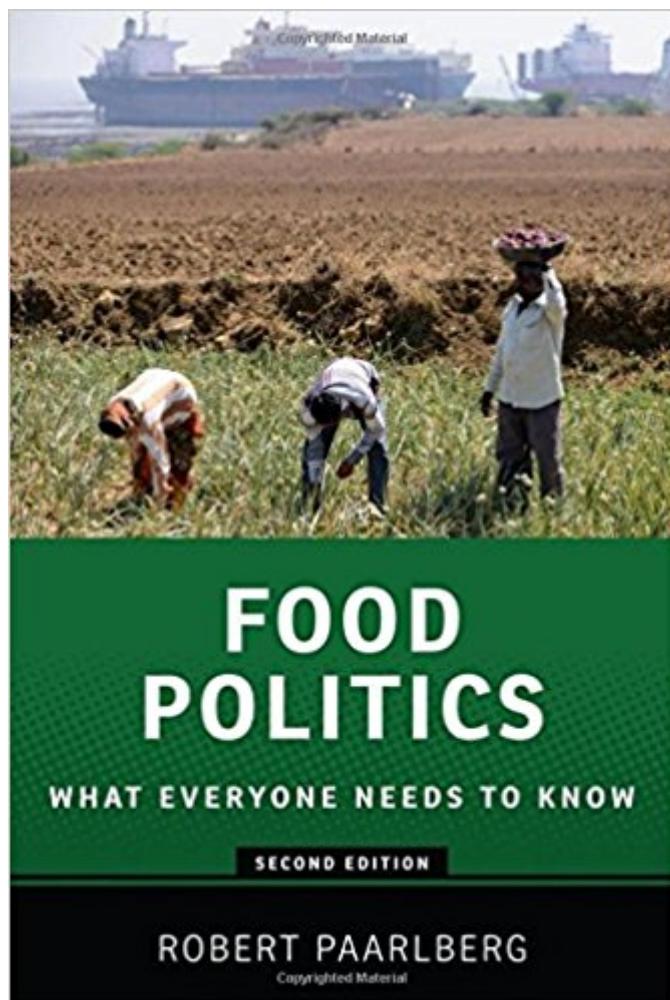


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# Food Politics: What Everyone Needs To Know®



## Synopsis

The politics of food is changing fast. In rich countries, obesity is now a more serious problem than hunger. Consumers once satisfied with cheap and convenient food now want food that is also safe, nutritious, fresh, and grown by local farmers using fewer chemicals. Heavily subsidized and underregulated commercial farmers are facing stronger push back from environmentalists and consumer activists, and food companies are under the microscope. Meanwhile, agricultural success in Asia has spurred income growth and dietary enrichment, but agricultural failure in Africa has left one-third of all citizens undernourished - and the international markets that link these diverse regions together are subject to sudden disruption. The second edition of *Food Politics: What Everyone Needs to Know*® has been thoroughly updated to reflect the latest developments and research on today's global food landscape, including biofuels, the international food market, food aid, obesity, food retailing, urban agriculture, and food safety. The second edition also features an expanded discussion of the links between water, climate change, and food, as well as farming and the environment. New chapters look at livestock, meat and fish and the future of food politics. Paarlberg's book challenges myths and critiques more than a few of today's fashionable beliefs about farming and food. For those ready to have their thinking about food politics informed and also challenged, this is the book to read. *What Everyone Needs to Know*® is a registered trademark of Oxford University Press.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

What a terrific book for teaching! The only complaint the students had was: 'it's too optimistic.' So then we read The End of Food and -- you guessed it -- 'it's too pessimistic.' That's actually a good pairing: Paarlberg's techno-market optimism is a good foil for doomsday scenarios so common in the media. The formatting in Paarlberg's book is user-friendly, intuitive. The Q and A format is stimulating and retains focus for each section. Paarlberg's prose is admirably clear and jargon-free except when explaining jargon that students will encounter in political discourse. The coverage is broad and many concrete examples illustrate important points effectively, culled from experiences all over the world. Food Politics is a sophisticated treatment of a very broad canvass of important issues.

"Food Politics" provides a comprehensive, readable summary of the topic, well organized in 15 short chapters. Each chapter follows a question/answer format, with an obvious attempt to present the different sides of this highly politicized topic. Paarlberg's style is crisp and aimed at someone seeking to get up to speed on the topic. Along the way, you will pick up many interesting facts and arguments that will keep you in the conversation the next time this comes up at a social event.

Highly recommended.

How do I give this book zero stars? How does one take an academic book seriously where the author provides no citations for his claims? How does one take a book seriously where the author writes "Some analysts concluded" (page 24, one of many examples), but neither tells us who these analysts are or gives us a citation to examine their work? How does one take seriously an author who writes in vague generalities without showing evidence or causation? Is it too much to expect for an author to show evidence to back up their argument? Is it too much to expect that an author demonstrates an understanding of critical thinking? Paarlberg fails to construct an argument supported by evidence and logic. Reading this book was an exercise in frustration. I kept finding myself saying "Really? How do you know that? Where is the evidence?" I had high expectations for this work as it is published by Oxford and am sadly disappointed. Oxford University Press should be ashamed.

This book is that rare thing, an excellent introduction to many of the most important issues in our global polity, economy and society. I would hope everybody reads it for that reason. It is clear, concise, and very readable -- just the thing to connect students with fundamental issues they won't

hear much about on FOX or CNN, until the next food crisis hits. It is much easier to go long than to go short, so I admire this book very much. The range of issues he covers and his care in summing up debates are wonderful.

Interesting book. Unfortunately I had not given much thought to the politics of food growing. The book seemed to be unbiased and accurate.

This book has some strong positive attributes. The author is highly informed and reasonable. He corrects many statistical misunderstandings. There are also serious negatives. His sources are from the status quo food complex (agricultural universities located in political zones with a skewed bias and questionable "institutes" formed by food corporations) and what is far more important, he ignores both economic anthropology and the perspective of the traditional farmer (read a superb explanation of "sensible decisions within tight constraints" in Mark Greengrass, 2014, pp. 73-5). Paarlberg's conclusion seems to be that, internationally, the food future will be more of the same: supermarkets, processed foods, a few corporate giants. His defense of the self-regulating market in a few places is exasperating, since in England the manipulation of food prices dates at least from 1180 AD (when forestalling to raise prices artificially was prohibited by law and the law ignored). Paarlberg generally calls for more intelligent institutional intervention in food markets and who could disagree? This book will serve readers who need to acquire basic familiarity with a vast subject.

This is an interesting little book that's a quick read. I bought it while taking Rob's class at HKS (which was PHENOMENAL!), but am glad that I'll have my Kindle copy if I want to look back at it.

Rob always has strong opinions and articulates them well; this up-to-date work is no exception

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