



# Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World Food System

By Raj Patel

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**Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World Food System** By Raj Patel

“One of the most dazzling books I have read in a very long time. The product of a brilliant mind and a gift to a world hungering for justice.”—Naomi Klein, author of *No Logo* and *The Shock Doctrine*

Half the world is malnourished, the other half obese—both symptoms of the corporate food monopoly. To show how a few powerful distributors control the health of the entire world, Raj Patel conducts a global investigation, traveling from the “green deserts” of Brazil and protester-packed streets of South Korea to bankrupt Ugandan coffee farms and barren fields of India. What he uncovers is shocking—the real reasons for famine in Asia and Africa, an epidemic of farmer suicides, and the false choices and conveniences in supermarkets. Yet he also finds hope—in international resistance movements working to create a more democratic, sustainable, and joyful food system.

From seed to store to plate, *Stuffed and Starved* explains the steps to regain control of the global food economy, stop the exploitation of farmers and consumers, and rebalance global sustenance.

**RAJ PATEL**, policy analyst for **Food First**, a leading food think tank, is a visiting scholar at the UC Berkeley Center for African Studies. He has written for the Los Angeles Times and the Guardian, and though he has worked for the World Bank, WTO, and the UN, he’s also been tear-gassed on four continents protesting them.

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**Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

Journalist and scholar Patel (*Promised Land: Competing Visions of Agrarian Reform*) focuses attention on the unfortunate irony of the current world food situation, in which the imbalance of world resources has created an epidemic of obesity in some parts of the world while millions in the "Global South" endure starvation. To make sense of the situation, Patel addresses the entire system of global food production, distribution and sale, concluding that "unless you're a corporate food executive, the food system isn't working for you." "Record levels of diet-related disease" plague consumers, cruel market realities (and unsympathetic officials) doom farmers, and communities are beset by a supermarket system that provides "cheap calories" while "bleeding local economies." Patel analyzes what can be done, presenting logical recommendations and strategies for individuals—eat locally, seasonally, and ecologically; support local business, workers' rights, and living wages; create a sustainable food system—though several primary components of his big vision (including ending agribusiness subsidies and corporate farming, and levying a tax on processed foods) are clearly a long way off. Those concerned about global health, social justice and the environment will be aware of many of the issues presented here, but should still find much to learn. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Review

"Compelling. At first glance, Raj is another depressing voice in the chorus. But in traveling the world researching the book, he also found hope in international social movements working to create more democratic, sustainable, and joyful food systems."

—**Mark Bittman**, *New York Times*

"For anyone attempting to make sense of the world food crisis, or understand the links between U.S. farm policy and the ability of the world's poor to feed themselves, *Stuffed and Starved* is indispensable."

—**Michael Pollan**, author of *The Omnivore's Dilemma*

"One of the most dazzling books I have read in a very long time. The product of a brilliant mind and a gift to a world hungering for justice."

—**Naomi Klein**, author of *No Logo*

"Patel's broad treatment helps the layman connect the dots, as well as hear the voices of those who occupy the lower rungs of the global food chain."

—*Time Magazine*

"A blistering indictment of the policies of multinational agribusiness conglomerates and charges that their drive for profit at any cost has left the developing world starving while wealthy countries like the United States are experiencing epidemic obesity rates and related health problems."

—*Newsweek*

"For Patel, it is a short step from Western consumers 'engorged and intoxicated' with cheap processed food to Mexican and Indian farmers committing suicide because they can't make a living. The 'food industry's pabulum' makes us all cogs in an evil machine."

—*The New Yorker*

"A book full of insight, that makes an important contribution to understanding that the politics of food is not a narrow matter of shopping, ethical or otherwise."

—*The Guardian*

"*Stuffed and Starved* remains a brilliant didactic account of the powerful interests (dis)organizing our food systems, and why, when food is an object of profit, there are no *modern* solutions to *modern* problems such as endemic hunger, ill-health and environmental degradation...Raj Patel's unique sensibility and intelligence in evaluating grassroots alternatives provide a road map to understanding and changing the world through re-centering food as a cultural anchor rather than a product, especially at this moment of environmental uncertainty." —**Philip David McMichael, author of *Development and Social Change***

"With its conversational tone, sense of humor, and real-life vignettes from the author's travels around the world, the book is accessible to general readers and will be as classroom-friendly as Michael Pollan's *Omnivore's Dilemma*." —**Reference and Research Book News**

#### About the Author

Raj Patel, former policy analyst for Food First, a leading food think tank, is a visiting scholar at the UC Berkeley Center for African Studies. He has written for the Los Angeles Times and the Guardian, and though he has worked for the World Bank, WTO, and the UN, he's also been tear-gassed on four continents protesting them.

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##### **Jared Hoskins:**

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