**Power and Resistance in Food System Webinar 2025 05 29**

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**Alison Blay-Palmer**: Super, okay, thanks and welcome everybody. We're really excited to be hosting this panel through the UNESCO Chair on Food Biodiversity and Sustainability Studies. Before we begin, I welcome you all as our audience and participants. We hope you'll be asking questions. But before we get started, I'd like to acknowledge that my university's campuses are located on the shared traditional territory. Of the neutral Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. This land is part of the Dish with One Spoon Treaty between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples and it symbolizes the agreement to share, protect our resources and not to engage in conflict. The principles, as I learned from Oneida Elder, are to only take what you need, leave enough for others and clean the dish. And these are the principles that guide my work as a food scholar and activist and I hope can inform your work as well. So I would like to welcome all of you as the UNESCO chair in Food Biodiversity and Sustainability Studies. The chair was established in 2019 and as a platform for change. It uses food systems as a lens to work towards biodiversity protection, enhancing community resilience in the face of climate change and other pressures. And it works to increase opportunities for marginalized groups, improve food security and enhance community well-being. So we're delighted to have you all here. Just before we get started, I just wanna go through a couple of housekeeping points. This webinar is being recorded, so please keep yourself muted and your cameras off. Use the chat to direct your questions. We'll be monitoring the chat, Liz and I will be monitoring in the chat. You can turn on your closed captioning by selecting closed captions at the bottom of your screen. And there are options in the closed captioning about the language that you would like to be hearing things in. And I am really delighted to be welcoming our panel. The enthusiastic response, we had over 360 people register for this webinar, which is unheard of for us, is in part because of the that the topic that we're going to be discussing this morning in terms of power and resistance, but it's also recognition of the stature and importance and contributions that our panelists have made and are continuing to make. So I'm really delighted to welcome Molly Anderson, Jennifer Clapp and Harun Akram Lodi as our panelists for today. And we're here to discuss two books, one that Molly authored. And the second one that was authored more recently and launched in the last couple of months by Jennifer Klatt. So in terms of the order for the event, first we're going to hear from our speakers, Molly and Jennifer, who are gonna provide a short introduction to their books to help frame our conversation, give us a little bit of background. Then we're gonna have a moderated question period. With Molly and Jennifer to explore themes around power and resistance in our food systems. And after that, we're going to have some reflections about the big picture from Haroon. And we have about 25 minutes at the end of all of that for your questions. So please put them in the chat as you think about them and we will get to them towards the end of the event and we'll end with a wrap up as is to give our speakers a chance. To share their final thoughts with us. So I would like to invite our speakers who really don't need any introduction, but I will read their bios just in case you don't know who these eminent people are. Jennifer, we're gonna ask you to go first. So I'll share your bio and I'm also gonna read Molly's bio and Haroon's. So everybody knows who's on our panel if that's okay. So Jennifer Clapp is a professor and Canada research chair in global food studies and sustainability. In the School of Environment Resources and Sustainability and the Balsillie School of International Affairs at the University of Waterloo. She has published really widely and as a world leader in terms of global governance of problems that arise at the intersection of the global economy, food security and food systems and the natural environment. So really a wide ranging thinking on such important topics. Professor Clapp is a member of the IPES international panel of experts on sustainable food systems. And from 2019 to 2023, she served on the steering committee for the high level panel of experts for the committee on world food security at the United Nations and was vice chair of the HLPE from 2021 to 2023. So welcome, Jennifer. We're so delighted to have you here with us to talk about your book. Molly, also a giant in her own right in terms of the work that she brings to the table and to the conversation. She's a research associate professor at UVM and directs academic programs and food studies at Middlebury in Vermont, where she has been teaching about hunger and food security, fixing food systems and sustainability. She's especially interested in multi-actor collaborations for sustainable food systems, sustainability metrics and assessment. And food systems resilience, and has a particular expertise in human rights and the food system, and has been a long time activist for human rights and the right to food in the United States and other industrialized countries. She's also interested in bridging interests and concerns of the academicians, community-based activists and social movements, and she does a wonderful job of translating things. All of us. And that's really what her book on narratives is all about. She's involved in food systems, reform and planning at the local, state and regional scales, and participates in the regional food solutions, New England Network and the National Institutional Network for Food, Agriculture and Sustainability, and is also a member of IPES. Haroon is also an outstanding scholar and thinker, Professor of Economics, Global Justice and Department at Trent. In Peterborough, Canada. He's an associate editor of Feminist Economics and the focus of Haroon's research is on the engendered political economy of agrarian change in the countries in the global south. On the economic dimensions of gender relations and on the political ecology of gendered, sustainable rural livelihoods in contemporary low and middle income countries. He is currently a gender and livelihoods advisor to the World Food Program and has acted as an advisor to UN Women, can be an environment. UNDP and the United Nations Capital Development Fund. He's also lived, taught, and conducted research in numerous countries, published extensively in peer-reviewed journals, and has received honorary appointments at universities in Canada, the US, and the UK. So as you can see, we have a powerhouse of speakers and panelists this morning. So without further ado, Jennifer, I'll turn it over to you to share your insights about your book. So please go ahead.

**Jennifer Clapp:** Thanks so much, Alison. And it's really a delight to be here today and with such wonderful and accomplished colleagues. So thank you. And also, like Alison, I would say I'm coming from Waterloo and I appreciate Alison's land acknowledgement. We are on the traditional territory of the neutral Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee people. And I'll just add in addition to Alison's heartfelt acknowledgement, I would also say I am deeply grateful to be able to live and work on these lands. So I'm delighted to be here today to talk about my new book, Titans of Industrial Agriculture, with a subtitle, How a Few Giant Corporations Came to Dominate the Farm Sector and Why It Matters. So that's my super nutshell, what the book is about. But in terms of the substance, it's basically about the four agricultural input industries, meaning farm machinery, fertilizer, seeds and pesticides. And how we basically went from having these four inputs that were not even market commodities around 200 years ago to now today being controlled by just a small handful of firms. And the book probes, like how these industries became so concentrated, but also what are the economic, social, and ecological consequences of that transition to highly concentrated markets. And I'll just say I was prompted to write this book. By the post 2015 mergers in the agricultural input sector where Bayer bought Monsanto, Dow and DuPont merged, Form Corteva, Syngenta is purchased by Sinochem, et cetera. We went from sort of the big six firms down to the big four and there were also mergers going on in the fertilizer industry. And I just wanted to understand what was going on. And I was in part inspired by the work of Louis Brandeis who was a US Supreme court justice in the early 1900s. He, I was reading his work because he had done stuff on finance and financialization, but he also was very concerned about corporate power. And he really encouraged like historical inquiry to understand how corporations got so big so that we would be better equipped to address them with policy. And, you know, he came at this issue a bit skeptical like I did. Saying you know these firms aren't big just because they're more clever or they're more efficient but you know they're they're kind of like swallowing each other up it's part of this bigger process of capitalism and also it threatens democracy right so i was like okay he encouraged historical inquiry but nobody had done this deep historical inquiry across all the inputs in the agricultural sector and i was Like okay this is what i'm going to do and this was in the pandemic hit and i had lots of i had a research leave for two years to to write this book and I had a lot of time to read so it was safe. Immersive experience to go back in time at that weird time in the world to think about the origins of these farms. And basically, I know I'm probably halfway through my five minutes already, but I'll say that what I found was in some way surprising to me. I've been studying these issues for 30 or more years, but hadn't fully realized the extent to which corporate concentration was already established by the early 1900s. So it was much earlier. Then we tend to think about, because we hear about the corporate food regime and thinking about the 1980s and 1990s as a moment when corporations became more dominant in the food system, but actually in the input sector it goes back to the late 1800s and the early 1900s. And without going into details, because I know Alison's going to ask us questions, but I talk about three big drivers that resulted in this massive consolidation in the sector. I talk Market factors that were important. I talk about technological changes being important at key moments in time. And I talk about the policy context and dynamics. And this approach was really drawing on the work of Susan Strange. She's a revered scholar of international political economy. And she said, you know, we need to look at state actions. We need to look at markets, but we also need to look at technology if we want to understand power in the global economy. And her framework which I'd always found really important and insightful. It was so relevant for looking at this particular case study. And so just to make it quick, these factors were influential in these corporations getting giant, but they also were factors that the corporations themselves, once they got big, were able to manipulate in ways that gave them power to shape the very factors that allowed them to stay big. The book tells the story of the farm machinery, fertilizers, pesticides, and. Across a 200 year history and looking at how this came about, how these factors mattered through time. And then also what were the consequences? And I know Alison's gonna ask us about that, so I won't say a lot here, but really the key takeaways is that corporate power in the agricultural input sector has deeper roots than we often realize. There's a complexity in terms of the mix of market technology and policy factors that I think help draw up nuances. To reveal common patterns over time and across these industries to show us where power comes from and how it's utilized in the food system. And so my big conclusion is that if we wanna have food systems transformation, and we're all having that conversation right now because there's so many problems in the foods system, we need to tackle corporate power as part of that transformation. And I'll just add one tiny thing, which is that The context in which I was writing this book and working on it was during the run-up and the aftermath of the UN Food Systems Summit where corporate power was getting scant attention from those powerful actors. And I was really trying to show how and why it matters and we need to tackle it. And I'm hoping, you know, along with Molly and others, we're all contributing to this broader knowledge base and evidence base that if we don't tackle corporate power, we are in.

**Alison Blay-Palmer**: There. Thank you. Thanks so much Jennifer for that wonderful overview. Molly, we'll hand it over to you.

**Molly Anderson:** Thanks, Alison. Just took me a minute to unmute myself. And thanks to the Laurier Center for Sustainable Food Systems for organizing and sponsoring this talk. I am so honored to be on a panel, a webinar, with such esteemed scholars whose work I have admired and followed for so long. I'm on Abenaki territory. I'm in Vermont, Middlebury, Vermont. Unceded territory, that the Abenaki never gave up. It's a lovely place, but the cruelty that's been done by our country toward Indigenous people has never really been addressed or ameliorated. So, let me start with a little introduction to my book. I've been working with narratives and I define those very simply as just the stories that we tell ourselves about how the world works. I've drawn to narratives for several years and I got into this because I was going to conferences and listening to people talk about how we need to transform food systems. Everybody agreed on that point, but the ways that they were proposing to transform food systems just varied wildly. And these were not ignorant people, not stupid people. So I tried to figure out what's behind this and realized that they are telling each other very different narratives, telling themselves very different narrative. And those narratives have hooks in them. So once you get started on one narrative, it's really hard to give it up and. Embrace another one. I see two big meta narratives at war in food systems governance right now. One is regenerative and one is extractive. The extractive industrialized food system where food is a commodity to be produced in exchange for profit is opposed to a regenerative food system where food as a public good with multiple values. To people in communities and its production, distribution and consumption are all subject to human rights. By regenerative food system, let me just make clear that I mean a system that restores ecological integrity to the greatest extent possible, builds the agency of people to grow and consume healthy food and provides fair wages by sharing the value of food. I certainly don't mean regenerative agriculture as it's been co-opted by business and some farmers' organizations to mean making money from carbon credits. Regenerative agriculture definitely has some benefits in restoring soil fertility and sequestration capacity, but I see it as a very limited concept. So, my main premises about transformation are, first, to echo Jennifer. Power relations are key to transformation. Corporations hold more and more power over the food system and there are deleterious consequences for producers, consumers, small businesses, and rural communities all over the world. But food systems won't transform toward more regenerative practices and businesses until we overcome the gross inequality in power among actors. And I'm defining power, we'll come back to that. But to me, it's very simply the ability to accomplish goals. It may consist of money, information, technology, access to resources. It might consist of regulations that inhibit or permit certain actions, certain social pressures to act or that direct violent pressure to act or not to act. And we're seeing all of these in place. It may also consist of opportunities to participate in decision-making or to choose public officials. So that's my first main premise. We've got to look at those power relations. My second main premise is that transformation toward regeneration will require supporting the entities that already hold regenerative values, such as agroecological farmers, socially responsible businesses. And social movements that are fighting for food sovereignty and also at the same time weakening the sources of power upon which extractive food systems draw, such as the immense subsidies for fossil fuels and productivism. And third, changing the public narrative so that regeneration becomes normalized and dangers of current extractive systems. Are well understood. And just one more key premise, transformation needs to involve actors throughout the food system. It can't be driven by business, by government, by farmers, or by civil society alone, but support of broad social movements is especially important for various reasons. So I'm going to stop there. I'm a little over five minutes, so we can turn back to Alison. Thank you so much, Molly.

**Alison Blay-Palmer**: And Jennifer for those excellent overviews of your books and points to the rich conversation we're about to have. So thank you for that. Jennifer, I'm going to start with you. If you could elaborate a little bit more on this idea of power and how you address this in your book, that would be great to get us started.

**Jennifer Clapp:** Great, thank you, Alison. And that was a great overview, Molly, of your work as well. And yeah, in terms of power, power is a central theme in my book. In a way, I show, as I mentioned, that these kind of market technology and policy factors and their complicated interaction have created opportunities for these firms to get big. And what I argue is that Their bigness, in a sense, gives them more power to actually shape those very factors of markets, technology, and policy context. And so I sort of pull this out in a way that I'm trying to not necessarily just talk about political power or just talk market power, but I'm just trying to show that the power of these giant firms is. Is much wider than just the market power that we discuss when we talk about antitrust and basically what economists tend to talk about. They are obsessed with market power, which is this idea that when you have just a few firms controlling a market, they actually are much more likely to coordinate with one another, to collude, to sort of raise prices or to erect barriers to entry to prevent other firms from coming into the sector. They also do things like controlling who can service their machinery or who can sell what. I mean, we saw this in recent years with John Deere, for example, making farmer sign agreements that they can't repair their own tractors. It has to be done by an authorized dealer or Monsanto or Syngenta telling, you know, input dealers they shouldn't sell generic herbicides, sell our brand of herbicides. So there's a lot of this market manipulation going on that I think is important and economists call this market power. But I think. It goes beyond that. And so this is where I was sort of. Making my own new power framework, but I talk about the power to shape markets, that's the market power, but i also talk about, the power, to shape technological trajectories, because once these firms get really big, and by virtue of their size and dominance, the technological decisions that they make, which inputs, like what kind of seeds are we, are farmers going to have access to, what what are the machines, the farm machinery going to look like, how are we going to make fertilizer, all those kind of decisions set us on these technological pathways. And they can design those pathways in ways that benefit them. So I show that they do this with seed hybridization. They did it with AgBioTech and they're now doing it with digital agriculture. They also did it nitrogen synthesis. They did with the synthetic pesticides. So all of these ways in which these big firms, once they become powerful, and I should stress, like there was this massive consolidation even by the early 1900s. And they were making decisions about what industrial agriculture looks like. Has real material consequences. So I call this the power to shape technology and I think it's an aspect we haven't paid enough attention to in food studies. And then I also talk about their power to shake policy and governance. And there's a lot written about corporate power in the political sphere, but I argue that I draw on those frameworks to show that those actors, once they become big, it's easier for them to coordinate in terms of lobbying. It's easier for them to sponsor scientific studies in ways that. Bring out the kind of results they want to see. They have this ability to shape narratives and discourses, the kind stuff Molly's talking about. And they have the power to threaten to leave a jurisdiction and take the economic jobs with them, all in ways that can influence how policymakers address these kind of actors. So I talk about these three kinds of power and how they interact with one another in a way that kind of creates this. A bit of a juggernaut of industrial agriculture that's hard to break away from because of that power. Sorry, that was a long answer, Alison, but I'll stop there.

**Alison Blay-Palmer**: No, that's fantastic. Thanks, Jennifer. And Molly, I think that gives us a lovely segue to ask you about your book's contribution to thinking about power, and how the narratives really that underpin and enable what has happened in some ways. I mean, some of it happens behind a lot of it, happens behind closed doors in corporate boardrooms and things. But there's a narrative apart from that, that's being shaped in the public sphere and in the policy sphere. Perhaps, Molly, you could address that in terms of power for us.

**Molly Anderson:** Thanks, Allison. And I'm going to talk a little bit about both the consequences of the concentration of corporations and Jennifer started talking about that, but also about the ability of that concentrated power to shape discourse and to eliminate various alternatives. From people's imagination, because they are so fixed on the particular solutions that corporations are bringing forward. And I'm thinking of these big ads that Monsanto, back when, before it was bought out by Bayer, those big ads that it would have in farm magazines about how Monsando is sustainable, how it's all about sustainability. And a lot of people were bamboozled by that. And actually believed that. Widespread agreement that corporations hold disproportionate power in the food system. They're squeezing farmers between high input prices and low sales prices. They're abusing workers. They're jacking up prices to consumers during any kind of emergency, but then not lowering them when the emergency passes. That's an example to me of power. Getting stuck and not flowing in the way it should be flowing. And of course, corporations are concentrating into larger and larger entities that have the power to fix prices and to run out small independent businesses and damaging the environment when it's profitable to do so because they are able to influence regulations and to ease those regulations. To make them lax, to suit their own purposes so that they can make more money, which is their main interest. They are not interested in the public good. Their purpose is to make money for shareholders. And in many ways, that purpose is concretized by law that they have to maximize shareholder profit. If it's a public corporation. And shareholder profit is not by any way the same as the public good. So we are working against two or trying to balance two very different interests here. One is the interest of shareholders who usually already have way too much money. And the other is the public goods which is under supported. So I'll leave it there for now.

**Alison Blay-Palmer**: Molly, you've left us with some really interesting things to think about. And next question is for Jennifer. So, Jennifer, do you want to add to the consequences that Molly has just pointed to, specifically in terms of concentrated corporate power? What do you see as the consequences to this that you haven't touched on already?

**Jennifer Clapp:** Yeah and it's a big it's interesting you know the consequences were in big part why i wanted to write the book because of the consequences but at the same time in telling the story of um why these corporations became so big and dominant it was at times like messy to figure out because the consequences are clear, but do we attribute those consequences to the firms and their bigness, or do we contribute them to industrial agriculture more broadly? So maybe I fudged it a little in the book, but I talk about the direct consequences of corporate power which I think are easy to attribute to the firm's. You mean these direct consequences like Molly had mentioned charging higher prices through collusion, taking advantage of crises to raise prices, the sort of thing this is. A long history of this happening in the fertilizer sector and farm machinery, et cetera. The other direct costs though are like as this is, these prices and other barriers to entry. I mean, there are a lot of economic sort of direct costs that we can attribute to the exercise of market power, but there's also these costs, cost to farmers agency and autonomy by reducing choice that farmers have, by threatening their livelihoods, by the decisions corporations making to actually create technologies that are deliberately intended to be locked in. There's a lock-in, not just, you know, of fertilizer into the system or machinery into the systems, but the machinery, fertilizer, seeds, and pesticides, they're all locked in together. And that's now, you now, tethered together through digital agriculture and through agricultural biotechnology. And so these kinds of direct consequences, the dominance of the chemical-centric industrial agricultural model is... A product of this kind of corporate dominance itself. But there are these broader consequences that come from the rise of industrial agriculture that I do think we can tie back to this corporate bigness, but also at the same time, you could say other forces are also contributing. But these include, for example, just the march of industrial agricultural across North America, including displacement of indigenous peoples from their lands. If we hadn't had that industrial agriculture, it wouldn't have happened the way that it did. And so people lost their lands. And we also saw displacement from the land of black farmers with the rise of tractors after the 1920s and 30s. We also, this, you know, industrial model causing huge soil damage, loss of fertility, loss of soil structure. You know, we can connect to the dust bowl, huge biodiversity loss, agricultural biodiversity loss from monocultures, toxic pollution from the rise at pesticides. And now we can say climate change as well, especially through fossil fuel use, fertilizer industry, et cetera. So there are massive consequences of both, or triple, I would say, economic, social, and like in terms of autonomy and culture, as well as the ecological. And they're all enmeshed within each other. And that's the discussion we're having right now about transformation of agriculture. We want it to be more equitable. Wanted to be more sustainable. And we talk about these problems, especially those broader problems, as if they just kind of happened and they were, you know, but they didn't. That's what I was trying to show in the book. They didn't just happen. They happened because of the power that these corporations amassed as they got big. They pushed that model specifically because it made them more money. And, we have to come to grips with that to understand that market The structure is really, really... Matter for all of these factors. So anyway, that's sort of like, I try to talk about those consequences so that we connect them. So when we're talking about transformation, we know that corporate power played a role in driving those consequences.

**Alison Blay-Palmer**: Yeah, thanks. Molly and Jennifer, you both pointed to something in Naomi Klein's work on disaster capitalism popped into my head a couple of times. And I wonder, as you know, our next question is all about resistance. I wonder if you see any benefits to solidarity building outside the food systems movement in terms of tackling some of these issues because corporate concentration, climate change, fossil fuel use, the widening gap in terms of equity, all the things that we're dealing with are not just part of the food system, but they're part of wider concerns in society. So I don't know if you wanna read that into your response in terms what resistance looks like, but Molly, if I can turn to you now to address that question and then Jennifer, maybe you can pick up after Molly, that would be great.

**Jennifer Clapp:** Thanks, Alison, and you are absolutely right. There's no way that the people who are working within food systems to oppose corporate domination can be successful without joining forces with people who were fighting for control over water systems and control over their own labor and being able to benefit from their labor. People who are fighting for ecological integrity, people in the environmental movement, people in the stop fossil fuels movement, because as Jennifer pointed out, they are all intermeshed. And we just finished a project or we're wrapping it up in EPA's food about getting fossil fuels out of the food system. One of the things that that project brought forward is how entwined fossil fuels are with every single activity in the food system. So as we try to reduce the power of fossil fuels and reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that are coming from fossil fuels, which are up to about a third of total greenhouse gas submissions, then we need to be getting them out of the food systems. And we need figure ways that we can produce food without the environmental damage that is leading to really catastrophic loss of biodiversity. And that's been a little bit under-emphasized recently in the food movement, I think, that we cannot survive, humans cannot survive without intact ecosystems around us that are protecting us from pandemics and providing all the ecosystem services. On which we depend so fundamentally. I've gotten really interested recently in thinking about post-capitalist food systems and what the potential is for producing foods in ways that don't rely on capitalism. And many people will say, well, there is no alternative to capitalism. I'm sure that those in the audience have heard that old trope that it's easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism, but we have to imagine that because this is a system that has reached its conclusion. It has reached the end of its ability to support life. And in fact, the strongest forces within capitalism now, the military industrial complex. The food complex. These are all supporting death and not supporting life. Many of the technologies that Jennifer is working with are supporting death. For instance, the overuse of fertilizers is killing microbes in soil. So I am really eager to figure out with people, what happens after capitalism? Whether it implodes of its own internal contradictions or whether all of these different movements joined together are successful in finding an alternative. But I really think we need to start defining and articulating what is that alternative because unless we have a clear vision of what it is that we are driving toward, we'll just flail around. We won't be successful. And that's one of the issues in the United States now with the Republicans, which have had a very clear vision for quite some time of what they want versus the Democrats who have not been able to join together in a consolidated vision. And because of that, the Democrats are basically legless. They don't have any power. So I'll leave it there before I go off on another political rant.

**Alison Blay-Palmer**: Thanks for reening yourself in, Molly, we appreciate it. Hard as that is, we all wanted to have that rant. Thanks for that. Really insightful. And, Jennifer, I'd be interested in hearing any of your thoughts on the idea of solidarity with other other folks outside of the food movement. And if you think that there's room and need for that, as we're moving towards this idea of resistance, and then if you want to talk about resistance, that would be great. Because that's what everybody's here to hear about.

**Jennifer Clapp:** Yes, we do know. The problems. Yeah well I first want to say a little bit about the historical aspect of resistance if that's okay. Yeah I mean what I found really interesting in doing the historical research that I did for the book was that criticism of the rise of the industrial model and the corporate power embedded in it goes back much further than we often discuss. And so like as early as the 1860s, the Granger movement in the US was really fighting monopoly power. And to your point, Alison, about working with other groups, I mean, the Grangers were, you know, mostly a rural social movement, but they weren't just fighting the corporate monopolies in agriculture. They were fighting the monopoly in the railways. They were actually fighting a sewing machine monopoly, which I found really interesting. You know, they were also mad about the farm machinery companies, the plow manufacturers, the reaper manufacturers. So they had a movement that was against corporate monopoly very early on. And I found that movement really interesting. And I think, like, I'd love to go back and do more work on the Grangers to understand why they did not meet more success in what they did. But basically... What's really interesting to me in comparison to today is that the Grangers were trying, they didn't really criticize industrial agriculture itself. What they were criticizing was monopoly power. Because of that, what they were trying to do is bring prices down for the inputs that they needed, especially machinery and plows. And so they tried to negotiate direct purchase deals with the big companies, which the companies just kind of rebuffed. They didn't really, you know, they put all these conditions on the idea. And then they also tried to produce their own machinery and blows to bring prices down, but what they quickly realized is they didn't have the capital that the big company's had to offer credit because they were expensive machines to, you know, deal with bad debt. Couldn't deal with it. They were actually ended up folding under fear of being sued because they basically couldn't pay their bills. So that was like a model of resistance that was actually within an industry, like accepting the industrial march of agriculture. But there were other critics in the 1920s to 1940s that really were critiquing the ecological and social aspects of industrial agriculture as it was emerging. You know, of Rochester's book, you know, the why farmers are poor, was really trying to tackle the social aspects of corporate, like of land consolidation that came with industrial agriculture. Others like Paul Sears, you know, when Edward Faulkner looking at the problems of soil, the loss of soil fertility, and Albert Howard, Paul Mangelsdorf worried about, you know in the 1930s he's worried about the loss of agro-biodiversity. So that's super interesting that we had early resistance. You know, not, you know, we often start the story with Rachel Carson, you know, who was writing in the 1960s, but she wasn't the first, she was actually summarizing the work of other scientists who had in previous decades pointed out the problems with DDT and other kinds of pesticides. Those early critics I would say they actually wrote very popular books that were widely read. Have a coherent movement in the sense that really took down the power of the big corporations that were pushing with their narratives. So that brings us to today. What is the prospect for collaboration across social movements? And I think it's a great question because we see today resistance is different. There is this critique of industrial agriculture, not just of the monopoly power. In a way, it's almost inversed for what we had before. And we need to make sure corporate power is part of that critique, but it's really, we're seeing food sovereignty movement, agro-ecology movement, people pushing for territorial markets. And we're converging around a set of strategies to promote more self-reliant and ecological agriculture that embeds human rights. So that's exciting that we're seen these movements around food coming together. But what I document in my book is that there's this other movement that's trying to deal with corporate power, what some call the neo-brandeis movement, or some call The critics of the neo-Brandeisians call them hipster antitrust, but it's I like the term. I don't think it's pejorative, but I like the idea anyway, but these are new antitrust warriors who are pushing for better rules on antitrest and in large part pushing back against big tech, the power of the big tech and pharmaceuticals, etc. They are only just starting to look at agriculture. And they were big and powerful in the Biden administration. Like Lena Kahn was one of these big neo-Brandeisian antitrust warriors. She was made the chair of the FTC. She had a lot of influence, you know, and then we've got this sudden change of the guard. We've got the magazine now. It's really unclear as yet how things are going to play out. We see in the US anyway, this very transactional presidency. Where corporations are able to buy their way in to fancy dinners and get, you know, specific rules that they want, that's actually really concerning. But parts of the MAGA movement really are against corporate power. If we look at someone like Steve Bannon, like I saw a picture on social media of him having lunch with LenaCon because he's a big fan of hers. Who knew? You know, so I don't know how these dynamics are going to play out in this current moment. But what's Fascinating to me is that. We've got this new Brandeis movement, we've got these global social movements working on food systems, but there's very little intersection between them. And I think there is space there to seed more interaction. And this is something I'm really interested in working on is bringing people together to have these conversations across the sort of more technical antitrust world, and then the social movement world of bringing more sustainable and equitable agriculture. Anyway, and that's just, you know, part of what's going on. And I would say there's still a big role for the state because as I documented in my book, the state played a huge role in supporting a lot of the technological change that benefited corporations.

**Alison Blay Palmer:** Yeah, well, doing the research, right?

**Jennifer Clapp:** Exactly. The public research is the basis for a lot of what we have now. Exactly. But the amount of effort they're putting towards agroecology and understanding territorial markets is just a minuscule amount. So the state could play a positive role in future. It's just the capture of the state by corporations that's quite concerning. Anyway, sorry, I'm talking for too long, I'll stop.

**Alison Blay Palmer:** Thanks so much, Jennifer. Molly, I'm gonna ask you to talk about resistance in a couple of minutes, and then we're gonna hand it over to Haroon for his big picture reflections, if that's okay.

**Molly Anderson:** Thanks. And let me just say, as Jennifer was speaking, I was thinking back to the anti-industrialists in 1600s Britain, the diggers, the agrarian socialists, the agrarians populists, Gerard Winstanley. And I'm sure some of you are familiar with this. And it has always been very perplexing to me. That the the Granger movement and the very radical socialist movement in the United States didn't continue on, and the Midwest became a real, can I say, a hotbed of conservatism instead of a hot bed of radicalism. So that's an interesting aspect to me, why these movements uh, come and go, why they die. And I think some of the reason that they arise is that people are very fearful about their jobs, about their livelihoods. That was definitely the case with the diggers when, when, uh, folks were out there crashing looms, weaving looms because they were afraid that the industrialists were taking over their jobs. And I see that as an emerging resistance to AI, which is just beginning. AI is still presented as this wonderful new technology that's going to come up with a solution to global warming and all kinds of other problems. But in fact, it's eradicating jobs for so many people. And that's one of the places where the food movement and the labor movement can join together. But I agree with Jennifer that these movements are still way too siloed. They aren't working together. Several years back, some folks from the Transnational Institute and Nora McKeon and a few other people came together and tried to create the beginnings of a joined movement. And we had a website and all kinds of ambitious plans, and it has more or less withered on the vine, I'm sorry to say. Maybe there just was so much interest within each movement to tackle the problems that they could see right ahead for their own people that they didn't have the energy to reach out and try to build bridges to other movements. But I think that's really what we need at this point to come up with a coordinated proposal for a better kind of society that truly serves life and serves the public good instead of this little group of folks who are mainly interested in preserving their own power and building their own wealth. And that's who has control now. Over to Haroon. Thanks so much.

**Alison Blay-Palmer:** Thank you so much, Molly. Haroon, over to you if Molly said thanks.

**Haroon Akram-Lodhi:** Okay, well, I'm the only one that is using a PowerPoint for which I apologize, but let me just get it up here and... Hold on.

**Alison Blay-Palmer:** While you're doing that, Haroun, I'm just going to invite people to put comments and questions in the chat. We've had some great questions so far, but please feel free to post more questions. We'll get to them right after Haroun's talk. Thanks.

**Haroon Akram-Lodhi** :So first of all, of course, I want to thank by I want to begin by thanking Alison for the invitation to this really wonderful webinar. I wanna thank Liz for organizing the nuts and bolts of it. And of course Jennifer and Molly for their really quite outstanding books. I urge everyone to read them because in many ways they're quite complimentary. Molly in part speaks to the contemporary food system and where it's come from, from commons to commodity. Jennifer speaks to that process of transformation, both speak to where we are and where we need to get. So I've been asked to offer some big picture reflections on the contemporary food system which maybe can help us understand why these two books are important. In this slide, I think it's really important to begin by stressing that the contemporary food system has torn us under a 10,000-year history of closed-loop agroecological peasant farming systems. It's only in the past half-century that the Contemporary World Food System has been and is clearly and uniquely representative of the neoliberal variety of capitalism. The food system, as we've been told, is dominated by global agri-food transnational corporations, driven by the financial imperatives of short-run profitability, characterized by increasing market power in agricultural inputs, food trade and food manufacturing. So here I've got a very simplified global agro-food commodity chain, bringing together the relationship from farm to fork. It's dated because I can't afford to do the research to update it. It's from 2007 by Joachim von Braun. In 2007, the world food economy was worth $4 trillion. Today it's worth upwards of $8 trillion, but many agree that the distribution of value in the system has not significantly changed. So. In the right-hand column labeled Consumers, we see the value of the World Food Market in 2007. In the column labeled Farms, we see that 85% of the 450 million farms in 2007 were two hectares or less, while only one half of 1% of farms were over 100 hectares. Cumulatively, in 2007, farmers captured 40% of the total value produced in the food system, or $1.6 trillion. Now currently, the largest 1% to farms control approximately 70% of global farmland. And by way of contrast, approximately 510 million of the world's 550 million family farms are two hectares or less in size. These small-scale peasant farms contemplate only 12 percent of global farmland and produce about 35 percent of global food. So the dominant model of the world food system is, as we've been told, this fossil fuel-driven, large-scale, linear, flow-through, capital-intensive, industrial agricultural mega-farm. If we look at Jennifer's top 10 agricultural input suppliers 10 years ago, they only captured a miniscule portion of the value in the food system. The top 10 food processors and traders, companies like Nestle and Cargill, captured only 0.1 percent of the value produced in the food system. But move to the food retailers. The 10 largest global supermarkets captured a quarter of all the value produced in a system, over a trillion U.S. Dollars. And since 2007, as in agricultural input suppliers, food processors, food traders and food retailers, there's been extensive mergers and acquisitions. So the choice that we see in the supermarkets of the world food system is one that is embedded within these huge oligopolistic companies that use their market power to roll prices back. This is supposed to be to the benefit of their customers. But in reality, it's in the benefit of the corporate bottom line, which is profits. In the wake of the 2007 food crisis, between 2010 and 2014, the average return on invested capital in food retailing was 28%. And so with a focus on profitability, the food system bypasses the need of the food insecure who don't have enough money to spend. It's not in their interest. In a supreme twist, of course, these who don't have enough money to spend, the food insecure are largely small scale peasant farmers. And of course the food system generates low paying work for billions of people in the global south and the global north. Broadly defined the food system is the biggest employer in the world. So let me make two points and then go on to moving forward. First point is that mass produced, durable processed food has low margins and so you have to sell an awful lot of it to make money. Now this means that consumers are consuming large volumes of bad sugars and particularly high fructose corn syrup. And the result of that is the global obesity crisis, which because of its health effects, places a huge burden on the global economy. And if we think about it, researchers now argue that more people die every year from diet related diseases than die from hunger. And if you add the hungry and the obese, something like seven out of every ten people in the world are malnourished. The second point to make is that the International Panel on Climate Change has stressed that the world food system in its hydrocarbon dependence and greenhouse gas emissions. Worsens the climate crisis, degrades biodiversity, and significantly weakens the ecological foundations of the very farm production upon which it depends. So food crises are linked to climate crisis. In 2007 and 2008 the IPCC estimated that around a quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions could be linked to agriculture. By 2021 this had risen to 31 percent. So it's getting worse, not better. So it is not difficult to see that profit drives a food system that creates hunger, makes you physically unwell while burning the planet. As Molly said, it supports death, not life. So in this light, the transformation that's advocated by Jennifer and Molly is the only way of stopping the four horsemen of the food system apocalypse. Market power, profit, ill health, and climate breakdown. Now, Molly argues that there's a need for a cultural shift that embraces indigenous worldviews, regenerative agroecology and rights-based approaches, and which is led by movements for food sovereignty. But how do we get there? Now, I've always liked the approach that was described by Annie Shattuck and Eric Holt-Haminas 15 years ago in 2010. They both argued that reform and transformation are needed and that the food movement needs to be united in order to drive substantive change. And the key point they want to make is first of all, the food system has to unite, which it is not. So they use this food regime, food movements matrix to understand the politics, production models, tendencies, issues, and approaches to the food systems. They identify the business as usual neoliberal institutions, models and approaches. They identify reformists that seek to regulate markets, supply and consumption to rein in tendencies to crisis and restore stability to the existing system. They identify progressives who focus on localizing production and improving access to good healthy food. And finally, they identify the radicals, seeking to change structures and create politically enabling conditions for more equitable and sustainable food systems. Progressives and radicals both significantly overlap in their approaches, being the arms and legs of the food movement, but they are different. Now, Shattuck and Holt Jumina suggest that if progressives build their primary alliances with reformists, the contemporary food system will be strengthened and the food movement will be weakened. However, if progressive and radical trends find ways to build strategic alliances, the food movements will be strengthen. And here I would suggest it is the radicals that need to give ground to draw the progressives towards them. Progressive food justice activists and organizations seek access to healthy food for marginalized groups defined by race, gender, and economic status. Healthy food should be produced on small and medium scale family farms using sustainable production models to restore quality and authenticity to the food systems. And this is why progressives focus on localizing production and improving access to good healthy food. Radicals need to join with progressives in stronger and strengthened food movements for food justice, while radicals build within progressive movements an understanding of why food justice is not enough and that there is a need to dismantle the structures of the food system in order to build the food sovereignty that the four of us advocate. So these two movements must become are much closer aligned. But to that I would also argue that as they become more aligned, there are clearly elements within reformists that can be brought into progressive movements for food justice. Because they operate in institutional settings where rhetoric is progressive, but the reality is neoliberal. And this is one of the reasons that I work within UN institutions. I've clearly seen many proponents of regenerative agroecological farming models and localized food systems working within the interstices of organizations like the Food and Agriculture Organization. So social pressure from a united food movement bringing together some reformists, progressives and radicals. This is a broad democratic national and international alliance that is the basis of moving our food systems toward transformation. And once the food movement is united, this is the base by which it can build alliances with other social movements. Thanks very much.

**Alison Blay-Palmer:** Haroon, thank you so much for that great overview and for those closing comments. Yeah, really constructive and useful to move the conversation forward about transformation of narratives and corporate power and how we can tackle all those things. I think this is a great segue and actually anticipate some of the questions that we have in the chat. So grateful to all of you for your amazing insights. And we're now going to open up to questions. The first one is from Ruth Siegel, and she specifically addresses this question to Jennifer, but given her room's comments as well, and Molly, what you said after Ruth posted this question, it's for all of you. Hope that's okay, Ruth. So, does the work on socio-technical regime change provide any insights into how we can challenge the industrial agriculture regime? So, dealing with that intersection of society and technological Innovation, Jennifer, that you talk about so much, are there things in there that we can use to bring about change to the industrial ag system? I don't know, Jennifer if you wanna get started and then Molly and Haroon, if you have anything to add, great. Otherwise, we got lots of questions.

**Jennifer Clapp:** Right. Yeah. And I feel bad I wasn't like going back in the chat to look at all the questions. Um, so the question being, what can we learn from STS literature or? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, regime. Well, I think, I mean, what's I think really important is, like I draw a lot in my work on literature from the STS around technological lock-ins. And what's really important there, and I know that's important for transition thinking as well is like, how do we break these lock-in? And what was really interesting to me is the intersection of corporate power with lock- in. There's actually a little strand of some of that literature that looks at how lock-ins are more likely to occur in oligopolistic markets. And I think that's interesting because, you know, you've got these firms that have the power to shape technology in ways that promote lock- ins that make it even harder to break free from them. And so there's a lot of work on on breaking lock-ins and transition, but I think it has to reinsert. Aspect of addressing corporate power in terms of breaking those kind of lock-ins. What was concerning for me in terms the research I was doing was just learning the extent to which the lock-in across the different inputs that I'm talking about are really encouraged by the corporations themselves, and so you end up with, you know, hybrid seeds. But you can't harvest the corn, for example, from hybrid corn very well by hand because the stocks are stiffer, right? And so you start to get into all these technical details. Well, you need a machine to do that. And once you've got a machine, you're gonna be doing monocultures because you can do a polyculture and harvest by machine. And once your using a machine you're going to have larger land holdings because you need to be able to make enough profit to pay back what you borrowed to buy that machine, right. And then once you got the monoculture, you need. Need the pesticides and so this um and also you need the fertilizer that was a big one as well because you're if you're constantly um sowing the same crop on the same field you're going to deplete the soil nutrients more quickly and also they started you know it's there's this whole myth that hybrid corn was actually had higher yields it's just that they were able to plant it closer together because they were using fertilizer and harvesting with machinery So anyway those kind of lock-ins, I think, are important for us to acknowledge and recognize. And because corporations play, they're actually playing an active role in encouraging those kind of lock- ins through these various strategies they use. And so I found, you know, the STS kind of literature really helpful in untangling some of those aspects. But I also found that there wasn't that much in the STs literature on these kind of lockdowns across the inputs. And I I think that's something. We need to deal with. But coming back to the question of how we resist and how we address these kinds of lock-ins today definitely need to support alternative agricultural research that gets us away from those lock-in, that gets us a way from the corporate decisions about how we use tech. There's interesting work out there about how digital tech could be useful in agro-ecological contexts, but if it's only controlled by the big corporations that will ever happen. So how do you bring about this alternative research, especially when you look at who is doing agricultural research and development today? It used to be the state, primarily. Corporations playing a small role. Now corporations far surpassed state agricultural research and development and we need to address that and to acknowledge these technological lock-ins that I think are not acknowledged enough. And sorry, I'm talking too much. I'll stop there.

**Alison Blay-Palmer:** Thanks, Jennifer. Molly and Haroon, if you have brief comments, that'd be great. I'd like to get on to some other questions. Please go ahead. Yeah.

**Harroon Akram-Lodhi:** And Jennifer's raising some really great issues here. For instance, who's doing the agricultural research and to what purposes? And that much of the public agricultural research is actually being co-opted or stolen for private purposes. I want to go to the question of who will be resisting, who is going to be instrumental in doing this And how do we create these kinds of? Cross-movement collaborations. There are very few of them that I am aware of. The civil society and indigenous peoples mechanism of the committee on world food security is the best example to my knowledge. And they have created a pretty complex structure, or I should say a complicated structure of how they're going to work and how they're going to resolve. Conflicts among the different constituencies, we need something similar to that at every level in governance. Food policy councils are serving that role to some extent at the municipal level, sometimes at the state level, and the EU has a, I think they have a food policy council now that's serving the entire EU, but... It's so easy for a food policy council to be swayed, to be co-opted by corporate members who are pulled into the food policy counsel because they insist that they have to be at the table because they're so strong. And of course, being at the tables means that they are able to strengthen themselves even more. So we really need powerful conflict of interest. Mechanisms that can prevent people who have a financial interest in governance from being on those decision-making bodies. They don't have a role there. They might be able to sit at the table and listen, but they should definitely not be able to help make decisions because the decisions will be distorted. This is what civil society has fought against for some time. Their complaints against multi-stakeholder initiatives, which unfortunately is a direction that the entire UN is going now of having multi- stakeholder initiatives instead of the states making decisions. And I think it's a serious mistake. The states can make much better decisions that will serve the public interest because the delegates from the states are accountable to the public interest, unlike the people who show up for multi-stakeholder initiatives. So I'll leave it there. I'm eager to get to some of these other questions.

**Alison Blay Palmer:** Yeah, Haroon, thanks very much, Molly, for that. And I think that the role of the state is critical and also that the states actually use the tools they have in their hands to make change. That's what we need too, right? It's not that they need more tools necessarily, but they need to actually step up and do the right thing. Haroon there's a specific question for you. Do you find, do you have examples of building trust across movements and groups? This is from Rachel Chen at the Montreal Food Policy Council, especially when each group has different frameworks, languages, and ways of working. So are you familiar with any examples? If you could-

**Haroon Akram-Lodhi:** I think the key point here is that first of all, you've got to talk to each other. And that means some people have got to do the hard work of sitting in the rooms with other movements and then actually taking roles in other movements. So people actually cross-fertilize. And I do think that if you look at the history of progressive movements, this is how you've been able to drive social change. It's by... Uh, people simply listening to each other to build a broad coalition. Um, outside the food system in Canada we have an extremely interesting example from the 1990s, uh, to deal, uh to do with alternative budgeting in the city of Winnipeg in which a very broad coalition of very different interests but who were united in the fact that they didn't want the city council to cut some of their social spending came up with a unified movement called choices by speaking to each other, by going to the community town halls and speaking out in public meetings and brought together this organization which put concrete proposals to the city counsel as to how they could make their budget cuts while still maintaining social spending. And it was a very broad alliance of people. So, you know, I don't think there's any magic in saying how do you bring these things together. In terms of food policy councils, the specific, where the question has come from, this means speaking to consumer groups, of course you do that. Speaking to public sectors, of course, you do as well. But also speaking to farmers, which food policy council's don't really do at all. And thinking about, you know, the more structural determinants of what it is that they are looking at. And then in order to counter some of those structural determinates... What you can think about is what ways can food policy councils encourage or indeed mandate city councils in terms of their public procurement policies in things like schools and things like care facilities and in things like hospitals, because that can radically change the prospects of small and medium scale farmers. Last example, last example. I was astonished. You know, universities are really important mini food systems. And in the universities, by and large again, it's a few dominant companies which control those food systems, but at the University of Winnipeg, it's workers' co-op. And that workers' coop was funded by the administration. In order to have a more sustainable and a more equitable university food system. These are the things we need to think about.

**Alison Blay-Palmer:** Yeah, Haroon, those are great examples. Thank you very much, all of you, for addressing this question of how do we build resistance? There's an interesting question that we haven't really touched on, but I think it's important to bring into the conversation as well from Natasha Pannell. And she's asking if we could please speak a bit about how this power dynamic differs between developed and developing countries. And I think that's an important point to note before we wrap up. So maybe Jennifer, if you could take it away and then Molly and Harun again, if you don't mind going with that order, that seems to work really well.

**Jennifer Clapp:** Sure, and thanks, Natasha. Clearly, you've read the intro to my book since your question mentions this, and I do say I would have liked to have spent more time looking at how these factors play out in developing country context. And I do this a bit in chapter six of the book, where I talk about how the rise of these big corporations and their power is exported, or what I call, you know, shipped out to the developing world. And what we found in that period were lots of critiques echoing these earlier criticisms so interestingly, but showing how the critiques of industrial agriculture as it plays out in developing country context has different kinds of consequences because the higher percentage of the population working in agriculture, because of lower incomes, because more fragile environments. And so in many ways the sort of just the export of this model to these new contexts created new kinds of problems that I would argue that those promoting it had no conception of what they were actually playing with. But that's the sort of bigger consequences of the model. In terms of the power, it's actually quite, I would say difficult and challenging to research these kinds of dynamics in developing country contexts, especially the political power, because we do lack, and many countries lack. Uh, transparency rules. Basically disclosing lobby activity. And so it's hard to know exactly, and it's also just challenging to draw the line from this lobbyist resulted in that kind of policy outcome. So, and I would argue that's probably much more challenging in developing country context, but these other kinds of impacts as well, like the technological change impacts, they're gonna have different kinds of consequences in different cultural settings. Um, as well as the, you know, the economic consequences being much more profound when people in developing countries spend a much higher proportion of their income on food. So um, I felt, you now, the book was already over 400 pages and I was like so wanting to dig in further in that. Aspect, but I needed to finish the book. And I'm hoping that others who've done more on-the-ground work in developing countries can use the framework to bring insights from specific countries, because I realized, you know, there's so much to say about the story of India. There's so much to see about sub-Saharan African countries. There is so much in the Latin American context, and they're all different because of these different histories and these different parts the world. So in a way, I chose to focus on what was the origin region of where industrial agriculture came from, and then who were the primary markets, and it tended to be, you know, initially other markets that were producing grain for export, but then increasingly in the developing world. Anyway, I'll stop there, but I'm hoping that the insights are useful for other researchers, so that I can circle back and do deeper work. As a ground zero for the the industrial agriculture.

**Alison Blay Palmer:** Yeah, absolutely. Thanks, Jennifer. Molly.

**Molly Anderson:** Of the people who has really explored what's going on in developing countries, both in Africa and Mexico in particular, in a very accessible form is Tim Wise in his book Eating Tomorrow. He talks about the lobbying that seed corporations had done in Africa, sometimes literally writing the seed laws so that. They would be adopted by African governments. And they did do that to the detriment of farmers. So let me just say in terms of resistance, often we need people both working in the global north and in the Global South to make a change. We can't have an either or situation. By forming alliances among consumers. In the global north who are benefiting from the goods that are shipped in from the global south and alliances among farmers in the Global South, we can catch corporations in pinches. And force them to make changes. There are some good examples in the Nordic wine monopoly of changes that were affected for labor in South Africa that happened because of, well, both because of a really good documentary that was done in South African about the labor conditions in vineyards. For the workers there, but it required the pressure on the Nordic alcohol monopoly to actually make those changes that benefited workers in the global south. So we can't be looking at it's going to be either one or the other. We have to be looking at ways that they and work together.

**Alison Blay-Palmer:** Thanks, Molly. Haroon, if you want to go next, that'd be great.

**Haroon Akram-Lodhi:**  I think that the key point to really make is that the the large corporations want to extend under neoliberal forms of capitalism what they've been seeking to do of course is further extend their power over a global agriculture and that of course is the global south. Now in in some instances as in Brazil what you get is transnational corporations coming from Brazil into the global north. And they're very powerful, JBS, very powerful very dominant in the meat market but in other sectors such as inputs you've got the transnational corporations from the global North going into the global South. So the global north and the global south are becoming increasingly interdependent because of the structure of the food system. And with the continued... Efforts to develop industrial agriculture in the global south, what you get. One consequence of this, of course, is the phenomena of land grabbing. I should say, we tend to think of land grabbing in the... As something that's done by international actors. Empirically, it's actually domestic actors that do it more, but they do it in order to be able to extend industrial agriculture. So it's really very problematic because the technological changes which they then impose in agriculture sets the terms and conditions for small scale peasant farmers and they are the weakest of the weak. In the current global food system. One last example I would point out about this, you know, I was in the Western Cape earlier in the year, and you know South Africa dispossessed the Black population under apartheid. In the Western cape the average size of a farm is 2600 hectares. The largest farm is 8,000 hectares. Now you know... That wrong has never been addressed. And the land back legislation, which the South African government does have is actually remarkably weak. So there's a lot to say on this as Jennifer has said. What I would finish on is very often we think that neoliberal capitalism has disempowered the state. That's wrong. What's happened is that neoliberal capitalism has reconfigured the power of the state to support the globalization of these firms. Thanks.

**Alison Blay-Palmer:** Yeah, those are all incredibly. Thanks Haroon for those, those insightful remarks and for making the conversation even bigger than it was to start off with. I really appreciate that. I'm just going to put one final question to you that you can address as you're giving us your closing comments. Because we're just about out of time. We have a question here from Ksenia Portnova. And I'm just going to paraphrase it a little bit. They're asking about food sovereignty and whether it can be fully realized within a capitalist framework or not. And does it ultimately, Molly, as you were suggesting, require a post-capitalist transformation at the same time? And if yes, I'm gonna prompt all of you to speak about what that would look like in terms of economic and political systems building on Ksenia's question. So, please. Maybe we'll switch it up a little bit. Maybe Haroon, if you start and then we go to Molly, you're still the ham in the sandwich, Molly, sorry. And then Jennifer, we'll give you the last word. How's that?

**Haroon Akram Lodhi:** I can be very quick on this because of the time constraint. First of all, is food sovereignty compatible with a capitalist economy? No, you need a post-capitalist system, absolutely. Second, what will that look like? I'm not a fortune teller, we have to build it.

**Alison Blay-Palmer:** Thanks, Haroon. Molly.

**Molly Anderson:** That was a great question. Thank you so much for raising it. And I agree with Haroon, we can't get there in a capitalist economy, in a capitalists society, especially a neoliberal economy because everything is pushing for power to be concentrated away from the consumers and farmers. So. Again, I don't know what that's going to look like. And I would love to be working with other people to try to create the vision for that post-capitalist food system. Well, maybe a post-Capitalist. World. We're all working in the same direction.

**Alison Blay-Palmer:** Thanks, Molly, for that. That's awesome. Jennifer, over to you for the last word and then I'll just have some wrap-up comments. Thanks.

**Jennifer Clapp:** Yeah, sure. No, in terms of the question, too, I would say it also depends on your definition of capitalism. And I think it's something we need to do more fundamental work on and have agreement because I don't think a post-capitalist vision should eschew markets altogether. I think there's some role for markets. It's just the kind, you know, industrial capitalism, which Capital ownership, all of this massive investment, basically promoting the big technologicalization of the economy. That's the kind of capitalism I think we should be really worried about and not necessarily throw out the idea of markets. And this is, you know, the work we've been doing with iPost Food about territorial markets. There's a role for this kind of market exchange that isn't, have this fundamental goal of expansion and control. So we need to differentiate when we talk about that, but I think it's really important that we definitely dismantle that kind of capitalism that is expanding and controlling. And that's where we need to join up the movements pushing for food sovereignty and alternative food economies with the antitrust folks that can at least begin the first steps of taking away the power of those firms to do that kind expansion. So I think there's definitely work there. And if it's okay, Alison, I'll just say two things. I just wanted to emphasize that I'm really glad that Haroun brought up these questions of land. And I just want to say that was something that in my own work, I wasn't thinking I was writing about land, but land is everywhere and land is so important. And the rise of the industrial agricultural model changed our land ownership patterns. It changed people's land rights. It changed human rights. That change. Ecology, it changed everything. And so land is so deeply connected to this question of corporate power and in many, many ways, not just land grabbing, but also through the promotion of the industrial model. And also I just wanted to reflect on Molly's, you know, focus on narratives because these narratives were in the background as I was working on my book and I had I had more time or more brain power, I would have woven them in more effectively and through the but it's really interesting. These narratives really did support these transitions to these different food regimes, you know, like producing food for export to Europe. And then it was like, no, wait a minute, you're producing too much food. Oh, wait, no. We were wrong. You can produce more food so long as you send it to the third world. No, wait. You're maybe producing too. Oh, but you need agricultural biotechnology to feed the world. And now it's digital agriculture, you know? And so these, the narrative is shifting, but in many ways it was sort of like moving forward, coming back, moving forward coming back. And I think it's important to understand that those stories. Have changed over time and But they often are supporting the big agriculture at the end of the day

**Alison Blay-Palmer:** Perfect timing. Thank you, Molly. Yes, okay. 30 seconds, Molly.

**Molly Anderson:** Allison, I know you're trying to wrap things up and we only have one minute left, but some great things coming up in the chat. And there is work about post-capitalist food systems that's emerging. There's a group CERN that's working on post-Capitalism. Catherine Gibson, the Gibson Graham group is working on that. Social and solidarity economies. Glad to see that Jeff Peastrack had brought that up. So it's actually working in many places. I have a whole chapter in my book on decommodifying food systems. That's a beginning to that. Over to you, Allison.

**Alison Blay-Palmer:** That's a perfect end to our fantastic webinar. Thank you so much, all of you for participating. Thanks to Liz for making this possible on the technology and keeping these cats herded. And thanks also to all of in our audience for participating and listening so attentively, for providing us with excellent questions and provoking further directions that we can all move in together. I'm hearing that there's a lot of interest in this topic. So I suspect that our UNESCO chair will maybe have another webinar about power and resistance in the food system and continue the conversation in the future in the not too distant future, hopefully. In the meantime, take good care of yourselves and your loved ones and family and friends. Work with everybody as much as we can to. Do what we can in terms of resistance. And thanks everybody for participating. It was lovely to have these moments with you. Everybody be well. Take good care.