



Movie Sheet: Food Inc.

Introduction

🕒 94 min

This movie explores how our food supply has become increasingly industrialized and the consequences this has on our health and on the planet.

Themes

1. The treatment of animals in industrial agriculture
2. The controversy surrounding the labelling of food
3. Food security and government regulations
4. The role of multinational corporations in the production of food
5. The definition of a 'healthy' diet
6. Farmers' rights and the control and ownership of seeds
7. The effects of industrial agriculture on consumers

Quick Facts

- The average supermarket has **47,000 different products** on its shelves.
- In the 1970s, the top 5 beef packers in the US controlled only about 25% of the market, today the top **4 companies control more than 80%**.
- Each year, approximately **325,000 people in the US are hospitalized** and 5,000 die from food-borne illness.
- Since the 1930s, the number of farms in North America have declined and now the trend is towards fewer farmers producing food for an increasing population. For example, in 1961 in Canada there were 480,903 farms, **today there are 229,000**.
- In developing countries organic farms produce on average 80% more than conventional farms.

Questions & Discussions

1. **Fast Food to All Food:** How has factory farming (or industrial agriculture) changed the quality of life for livestock such as chickens, pigs, and cows? Do we, as consumers, have a responsibility to ask for a minimum standard for the ethical treatment of animals? What links can you make between the treatment of animals and the treatment of people?
2. **A Cornucopia of Choices:** What are your thoughts on the chicken industry (and other industrial agriculture companies) unwillingness to make their farms available to the public and to share details on their practices? Do you think consumers have a right to this information?
3. **Unintended Consequences:** Were you surprised to find out how much of our food contains corn? What might some of the potential problems with this be? Who's responsible to inform us, the consumers, about what is in our food?
4. **The Dollar Menu:** Why is the cheapest food also the least healthy? How does this affect people of different income levels differently? Is eating healthy a right, a responsibility, or a privilege? How can we make healthy food more widely available?
5. **In the Grass:** How often do you consider all the workers involved who brought your food to you? Do you think that all these workers are paid fairly? How does this affect the price of your food?
6. **Hidden Costs:** What are the implications of small organic companies being purchased by larger corporations such as Wal-Mart?
7. **From Seed to the Supermarket:** Should private companies be allowed to own genetic material found in plants? How does this affect the ability of farmers to make a living (both in Canada and overseas)? How does this affect the food we eat?
8. **The Veil:** How much influence should companies have over what information is made available to consumers? Would proper labelling change the way you make food choices? How?
9. **Shocks to the System:** Do you think we could effectively feed people around the world without large-scale industrial agriculture? (see UN report in the Dig Deeper section)

Food Inc Viewing Guide

From Food to Fast Food.

How has what we eat in America become industrialized? What evidence is there of this industrialization?

In what ways are social inequalities being reproduced in the manufacturing of chickens? That is how are the social conditions of the people who work for food corporations related to the physical conditions that chickens are produced in?

A Cornucopia of choice

Why do we overproduce corn? What social policies and social interests are involved?

Unintended Consequences

Why are government regulators not protecting the American health and safety?

What is the connection between the consolidation of food manufacturing and the food contamination crises? Why are we more vulnerable to contamination now that we have just a few super producers of food?

Efficiency is a central component of rationality, how has the pursuit of increased efficiency in food production led to seemingly irrational choices by the food industry?

When there are crises in the system of food production what solutions do the food corporations turn to? What impact does this have?

The Dollar Menu

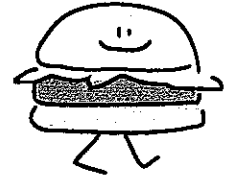
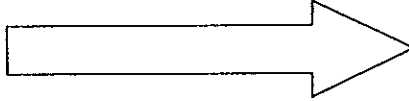
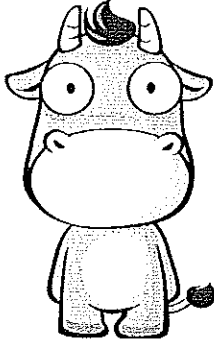
What role does economic inequality and how we structure our communities play in the food choices many people in the U.S.?

Why are “bad calories” cheaper? Could this be a possible area to create social change?

Questions for Discussion - Food, Inc.

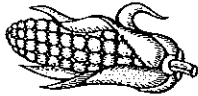
- Do you believe that the issues addressed in Food, Inc. are relevant in your country? Which issues are and which issues are not?
- As consumers, do we have the right to know where our food comes from, how animals are treated and how agriculture is grown?
- Whose responsibility do you think it is to inform us about what is in our food? Is it our responsibility to find out, the producer's responsibility to make it more clear, the stores, government or all of them? Why do you think so?
- What kinds of actions have you taken to make a change (what kind of changes?) at home, at school, or in the community? What was effective? What wasn't?
- Should a company have the power to decide what information to give consumers about the food it produces?
- What are other things we can do—either individually or collectively—to encourage our families, our friends, or others around us to make changes in their lives toward food that is more healthful and environmentally sustainable?
- What individual or collective actions are you willing to take to improve our food system, and what would be their impact? Can you take these actions without getting into trouble with your friends, community, local or national government?
- Who do you think should have the power to decide food policies, laws about food safety, and other food-related matters? Are any of these individuals, groups, or organizations doing it now and if yes, how is it working?

Food Inc Movie Sheet



Intro:

- 1) The modern American supermarket has, on average _____ products.
- 2) The reality behind how our food is produced is not a farm, but a _____
- 3) IN the 1930's the _____ was invented by the McDonald brothers.
- 4) We have never had food companies this big, and this _____ in our histories.
- 5) To build one poultry house costs between _____ and _____.
- 6) A typical grower (not farmer) with two chicken houses has borrowed over _____ and earns about _____.



A Cornucopia:

- 7) Most of our industrial food base is made from _____.
- 8) CAFO stands for _____

Unintended Consequences:

- 9) Regulatory agencies are being _____ by the companies they are supposed to be scrutinizing.
- 10) There are _____ slaughter houses in the USA that process the majority of the beef.
- 11) Kevin's Law would give the USDA the power to shut down processing plants that _____ produce contaminated beef.
- 12) Beef filler is washed in _____ to kill ecoli bacteria.



The Dollar Menu:

- 13) The biggest determinant of obesity is _____.
- 14) One third of all Americans born after 2000 will contract early onset _____.



In The Grass:

- 15) The people who own the processing plants don't want others to go there because then the world would see the _____.
- 16) We are all into the how, but _____ is asking why!
- 17) _____ is the largest slaughterhouse in the world.
- 18) Thirty-two thousand hogs are slaughtered on the _____ every day.
- 19) Meat packing companies got bigger to serve the needs of the _____.

Hidden Costs:

- 20) Organic has been growing _____ annually; making it one of the fastest growing segments of the food industry.
- 21) Around the turn of the century the average farmer could feed _____ people, now _____ people.

From Seed to Supermarket:

- 22) Monsanto is a chemical company that produced _____, _____ and _____.
- 23) Monsanto has a staff of seventy five devoted to _____ and prosecuting farmers.
- 24) When you _____ modify a crop, you _____ it!

The Veil:

- 25) Consumers are being kept in the dark about where their _____ comes from (that's us)

26) Companies have the Veggie Law, which makes it illegal to _____ their products.

27) You can go to _____ for saying bad things about their products!



Shocks to the System:

28) To bring a steer to slaughter takes _____ gallons of oil.

29) It costs more to eat _____ than it does to eat badly.

30) You can _____ to change the system _____ times a day.

www.takepart.com/foodinc