University and Research Centre in the Netherlands. The author of several books, she is a member of the Council of Advisors for the World Food Prize and has worked extensively in developing countries for many years. She lives in Amsterdam.

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