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Hungry for Progress?

ENACTING FOOD SOVEREIGNTY
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Hungry for Progress? Enacting Food Sovereignty

By

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**I dedicate this thesis to my godmother and aunty, Debbie Cook.
I will never forget those first lessons you gave me about believing in myself.**



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Abstract:

This research builds upon and utilises an emerging field of food and development theory – food sovereignty – as it discusses possibilities for an alternative food system, where the production, distribution and consumption of food may be guided by principles that foster a holistic, ethical and sustainable approach.

The theory of food sovereignty has grown from the writings of La Via Campesina (a global movement of food producers in the Global South) and offers critiques of the current food system, food security and corporate globalisation. As I grapple with the key principles of food sovereignty and explore the ways in which they are visible within Wellington, Aotearoa, I interact with five key organisations and present ways their actions foster a food sovereignty paradigm. By blending the theoretical with the practical, this thesis presents the lived experiences of people working in; Koanga Institute, Biofarm, Commonsense Organics, Workerbe and Kaibosh.

Bringing together the perspectives of these five organisations with relevant literature, this thesis first discusses some potential market-based solutions for achieving ethical consumption. It then examines ideas around the move to ‘grow something’ as a tool for resistance, reclaiming spaces and healing; to finally explore the ways in which a more holistic approach to food can nurture spiritual connections in profound and unique ways.

Hungry for Progress? Enacting Food Sovereignty is a qualitative research project that embraces notions of positionality and reflexivity and shares my journey of *living* this research. Through exploring the food sovereignty narratives and worldviews, I seek to promote empowerment among individuals and organisations through constructing knowledge that supports postcolonial, feminist and activist interactions so that *good change* in the food system (and beyond) may become a reality.

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Acronyms:

ATA – Applied Thematic Analysis

DSIR – Department of Scientific and Industrial Research

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FDI – Foreign Direct Investment

GE – Genetic Engineering

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GM – Genetic Modification

HFCS – High Fructose Corn Syrup

IHER – Indigenous Human-Environment Relationship

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

OECD – Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

TNCs – Transnational Corporations

TPPA – Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement

UN – United Nations

WFP – World Food Programme

WHO – World Health Organisation

WW2 – World War II

Prologue:

As I sit at the very desk where this research has been written, there is one thing that I can share with you, a small insight into me and this research. It is by no accident that I was drawn to researching food. Whilst most people have some form of relationship with food, for me, food runs deeper. Food and its inextricable ties to life – make it life. The way it flows and weaves throughout each day, food not only connects us to one another, it connects us through time and space.

Food is part of my identity. For my parents, it could have been yesterday that I was a toddler sitting on the kitchen floor, wrists deep in an olive jar, munching on my Italian heritage. For my family and friends, food is the way I show love as I joyfully prepare a meal to enjoy together. My love for food characterises me. But food is not always tied to joy. Food also has the power to haunt. I can still recall the painful sting of shame I felt when my lunchbox did not have the right food in it. The kids who used to tease me had no idea that the food in that box had a deeper significance than what I was eating for lunch, that food was a poignant reminder that my family and I were going through a period of loss.

At its heart, food is survival. I remember learning this as I heard my nonna's story in which following World War II, her child passed in her arms because of her inability to produce breast milk because she herself was starving.

This research is not simply about food and managing food resources. It is more. It is about understanding the experiences of humanity and the ubiquitous and unrelenting power of food.



Chapter 1: Introduction

Motivation for This Research Project

Food is life. Physiologically, food is not only a necessity for human survival but the preparation of food and the invention of cooking by our ancestors was key to human evolution. Scientists believe this is because cooking increases the metabolic energy available for consumption, which has allowed the human brain to evolve to become *Homo sapien* (Fonseca-Azevedo & Herculano-Houzel, 2012). Captured in the age-old adage 'you are what you eat', food is important to our health on a cellular level and has been represented as such throughout human history. The cultivation of food is documented through narratives and illustrations as many cultures and religions have been shaped by food (Roberts, 2008). Food plays a role in identity-making, and for some cultures, certain foods are sacred, like the importance of kumara in Māori culture (Meyer, 2014; Roberts et al., 2004). Socially, food brings people together and the experience of sharing food can signify social union. This is evident through the celebration of national dishes and special events based around food, like Ramadan or a wedding breakfast. Food is important to the social fabric of society. Politically, however, food is complex.

Food tells a story on the world stage like no other development issue. The current food system reflects patterns of power and privilege and has been socially constructed over time and space (Young, 2012). Daily decisions around food can be a constant compromise between the different stakeholders in the production, distribution and consumption of food, as businesses seek profits and governments and international institutions seek political power (Patel, 2007). For this reason, the study of food in development is crucial; 'The food system has become the most important globally embedded network of production and consumption; its integral connections with the petroleum industry in recent decades only serve to confirm its centrality and significance' because it shows how industries are inescapably linked through food production and consumption (Young, 2012; 2). The management of the global food network is extremely complex, not only because it includes understanding the production, distribution and consumption of food, which entails the management of the world's resources, international relations and solving the unavoidable issues that come along with that, but also because these issues often pertain to the economic, social, political, environmental and spiritual spheres simultaneously.

This can make interacting with food in socially just ways overwhelming, because the problems created by and within the food system can simultaneously feel far away and close to home. Acknowledging the personal and political connections many people have around food, food

sovereignty – an emerging approach within the development paradigm – serves as a lens to explore the contemporary food system and support people in making informed food decisions.

The Development Paradigm

As this research is situated within the development paradigm, it is necessary to explore what I mean by ‘development’. This is not a simple process as development is known as a concept, discipline, theory and ideology (Chambers, 2004; Curtin, 1995; McEwan, 2008; McMichael, 2001; Young, 2012); and for many scholars defining development is contentious. For instance, Sachs, a key post-development writer, states that development is ‘development-as-growth’ (2013; 22) where globalisation and economic progress have sprouted from President Truman’s 1949 promise that ‘poor nations would catch up with the rich’ (2013; 23-24); Later he writes that development is a concept of ‘monumental emptiness, carrying a vaguely positive connotation’ (2013; 25). Brigg (2002) cautions against appropriating historical events in development and interprets Truman’s 1949 inauguration promise as a possible ‘afterthought in Truman’s overall speech’ (Rist as cited in Brigg, 2002; 424). This shows how development can be reflexive in nature, as looking back in hindsight on approaches to development can inform new understandings (Pieterse, 1998); a notion integral to post-development. This can result in ambiguous definitions, such as Chambers definition that development means *good change*;

‘Development has been taken to mean different things at different times, in different places and by different people in different professions and organisations...it has been normative; and it has involved change. So the underlying meaning of development has been good change’ (Chambers, 2004; 2).

Although this thesis adopts a normative definition of development as ‘*good change*’ there are some inherent issues with this, the most predominant being the question of who is defining what is *good*?

Whilst, arguably, many have enacted development approaches with the intention of creating *good change*, in some cases this has not been the reality. This is generally due to the inextricable dimensions of power within development, as due to inequality (and inequity), the problem and respective solutions within the development paradigm are defined differently, by different people. This notion is well-expressed in Pieterse’s (1998) work with the catchy title ‘My Paradigm or Yours?’, and becomes an issue when people’s rights to agency are compromised (Pieterse, 1998). This is because often compromise is reached through negotiating the definition of a right and its corresponding need and this may be mediated through hierarchical structures.

For McEwan (2008), a key writer in postcolonial development, this issue is evident when development is reviewed as a 'dominant Western discourse' (2000; 1), or is tied to modernisation¹ theory, where traditionally economic growth is argued as a way to 'relieve poverty and improve the standard of living of a nation' (2000; 12).

On one hand, such institutionalisation² of development is dubious because the policies, programmes and projects enacted in the name of 'development' can be confined to the binary portrayal of development actors. This is evident in the coining of the terms 'The First World', 'The Rich', 'The West' and 'the Global North', and their respective counterparts 'The Third World', 'The Poor', 'The Rest' and 'the Global South' (Chambers, 1994; Hall, 2002; Pieterse, 1998; Sachs, 2013; Young, 2012). Such binary projections often frame the former as permitted to 'know', 'act', 'develop' and 'enjoy' the moral prerogative, whilst the latter are assumed to be 'ignorant', 'passive' and 'deserving' recipients of the actions of others (Curtin, 1995; 66).

On the other hand, it is problematic to reduce the institutionalisation of development to such simplistic terms (Pieterse, 1998), as 'development can have the effect of directing people's lives in a particular way without totalising the force relations involved' (Brigg, 2002; 433). While development may be reduced to a 'mainstream'³ discourse of modernisation and economic growth, 'such ascription of agency and intention, regardless of its parsimony, is not adequate to understanding the multidimensionality of social and political relations, including the role of contingency which led to the formation of the development project' (Brigg, 2002; 424). Rather, development as *good change* exists beyond such binary portrayals and is enacted through personal actions, ideas, thoughts and beliefs (Chambers, 1994; Hall, 2002; Young, 2012). It is also enacted on varying levels (locally, institutionally, nationally, regionally and internationally), and by a diverse range of people; so effectively development as 'evolution' or 'progress' is inescapable (McEwan, 2008; 12) because change is inevitable (Chambers, 2004).

Consequently, the development paradigm does not consist of 'either-or' forms of *good change* but 'both-and', because development, in this sense, is omnipresent. Nevertheless, employing development discourse requires a certain level of homogenisation, where people and places

¹ Modernisation theory – a prominent theory in development – is often cited as the 'mainstream' form of development and argues economic growth as a key strategy for developing (Pieterse, 1998; Young, 2012). Through promoting big infrastructure, industrial development and urban expansion (Young, 2012), modernisation has been problematic in many places, however specifically the repercussions in the food system will be explored in this thesis.

² With the term 'institutionalisation' I am referring to major institutional stakeholders within the development paradigm. These stakeholders, like the United Nations [UN] formed following Truman's speech and are said to be concentrations of 'development professionals, power and intellectual capability in the world' (Chambers, 2004; 6).

³ See the 'Important Terms' section.

are grouped and discussed. This does not mean development is without a moral prerogative to promote equality and sustainability, but illustrates the difficulty in talking about development without making some assumptions.

This is evident in Chambers' call (2004; 10-11) for 'responsible well-being' which he says, embraces development as 'well-being for all' and equity as achieved through 'putting the last first and the first last'. Such a call is complex because it assumes that the 'first' and the 'last' are easily identifiable and also want to be identified as such. It is further complicated by Escobar's (2000; 12) awareness that a post-development approach is not without problems as previously, post-development has been criticised for romanticising local traditions and social movements; 'ignoring that the local is embedded in global power relations and that, indeed, many struggles today are about access to development'. In examining sustainability, Sachs (2013; 22) writes that the development-as-growth paradigm is 'compelled to push either equity without ecology, or ecology without equity', because such a model has created a 'desire for justice'. In this, he examines the pursuit for the Global South to consume goods and services in the same manner as the Global North, and not only argues such pursuit as ecologically unviable, but also promotes a sense of post-development that delinks 'the desire for equity from economic growth' and 'relinks it to community-and culture-based notions of well-being' (2013; 24). Moreover, Sachs signals the need for 'wealth alleviation' as well as 'poverty alleviation' (2013; 27), highlighting that certain terms are employed in development discourse that are undoubtedly problematic but also necessary.

Though this definition of *good change* is not without problems, I contend that it is appropriate for this thesis because it allows space for an exploration of what development is. It is harmonious with Escobar's (2000; 13-14) reasoning that the journey of development is not about finding the 'right' notion of development but about imagining a 'utopian possibility of reconceiving and reconstructing the world from the perspective of, and along with, those subaltern groups that continue to enact a cultural politics of difference as they struggle to defend their places, ecologies, and cultures'.

Food in the Development Paradigm

Because development can be *good change* and because personal actions, ideas, thoughts and beliefs are tied within the food system, food and development are inherently linked. Through everyday interactions with food, people are placed within a complex, globally embedded food system that encompasses many of the issues facing humanity today. This was made clear through the framing of the 'World Food Crisis' [WFC] in which record levels

of hunger were reported in hand with record-high harvests and profit for agribusinesses⁴ in 2008 (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). This concerned many politicians, policy-makers and activists (Holt-Giménez, 2008; Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; McMichael, 2009; McMahon, 2013; Rosset, 2009); and Zoellick, president of the World Bank at the time claimed that the world was 'only one poor harvest away from chaos' (World Bank as cited in Young, 2012; 2). Notably, perceptions and understandings of the WFC are found within two main discourses of food and development; Food Security and Food Sovereignty. Whilst these theories are further defined in Chapter 2, briefly described; Food security is an approach that promotes a mentality of 'the Global North need to feed the poor [the Global South]' (Jarosz, 2014; McMichael, 2001). Emerging from international relations and early development discourse, food security arises from modernised thinking that has colonial and capitalist underpinnings (Curtin, 1995; Heynen and Robbins, 2006). Conversely, food sovereignty promotes a discourse of 'the Global South will feed themselves' (Jarosz, 2014). Born out of the 1990's anti-globalisation movement (where arguably the target was corporate globalisation) and encompassing indigenous roots, food sovereignty is a rights-based, bottom-up, postcolonial and post-development paradigm that is critical of food security approaches (Jarosz, 2014; Patel, 2009; Wittman, 2011; Villalba, 2013).

Through exploring the complexities tied to the definition of development as *good change* and how it is connected with food and development, I now return to the title of this thesis, '*Hungry for Progress? Enacting Food Sovereignty*'. The term 'hungry' has a dual meaning; whilst the word 'hungry' is employed to communicate a need for food, it can also convey a want or urge for what is lacking. Contrastingly, the word 'progress' communicates a form of improvement or development. Thus in this thesis I am not only exploring approaches to solving hunger, but also to development itself.

Research Scope

In this research I explore the theoretical and practical applications of food sovereignty. I do this through, after discussing this concept in depth, engaging with the lived experiences of participants working within five selected organisations in Wellington, Aotearoa⁵. I have identified these organisations as fostering the food sovereignty paradigm and present their narratives, drawing parallels between their worldviews and the discourses within literature. The literature that supports this research reflects international, national and local narratives where food sovereignty is being enacted worldwide by groups and individuals. This supports

⁴ A term common in the literature which combines 'agriculture' with 'business'; 'agribusiness'. It represents companies that make profits through industrial agriculture (which includes the production of food) (Young, 2012).

⁵ The Māori term for New Zealand.

Young's comments (2012; 29) that 'given the complexity of the food system, employing various scales for analysis helps illuminate some otherwise very complicated interactions'. Through selecting organisations that work within different areas of the food system, this research engages with the varying aspects of the system and the life cycle of food.

This research aims to construct knowledge around food sovereignty and how it can be practiced in this context, in order for food sovereignty to be more approachable, tangible and/or relevant to people seeking to make informed, ethical and political decisions within the food system.

Important Terms in this Thesis

'In language we coordinate our behaviour, and together in language we bring forth our world', (Chambers, 2004; 2)

Postcolonialism

The postcolonial development paradigm which, though contentious and debated by many scholars, is about recognising the impacts of (and structural continuance of) colonisation and imperialism⁶, how they have shaped history, and how they are currently shaping the world (McEwan, 2008). Hence, wherever possible, this research acknowledges the impacts of colonisation 'not only in terms of how [it has] shaped contemporary cultures and economies, but particularly as [it] relate[s] to power relations' (McEwan, 2008; 4). Therefore, whilst I am aware of Smith's (1999) critique of Postcolonialism as naming the world as 'post-colonial' where colonialism is 'finished business'; this research argues postcolonial development as in accordance with theories of decolonisation, which is 'now recognised as a long-term process involving bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic and psychological divesting of colonial power' (Smith, 1999; 98). Thus the terms of 'the Global North', 'North' or 'Northern' and 'the Global South', 'South' or 'Southern' are employed as they are consistent with postcolonial approaches (McEwan, 2008).

Similarly, this research will occasionally employ 'The West' or 'Western' and 'The Rest' or 'The Other' or 'Othering' (Hall, 2002). The term Western is used not only to denote a system of representation, where The West is 'developed, industrialised, urbanised, capitalist, secular, and modern' but also a form of ideology in which Western 'provides a criteria of evaluation against which other societies are ranked' (Hall, 2002; 57).

Whilst colonisation eventuated through a plurality of experiences (and therefore refraining from re-homogenising the experience of colonisation is necessary), the postcolonial lens

⁶ Henceforth both colonisation and imperialism will be referred to as 'colonisation' as they are linked and different sides of the same coin.

presented is particularly critical of the way colonisation has conjured conceptualisations of the world and how they relate to the food system. Specifically, distance (Smith, 1999) and compartmentalisation (Villalba, 2013) are argued as damaging remnants of colonisation.

These are seen as deriving from the concept of 'the self' which evolved from Greek philosophy (Smith, 1999; 47). From its inception, many Europeans began to regard themselves as distinct from (and often superior to) nature; where they put their wants before the needs of the ecosystem, giving rise to anthropocentrism. Through a process of comparison with what was known, and the discovery of the 'new', early scientists began categorising and compartmentalising species, where every aspect of the compartmentalisation process warranted a new name (Smith, 1999). Naming not only reiterated an internalised system of hierarchy (where Europe had long experienced social stratification) but also gave the subtle illusion of ownership; where binary thinking determined if one was stronger or weaker than its counterpart, more or less aesthetically appealing, and so on (Smith, 1999). This process of compartmentalisation is well captured in Darwin's 'Survival of the Fittest' theory where man was placed at the top of the 'food chain' because man 'dominated' the natural world. Through the discovery of sciences like psychology, the practice of compartmentalisation also fragmented 'the self' into the mind, body and spirit, where they were henceforth viewed in isolation from one another (Smith, 1999). This anthropocentrism and practice of compartmentalisation contrasts with many indigenous ontologies where each species is inherently interconnected and contributes to the natural balance of life, a philosophy captured in the term 'relationality'⁷ (Villalba, 2013; 1430). Underpinning indigenous worldviews is a practice of relativity where one's self is defined through the ways one is connected (Villalba, 2013).

Understandings of anthropocentrism and compartmentalisation have been inherited by the contemporary food system and are visible through the wants of the colonised consumer. As the colonised consumer may buy certain foods in unsustainable ways at the expense of a healthy ecosystem, they may view their purchases as owned by them; they may see their actions as separated from a complex food system which is too often inflicting harm on other people, animals and ecosystems. This is because the system has been forged alongside a system of colonisation. Whilst I will return to this point in Chapter 7, I argue that through adopting processes for decolonisation, the colonised consumer can change to decolonise their food consumption.

⁷ I am aware of the complications to the essentialist portrayal of indigenous cultures and peoples and explore this further in Chapter 7.

Activism

Whilst the term activism is difficult to define, because it can be interpreted in different ways, this research employs the term to denote the importance of acknowledging individual acts in social change (Martin, Hanson & Fontaine, as cited in Brown & Pickerill, 2009; 25). Activism in this sense is about people interacting with the 'system' in ways that might lead to changing it (Leitner, Sheppard & Sziarto, as cited in Brown & Pickerill, 2009; 25). This is in response to the aforementioned comment that development as *good change* is effected through personal actions, ideas, thoughts and beliefs (Chambers, 2004).

Please note that occasionally people are referred to as activists in this thesis. This is not necessarily because they have identified themselves as such, but rather because the term activism or activist is signalling certain actions as effecting social change, and more importantly *good change*. Whilst I am aware that defining someone as being an 'activist' can be problematic as activist definitions are 'fluid' (Brown & Pickerill, 2009; 25), the word has been used as a deliberate form of politicising this research.

Globalisation vs. Corporate Globalisation

Globalisation is a term used throughout this research and whilst it is debated by scholars, it is defined as;

'a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organisation of social relations and transactions assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact – generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power' (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt & Perraton, as cited in Young, 2012; 98)

This thesis adopts a 'transformationalist' position, where globalisation is both significantly effecting change and malleable, where there are 'diverse potential trajectories' (Young, 2012; 99). This contrasts with 'corporate globalisation' which McMichael (2005; 270) defines as 'accumulation by dispossession', and is devastating the Global South.

Research Aims

This research advances the current knowledge and interpretations of the concept of food sovereignty, as it builds upon existing discourse and highlights potential applications for theoretical framing. Grounded in the Wellington, Aotearoa context, this research also makes tangible suggestions for solutions whereby it presents discourses and information that may be applied to people's daily interactions with food. This is covered through exploration of the following questions.

- What are key aspects of food sovereignty and how can they be used in practice?
- What are some market solutions amidst a food system that is unequal and unsustainable?
- How does food sovereignty promote resilience in face of rising health and resource concerns?
- How can people better connect through a food sovereignty paradigm?

Thesis Structure

This thesis consists of eight chapters.

After this Introduction chapter, I explore the genealogy and definitions of food security and food sovereignty in Chapter 2. This is followed by the building of the food sovereignty paradigm which will be used to contextualise the findings and discussion. In Chapter 3, key factors surrounding the food system in Aotearoa are explored, followed by brief introductions to the five organisations and key participants in this research. Then, Chapter 4 presents the pillars of this research that have informed the qualitative methods used to construct knowledge.

Chapter 5 investigates key problems within a marketised food system and presents some market-based solutions that the participants are enacting. Chapter 6 examines some 'knock-on' effects of the marketised food system and addresses ways to undercut the vicious cycles created within the food system through the discourse of 'Grow Something'. Then, Chapter 7 considers intangible findings and emphasises the importance of 'connection' and how it interweaves with interpretations and enactments of food sovereignty. Finally, Chapter 8 presents my own story of a food sovereignty paradigm shift which is followed by an overview analysis and summary of this research through reflecting on the research questions and limitations.

Chapter 2: Hungry for Progress?

Introduction

This chapter explores the conceptual framework of this research, and investigates varying components of the two key food and development theories; food security and food sovereignty (respectively). After exploring the genealogy of each theory, I explore some practical applications for the fluid and malleable nature of food sovereignty as suggested by key authors. This then informs the creation of a food sovereignty framework or paradigm which is used throughout the remainder of this thesis.

Food Security

The concept of food security can be traced to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights which affirmed, that 'Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself [sic] and his family [sic], including food' (United Nations, 1948). In 1966, a right to 'freedom from hunger' was added, further establishing a belief in 'fundamental rights' accessible to all people (Armar-Klemesu, 2001). Food security didn't appear in print until the 1975 World Food Conference report, which defined it as;

'[The] availability at all times of adequate world supplies of basic food-stuffs...to sustain steady expansion of food consumption...and to offset fluctuations in production and prices' (Maxwell, as cited in Jarosz, 2014; 170).

Marking the reaction to the 1970s' large-scale food shortages, price destabilisation and oil price shocks, food security became entwined with debates on commercial food prices and physical food availability (Armar-Klemesu, 2001; Jarosz, 2014). Representing a top-down approach, the term became rhetoric to mobilise governments and global institutions to adjust their market and agriculture policies. This approach also framed food security as an explanation of hunger issues and respective solutions (Jarosz, 2009b; Jarosz, 2014; Patel, 2009). From there, discourse sprouted in institutional documents where bodies like the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO] and the World Bank reported on causes and solutions for hunger and related issues (Jarosz, 2009b; Jarosz, 2014).

Many of the framings surrounding hunger through this development paradigm invoke Malthusian theory. Thomas Malthus was the world's first paid economist and (in)famously theorised that as population climbed, it would surpass the ability to produce food, leading to catastrophic levels of starvation and a population crash (Patel, 2007). Whilst this myth has been debunked it appears frequently throughout food security discourse where 'over-population' is cited as a pressing issue (McMahon, 2013).

This was evident throughout the FAO's rhetoric of diminishing hunger through top-down institutions and multi-national corporations, citing issues of over-population, ineffective trade and poverty as key causes of hunger (McMichael, 2001; Jarosz, 2009b; Traill, 1997). In Jarosz' words (2009b; 55), these conceptualisations of food security fall into a dominant discourse of 'increased productivity, economic development, and integration into the world-economy through trade'; and a secondary discourse of 'envision[ing] the response to global hunger as encompassing moral responsibility'(ibid).

Malthusian theory argues food security solutions as *peaceful* and legitimises the Green Revolutions. There have been three waves of Green Revolution. Henceforth 'Green Revolution' refers to the overall changes within agriculture as this technology led to the inception of Genetic Modification [GM] and Genetic Engineering [GE] in agriculture.

Following World War II [WW2] 'another vision of agricultural development was taking shape in American foundations and aid agencies. This vision was based not on cooperation with nature, but on its conquest. It was based not on the intensification of nature's processes, but on the intensification of credit and purchased inputs like chemical fertilisers and pesticides. It was based not on self-reliance, but dependence. It was based not on diversity but uniformity' (Shiva, 1991; 29).

In 1970, Norman Borlaug, also known as the 'Father of the Green Revolutions' (Curtin, 1995; 59) was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his 'miracle seeds' (Shiva, 1991; 19) which were said to be the mechanism for making nature more abundant and for making social relations more *peaceful*. These miracle seeds, inextricably linked with the Green Revolution, represented the science-based transformation of agriculture, whereupon increasing chemical inputs, such as fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides, was said to be the best form for increasing yields and therefore, prosperity (Shiva, 1991);

'Agriculture and food were transformed through two earlier 'Green Revolutions', the first based on introducing chemicals to agriculture. For this, plants were made into dwarf varieties with the application of chemical fertilisers to prevent them from lodging. The second 'green revolution' is based on the application of genetic engineering; and the emerging third 'green revolution' introduces synthetic biology' (Shiva, 2012; 140).

Preached through institutions such as the Rockefeller Foundations Programmes, the Green Revolution under the slogan of 'building on the best' politicised agriculture and industrialised food production (Shiva, 1991; 45). This changed food production practices and many farmers switched to mono-cropping; a form of farming where only one crop is grown, and cash cropping; where only food commodities (discussed further in Chapter 5) are grown (Shiva, 1991). Despite the claim that the Green Revolution has solved the issue of 'overpopulation'

through making agriculture more 'efficient', in reality it has allowed for greater corporate control over food; 'Pitting humans against nature is not only anthropocentric, it is corporate-centric' (Shiva, 2012; 18).

This corporate-centric view of food is reflected through the shift in the 1986 definition of food security by the World Bank, which emphasises an ability to *buy* food (Jarosz, 2009b);

'Food security has to do with access by all people at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life...achieved only if all households have the ability to *buy* food' (World Bank as cited in Jarosz, 2009b; 171).

This overlooks much of the subsistence agriculture in the Global South and links into 'mainstream' economic discourse, where the poor need to make money or increase the economic value of their crops to overcome issues of hunger (Curtin, 1995; Jarosz, 2014). This definition also defends key reasons why 1980 and 1990 neoliberal development⁸ discourse stresses individual buying power in a free trade, globalised, industrialised and corporatized food system (Curtin, 1995; Jarosz, 2014).

By the early 2000s, institutions like FAO expanded food security to highlight the need for a multi-faceted and collaborative approach in addressing hunger (Patel, 2009);

'Food security [is] a situation when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy lifestyle' (Economic and Social Development Department of Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2001) .

These changing framings of food security continue to provide justification for food aid (discussed further in Chapter 5).

When enacted, food security promotes industrial food production, distribution and consumption. It reasons that biotechnological advancements, evolving from the Green Revolution, speed up and mechanise nature, making agriculture less labour-intensive and therefore better able to meet the food demands of an overpopulated planet (Curtin, 1995). It suggests that through employing practices like mono-cropping, Southern agriculture may quickly join the global market, alleviating issues of poverty through dissolving the bottle-necks that are preventing equal and free distribution of foodstuffs across the globe and boosting the local economy (Curtin, 1995; McMichael, 2001). Food security discourse frames the

⁸ Neoliberal development is an economic-centric approach to solving issues. This approach argues that through 'deregulation, privatisation of industry and government services, reduction of government spending, financial liberalization, promotion of foreign investment, and enhanced protection of private property rights' (González, as cited in Ehrenreich & Lyon, 2011) governments will be able to increase their economic growth. This will then supposedly help the poor, as the economic growth will 'trickledown' (Ehrenreich & Lyon, 2011).

aforementioned solutions as *good change* because supposedly they will lead to a strong, interconnected and resilient community, where food will no longer impact upon North-South relations because the South will 'catch up'.

Food Sovereignty

In 1996, La Via Campesina, the world's largest social movement and representative of world farmers and peasants, published its first Declaration on food sovereignty (Jarosz, 2009b; Jarosz, 2014), defining it as;

'The right of each nation to maintain and develop its own capacity to produce its basic foods respecting cultural and productive diversity. We have the right to produce our own food in our own territory. Food sovereignty is a precondition to genuine food security' (La Via Campesina, 1996).

La Via Campesina advocated for approaches to be culturally-appropriate, ecological and rights-based where people have the right to choose their own food system, and blamed food security approaches for contributing to issues of hunger and poverty (Jarosz, 2014). La Via Campesina argued that the systematic liberalisation of trade and economic policies, agricultural adjustment and unmediated corporate power threatened the sovereignty of Southern nations and the subsistence livelihoods of organic agriculture (McMichael, 2001; Jarosz, 2014; Wittman 2011). In 2001 the Declaration 'Our World is not for sale' updated the definition to;

'The right of peoples to define their own agriculture and food policies, to protect and regulate domestic agricultural production and trade in order to achieve sustainable development objectives, to determine the extent to which they want to be self-reliant, and to restrict the dumping of products in their markets. Food sovereignty does not negate trade, but rather it promotes the formulation of trade policies and practices that serve the rights of peoples to safe, healthy, and ecologically sustainable production' (La Via Campesina, 2001).

The 'dumping of products' references the rollback of protectionist policies in the South which leave countries open for exploitation. Young (2012; 91) defines 'dumping' as 'when one country subsidises agricultural production and then sells the goods in another country at below productions costs' (see Chapter 5). The word 'safe' speaks to the sometimes violent conditions around food management, such as land and water wars, as well as the unsafe consumption of chemicals (Curtin, 1995; Shiva; 1991). Thus, the food sovereignty paradigm fosters the need for organic food (Curtin, 1995; Jarosz, 2014; Rosset, 2009).

Organic agriculture is sustainable, environmentally and economically, and is more likely to produce nutritionally-dense food than non-organic (Armar-Klemesu, 2001; Curtin, 1995; Heynen & Robbins, 2005). Organic agriculture is also linked with agroecology, a form of permaculture promoted in food sovereignty discourse (see Chapter 7). Through self-sustainability and living in balance with nature, communities can achieve greater well-being and autonomy where diversity is celebrated (Wittman, 2011); whilst internationally, food sovereignty promotes more ethical North-South relations because it promotes building relationships based on equality.

Building the Food Sovereignty Lens

Given its rights-based philosophy, food sovereignty has a fluid and malleable nature which resists the homogenisation of people's experiences. This makes it harmonious with postcolonial development and *good change* because it counters binary and western-centric definitions and provokes a process of reflection of what food sovereignty means in a particular context. Unlike food security, food sovereignty emphasises problem solving aligned with a set of principles that, although varied for different authors, have emerged largely from the works of La Via Campesina.

The malleable nature of food sovereignty can be applied to varying issues pertaining to food and how they intertwine with one another, thus promoting an activist paradigm. Rosset (2009) remarks upon the ability for the food sovereignty paradigm to address the interlocking crises of food, climate, energy and finance through the way it analyses the root causes of issues as opposed to addressing the symptoms. The fluid nature of food sovereignty discourse is also reflective of the indigenous philosophical underpinnings and ontologies, through the way they foster 'connection' (see Chapter 7)(Villalba, 2013; 1430). For these reasons, I have adopted a food sovereignty approach to explore how and why people might engage with alternative forms of food development.

One challenge of a fluid and malleable nature is that it is hard to define. Whilst this is to no detriment of the theory per se, it poses problems for analysis in this research. Thus in the following section I have collated what I identify as the key tenets of food sovereignty literature. Based on the principles presented by Hutchings, et al. (2012), Jarosz (2014), Patel (2007), Pimbert (2009) and Wittman (2011), I have built a framework comprised of the following six principles, which I argue provides a substantial platform for both broad and in-depth analysis.

These principles are;

1. Recognise Food as a Basic Human Right
2. End the Corporate Globalisation of Hunger Through Re-Distribution
3. Create Social Peace Through Food

4. Re-Value Food Skills
5. Act in Harmony with the Environment
6. Call for Agrarian Reform

I use the food sovereignty literature to support these principles by providing a concise explanation of key problems followed by some respective solutions and an example of how this might look in a food sovereignty paradigm. The importance of this is understood through food sovereignty as a concept. This means that it is not easily seen in its own right but apparent as a lens or framework in conjunction with a case study, which I have done with the analysis of five organisations (introduced in Chapter 3). This does not make food sovereignty a checklist of 'things to do' but offers a lens, formed through integrative principles, which aids the viewer in seeing a paradigm shift (Wittman, 2011). Therefore these principles are strongest as a comprehensive approach, rather than fragmented and 'cherry picked' (Pimbert, 2009).

1. Recognise Food as a Basic Human Right

In a food sovereignty paradigm each individual has free access to food with dignity and sufficient food producing resources.

Food sovereignty is a call for a right to a right (Patel, Balakrishnan & Narayan, 2007; Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012). A rights-based approach means every human being, by virtue of being human, is a holder of certain inalienable rights (Patel et al., 2007; Wittman, 2011). As rights are transgressive in nature, they are best defined by those who are underprivileged, disadvantaged and marginalised and thus what constitutes the priority right will depend upon the person calling for it (Ehrenreich & Lyon, 2011; Patel et al., 2007; Wittman, 2011). Rights offer an important means to mobilise action and change in society because they can be self-fulfilling where discussion for a certain right highlights the need for it (Patel et al., 2007). In this way, rights can work as a gateway to enact autonomy and empowerment (Goulet, 2009).

Rights discourse in food sovereignty can empower by orientating the discussion towards those calling for their rights and away from the people who are taking them (Patel et al., 2007; Wittman, 2011). Focussing on rights builds on the argument that a right to food is not the same as a right to food with *dignity*; that is, food beyond the minimal amount necessary for survival and functioning, and food that is healthy, culturally appropriate and has been ecologically produced (Goulet, 2009; Patel et al., 2007; Sen, 1981; Wittman, 2011). Hence food is viewed in conjunction with the processes surrounding its production, distribution and consumption, offering the notion that achieving food security is not a matter of having food, but having food with *dignity* (Armar-Klemesu, 2001; Ehrenreich & Lyon, 2011; Patel et al., 2007; Pimbert, 2009).

Thus food sovereignty might be enacted through ensuring that local people have inherent rights and priority access to locally produced food (Goulet, 2009; Rosset, 2009). It might be a collective understanding that hunger is a symptom of a broken system (Wittman, 2011).

2. End the Corporate Globalisation of Hunger Through Re-Distribution

In a food sovereignty paradigm the food system is managed to ensure that food is produced, distributed and consumed sustainably and ethically.

Due to the extreme commodification of food through capitalist systems, many people are distanced from an Indigenous Human-Environment Relationship [IHER] and this has led to a mismanagement of natural resources, and resulted in multiple crises pertaining to food, climate, energy and finance (Bargh, 2014; Liverman, 2008; Rosset, 2009). The pursuit of profit, enabled through the marketised food system, has allowed corporations to artificially create scarcity, causing the food market to be turbulent and leaving many people in desperate situations (Curtin, 1995). These situations point to the deep structural problems with a system that has been forged alongside colonisation (Ehrenreich & Lyon, 2011; Goulet, 2009; Rosset, 2009). This emphasises that food remains entangled with power which is seen through the way corporations and food producers withhold food resources to manipulate prices, consequently leaving countries and peoples with insufficient food reserves and productive capacity (Rosset, 2009). Additionally this divide between the food rich and the food poor furthers discourse of the rich North and poor South and the justifications for food aid (Patel, 2007).

Food sovereignty offers a solution through collective action, where resistance to the marketised food system (where possible) is one way to reform damaging supply and demand mechanisms (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012). Accordingly, food sovereignty promotes the idea that people can enact and define their own food systems, and for this reason offers critiques of the neo-liberal 'one size fits all' approach, the implementation of the Green Revolution and the application of industrial agriculture (Altieri, 2012; Patel et al., 2007). Food sovereignty also advances arguments that countries can implement sustainable agriculture and control national production to help avoid damaging structural surpluses (Patel et al., 2007). It advocates for the environmental cost of food to be linked with the retail price of food and hypothesizes this as one way to prevent food dumping, waste, unnecessary aid and excessive exporting (Goulet, 2009; Patel et. al, 2007; Pimbert, 2009; Rosset, 2009).

Thus food sovereignty might be enacted alongside notions of a 'Blue Economy', a system of doing business where processes and creation of products mimic nature wherever possible (Bargh, 2014; Pauli, 2010); as well as 'cradle-to-cradle' philosophies, reacting to and putting the needs of peoples, animals and the environment before profit and economic pursuits

(Altieri, 2012; Bargh, 2014; Pauli, 2010). The use of a food market might be reformed to reflect values of transparency and regulation, to ensure fair, ethical and local systems of production, distribution and consumption (Pimbert, 2009; Rosset, 2009; Wittman, 2011).

3. Create Social Peace Through Food

In a food sovereignty paradigm relationships are fostered through equitable and harmonious interaction.

Inequalities of power have led to harmful forms of discrimination which can be enacted through judgements made on gender, race, class, sexual orientation, appearance, ability (to name several), and these discriminations contribute to skewed perceptions of fairness (Ehrenreich & Lyon, 2011; Wittman, 2011). These discriminations have crept into interactions around food, where inequalities of power have manifested as inequalities in food distribution and wealth, to the extent that food is used as 'a political weapon' (Curtin, 1995; Patel, 2007; Shiva, 2014). Internationally, Northern food corporations are seen as exploiting Southern food producers (McMichael, 2001; Young, 2012); and many people who have exercised their right to resist the 'generalised pillage' (Rosset, 2009; 189) have faced consequences such as obligatory migration, criminalisation, and repression (Curtin, 1995; Rosset, 2009). Moreover, processes of colonisation can be seen as extending into contemporary society, as forms of owning nature have become common practice and speak to the corporate climate and darker forms of food development, such as the Green Revolution, where the infliction of violence upon peoples, animals and the environment has changed the food landscape and what is considered acceptable (Curtin, 1995; Shiva, 1991; Shiva, 2012). Domestically, the community and the household are seldom gender-neutral institutions where women enjoy the same allocation of food and decision-making powers as men, and in the same vein, the kinds of food consumed are seldom distanced from socio-political factors (Curtin, 1995; Goulet, 2009; Wittman, 2011).

Food sovereignty suggests that transforming the focus in relationships to fostering equity and 'unity in diversity' may simultaneously soften inequality (Wittman, 2011). With this, people may come to improve North-South relations through fostering equitable relationships (Ehrenreich & Lyon, 2011; Goulet, 2009). Through relationships, distance is lessened as producers and consumers are re'connected', encouraging understandings of the ways food is linked to quality of life and represents people's nutrition, incomes, economies and culture (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012; Pimbert, 2009). This has the potential to be empowering for indigenous peoples, as many continue to experience the shocks from colonisation which have also caused endangerment to indigenous ontologies and species (Pimbert, 2009; Smith, 1999; Villalba, 2013). Thus, food sovereignty can be considered as harmonious with forms of decolonisation and postcolonial development, as it has grown from indigenous knowledge

systems and advocates the rights of indigenous peoples to say 'no' (Bargh, 2014). A food sovereignty agenda might also include an explicit discussion on gender politics and food production in local communities, as progressive social movements do not necessarily operate in gender-neutral ways to achieve gender equality (Goulet, 2009; Patel et al., 2007; Wittman, 2011). These discussions may realise action through re-politicising women's work and recognising the productive and reproductive labour women perform locally and internationally (Curtin, 1995; Goulet, 2009; Patel et al., 2007; Wittman, 2011).

Thus food sovereignty might be enacted through adopting practices based on culture, tradition and family, to create food abundance and build 'food based communities' (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012; Rosset, 2009). These communities would most likely recognise women as significant producers of food and therefore endorse women as leaders (Curtin, 2005; Patel et al., 2007; Wittman, 2011). Similarly, these communities might embrace 'diversity in unity' through harbouring dynamic voices and representative leadership, where leaders are different genders, ages and have different sexual orientations, political and religious affiliations, abilities (and more), and may expand the community to include animals and plants (Wittman, 2011; Villalba, 2013).

4. *Re-Value Food Skills*

In a food sovereignty paradigm food is re-prioritised and the skilled people working with food in agroecological⁹ ways are cherished.

Currently food production is amongst the most exploitative industries in the world where many people are overworked and underpaid, despite the fact that many of these peoples are, by and large, feeding the population of the world (Rosset, 2009). Some of these peoples are making significant contributions to deterring and preventing the current crises upon us, with their advancements in researching sustainable, ethical and appropriate forms of agriculture, as well as teaching future generations how to produce food in traditional forms, despite the contemporary promotions for biotechnology and GE (Curtin, 1995; Rosset, 2009).

To help prevent these traditional skills from disappearing, food sovereignty calls for recognition that all 'food is from somewhere' (Wittman, 2011; 90). Through awareness, people might change consumption because 'The act of domestic production, far from being an insignificant part of our food system, is a potentially powerful way to challenge the dominant, capitalist-based food system' (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012; 60). Whilst this might mean paying higher food prices, these prices are fairer to food producers (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012; Pimbert, 2009; Rosset, 2009; Wittman, 2011). Similarly, through an understanding that food

⁹ Agroecology is a knowledge-intensive form of sustainable agriculture (Altieri, 2012; Pimbert, 2009; Wittman, 2011).

production can be a 'place-making' 'spiritual act', food sovereignty encourages people to consider their own relationship with nature and works to inspire people to re'connect' within an indigenous form of IHER¹⁰ (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012; 63). This might extend to people growing some of their own food or conducting agricultural research, focussing on ecology and culturally-appropriate forms of agriculture (Wittman, 2011). Hence, public access to and the protection of agricultural research is seen as fulfilling the rights to nature. Similarly praising the work of peoples who are rebuilding national seed reserves and recovering national food producing capacity is a way of enacting food sovereignty (Rosset, 2009).

Thus food sovereignty might be enacted through activism, social movements, community groups and food producers who are working to make food with *dignity* and food knowledge a public good for the community to share (Wittman, 2011). Similarly, it might also be enacted through a shared upholding of food and local knowledge of place-based cultivation, such as agroecology as sacred and necessary for human survival.

5. Act in Harmony with the Environment

In a food sovereignty paradigm the environment is not treated as a resource to be used at humans' disposal but as a living entity with its own intrinsic rights.

Present-day industrial agriculture significantly adds to environmental degradation (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012). Whilst people continually see themselves as separate from the environment, rather than a part of it, the world's resources are being used out of balance with one another, disrupting ecosystems (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012; Shiva, 2012). One way this is manifesting is through the production of biofuels, where food is grown to be manufactured into energy to fuel industrialisation (McMichael, 2001). This is pushing ecosystems off-balance and resulting in less resilient species of animals and plants (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012; Pimbert, 2009; Shiva, 2012).

Rather, food sovereignty offers solutions centred on agroecology to achieve sustainable livelihoods, living landscapes, biodiversity, environmental integrity and community well-being (Altieri, 2012; Goulet, 2009; Wittman, 2011). Through building sustainable models for growth that 'mimic nature', food sovereignty is harmonious with creating abundance (Pauli, 2010). Moreover, conceptualisation of abundance links in to many forms of indigenous agriculture where a focus on 'cradle-to-cradle' philosophy encompasses waste management through reincorporating waste into a cyclical ecosystem (Bargh, 2014; Rosset, 2009). This recognition of a cyclical ecosystem neutralises colonial ideas around owning and manipulating nature, as it emphasises that every flora and fauna has intrinsic value (Pauli, 2010).

¹⁰ A relationship with Mother Earth where she has intrinsic rights and value.

Thus food sovereignty might be enacted in conjunction with agroecological principles and prioritise the well-being of every flora and fauna rather than putting people first (Rosset, 2009). To this end, food sovereignty might involve increasing forms of agrarian citizenship; where nature's voice is included in development policies and seen as having inherent rights (Wittman, 2011). Similarly food sovereignty activists will most likely not include biofuels as a solution for the climate and energy crisis and continue to research appropriate renewable and regenerative forms of technology and energy (Pauli, 2010; Rosset, 2009).

6. Call for Agrarian Reform

In a food sovereignty paradigm agriculture is promoted as intrinsic to life and this is reflected in the management and use of space and natural resources.

The food system is largely not controlled by governments, but rather private actors such as agribusinesses which are becoming a powerful international force (Goulet, 2009). Many governments are pressured into making policy reforms by more 'powerful' governments despite the disadvantages to their own citizens (Goulet, 2009). Much of the world's most fertile land is in the hands of agribusiness and much of this land is repeatedly damaged through industrial agriculture (Goulet, 2009; Curtin, 1995).

In response, a redistribution of power could be synonymous with changing agricultural policies and democracy amongst food producers where each country, community and individual can establish their own policies concerning food and agriculture, so long as these policies do not harm other people's autonomy to do the same (Rosset, 2009; Patel et al., 2007; Pimbert, 2012; Wittman, 2011). This, in turn, might challenge agribusiness and political power (Patel et al., 2007). Furthermore, this would likely re-politicise space and create opportunities to cultivate healthy food in public and private spaces, which would be beneficial to communities, as there are instrumental benefits associated with growing food (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012; Patel et al., 2007). When local people are empowered to feed themselves, access problems around food can be reduced (Pimbert, 2009). Additionally, a reconceptualization of space and food cultivation might ease the stress on rural food production and promote disaster resilience (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012).

Thus food sovereignty might be enacted through people having the right to produce and harvest food in ecologically sustainable ways, consisting of low-external input production (Pimbert, 2009). Under food sovereignty, intellectual property laws might be readjusted to encourage access to life-sustaining natural and organic resources (Patel et al., 2007). Also, because 'biodiverse' organic agricultural production methods require less agricultural land base than industrial agriculture, this form of food sovereignty might better correlate with food abundance (Wittman, 2011). A 'food-based community' would likely protect and preserve

indigenous seed and livestock varieties for their intrinsic value (Wittman, 2011). Overall food sovereignty might be enacted through the ways people make decisions about what they consume, how it is produced, who produced it and to what extent they are self-reliant (Goulet, 2009; Patel et al., 2007; Pimbert, 2009).

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has presented and explored two of the predominant theories driving development approaches around food. Food security – is argued as a top-down approach that emphasises traditional development thinking. Namely, this approach is argued to place the Global North as the major player in addressing food issues, and hunger is argued as the most pressing issue linked to ‘over-population’. Due to this, measures such as increasing technological inputs or Green Revolution technology in food cultivation are said to solve these issues. This is then contrasted with the second theory of – food sovereignty – which is a bottom-up approach that argues that everyone has a role to play in addressing food issues. This theory argues that the causes of food issues are complex and have predominantly grown from a lack of equality, agency and biodiversity.

As I have argued food sovereignty as more harmonious with *good change*, I then outline further the six principles that promote this approach. Using literature to support this framework, I present theoretical ways a food sovereignty paradigm might manifest. This framework will be used throughout the discussion and findings of this thesis.

In the next chapter I present a brief context for food and development in Aotearoa and then introduce the key participants to this research.

Chapter 3: The Context of Aotearoa and Introducing the Organisations

Introduction

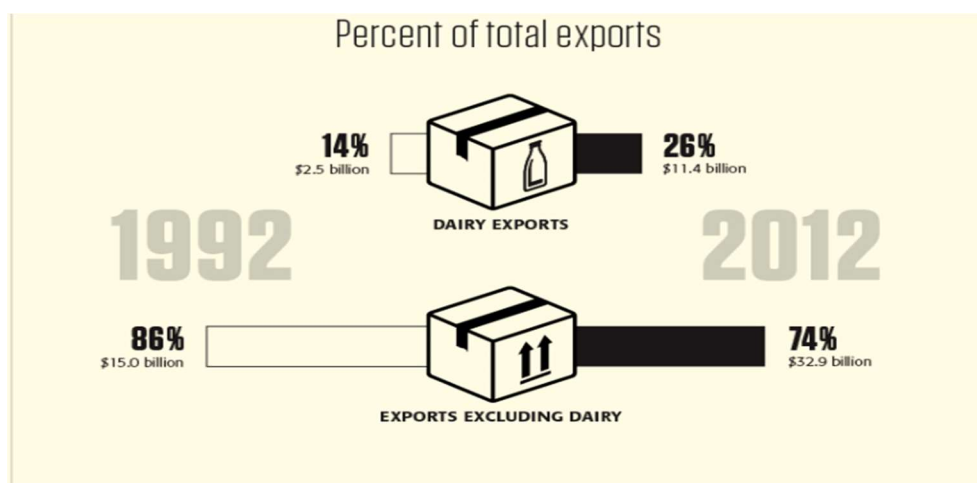
In the following chapter I engage with the concept of food sovereignty on a more practical level by first exploring some key food-related issues in Aotearoa. This is followed with introductions to the key organisations in this research. As I introduce the organisations in this chapter I cannot stress enough how much their work has inspired this research and me as the researcher. I feel that it is really thanks to these organisations and the ways they are inspiring change within and around Wellington that this research exists.

Though all of the organisations did not express themselves as food sovereignty activists, as I delve into the customised ways the organisations are effecting change, I highlight how their actions resonate with a food sovereignty paradigm.

Food Sovereignty in Aotearoa

The issues surrounding the farming industry, the environment, and health seem to weigh heavily on the minds of New Zealanders when it comes to discussing food production. Aotearoa has long been a farming nation and much of our Gross Domestic Product [GDP] is reliant upon agricultural exports. In 2012, Statistics New Zealand reported that dairy exports accounted for 26%¹¹ of all exports, which had increased from the 14% exported in 1992 (see Figure 3.1) (Statistics New Zealand, 2013).

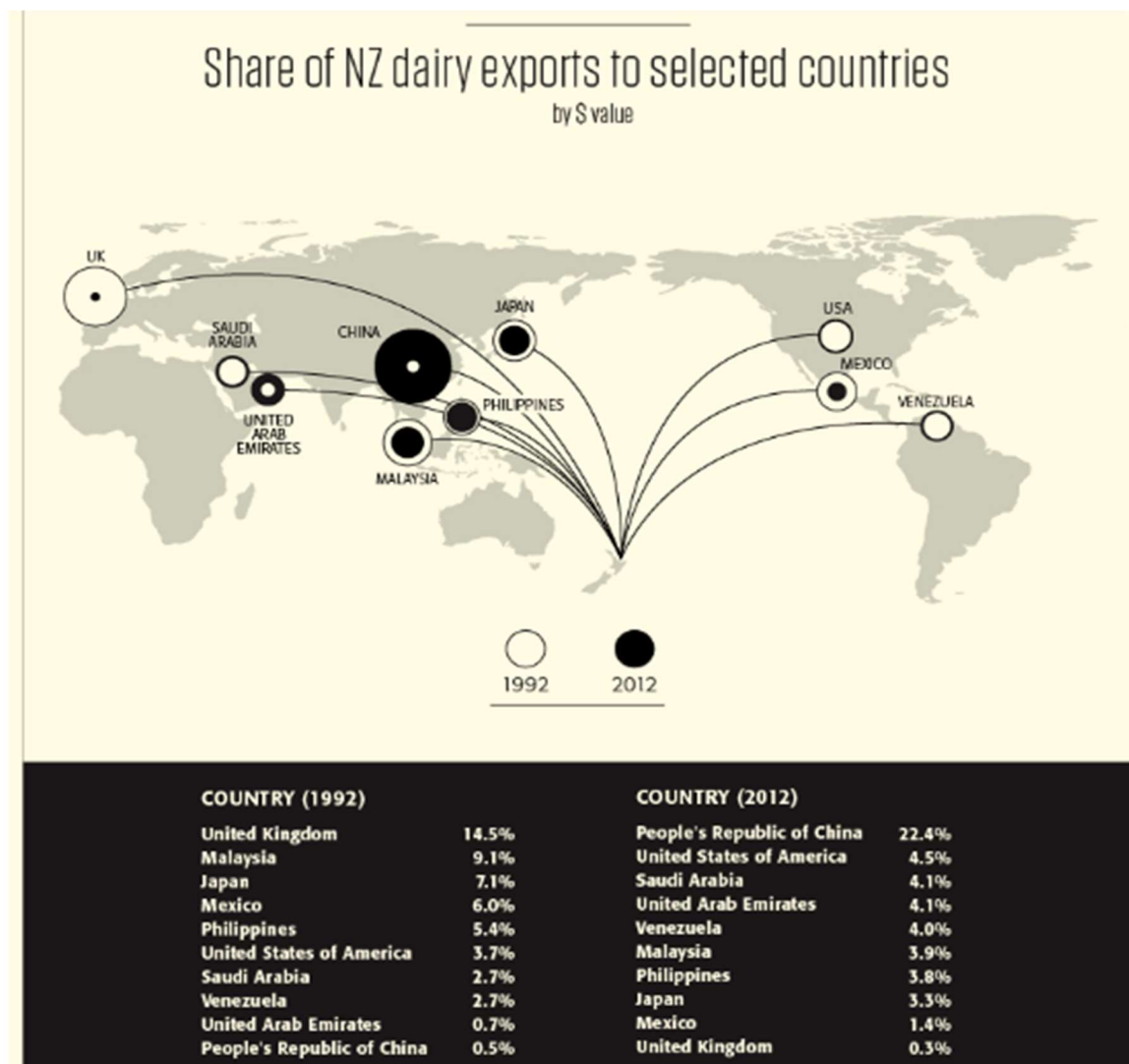
Figure 3.1: Aotearoa Exports Increase Between 1992 and 2012



Additionally, a majority of dairy exports (22.4%) are now being sent to China (see Figure 3.2).

¹¹ With Fonterra being a major stakeholder (Bartos, 2014).

Figure 3.2: Share of Exports to Selected Countries 1992 and 2012



(Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2013)

This suggests that the overall trend of farming for export is increasing and some have said this is in part thanks to our representation of being 'clean green' in the market (Bartos, 2014; Haggerty, Campbell & Morris, 2009), and in part due to 'government subsidies' such as nitrogen fertilisers and imported livestock feed (Brower, 2013; Haggerty et al., 2009). While most of the public are aware that our agricultural exports are climbing many would be surprised by how detrimental farming practices are becoming in Aotearoa (Brower, 2013; Haggerty et al., 2009). Scholars like Bartos (2014) suggest that Tourism New Zealand's clever branding of Aotearoa as 'clean and green', and particularly the 1999 '100% Pure' brand, evidently remains vivid in people's imaginations; despite the reality that environmentally, Aotearoa is slow to take political action to address issues. Particularly, issues of water quality and climate change are worrisome and in recent years, unprecedented access has been given to agribusinesses. This is recorded through increasing occurrences of fracking and oil drilling

which illustrate the readiness of the government to put a price tag on finite resources which are key to the well-being of the environment (Smellie, as cited in Bargh, 2014); although it is not always worded so explicitly;

‘The Government wants New Zealand to be a highly attractive global destination for petroleum exploration and production investment so we can develop the full potential of our petroleum resources. Significant discoveries of oil and gas resources will help boost New Zealand’s foreign earnings and domestic gas supplies’ (Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, 2016).

One interpretation of this highlights the actions of government as justifying environmental degradation in exchange for economic growth.

Privatisation and selling-off natural assets is also apparent and recently, the Ashburton local council made headlines for selling rights to extract billions of litres of fresh water to a bottled water company, infuriating many New Zealanders (Murphey, 2016). Another recent report (Simmons & Young, 2016) found that Aotearoa is ‘cheating’ on climate change commitments through purchasing fraudulent carbon credits from Ukraine and Russia, showing that a neoliberal agenda is being pursued contrary to ecological and political concerns because the carbon credits is seen as an economic issue rather than an environmental one.

One reason for this is linked to the recent neoliberal reforms that came with the election of the centre-right National Party in 2008 (Edwards, 2015). Following this election New Zealanders witnessed further privatisation of public goods and neoliberal development. Recently the government signed the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement [TPPA], and many people, myself included, are concerned that this will lead to strengthened corporate control in Aotearoa (Brower, 2013). This is because the TPPA would allow agribusinesses to sue the New Zealand government for taking action not in favour of their investments (Brower, 2013). Though the repercussions of this could affect all industries, I am particularly concerned by how it would change our food system. Aotearoa proudly promotes itself as GM-free, however much of the general public are unaware that current labelling laws don’t apply to ‘highly processed’ ingredients, meaning there is an estimated 70% of processed foods on our shelves made from imported soy, corn, canola and cotton that are believed to contain GM (Brower, 2013). Similarly, increasing amounts of GM cotton-seed meal and soy have been brought into the country through loose labelling laws on animal feed which is largely given to our dairy cows (Brower, 2013). Despite the legal hurdles to prevent GE in Aotearoa, it is clear that agribusiness giants and GE corporations such as Monsanto are finding ways beyond our borders (Brower, 2013).

As of 2013, Monsanto was said to have made \$27 million USD from suing family farmers in the US on the grounds of copyright infringement, which was made possible through the discovery of GE and the ability to patent certain genes within a seed (Brower, 2013). Many of these farmers did not actually plant these seeds and cross-contamination (caused by weather) meant that their farms were not only contaminated by GM, but they were sued for this. If GM was freely allowed in Aotearoa there is no knowing how many farmers would run the risk of being sued or how this would affect our agricultural economy.

Not only is this against New Zealand's best interests but it is criminal in light of Te Tiriti O Waitangi [the Treaty]. When the Treaty was signed in 1840, Māori chiefs believed they would retain their right to sovereignty¹² and to guard and protect their taonga¹³ (Mutu, 2010). Due to inaccurate translation between the Māori and English versions, there has been disagreement on what rights were agreed to in the partnership and consequently Māori have faced difficulties in accessing their rights to self-determination (Mutu, 2010). Included in this is their right to accessing Māori food sovereignty. In 2010, the government introduced a new Food Bill under the guise of updating policy around food health and safety regulations (New Zealand Legislation, 2016). Although it was not largely discussed in the media, the Bill fundamentally changed New Zealanders' rights to growing and distributing their own food, as it affected home gardeners and seed savers through defining bartering as a form of sale (Kedgley, 2011). It also put tighter regulations on a community's ability to donate food, which simultaneously affected Māori living on Marae. Although this has been somewhat rectified with the addition of the 'Good Samaritan Act'¹⁴, Māori continue to face challenges to their autonomy (Mutu, 2010).

Closely correlated with discussion on food hygiene and safety is a concern for the state of health within Aotearoa. Whilst many New Zealanders seem aware of the issues of obesity¹⁵ and type 2 diabetes in Aotearoa, there continues to be a debate about the extent to which there is hunger. Whilst some New Zealanders blame 'bad parenting' as a causal factor of child hunger, others note structural poverty as the cause (Brookes, 2013), with the picture on the next page representative of a recent campaign.

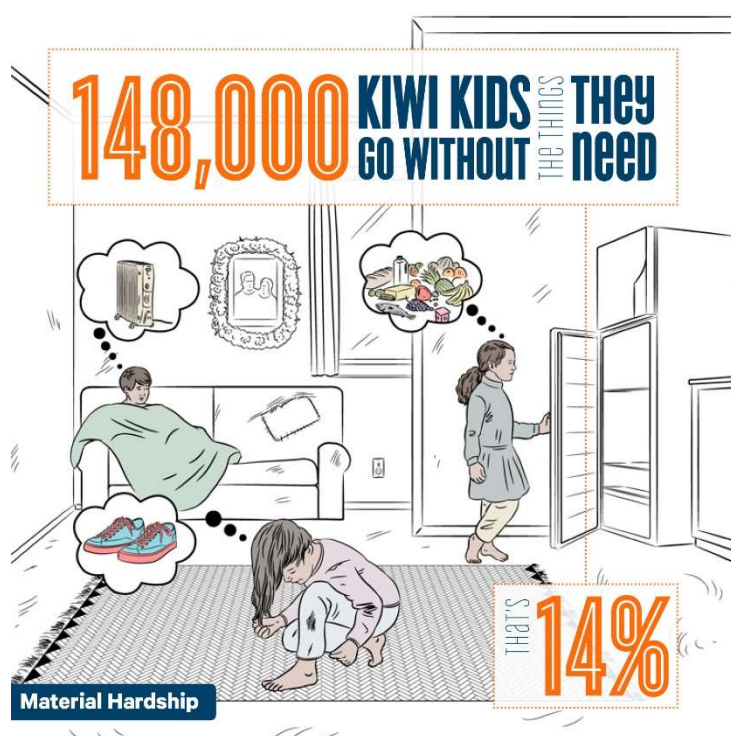
¹² The word sovereignty had no direct translation in Māori and was translated as 'kāwanatanga' which was a word the missionaries created from 'governor' (Mutu, 2010). Bartos (2014) believes this is a contributing reason to why people are hesitant to embrace the word sovereignty in 'food sovereignty'.

¹³ Often translated as lands, forests, fisheries and other living treasures like language and culture.

¹⁴ Thanks to Kaibosh the 'Good Samaritan Act' was added to the Food Bill and states that if the food is safe at the time of donation then liability is removed and the food donor cannot be prosecuted if the donated goods make someone ill.

¹⁵ In 2014, New Zealand placed as the third most obese country in the OECD (OECD Health Statistics, 2015).

Figure 3.3: Child Poverty in Aotearoa



(Source: Child Poverty Monitor, 2015)

As the recognition of charities such as KidsCan, a charity providing food in low-decile schools, continues to grow, the debate on who is responsible for child hunger continues (Brookes, 2013). This debate is representative of the strong partisan divide currently present where National (traditionally a right-wing party), enacting neoliberal ideology, is continuously making cuts to welfare programmes resulting in charities reporting higher numbers of people requiring their services (Brookes, 2013). This is significant as poverty is linked with ill-health (explained in Chapter 6).

Another potential complication to the management of food in Aotearoa is that there is currently no independent department dedicated to food laws and regulations, unlike similar Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] countries (Bartos, 2014). I believe this is a reason why Bartos (2014; 191) says in 'New Zealand food politics are more fractured, fragmented, and less firmly embedded in wider political discourses than they are up north'. Issues resulting from not having a direct political food body include the legitimacy of the term 'organic' on food labels, as current labelling laws have allowed a widespread abuse of the term (Gulliver, 2015). The national umbrella organisation, Organics Aotearoa New Zealand, have been trying to get regulation measures implemented and enforced by the Ministry of Primary Industries but to no avail (Gulliver, 2015).

Instead, organisational bodies operate independently to regulate and certify local products. One example is Hua Parakore, a kaupapa Māori programme designed by Māori for Māori,

which embodies the food sovereignty principles and stimulates decolonisation through promoting an indigenous model of food production;

‘Hua Parakore aligns with closed systems of production with zero or minimal inputs, works in harmony with nature and promotes self-resilience and self-sustaining practices...Hua Parakore contributes to well-being and supports the potential of Māori communities to transform and re-invigorate; rangatiratanga (self-determination); te ora o te whānau (family well-being); community development; kaitiakitanga (cultural and environmental sustainability) and creates a pathway for Māori growers and producers to tell their kaupapa Māori production story’ (Hutchings et al., 2012; 131-132).

Hua Parakore is a strong example of the ways in which food sovereignty is explicitly unfolding within Aotearoa.

Similarly, as argued in this thesis, food sovereignty in Aotearoa is evident through alternative food initiatives. Through collaboration with these organisations I have gotten to know people who are deeply passionate about food. By sharing their stories, I hope to bring awareness to their awe-inspiring work.

The Organisations

I have presented each organisation in alignment with the life cycle of our food, from ‘seed’ to ‘waste’. Please note that given the emphasis on traceability and transparency in their work, the Directors¹⁶ were happy to use their real names and be quoted directly.

Koanga Institute

‘Our Vision is that through our research, living experience, and service, we are able to strengthen people’s ability to create regenerative environments and self-reliant cultures’
(Koanga Institute, 2016).

¹⁶ I have used the term Director to describe their position for reasons of consistency although their actual job title may be different to this.

Figure 3.4: Koanga Institute Homepage



(Source: Koanga Institute, 2016)

Koanga Institute (see Figure 3.4) is home to Aotearoa's largest heritage organic seed collection. Based in Wairoa, the institute focusses on 'growing nutrient dense food and seeds in a regenerative manner for the next generation's health and well-being' (Koanga Institute, 2016). The non-profit organisation was initially inspired by its Director, Kay Baxter, and her observations of the wild fruit trees growing in Kaipara Harbour in 1980, as she noticed they were growing better than many home-grown trees and set out to discover why (Koanga Institute, 2016). The answer was found in understanding ecology and the growth of suitable crops in nutrient-dense soils. For Kay this understanding sprouted from a trip to a farm field day.

'We were wandering the field days and I walked into one of the seed tents. I had never thought about seeds before. I just thought you buy them at the supermarket. I never questioned it even though I was a staunch organic grower. The man in that seed tent asked whether I realised that the only seeds that we could buy in New Zealand were Pukekohe Longkeeper onions – all the rest came from Holland, which was under nuclear fallout at that point. A shiver went up my spine and I knew I had to do something about it' (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

Kay and her husband, Bob, started collecting heritage seeds with help from gardeners around the community who had been keeping their own collection each year, and found that as their collection grew so did their connection with the seeds. Saving the seeds meant saving the

whakapapa¹⁷ and stories connected to the seeds, which re-orientated their priorities. At the realisation that they couldn't save the seeds on their own, they founded Koanga Institute. Today Koanga Institute has a collection of over 800 vegetable seeds and 400 fruit seeds (80 per cent of which are indigenous to Aotearoa) (Koanga Institute, 2016). Currently, they are building Kotare Village, an eco-village constructed alongside Koanga Institute. They also contribute to epigenetics research. Days at Koanga Institute are busy as they run workshops and internships and publish articles online. Their seeds are found throughout Wellington stores, and Commonsense Organics often have them in stock.

I selected the voice of Koanga Institute in this research as a leader in achieving food sovereignty through seed sovereignty. During my visit, I noticed walking into the office a big spider's web in the corner ceiling above one of the computers. I interpreted this spider's web as signifying how the outside world and nature was intrinsically valued and welcomed indoors, and this provoked thoughts about the often present binary between natural spaces and man-made spaces and how space can be reconceptualised in a food sovereignty paradigm.

Biofarm

'Biofarm is committed to the production of clean nutritious food using biodynamic farming principles, which are based on our consideration for the health and welfare of consumers, the animals in our care, and the environment we all live in' (Biofarm, 2016).

Figure 3.5: Biofarm Homepage



(Source: Biofarm, 2016)

Biofarm has become the first company in Aotearoa to supply certified organic dairy products to supermarket chains (see Figure 3.5) (Biofarm, 2016). Based in Palmerston North, Biofarm

¹⁷ Whakapapa broadly translated means 'genealogical connections' Hutchings et al., 2012; 136).

is the second oldest commercial organic farm operating in Aotearoa (Biofarm, 2016). Owned and operated by Cathy and Jamie Tait-Jamieson, the farm is run in accordance with Rudolf Steiner philosophy and was one of the first businesses to be certified under Hua Parakore (Hutchings et al., 2012). In 1997, Cathy also won the 'Overall Excellence in Business Award' in the Māori Women's Business Awards (Biofarm, 2016).

Biofarm began in 1977 as a dream to work with nature. Unfortunately when the Tait-Jamiesons first got into dairy farming they found the reality very different to their dream, where they didn't picture spraying weeds and drenching cows (Cathy, Biofarm, 4 June). Wanting to 'do it differently' the Tait-Jamiesons broke away from convention in 1980 and started farming biodynamically after discovering Steiner's work. To keep the farm financially viable they added value to the milk by making yoghurt and by 1986 they had registered the Biofarm Trademark;

'We had to evolve a Southern hemisphere system that was biodynamic because it was based on Northern hemisphere farming; where animals are housed through the year. There was a big emphasis on making compost and for three years we rushed around trying to find enough stuff to make the compost we apparently needed. We took a while to figure out that the compost was normally made from soiled straw used in animal bedding and compost was actually about making use of an excess resource. As our cows are outdoors all year round, there's no bedding to make compost, because of this, and as biodynamic is about maintaining soil health, every cow pat is actually a compost heap. That turned the whole organic thing on its head' (Cathy, Biofarm, June 4).

Today, Biofarm are a well-established and sought after brand in Aotearoa and the hope is that one day Biofarm and Ecofarm (a farm also registered with the Tait-Jamiesons) products will be available on the international market.

I selected the voice of Biofarm in this research as a leader in Māori and indigenous food sovereignty. This was not only an important component of conducting postcolonial research, but speaking with Cathy also helped me to understand the deeper significance of a food sovereignty paradigm, as she spoke about connecting with her whakapapa.

Commonsense Organics

'Commonsense Organics are suppliers of organic and allergy-aware food, environmentally friendly products and fair trade goods' (Commonsense Organics, 2016).

Figure 3.6: Commonsense Organics Homepage



(Source: Commonsense Organics, 2016)

Commonsense Organics is a family-owned business that started in 1991 as a small organics shop in the heart of Wellington. As the business grew so did the number of stores and today there are five Commonsense Organics throughout Wellington and Auckland as well as one online (see Figure 3.6) (Commonsense Organics, 2016). For Marion and her husband, Jim, Commonsense Organics grew out of a dream of providing a market for organics during a time when ‘wilted greens’ were the norm on the organic market (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May). Though the couple had been gardening for most of their lives, they didn’t have a lot of experience working in the industry.

‘We helped to start the Wellington food co-op and then when that was looking at going into liquidation we thought we really need to make sure that organic food has a market and it gets out to ordinary New Zealanders. We started Commonsense Organics in 1991 to mainstream organics because it’s nutritious, it’s good for you and it tastes better... That’s why we say on some of our shops “good for you, good for the planet”’ (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May).

Through a long process of adapting their business model, Commonsense Organics has grown into a strong business that is doing things differently. Through maintaining high ethical standards in procurement and trade, Commonsense Organics stores are known for stocking a range of fair trade and ethical business products which has fostered smart business on a local, national and international scale (Commonsense Organics, 2016). Marion and Jim are also very hands-on around the community and often help people with becoming certified organic or mentoring people in the food industry wanting to adopt more ethical business practices (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May).

I selected the voice of Commonsense Organics in this research as a leader in market-based solutions. I regularly shop at Commonsense Organics and am always impressed by the subtle yet clear ways there is encouragement for people to grow their own food and cook for

themselves as I often see fact sheets displayed in-store giving tips on cooking fruits and vegetables and each store has a gardening section.

Workerbe

'Healthy happy food delivered to your desk daily' (Workerbe, 2016).

Figure 3.7: Workerbe Homepage



(Source: Workerbe, 2016)

Workerbe (see Figure 3.7) is a social enterprise that is supporting urban agriculture through providing a convenient way for urbanised peoples to eat and learn about nutrient-dense food (Erin, Workerbe, 25 June). Whilst it remains in its infancy, Workerbe primarily specialises in delivering nutrient-dense green smoothies and lunches to offices around the Wellington Central Business District and running workshops on health (Workerbe, 2016). The business is also developing to include Workerbe Oasis, an urban garden growing organic nutrient-dense food according to permaculture principles. Workerbe Oasis will work alongside Workerbe through increasingly providing the produce used in Workerbe food (Erin, Workerbe, 25 June). In the interim Workerbe is supporting local, organic and spray-free farms. The business was inspired as Erin, one of the Directors, started making and delivering green smoothies to her colleagues and realised that there was an opportunity to help the Wellington community (Erin, Workerbe, 25 June). Being health-conscious and avid gardeners the Workerbe team wanted to create a business that would be holistic, ethical and operate out of the urban centre.

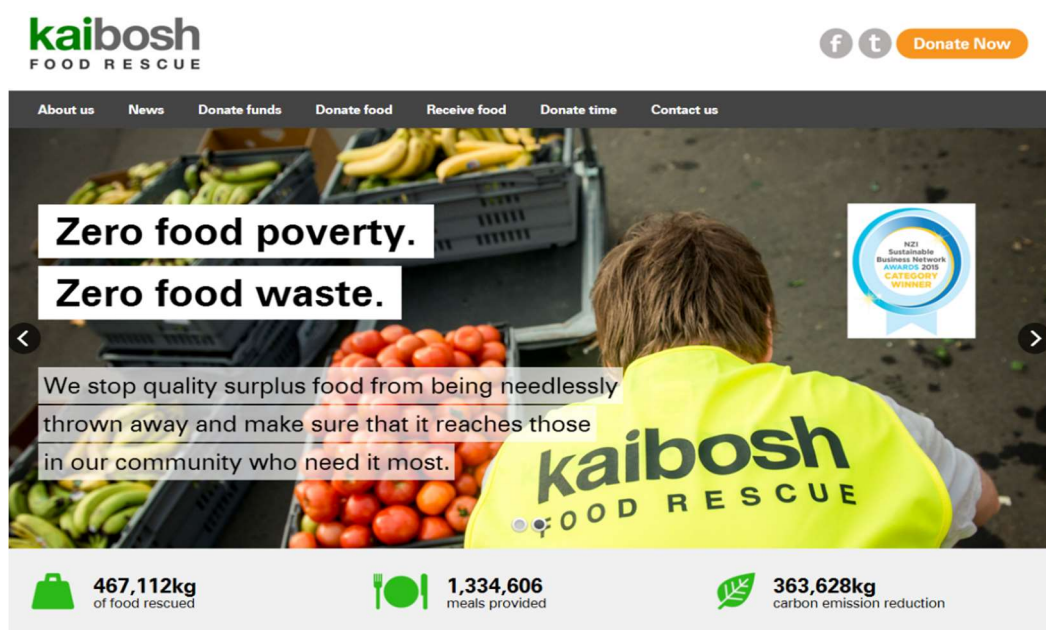
The Workerbe team hopes to one day see hives in many urban centres where health is treated holistically, from eating nutrient-dense food and working in environmentally friendly ways to encouraging a strong sense of community (Erin, Workerbe, 25 June).

I selected the voice of Workerbe in this research as a leader in pioneering the urbanised food sovereignty paradigm. Given the current corporate climate of Wellington city and the prioritisation of work over other life aspects, I am inspired by the ways Workerbe is transforming urban spaces.

Kaibosh

‘We stop quality surplus food from being needlessly thrown away and make sure it reaches those in our community who need it most’ (Kaibosh, 2016).

Figure 3.8: Kaibosh Homepage



(Source: Kaibosh, 2016)

Kaibosh is New Zealand's first food rescue charitable trust and works on a vision of 'Zero Food Poverty, Zero Food Waste' (see Figure 3.8), through saving food that is still good to eat but no longer considered sellable. Kaibosh collects, sorts and redistributes food at no additional cost to donor businesses (Kaibosh, 2016). By working directly with other organisations, Kaibosh supports a community of charities and support organisations so that people don't just receive food, but also any additional support they may need (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May).

The idea of Kaibosh grew from humble beginnings in 2008, when Robyn and George Langlands began collecting excess food from Wishbone one night a week and kept it in their fridge to donate to the Wellington Women's Refuge the following day (Kaibosh, 2016). After a

while they found themselves inundated with food and decided to register Kaibosh as a charitable trust that could be properly staffed and managed. They employed Matt Dagger, the current Director and grew into the well-known organisation they are today. As of January 2016, Kaibosh have redistributed over one million meals and saved over 400,000 kilos of food (Kaibosh, 2016). Given Kaibosh's aim of redistributing food which is over 60% fresh fruit and vegetables, the meals they have put on tables have been much healthier than the non-perishable foods charities have traditionally been able to give (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May). This was not easy at first as they had to implement a lot of health and safety policies and were required to make a submission to influence the 2011 Food Bill in order to remove the obstacle that potential legal liability posed to reluctant food donors (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May). Any food that does not meet health and safety regulations is sent to be composted and disposed of in an environmentally-friendly way, making Kaibosh also an environmental organisation (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May).

As they continue to meet their original goal of minimising food waste and environmental degradation, Matt finds the organisation is also increasingly working in a consultancy capacity for other food rescue groups.

'I don't see that Kaibosh will ever be a nation-wide franchise, we'll always leave that to local organisations to set up and run local projects because local people have local solutions to local problems, but more and more we are offering a sort of consultancy role' (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May).

I selected the voice of Kaibosh in this research as a leader in food redistribution and waste management. I was really impressed by my visit to Kaibosh as Matt enthusiastically showed me around. I loved the juxtaposition of having something like a commercial kitchen at the back, to a 'conference room' -like entrance and it got me thinking about the logistics of building 'food-based communities'. Moreover Kaibosh are fulfilling the primary principle, that 'food is a human right'.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has briefly analysed key food-related issues in Aotearoa. Though these issues are only explained in brief, they are important for the ways they fit within the general themes of this research where industrial agriculture is proving ever more problematic for the environmental impact it is having. Similarly, through highlighting the link between neoliberal reform, poverty and hunger, this research demonstrates that Aotearoa is not immune to the kind of issues many countries face with the growing power of corporate globalisation and the marketised food system.

This is then contrasted with the unique, holistic, ethical and sustainable ways each of the participant organisations are working. As I present the narratives of people working in these organisations I have shown how these organisations are pioneering new ways of interacting with food and the food system. In later chapters I will argue this as coherent with the food sovereignty paradigm.

First however, I share my journey of crafting this research and collaborating with these organisations in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Introduction

My initial methodological approach began as a quest to read as many 'how-to' research guides as possible. Eagerly searching for arguments on the best way to design my data collection and analysis, I scanned through books like 'how to write a winning thesis'. Needless to say, at first I was completely unaware of the journey that is crafting a methodology. In this chapter I relay my story of what it was like to *live* the research and discover that constructing knowledge is not passive, but rather a series of difficult decisions that are messy, specific and situational in nature. I also justify my choice to adopt qualitative and ethnographic approaches. This followed a process of realising positivist and quantitative traditions do not align with food sovereignty because they encourage distance and neutrality, concepts alien to a food sovereignty lens. Instead I found postcolonialism provided a theoretical approach to untangling power and positionality.

Epistemology

My first pivotal interaction with moulding this research arose from the task of interpreting and applying epistemological and ontological theoretical paradigms. In my initial canvasses of the research literature, I learnt how these paradigms stand as metaphorical pillars in the research structure (Creswell, 2014; Davies & Hughes, 2014; Guba & Lincoln, 2004); 'The epistemological positioning of the researcher operates as an intellectual (and perceptual/cognitive) technology of seeing (and doing) the entire research project' (D'Cruz, 2001; 19). I felt a pressure early in designing this research to identify my epistemology/ontology. I thought that if I discovered which theoretical paradigm I fit in, I could then be instructed on how to research according to my epistemology/ontology. Initially, I treated methodology literature like taking a questionnaire. As I attempted to 'diagnose' myself through reading each theoretical category of Positivism, Critical Theory, Constructivism and so on, I became resentful at how neatly each theoretical paradigm was presented by authors like Creswell (2014) and Guba and Lincoln (2004).

The word 'paradigm' is ironic, for the word's definition hints at the fundamental and intrinsic nature of these ideas to the way people define their existence: a paradigm 'represents a worldview that defines, for its holder the nature of the *world*, the individual's place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts' (Guba and Lincoln, 2004; 107). Understanding and navigating epistemological and ontological paradigms is not a trivial pursuit and one that cannot be discovered through applying the theories like a questionnaire. Instead, I noticed that aspects of a few theoretical paradigms, namely Social Constructivism, Post-Structuralism and Feminism, resonated with me. Through this process I came to mediate

my epistemology or 'fractured lens' (D'Cruz, 2001); a mess of theoretical ideas that cannot be applied in the same binary fashion that I found them presented, but used as a lens to highlight appropriate research methods. Using this lens I found answering three theoretical questions established key metaphorical pillars in this research.

The first question asks '*what is reality?*' (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Guba & Lincoln, 2004). Berger and Luckmann (1966; 13), two key writers on Social Constructivism, answer this question by defining reality as a 'quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognise as having a being independent of our own volition'; thus reality has a sense of being undeniable, it is not something that we can wilfully make disappear. Yet it remains intangible (as it is a concept) and is subjective (because we interpret it differently from one another); 'There is no such thing as objective reality because everything is understood and interpreted through the eyes, ears and brains of analysts from a specific social context' (Davies & Hughes, 2014). This means reality is fluid and moulded through interactions in the social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, sex and gender realms which have in turn produced and shaped a series of collective structures (like infrastructure, law, societal norms) (Guba and Lincoln, 2004; Seale, 1999); and with repetitive use of said structures, they become taken as 'real' (Guba and Lincoln, 2004). Because reality is fluid, it is in a permanent state of change, and therefore perceptions and conceptualisations of reality can *shift* giving rise to the idea of paradigm shifts.

This perspective of reality leads to the second question of '*what is knowledge?*' (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Guba & Lincoln, 2004). The word 'knowledge' connotes feelings of comprehending, understanding or assuming. For Berger & Luckmann (1966; 13), 'knowledge' is defined as 'the certainty that phenomena are real and that they possess specific characteristics', or a feeling of familiarity or resonating with a pre-established awareness of these 'real' structures. Given the postcolonial nature of this research, I struggled with this definition, as I have come to understand how words like 'real' or 'existing' connote a sense of binary acceptance, where it is either present or it isn't. Through interpreting what this means in a postcolonial frame, I have come to understand how an acknowledgement and prioritisation of certain phenomena over others have created systems of knowledge, which are enforced through power, and ultimately homogenise ways of knowing. This is re-iterated by key Post-Structural theorists like Foucault, who discusses knowledge as constructed rather than as existing in its own right. Therefore knowledge is inseparable from power, because 'knowledge induces the effects of power. It is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power' because 'knowledge is a power over others, the power to define others...and ceases to be a liberation and becomes a mode of surveillance, regulation and discipline' (Sarup, 1988; 73-82).

The construction and power of knowledge, in regards to Postcolonialism, has had a significant impact on the portrayal of human history. Knowledge, in hand with power, has created systems of privilege. Understanding research as a form of constructing knowledge and therefore engendering power, I began to question how I could best mediate this power to create equitable outcomes in my research. One way of doing this was through highlighting alternative ways of knowing. This means including emotional knowledge, which also fits within the activist framing of this research as; 'Over the last decade or so, social scientists have increasingly recognised the importance of emotions to the functioning and understanding of social movement' (Brown & Pickerill, 2009; 24); as well as including spiritual knowledge which is explored most explicitly in Chapter 7.

Knowledge as a cornerstone of epistemology influences how researchers test the validity of their research and prompts questions of '*How can I go about finding out what I want to know?*' (Davies & Hughes, 2014; Guba & Lincoln, 2004). Given Postcolonialism, Feminist arguments are also fitting. Haraway (1988; 580) argues that;

'We need an earth-wide network of connections, including the ability partially to translate knowledges among very different – and power-differentiated – communities. We need the power of modern critical theories of how meanings and bodies get made, not in order to deny meanings and bodies, but in order to build meanings and bodies that have a chance for life'

I interpreted this as research having the potential to empower and liberate, if an analysis of power is at the forefront of the knowledge constructed. Instead of attempting to be the traditional 'empty vessel' researcher, I reflected on the ways my positioning and power would mediate the knowledge constructed (Moser, 2008; 384). With an understanding that 'knowledge is always mediated by pre-existing ideas and values, whether this is acknowledged by researchers or not' (Seale, 1999; 470), I interrogated my own pre-existing ideas because knowledge is 'inextricably intertwined with the interaction between a particular investigator and a particular object or group.' (Guba & Lincoln, 2004; 110). This has allowed me to construct research that uses power discourse and my positioning as the context for the constructed knowledge. This reflects Kohl and McCutcheon's argument (2014; 729) that 'we use our stories to demonstrate the importance of meaningful interaction with others to deepen critical engagement with research'.

'Positionality' is a key concept in Feminist discourse (Haraway, 1988; Moser, 2008). Through continuously interrogating constructed knowledge, either through reflection or through lived experience, understanding my positionality helps me to see how I identify and label myself, others and power (Moser, 2008). Reflexivity is a tool best used in conjunction with positionality

in research; 'Reflexivity is self-critical sympathetic introspection and the self-conscious analytical scrutiny of the self as researcher' (England, 1994; 82). Not accounting for positionality (and reflexivity) in research is pulling the 'God trick'; a term Haraway uses to describe research that is traditionally Western and masculinist. Thus, this research is not about 'universal' application or the claim of 'seeing everything from nowhere' (Haraway, 1988; 581). Instead 'only partial perspective promises objective vision ... where feminist objectivity is quite simply *situated knowledges*' (Haraway, 1988; 581-583). Understanding that 'specific agglomerations of reality and knowledge pertain to specific social contexts' (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; 15), this research disregards notions of objectivity and neutrality and avoids reductionism, arguing that the role of a researcher is to offer a positioned lens for interpretation and communication of the specific 'data' used (Creswell, 2014; Davies & Hughes, 2014).

By the term 'data' I refer to any interaction I have had with the structures of reality throughout this research journey. In other words, how my surroundings have comprised a part of the research process. This has happened in formal and informal ways, where books and academic articles have influenced me as much as conversations and observations I have made. Kohl and McCutcheon (2014; 748) call this the 'Everyday talk' methodology, which qualitative researchers can use to interrogate their positionalities. This aspect of being surrounded by what I saw as relating to my research is what I mean by *living* the research, where there was a messy and unclear boundary between what was research and what was not. I feel my knowledge was constructed through analysing the ways it related to my every day interactions; and the ways I analysed were largely affected by my positioning at the time. After much reflection and mulling over a concern that this research was less academic because of the unclear research boundary, I came to realise that research mimics life and life is messy!

One major complication I confronted in this epistemological/ontological journey surrounds the argument of becoming 'prisoners of our own discourse' (Sarup, 1988; 104-105); 'If reality was constructed by our discourse rather than reflected by it, how could we ever know reality itself, rather than merely knowing our own discourse?' (Sarup, 1988; 105). Lived experiences base our constructions of knowledge and inform the words used to assert this knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 2004; Seale, 1999). Though I have done my best to mediate this through building and expanding upon definitions of discourse used, I am aware that this argument is an unavoidable weakness of any research, including my own.

Qualitative Methods

Given this journey of my ontology and epistemology, a qualitative methodology made sense as it allowed me to take a messy and unclear path to situated knowledge. Qualitative research focusses on the narratives of specific people, places and issues (Creswell, 2014; Davies &

Hughes, 2014). Qualitative methods are best used to foster the exploration of feelings and experiences ‘in ways that go beyond the crudity of traditional categories such as age, gender or ethnicity’ (Davies & Hughes, 2014). Similar to my food sovereignty lens, qualitative methods are inductive and deductive where themes emerge from the crude data and are reflected upon and tested throughout analysis and writing (Creswell, 2014). This emergent nature allowed me to adjust my questions and aims as the research evolved.

I purposefully selected the participants, not only because I feared that food sovereignty was too unknown as a concept and would not have resonated with people but because positivist methods of ‘random selection’ and avoiding ‘bias’ were not appropriate in this research (Creswell, 2014; Guba & Lincoln, 2004). I combined reflexive and holistic accounts in the write-up to achieve a sense of viable, reliable and ethical research. *Living* this research and embracing positionality has allowed for the construction of knowledge that is homed in a specific and situated context. My thinking and experiences have *threaded* together this research (Creswell, 2014; Davies & Hughes, 2014).

This approach, though difficult, has felt genuine and in tune with my internal positionality, for naturally I am reflective of my emotions and interpretations. Being a people-person, I knew at the outset that I wanted to interact with people face-to-face and explore their stories. When I was reading about the different forms of qualitative data collection I was most attracted to semi-structured interviews, group interviews and observations for the ways they could be combined for comprehensive data (Creswell, 2014).

I chose the organisations Koanga Institute, Biofarm, Commonsense Organics, Workerbe and Kaibosh (see Chapter 3) for the ways they contribute to the food sovereignty paradigm. Selection of these organisations came through recommendations from colleagues, reading about them in journal articles or seeing them at conferences. Awareness of how these organisations interact in different ways in or within Wellington was favourable, as it fostered a sense of researching home. Also, as these organisations work with a broad range of people from differing socio-economic demographics, I felt that combined, the organisations allowed for a broad analysis of the food sovereignty paradigm.

I was inspired by the work of these organisations and wanted to create a space where their achievements could be promoted in an academic light. It is my intention that this research serves as a gift for the community, rather than takes from it; which is both my ethical perspective and a form of academic decolonisation (Oliver, 2010; Smith, 1999).

Data Collection

Once I received permission to begin interviewing from the Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee, I contacted each organisation and was pleasantly surprised when

the Directors agreed to put some time aside to be interviewed because I could tell that they are very busy people. Before making a time and place for the interview I sent each Director an information sheet (see Appendices) to give them a clearer idea of my research aims. I asked each Director to choose a location for the interview to encourage a 'natural setting' where they could feel comfortable and I could better interpret the 'meanings' they attached to that setting (Davies & Hughes, 2014; 9). All the Directors, except one, were interviewed at work; and two of these workplaces also happened to be the Directors' homes. This provided a more intimate context for the interviews. Before interviewing began, I created my research tools (consent forms, interview guide) (see Appendices) and found myself thinking about all aspects of the interview including how I could dress in a way that represented me (Creswell, 2014; Davies & Hughes, 2014).

In total, I conducted six semi-structured interviews throughout May and June 2015. Semi-structured interviews give substantial insights into the participant's feelings, thoughts and experiences. I did not give the interviewees a list of questions beforehand to foster a conversational feel and better representation of everyday interaction (Jacob & Ferguson, 2012). I posed open-ended questions 'intended to elicit views and opinions' (Creswell, 2014; 190). I tried to use the specific terminologies or phrases the interviewees used in their responses in order to grasp the definitions of the words held by the interviewee.

I endeavoured to keep each interview under an hour to ease stress on the interviewee's time commitments. Due to my novice skills as an interviewer and preference, I chose not to make many notes whilst interviewing. The general sections of the interviews included; an introduction of the interviewee and the organisation; the challenges facing the organisation; the ways the organisation has grown; the interviewee's interpretation of food sovereignty; and lessons to be learnt from the interviewee's experiences. I found the advantages of semi-structured interviews included being able to ask the interviewees similar questions (giving each interview a certain flow), whilst getting in-depth and rich responses, and keeping within time constraints (Creswell, 2014; Davies & Hughes, 2014; Jacob & Ferguson, 2012).

It was interesting to notice how positionality impacted each interview. Knowing that 'complex and nuanced engagements with positionality are most often critically examined through self-reflexive processes' (Kohl & McCutcheon, 2014; 752), I decided to maintain a journal throughout data collection to record my feelings and reflections. My positionality influenced a complex relationship with each interviewee, where Chacko's (2004) notions of intersectionality rang true for me, as well as Kohl and McCutcheon's discussion (2014; 752) of occupying a space of 'betweenness'. At times, I felt like an outsider for being too urban, not Kiwi enough, or too academic; whilst simultaneously feeling like an insider because I could relate to how passionate the interviewees were about food, they also spoke English and four out of the five

Directors were women. It was interesting how the intersectional presence of these aspects affected the interviews. Moser (2008) writes positionality is not 'ready to wear identity', a claim I found true because intersectional positionality is a form of 'dormant' and 'non-dormant' positionalities. For instance, the Directors often remarked upon my age. I found comments like 'This probably happened before you were born' and 'We don't just give it all to some kid that's going to set up today and be gone tomorrow', reiterated Guba and Lincoln's (2004) remarks on research being specific to its context. I imagine that, had I been interviewing people my own age, comments of this nature would not have been said. This complex presence of dormant and non-dormant positionalities is echoed in England's writing (1994; 85) where personal characteristics can allow for certain insights whilst preventing others. This illustrates how power is an interweaving dynamic of interviews, as the interviewees can also exercise their rights in withholding information.

Unfortunately, it became clear throughout the initial interviews with the Directors that group interviews with staff and ethnographic observations were not going to be viable as the staff were already very busy and committing to the interviews would be an extra burden. I considered this to be an unethical ask from the organisations as I kept in mind that 'Fieldwork is inherently confrontational in that it is the purposeful disruption of other people's lives' (England, 1994; 85). I chose to abandon these forms of data collection, affirming the qualitative message that researchers must be flexible in data collection and consider how the theory is not always appropriate to the context. There was the exception of the Koanga Institute, however, where group lunchtime provided a moment to conduct a Focus Group. This interview proved enlightening and is referred to throughout the findings and discussion. The silver lining of abandoning these methods came from a recommendation in the group interview to add the organisation Workerbe to my participants, which proved insightful.

Despite not formally making ethnographic observations, the Directors of the Koanga Institute, Biofarm and Kaibosh were able to give me brief tours of their organisation's grounds which helped to build a stronger context for the interviews.

Data Analysis

Once data collection finished I began analysis. I found Crang and Cook's point (2007; 132) that 'analysis is a creative, active making process' and a way of 'translating a messy process into a neat product' to be true (Crang & Cook, 2007; 133). At the outset of analysis, I readdressed my research aims. I decided against the need to make recommendations for policy action and felt this research best offers empowerment and encouragement to other like-minded organisations working within the food sovereignty paradigm. I wanted the situated

knowledge evidenced in this research to form another brick in the wall of the knowledge of food sovereignty.

I selected Applied Thematic Analysis [ATA] once I was familiar with the content of my data. ATA instructs analysis to be data-content navigated, as opposed to having a pre-determined hypothesis (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012). My primary intention was to give voice to my interviewees in this research and allow the themes and findings to emerge from the narratives shared during data collection.

ATA combines aspects of phenomenology and grounded theory which keeps a balance between looking at the details and big picture of the themes (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012). ATA also offered tangible steps for analysis whilst accommodating a fluid and malleable way of analysing (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012), or what became the 'I'll know it when I see it' approach. This allowed me the freedom to act as 'the intellectual intermediary between what was said and what it means structurally within the context of the research' (Davies & Hughes, 2014; 222).

Like my messy epistemology, I did not use ATA in its entirety as my understanding of situated knowledge contradicted notions of 'quantification' (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012). Rather, I analysed with the mindset that the number of times something was said did not make it any more or less significant, reiterating Haraway's arguments (1988; 580) to not 'deny meanings or bodies' and Foucault's cautioning that knowledge is engendered by power.

I first made transcriptions of the interviews. Then I began a process of reading and re-reading my transcripts and looking for emerging trends, themes and key ideas (Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2012). Through *living* my understanding of postcolonial approaches and looking at how the themes and ideas interconnected, I began to build the findings. This was an active process of resisting categorisation and separation and embracing a 'relational' ontology (Villalba, 2013; 1430). This often meant finding the 'back story' to the views shared and building a picture of the key issues discussed within the literature.

This allowed for the natural divide in chapters where the discussion first contextualised the issues, which were then mediated and negotiated by the Directors and the work of the organisations. Furthermore, this process was not linear, but rather cyclical where 'de- and re-contextualising' (Crang & Cook, 2007; 133) allowed me to form the chapters. Often I would analyse a quote and then read literature to understand the different perspective shared within the quote, and then compare this perspective with the food sovereignty framework, which was 'maddeningly recursive' (Agar, as cited in Crang & Cook, 2007; 145).

Ethics and Representation

I have found conducting ethical research to be a continuous process of using reflexivity as a tool to guide ethical dilemmas.

This occurred throughout the research journey and was a prominent theme at the beginning of each interview when I explained the concept of 'on-going consent'¹⁸ and informed the participant they could choose not to answer any question or pull out of the research, with no questions asked (Oliver, 2010). I have also worked to represent the participants in a way they feel comfortable with, by providing different occasions where they could re-phrase anything or pose me any questions.

I have also worked to portray each participant as close to their own words as possible through avoiding 'textual appropriation' and 'misrepresentation' (England, 1994; 86) by including lengthy quotes. At times, however, comments made by participants, isolated out of context, could be misleading. To minimise this, each quote is followed with my interpretation of what a participant has said.

Similarly, throughout writing, I have occasionally chosen not to share aspects of the data in fear that doing so would somehow strip away from its sacredness. This has been difficult, ethically, because I do not wish to silence knowledges either. When in doubt I have reflected upon postcolonial approaches, such as when Smith (1999) cautions against the appropriation or showcasing of indigenous (and sacred) knowledges, and used this to guide my own agenda by reflexively analysing why I wanted to include certain data. If I considered it part of the decolonisation process I included it. If I decided my desire to include it was to make my research more interesting, I left it out.

I have tried to work as transparently as possible. This has been consistent throughout my research and first began in drafting the consent forms, where I gave the Directors the option to be identified and directly quoted. Ensuring that this option was as ethical as possible, I requested permission for each interview to be audio-recorded and later transcribed. I informed the participants that they could ask to receive a copy of the transcript at any point during the research. I have also sent them copies of the parts of my thesis directly attributed to them or their organisation for their revision and approval.

Also, working independently from these organisations, I have on occasion presented views that disagree with those of the participant's. This is my way of trying to keep this research

¹⁸ I did a pilot run of my explanation of on-going consent with friends to ensure that I was communicating it clearly (Davies & Hughes, 2014).

grounded, as it is formulated in the unideal world and therefore, through being critical of comments, I feel I am continuing some of these deep debates.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter I have relayed my story of crafting a methodology, which involved navigating a range of theories around differing ontologies and epistemologies. Through a process of introspective questioning and interrogating the literature I came to the pillars of this research; which are inspired by Postcolonialism, Feminist theory, Post-Structuralism and Social Constructivism. Together, they convey an understanding of knowledge as engendered in power and unavoidably situated and tied to positionality.

This led me to qualitative methods where I could be explicit about my positionality and processes of reflexive thinking. This chapter then discusses how I came to select and interact with the organisations and primary voices within this research. Lastly, I explain the intention of creating research with validity and reliability through representing the data ethically and in accordance with situated knowledge. Through *living* this research, I have constructed knowledge with a purpose.

The next three chapters are the discussion and findings chapters, where I connect and interpret the key themes and messages presented by the interviewees in context of the literature. This begins with an analysis of the role of the market in the food system.

Chapter 5: Finding Market Solutions

Introduction

This chapter explores the issues tied to an unequal and unsustainable food system, by analysing issues of power, wealth and environmental degradation. This entails analysis of the marketised food system, which is based on exploitation and the pursuit of profit. Through critically assessing the supermarket model, this chapter will begin to tease out some alternative forms of food business models and suggest some key market solutions the participants have discovered.

An Unequal and Unsustainable System

The current food system is critiqued by food sovereignty activists as failing. Whilst justifications for this claim are varying, main critiques break into two primary concerns; the system as unequal and as unsustainable.

On one hand, the food system is failing because it perpetuates inequality. Due to the heavy emphasis of the market economy, the food system undermines the ability for food to be a basic human right as many people access food through purchasing it. This fact has led to issues of food poverty because the market, despite the debunked 'trickle-down theory', is not a means for equal distribution but rather orchestrates situations where people 'miss out' (Ehrenreich & Lyon, 2011; Roberts, 2008; Young, 2012). For Sen (1981), not having enough food, or starvation, is caused from a 'perspective of entitlement', where ownership of food is viewed in the same light as property rights and so, starvation is understood as failure to acquire necessary property; meaning that food rather than being a right is a marketable commodity. This leads to unequal distribution because the current marketised food system perpetuates a symmetrical system of creating 'winners' and 'losers' (Roberts, 2008) or a 'zero-sum game' which is counterintuitive to rights discourse because having a right and accessing it, does not detract from someone else's rights (Chambers, 2004). Thus food sovereignty critiques rights to food as one way to address structural access to food (Brower, 2013; Goulet, 2009; Patel, 2009; Young, 2012).

For Matt, observing the food system as morally unjust inspired him to work for Kaibosh;

'Food sovereignty for me is about fairness and fair distribution. Because of the way we work in market-based economies and market-based societies, there's always people who miss out and my worldview is that's not alright. It's especially not right in times of abundance. How can you have a food system which is supposed to support everybody, but is not supporting everybody because it is market driven?' (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May).

Matt's sentiment of the food system being morally wrong is shared by food sovereignty activists (Patel, 2009; Sen, 1981; Shiva, 2012; Young, 2012).

This is evident through the varying critiques of the marketised food system where 'Wall Street starved millions and got away with it' (Kaufman, as cited in Shiva, 2012; 139). This argument is in response to 'commodity trading' which, in effect, is turning the food system into a 'casino economy' with commodity speculation (Young, 2012; 101). Food and corporate food stocks are treated like other traded goods on the stock market, leading to the tumultuous prices of food (Jarosz, 2009a; Young, 2012). Through this system of trading and price speculation, corporations are able to create artificial scarcity, and consequently this is addressed in the food sovereignty framework.

Around the world, commodity speculation has contributed to food poverty as too often the price of food will spike or drop unexpectedly, destabilising people's access to food (Altieri, 2012; McMahon, 2013); 'our food system is a casino with commodity speculation pushing up prices. Between 2005 and 2007 commodity speculation increased by 160 percent, it pushed up prices and pushed an additional 100 million people into hunger' (Shiva, 2012; 138). This explains one way the food industry has become a multi-billion dollar industry; because people profit from the hunger of others (Jarosz, 2009a; Shiva, 2012; Young, 2012). Further, this marketised system was not formed haphazardly but rather manufactured in order to keep food production costs down and retail price high (Patel, 2007).

Due to the pursuit of profit within the marketised food system, the retail price of food is not necessarily linked with actual production costs, giving rise to the concern of unsustainability (Shiva, 2012). This is evident through increasing literature warning that finite and natural resources are being consumed at alarming rates and adding to fears of climate change with increasing levels of greenhouse gas emissions (Liverman, 2008; Shiva, 2012). Roberts (2008) argues that such unsustainability is caused because food is not naturally suited to mass production. For him, this is evident through the reliance on Green Revolution technologies to attain current levels of certain crop productions. For Shiva, this is evident through the rate of extinction as 'between 30 and 300 species go extinct each day' (Shiva, 2012; 9).

Industrial food production uses ten times more units of energy (as inputs) than the metabolic energy of the food produced (Shiva, 2012); whilst about 50 percent of this food is wasted because people would rather throw food away than give it for free (Shiva, 2012). Despite this, the environmental cost of food, whether consumed or thrown out, remains the same. Thus whilst 70 percent of the world's fresh water has been consumed or polluted, 75 percent of agricultural biodiversity has been lost and 40 percent of greenhouse gas emissions have been

released (Patel, 2007; Shiva, 2012), some of this has occurred for the result of more edible food rotting in a landfill (McMahon, 2013).

For Marion from Commonsense Organics, having awareness of environmental degradation in the food system is part of what inspires her work;

‘I was at a forum the other day and discovered that if you internalise the environmental costs in the car industry it will reduce profits by 10% but if you globally internalise the environmental costs in the agriculture field it will reduce profits by 220%. So we are farming in a way that is totally unsustainable. It’s not good enough to say if we farm organically we won’t be able to feed people, we won’t be able to feed people the way that we are farming at the moment’ (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May).

This concern was shared by the other participants. At Koanga Institute, one participant remarked ‘at the moment we are living basically on fossil fuels - if you took those away our society would collapse’ (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May); suggesting a fear that industrial agriculture could eventually stop people from being able to feed themselves;

‘We created businesses around the need to save seeds...What we see are the seeds are the canary in the coal mine, they point to systemic failure and in a way they’re our flag mast now. So in a way the seeds have taught us a whole heap of stuff about systemic failure and now understanding the patterns of regenerating the seed, we understand the same patterns of regenerating communities, regenerating ecology etc’ (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

So for Koanga Institute, the value of the seeds is about reacting to and being resilient to systemic failure. Thus the organisation, critical of the unequal and unsustainable food system, is working to build an alternative food system. Moreover, one that is not necessarily based on the belief that ‘price equals value’ (Shiva, 2012; 17).

Inherent in this idea is the argument that economic growth is of a ‘cannibalistic nature; [because] it feeds on both nature and communities, and shifts unpaid costs back on to them as well’ (Sachs, 2013; 25). In Sach’s view, it is the development-as-growth model (which has reinforced the marketised food system) that has, time and again, led to impoverishment next to enrichment. This is visible in the difference between the altruistic justifications for aid and the reality of aid as a political agenda, where the separation of price and value has not only created the precedent for cheap food, but has also created dependency cycles – where the poor are further burdened by the agendas of the rich.

Food Aid: Creating Dependency in the System

So how did food aid begin? At the end of WW2, when Europe was left in ruins and faced difficulty producing adequate food supplies, US agriculture was producing food surpluses (Patel, 2007). In order to continue fostering good relationships with Europe, the US began sending surplus food to help feed populations devastated by war (Roberts, 2008)¹⁹. As Western European countries became independent in their own agricultural capacities they began asking for the food aid to stop. This was because in many cases the food had become more of a burden than a help due to the economics of food 'dumping' (Roberts, 2008; Pimbert, 2009). Thus, food aid deregulated local economies because it competed with local produce, making it difficult for local food producers to sell their crops (Hill, 1992; McMahon, 2013; McMichael, 2005).

During this time, when food aid was discontinued to Europe, traditional development was in its infancy. As a strategy to keep national agricultural subsidies in place (and to support theories of modernisation), the US shifted the framing of food aid to encompass foreign policy (McMichael, 2005; Patel, 2007). By 1956 food aid accounted for more than half of all economic aid (Patel, 2007). Advocating this strategy Butz, Assistant and Secretary of State for Agriculture between 1954 and 1974, declared 'Hungry men listen only to those who have a piece of bread. Food is a tool. It is a weapon in the US negotiating kit' (Jarosz, 2009b; 2070; Patel, 2007; 91), showing that food aid was (and still is) entangled with political power.

This was made clear through the shift in food aid receivers in the midst of increasing tension between capitalist and communist ideologies (McMichael, 2005). Following the end of the Cold War, as the Soviet Union offered oil in exchange for imported US wheat, the US withdrew a high proportion of food aid from parts of the Global South and began sending it to the Soviet Union (McMichael, 2005; Patel, 2007). Fearing consequences of what this would do to Southern aid receivers, political agendas shifted to promoting Green Revolution technology as an agricultural solution for the South (Shiva, 1991; Shiva, 2012). This did not only result in a new revenue stream for large Northern chemical corporations, but also provided a new use for leftover chemical weapons, where in particular Agent Orange, a chemical weapon used in the Vietnam War, was discovered to have insecticide applications (Curtin, 1995; Shiva, 2012).

Following the 1970s Oil Crisis, many South countries with agreeable climates and fertile soil turned to selling primary and finite resources to meet the conditions of Structural Adjustment

¹⁹ This was not the first time that US agriculture had stepped in to offset struggling agriculture in Western Europe as the food surpluses from the 1850's were a contributing factor to strong trade ties between Europe and the US (Roberts, 2008).

Policies²⁰, which promoted neoliberal trade as the route to development (Young, 2012). Doing so has not only meant that natural resources have and continue to plummet for many South countries, but due to commodity speculation and trading, the tumultuous pricing has made debt recovery a slow and unpredictable process (Patel, 2007; Young, 2012). Meanwhile, the need to continue producing commodities in a cycle of 'catch up' has left agriculture in the Global South open to exploitation (Shiva, 2012).

Furthermore, the World Trade Organisation's establishment of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade further accurses South farmers by restricting South governments from subsidising national agricultural efforts, by way of offering a minimum price guarantee (McMichael, 2005; Patel, 2007). Meanwhile, the US and some European governments do not face these same restrictions (Patel, 2007). This results in the production of cheap food by South agriculture, alongside subsidised US and European food (McMahon, 2013). This is why subsidies are mentioned in the food sovereignty lens (Wittman, 2011); 'The US government subsidised key farm commodities such as wheat and soybeans by buying them at set prices from farmers' (Jarosz, 2009a; 2009b).

Thus cheap food,²¹ has been created from the exploitation of South farmers. What's more, whilst debt recovery mandates agricultural production for certain commodities, much of the Global South are importing US and European subsidised food; 'The number of people in the world doubled between 1965 and 2008 but the volume of trade in cereals and oilseeds increased by three and a half times...rich countries were mostly selling food to poor countries...Of the 46 poorest countries in the world (with a GDP of less than \$2,000 per person) all but 3 countries imported more calories than they exported' (McMahon, 2013; 43-44). This is why the food sovereignty framework emphasises the importance of retaining food reserves and food productive capacity (Ehrenreich & Lyon, 2011). Moreover, importation is happening concurrently with selected programmes which dump food in the Global South, and particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa who have largely come to depend on the aid (Goulet, 2009). I use the word 'dump' here because, as Holt-Giménez (2008) points out, the quantity of food aid given is linked with food prices. The quantity increases when prices are low and decreases when prices are high, resulting in food-deficit countries being further burdened by unsteady quantities of food aid; suggesting that food aid is not always altruistic, but a way to dispose of

²⁰ As part of a condition of receiving a loan or keeping interest low on a loan from the World Bank or International Monetary Fund, many Southern countries had to agree to these policies which enforced neoliberal reforms and have been widely criticized as harming the South by opening it to exploitation (Ehrenreich & Lyon, 2011).

²¹ By this I mean a cheap retail price of food.

excess food (Hill, 1992). A reason why food sovereignty is critical of food aid provisions and argues for a new trade regime (Wittman, 2011).

Critiques of food aid arose in my discussion with Matt as he spoke about the criticism Kaibosh can receive;

'We get challenged about it quite a lot as to what we're doing, whether it's socially beneficial or socially destructive? That usually comes down to issues of dependency creation. Are we creating a need where there previously wasn't one? It's that kind of teach a man to fish or give him a fish thing. That's why we go with organisations, because for sure I agree if we just keep pumping free food on to a table to everybody, I don't think that that's socially beneficial. But if we can help organisations that give all those other things which are socially beneficial, then it means what we're doing is socially beneficial. Do you know what The Free Store is?...They go around and pick up surplus food like we do and they give it out to everyone. I philosophically disagree with that. Invariably it probably goes to the people our food goes to, but what's the end result? Is it that we're going to have this group of people coming to our door at 6 o'clock every night to get free food? Our end result is that the people supported by the organisations no longer need to take the food' (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May).

Through collaborating with other organisations, Kaibosh is structurally attempting to mitigate dependency creation issues. To receive access to Kaibosh food aid, people must go through other organisations; organisations that similarly have a well-being focus and offer assistance like budgeting help or getting a health nurse to visit a family home. This aspect of Kaibosh's model shows that whilst there are challenges in making food freely accessible and therefore, a right, these challenges may be mitigated through stronger collaboration. Moreover, Matt spoke about how the model of Kaibosh is not about making a profit, but getting the most social benefit, signifying that food aid can be altruistic.

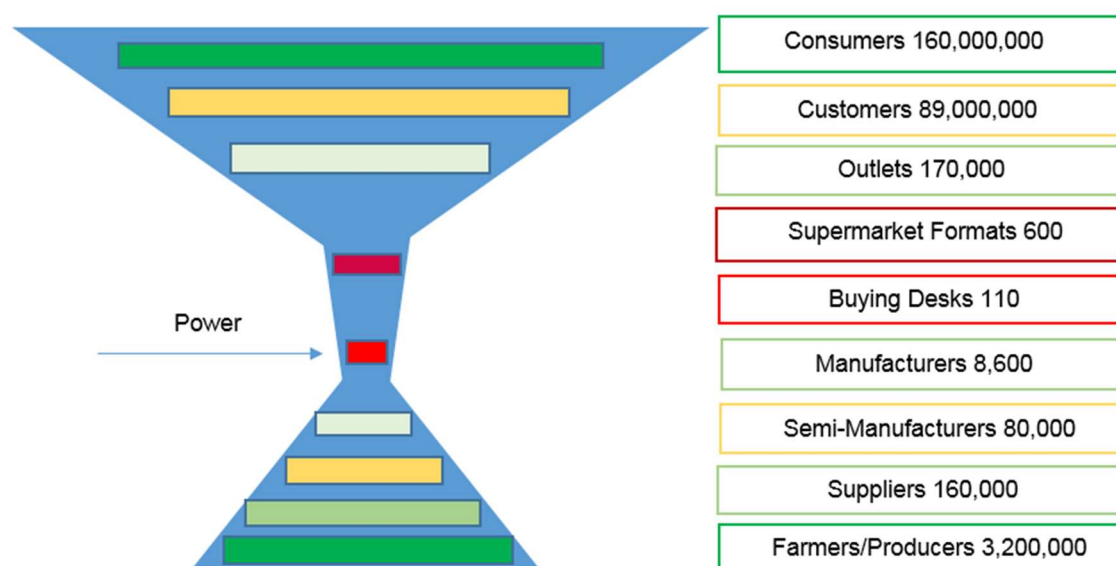
Whilst on the global scale, food aid has been shown as detrimental, through looking at the case of Kaibosh it is clear that food aid can be used for social benefit. Rather than entering further into the debate of whether food aid, globally could be beneficial, the underlying issue is really around the abuse of power and the disregard of the right to food.

Cheap Food: An Exercise of Corporate Power

In her critique of power within the food industry, Shiva (2012; 38) writes about the 'tsunami of corporate globalisation'. Whilst many South farmers are being exploited for cheap food production, many North corporations are becoming increasingly powerful (McMichael, 2005).

Whilst there remains an abundance of commodity farmers and consumers, there are few corporate buyers and sellers in distribution chains because the shipping, processing and trucking of food over vast distances requires a great deal of capital (Patel, 2007). This means big corporations can use economies of scale to their advantage, so the bigger the corporation, the higher the quantity of food that can be bought, transported and sold. This creates more opportunities for profit as corporations with the available capital can more or less, dictate price, because they have a monopoly. Thus corporations dictate the price to producers (through being one of few buyers of a commodity that is perishable) and to consumers (through retailing) (Patel, 2007). This is exemplified in the following figure which illustrates the approximate number of stakeholders at each level of the European industrial agriculture chain in 2003.

Figure 5.1: An Analysis of Power in the Food Distribution Chain in 2003



(Source: adapted from figures in Grievink, 2003)

Unbalanced power distribution benefits corporate interests at the expense of producer rights to fair pay, and consumer rights to fair food prices. The bottleneck of distribution, supermarkets and buying desks (forms of major corporate retailers), are the predominant bearers of power.

This explains how supermarkets have become the most powerful form of agribusiness in today's society (Patel, 2007). As the world's largest accomplice to a system of supplying cheap calories in unsustainable ways, the supermarket is an example of a perpetuating cycle of exploitation; which is clear through analysis of one precursor to supermarkets – colonisation.

The current supermarket model was born out of the exploitation of slaves and colonial trading where empires, particularly the British Empire, used colonial outposts as heavy suppliers of primary resources not native to The West (Roberts, 2008; Shiva, 2012). To attain levels of commodities, plantations were set up in The Rest, where slaves were exploited as physical labour and used to subsidise the price of food for consumers in The West (Patel, 2007). This was particularly beneficial to the Empire throughout the industrial revolutions of the 18th and 19th centuries, as the Empire relied upon The Rest as a means to feed the expanding populations concentrated around factory work in The West (Patel, 2007; Roberts, 2008). Sugar and tea were especially important as forms of cheap energy to keep workers docile in face of elevated poverty (Naylor, 2000; Patel, 2007). Corporations began to form around the trading of sugar, tea and other non-native goods, and as shipping routes became more common, trading increased (Naylor, 2000). Contemporary supermarkets still use these shipping routes and the exploitation of South farmers to produce cheap food for Western consumers.

A large portion of supermarket profits are derived from cheaply imported food from The Rest, where Western consumers will pay a marked-up retail price. Additionally, the processes of colonisation (which created the powerful West) have allowed many Western corporations to turn a profit through manufacturing foods using cheap imported South ingredients (Patel, 2007). This is visible (see Figure 5.2) in the familiar labelling on ‘added-value’ products; ‘Made in New Zealand [or Australia, or US, or Canada et cetera] from imported and local ingredients’.

Figure 5.2: ‘Made from Imported and Local Ingredients’



(Source: Author, 2016)

Added-value products are products that have been manufactured through an added process of preparation and are no longer in their primary form. For instance, an apple is a primary product whilst apple juice (because there has been a step in manufacturing) is an added-value product. This is important as the general rule is that added-value products can be retailed at a higher price than primary products. This is because commodity speculation most affects primary commodities. Added-value products can also be advertised differently, as product brands are often copyrighted to a corporation. Patel (2007) explains that this is one reason why a consumer will likely find eight varieties of apples in a supermarket, in contrast to 50 different kinds of breakfast cereals.

Thus, through corporate globalisation, and the accumulation of wealth through manufacturing foods but not producing primary ingredients, Western corporations, and particularly supermarkets, have the power to hike retail prices and exploit labourers. All whilst local food vendors are pushed out of business, unable to keep up with market competition (Ellickson, 2011; Naylor, 2000). Young (2012; 123) writes:

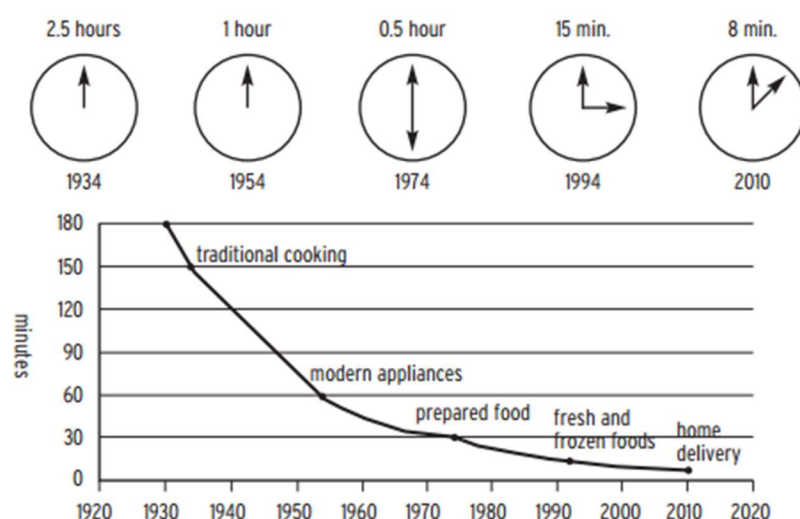
‘The “supermarketization” of the globe is already well advanced and has been effected in a remarkably short time frame. The 30 largest retail chains accounted for 29 percent of all food sales in 1999, but this figure had grown to 33 percent by 2002...Among the most powerful and famous, or infamous, ranked by size in 2002, are: Wal-Mart (United States); Carrefour (France); Ahold (Netherlands); Kroger (United States); Metro Group (Germany); Target (United States); Tesco (United Kingdom); and Costco (United States)’.

This has had knock-on effects, where the major supermarket chains (which are all owned by organisations from the Global North) have increasingly stocked products with new food technology. The refrigerator, freezer and tin can (Ellickson, 2011) have changed social infrastructure through changing how people store and carry food. Supermarkets have also increased in size, with many families increasingly owning cars, allowing people to shop with less frequency but in larger loads. Supermarkets also increasingly opt for longer shelf life and non-perishable foods to avoid making a loss on spoiled perishable goods, which is shifting how people prepare and consume food (Ellickson, 2011; Naylor, 2000; Roberts, 2008).

One participant expressed walking along the supermarket aisles as filled with ‘distractions’; ‘I think of what we should be putting in our body to help our health and nourish us as opposed to working against it and there’s a lot of distractions when you get to the supermarket which do the exact opposite’ (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May). So for her, the supermarket is shifting consumer priorities (through marketing strategies) and thus is geared more towards profit making than improving the health of consumers.

For instance, convenience foods such as frozen or microwave meals have materialised to meet market demands for less cooking time. This is apparent in trends of decreasing cooking times (see Figure 5.3) (Patel, 2007; Roberts, 2008).

Figure 5.3: Estimated Cooking Times in the Household Between the 1930s and 2010s



(Source: Hughes, as cited in Patel, 2007; 289)

According to Roberts (2008), this is changing the social infrastructure around food. As people continue to outsource roles around food production and preparation, people are shifting one key way they have related to one another over history (Roberts, 2008).

For Kay from Koanga Institute, this shift in people's relationship with food has continued on from women entering the workforce following WW2;

'We all chose to have a higher standard of living after the WW2. So the women went to work instead of being the food producers and we all decided we wanted three bedroom homes, carpet, automatic washing machines, fridges and all sorts of things we hadn't had before. So we gave away gardening and as part of that we gave away our seeds' (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

I believe Kay's quote emphasises that society has undergone restructuring in favour of monetised priorities. This was a sentiment shared by another participant at Koanga Institute who said; 'At the moment because economic rationalism is driving everything including our food industry it's about who can put a potato on the table for the cheapest. There's no other measure like how nutritious it is, because we've automated so much else, we've priced human labour to the brink' (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May). In response, Koanga Institute are trying to shift the focus back towards things they deem more important, such as health.

For Kay, economic rationalism can be seen through the push for longer shelf life, which in her experience is becoming the most important criteria of food on the market;

‘At one point I was working with the Manager of the DSIR [Department of Scientific and Industrial Research] in Auckland. He had the list of selection criteria the government were using for breeding new plant material. They had a list of selection criteria which was 27 things long. Number three was ‘what it looked like’. At the bottom of the list was ‘what it tasted like’. Nowhere on the list was suitability for local soils or climate or nutrition or disease resistance. I didn’t understand all the other things on the list. I don’t even know what they meant. ‘Shelf life’ was number one. That was the most important thing about it because they were all being bred for export...once they became what had to be grown commercially - for the commercial growers to earn a living - they also had to become what the nurseries grew in order to make a living and that just became what is in the garden centres and what the home gardeners grow’ (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

In other words, the pursuit of profit in the food system has not only affected food on supermarket shelves, but the food available within the food system, which is why saving heritage seeds is so important for her, because the seeds represent, literally and philosophically, an alternative food system.

Likewise, the literature is critical of how shelf life and convenience have also changed food biology, as food is becoming increasingly entangled with preservatives, additives, stabilisers and artificial flavours and affecting health (McMahon, 2013; Roberts, 2008). These mutated forms of food can be found on most supermarket shelves today and as price, by many consumers, is still considered a bottom line, many are unaware precisely what they are eating and how it has been produced.

Producers and consumers are linked in the current system where ‘we’re dissuaded from asking hard questions, not only about how our individual tastes and preferences are manipulated, but about how our choices at the checkout take away the choices of those who grow our food’ (Patel, 2007; 8). This is made possible by the expanding distances between producers and consumers facilitated in large part by supermarkets. Not only is distance manipulated to increase ignorance, but it also allows for violations of rights, where humans, animals and the environment are exploited for the benefit of corporate greed (Shiva; 2012; Young, 2012). Thus distance makes ethical consumption difficult for many consumers.

Finding Market Solutions:

Aware of these issues in the food system, the organisations are creating more ethically aware business models in order to find market solutions. This is not only important for the ways it

reinforces the possibility for an alternative food system in a food sovereignty paradigm, but also because their actions show that development can be effected incrementally, alongside the current marketised system.

Through Ethical Consumption

Part of enacting food sovereignty might be to support businesses that retail ethical food both within and outside the supermarket, which is an idea supported by the participants;

‘Whatever you think of the democratic system and your political vote, every dollar you spend in the system is a vote for the system. If you’re buying the rubbish food instead of supporting the producers making better quality food, then you’re keeping the machinery going. Even if you don’t have many dollars to spend, what you spend is still a vote’ (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

Thus, consumption is not only about price, it is a way of ‘voting’ within the food system. This is a notion highlighted within the food sovereignty framework with regards to manipulating the supply and demand mechanisms of the market.

For Marion, this form of voting is important because it works to address structural power inequalities;

‘I think that the whole industrialisation of society has taken away from what is closest... The global legal structure we have for companies and corporations has allowed some giant corporations to become far too powerful and to dictate to the rest of society what the priorities will be. I think that’s why this whole attitude that food has to be cheap has developed, because the giant food corporations screw down farmers, workers, supermarkets, supermarket workers and consumers’ (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May).

Thus consumption of cheap food is unethical because it continues to support the business practices that adopt exploitation or ‘screwing down’ to keep food retail prices cheap;

‘Me: Do you think the more that people buy into organics the cheaper the products will become?’

Marion: That really brings you back to the statistic about internalising the environmental costs. Organic farmers already internalise the environmental costs of their business. So if you look at that, and then at the statistic of 220% profit decrease – if globally all farmers did that – you can see how much organic farmers are subsidising the current system. So if organic farmers didn’t have to subsidise the current system then certainly organic food would be no more expensive and all food would be organic. So you’d have those economies of scale. But also we have to realise that food is unhealthily cheap. If that

figure of 220% decrease in profit is correct you can't run a business like that. Farmers can't survive like that – so the cost of food right across the board is going to have to go up. It was roughly that when I was a child about 40% of the household income went on food. Now it's 12%. So it is also about how we've been brainwashed into the idea that food has to be cheaper and cheaper and cheaper. This is the result. So we need to turn the whole political emphasis around as well. Food needs to be nutritious and internalise the environmental costs' (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May).

So whilst people might think of organic or ethical products as more expensive, Marion warns that this perspective has come about from the separation of price from the real production cost. This is a notion present in the food sovereignty framework with the call for food with *dignity*, which is viewed as more important than access to cheap food because cheap food does not allow for fair prices to be paid to food producers.

Moreover, discussions with the participants highlighted that the separation of price and value have made it difficult to operate within the competitive marketised food system. At Koanga Institute, protecting the seeds is the number one priority in their business model, and doing so has meant that financial sacrifices have had to be made;

'We decided that we wouldn't be able to save the seeds unless they were held in a community of people who valued them and helped us to save them. It's not an economic thing, we lose a lot of money every year, in fact it costs us \$100,000 a year to pay the staff just to keep the gardens going and wholesale value of the seeds that comes out of the gardens is like \$10,000. It's really uneconomical. We're doing it because we're working for nothing – a lot of us, and have done – I've been working for nothing for my whole adult life pretty much to save the seeds' (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

Thus for many people working at Koanga Institute, the intrinsic value and importance of saving and protecting the seeds outweighs economic gains. It is more important to preserve biodiversity, than to turn a profit. This is in accordance with the food sovereignty framework presented in Chapter 2 which argues that all flora and fauna have intrinsic value regardless of economic worth and praises people rebuilding seed reserves.

For Cathy from Biofarm, it is not necessarily about vilifying businesses that do pursue profit, because that is peoples livelihoods at the end of the day, but rather it is about finding ways of operating ethically;

'If you've got a product, to some degree you are driven by the market. We haven't been driven up until now. We just put the product there and said if you want it, it's there. But now, we're at a level of sales and 99.5% of those sales are spread over two supermarket chains. So if one of those decided that we weren't growing the same like the other –such

as the Greek this and that, highly-flavoured, highly-sugared, milk-powdered filled, gelatine – you name it – those yoghurts are growing substantially and we're not. So it's a risk that we have to be aware of and that's market-driven' (Cathy, Biofarm, 4 June).

Although competition is a cause for concern for the sustainability of Biofarm Yoghurt, Cathy and her team have chosen to keep their product the same despite market pressure. This is compatible with food sovereignty's call for the right to access locally produced and healthy food that is culturally appropriate.

However, it should be noted that consuming more ethically is not always as simple as purchasing 'the ethical product'. For instance, in the case of Fair Trade, certification does not necessarily ensure that farmers are not exploited, but rather that farmers receive a fairer wage. Given the current global trend of Global South farmers being exploited by corporations, questions arise as to whether consumption of food that is produced through industrial agriculture can be ethical. Patel (2007; 311) explains, 'mounting evidence suggests that Fair Trade is a thin patch on an unsustainable system. Fair Trade turns out to be a way for farmers, hanging on by their fingernails, to be able to hang on a little longer'. Likewise Roberts (2008; xxi) makes similar arguments around hypothetically 'environmentally ethical' products such as those which are certified organic:

'Nearly every piece of the modern supply chain, from individual farm to the largest retailer, is designed for, and dependent on, continuous increases in output – but it is extraordinarily adept at either deflecting its critics or absorbing them. The organic movement, which emerged in the 1940s as a direct critique of large-scale industrial food production, had by the 1990s been co-opted by that same system, and many organic products are now produced with the same high-volume, low-cost methods and sold by the same big-box retailers'.

Whilst organic food is not produced with harmful chemical inputs, if it is still grown according to mono-cropping systems and harvested using fossil-fuel machinery, it is no longer environmentally-friendly. This not only supports food sovereignty's call for agrarian reform but reiterates the fact that it is as difficult to consume ethically as it is hard to know what exactly is ethical.

Aware of this, Erin from Workerbe cautioned that increased labelling on ethical products was not necessarily a solution; 'I find it interesting that we're reading labels on packaging but fresh fruit and produce doesn't have anything like that. I'm hesitant that we should have that type of labelling or regulating though because then it becomes a monetised thing' (Erin, Workerbe, 25 June). This highlights that there are inherent challenges in creating more ethical food products because doing so requires a holistic approach. This is why the food sovereignty

framework is not a checklist, but rather encourages a paradigm shift because the issues are not simple nor are their corresponding solutions. Through a paradigm shift one is better able to assess a problem and create a solution that encompasses the core issue and symptoms of the issue, hopefully eradicating the issue rather than shifting it to another part of the food system.

Through Adopting a Different Model

Instead, as the participants demonstrated, it is about finding different business models that take more holistic approaches to creating an ethical food system. For Marion, this means not only thinking about people in the production of food but also about how food skills can be re-valued overall;

‘We’re doing something quite different and it has to be. That’s why if you’re running an organic store you can’t run it along the same model as a business model that has failed us. You’ve got to find a new business model that recognises the interconnectedness of human beings and the reliance and interdependence of human beings...The living wage campaign – we’re very committed to, but finding very difficult because we’re an established business in a low wage area. So we are moving towards bringing up our minimum wage and this year, for example, we brought our minimum wage to \$16.25 which is \$2 above the current minimum wage. That’s going to be our route to paying people a living wage’ (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May).

So, in working towards a fairer wage for employees, Commonsense Organics are not only thinking about the products in-store, but also their employees and finding ways to ‘re-value’ food skills (the fourth principle).

Another way of re-valuing food skills according to the participants is through changing the places where people purchase food. One participant at the Focus Group said, ‘Buy things direct from people, don’t go to the shops’ as another added, ‘Support the local producers, it’s powerful. That’s the hardest thing, trying to make a living’ (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May). Each participant also made a suggestion for people to start growing a portion of their own food;

‘Cathy: Grow something. Put it in a pot.

Me: Why?

Cathy: It gives you the inspiration. So you go to the supermarket and you see the lettuce and you think, my God I’ve got one of those at home – wow. Because you can’t run away from yourself. It doesn’t matter if you live in the city or country, you have to be growing something that you can eat’ (Cathy, Biofarm, 4 June).

For Cathy, 'Grow Something' is not only a practical form of 'ending the corporate globalisation of hunger' (the second principle) through empowering people but it is also more likely to foster 'agrarian reform' (the sixth principle) (explored further in Chapter 6).

However, analysis of these recommendations also raises concerns around the assumption of time, knowledge and money consumers have. For instance, ethical products are usually more expensive, farmers' markets usually operate at certain times in certain places and growing food requires a certain level of 'know-how', which can be resources that lower-income peoples struggle to access, illustrating how food can be 'a weapon of class politics' (Patel 2007; 89).

Through Thinking About Everyone

Purchasing the ethical choice might be ideal for consumers, it is not always realistic because ethical consumption is the domain of consumers who can afford it (Patel, 2007). Whilst recommendations of growing food or buying food at the farmers markets might provide a cheaper alternative form to procuring food in the supermarket, these recommendations in some ways, simplify the experience of food poverty. This is because food poverty is not only about money, but also other structural issues of accessing food (Brookes, 2013; Goulet, 2009). This was emphasised by Marion;

'There are some people who don't have time to garden because they don't have a garden or they are paid too little – then I think something else is going on and I have every sympathy with them' (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May).

As Marion elaborated on the 'something else' she spoke about the societal loss of survival skills where schooling no longer teaches children gardening or cooking, which is one reason the framework emphasises the need to make food knowledge a public agenda.

Matt spoke about how the experience of poverty, and addressing poverty is not only about looking at monetary inequality but also social inequality;

'Food is a real social equaliser but it also creates social disparity. What one person eats is almost indicative of social status, if you think about what wealthy people eat compared to what people who don't have money eat. The type of food is very indicative of your social position I think. And one of the ways of overcoming things, or trying to create a little bit of social parity is by enabling people who might not have some sorts of food to get them' (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May).

By types of food, Matt is specifically addressing access to fresh fruit and vegetables. This marks one aspect of Kaibosh that is revolutionary:

'We have strict policies on what we will take and what we won't take. Like we try not to be pumping the system full of unhealthy foods. Hence the aspiration of 60% of food we

redistribute is fruit and vegetables. We've just upped it for next year, we want that to be 70%. We get huge amounts of bread through which is a bit of a curse and we try not to pump the system too full of white bread. Nasty white bread. But you know, hey white bread in the belly is better than nothing. Recently, a donut factory wanted to give us all their leftover donuts. I don't think so! You know, so all those things are a bit of a balance. Then again whose position is it to decide whether people should be eating donuts? Well we're not supposed to be the value deciders of food. Our job is to go back to that whole value mission thing of zero food waste, zero food poverty. Some people would say that because we don't take the food then we are bailing on our food waste mission. But I kind of would rather fail on that than pump the system full of donuts. You know what I mean?' (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May).

The ability for Kaibosh to provide fresh fruit and vegetables to feed poor people is not only important for the social messages it sends, such as increasing social parity, but it is also a clever way Kaibosh are voting within the marketised food system. This is captured through Matt's phrasing of 'pumping the system'. Another way Kaibosh are voting in the system is through reporting back to donor businesses when they receive excessive amounts of particular food items;

'The businesses that we take food from and report back to have changed some of their behaviours as result of the feedback. I know a lot of the bakeries, bake a lot less. And some of the supermarkets too because we're saying "look guys, this is crazy – you're giving us 10 bags of white bread every day". And now we get two bags. So we've influenced their production schedules' (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May).

This suggests that profit as a motivating factor is not inherently destructive (because profit can alter business behaviour), but rather that it is best mediated in hand with other factors, such as the pursuit of social good. This is why the food sovereignty framework is not necessarily against food for profit, but states that increased transparency and regulation could ensure a fairer system.

For Commonsense Organics, a business that is turning a profit, it is about finding ways to increase access to food and support the idea that food is a right;

'Me: What happens to food that you can't sell anymore?

Marion: If it's passed it's used by date it goes to staff. We work in a low income area, so staff have first pick of that. Otherwise it gets composted after that. If we have a lot of something, some of the stores give it to Women's Refuge or Kaibosh, the soup kitchen. When Jim started most of his vegetables went to the soup kitchen. They used to give him a Christmas present each year of pickles made from our vegetables because we

gave them so many vegetables. But of course over the years the wastage is much less as there is a faster turnover. We have a very fast turnover now so the wastage is quite low. But if suddenly a fridge collapses or something like that –mostly the staff take it but if there's too much of something we will always take it to the soup kitchen or Kaibosh. When Kaibosh started I talked to Matt and thought it was a wonderful idea but we were giving away all our food already' (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May).

So through ensuring food is made available to staff, Commonsense Organics are operating in an alternative paradigm to the supermarket.

These examples exhibit ways businesses are enacting food sovereignty within the marketised system and using innovative solutions to source healthy food that would otherwise have been wasted.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has analysed some of the issues surrounding an unequal and unsustainable food system and then responded to these issues with examples from alternative food business models. I have argued that the separation of retail price from real environmental cost and value has led to a marketised food system that only benefits selected peoples. This chapter is critical of powerful components of the marketised food system, such as commodity speculation and the distribution mechanisms, for the ways they are counterintuitive to the food sovereignty paradigm. Knock-on issues within the food system, such as dependency creation and loss of profit, have been shown as being negotiated through applying food sovereignty principles, such as the view that food is a right as well as changing the system through re-valuing food skills.

In the next chapter, I will broaden the analysis of the food system by looking at secondary issues created by food, such as issues of health and nutrition, as well as resource management in face of rising urbanisation.

Chapter 6: 'Grow Something': A Form of Resistance to the Woes of a Marketised System

Introduction

This chapter investigates the interrelated nature of the 'knock-on' effects of a marketised food system, through looking at issues of health, land grabbing, urbanisation and nutritional transition. Following the discussion of key facts and figures pertaining to these issues, this chapter presents 'Grow Something' as a powerful discourse which can, both theoretically and practically, build resilience, reclaim space and foster healing.

A Global Health Paradox

The term 'paradox' is used within this research to convey the staggering effects of the global food system, where it is apparent that the market, because it creates 'winners' and 'losers', is responsible for the expanding gap between rich and poor; 'The global food system of the twenty-first century was both impoverishing *and* starving one-eighth of humanity, while leaving an even larger number overweight and at risk of disease' (McMahon, 2013; 45). This shows there is a gap that is not only monetary but also apparent in other aspects of life, like health. This is seen through analysis of malnourishment, in which sectors of society are most at risk of becoming ill. Whilst malnourishment can happen in different forms such as 'undernutrition', 'diet deficiency' and 'overnutrition', each condition is largely caused from the same determinant, 'a bad diet' (Young, 2012; 35). Without treatment, malnutrition can result in death. Despite the general sentiment that health science has progressed in the medical world, allowing for people to live longer than ever before, a deeper analysis of illness indicates mortalities at a young age remain high, and are potentially on the verge of increasing (Ezzati et al., 2005; McMahon, 2013; Shiva, 2012).

Despite food security's simple conceptualisation of malnutrition throughout the world, where the Global South are largely viewed as hungry, whilst the Global North are viewed as overfed, the lived experience of malnutrition is not so simply defined. Geography is not a reliable determinant for predicting a person's health. Rather, a person's access to food plays the most vital role in health because 'we are what we eat'. This is particularly powerful in context with recent research indicating that majority of diseases are caused from malnutrition with many diseases starting in the digestive tract (Goodwin, 2015). In the global health landscape, two trends emerge; due to the marketised food system, income is often correlated with health, but this does not need to be the status quo.

‘Undernutrition’, ‘Diet Deficiency’ and Myths About Hunger

Much of the literature around food and development focusses on health, and particularly hunger, as the most pressing issue. Hunger, also known as ‘undernutrition’ and ‘diet deficiency’, is considered a huge issue within the Global South with food security discourse geared towards fixing hunger through external interactions (such as providing food aid). On closer inspection, however, not all hunger is equal. It is caused by the inability to access the right quantity and/or quality of food. This is most apparent through understanding the differences between acute and chronic hunger. Acute hunger is a form of ‘undernutrition’ caused by the inability to consume enough food to maintain bodily function (Young, 2012). Conversely chronic hunger, a form of diet deficiency, refers to the conditions caused by not consuming enough essential nutrients, which over time causes the body to shut down (Young, 2012). Unlike acute hunger, the issue is not often that the person is not consuming enough food to sustain bodily function, but rather that they are severely lacking in the right food. For instance, vitamin A deficiency is a pronounced form of diet deficiency throughout Asia, which left untreated, can cause preventable blindness and lower the immune system; and often the contraction of a secondary disease (such as malaria) causes death (Young, 2012). Both forms of hunger are starvation but the important difference between these forms of hunger, is that they should not need to be addressed the same way.

Acute hunger, significantly affecting the sub-Saharan African region, is largely caused by issues of food poverty, where disasters such as famine as well as other geopolitical fragilities disable people’s ability to access food (Goulet, 2009; Hill, 1992; Patel, 2007; Young, 2012). Often, the issue is not whether there is enough food, but rather what the price of food is, because scarcity (a factor of famines, droughts and war) creates desperation. This in effect creates an opportunity for food producers and vendors to dramatically increase their prices, the result of which is usually mass mortality (Hill, 1992). Sen (1981; 434) argues that food shortages are not the leading cause of mortality in times of famine, but rather access to food (whether that be through buying, trading, bartering and so on); ‘Starvation is a matter of some people not *having* enough food to eat, and not a matter of there *being* enough food to eat’.

This is also important in context of the previous debate around food aid, as often acute hunger is misrepresented in food security discourse where ‘just moving food into such an area will not help the affected population, and what is required is the generation of food entitlement’ (Sen, 1981; 461), a notion that supports food sovereignty’s call for ‘a right to food’. Thus food aid and other Malthusian arguments obscure the actual causes of acute hunger. For example, the ‘starving children in Africa’ discourse is argued as a grossly simplified understanding of acute hunger and as providing a political alibi for the continued presence of the Global North in the Global South (Hill, 1992; Sen, 1981).

Meanwhile diet deficiency or chronic hunger, which is pronounced within the Asian region, is a 'silent killer' (Young, 2012); not only because it is leading to a larger number of deaths worldwide than acute hunger, but because there is confusion over what causes it (McMahon, 2013; Young, 2012). Like acute hunger, chronic hunger is largely an issue of access and entitlement, as people struggle to obtain certain foods that contain the nutrition they need. It is also grossly misrepresented which has led to failing development projects where so-called philanthropists have gained more from a development project than the people they intended to help (Hill, 1992). One recent case of this is the invention of 'Golden Rice', which inevitably failed to nourish people and instead served as a case to support GE (McMichael, 2001).

'Golden Rice' is the name of the GM vitamin A fortified rice that was produced as a means to prevent vitamin A deficiency throughout Asia (Young, 2012). It is made through genetically engineering beta-carotene, a major form of vitamin A (that is responsible for making carrots orange), into rice genes resulting in a rice that appears 'golden' or orange to the naked eye (McMichael, 2001; Patel, 2007). Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Rockefeller family, the rice was intended as food aid for poor families, and believed to be the key to eradicating vitamin A deficiency afflicting the food poor (McMichael, 2001). Unfortunately, by failing to look at the social and economic factors surrounding rice consumption in Asia, the project failed. This was in part due to the legacy of colonisation because the 'white is right' mentality continues to pervade cultural attitudes to non-white rice (Shiva, 2015), and thus meant the golden rice, because it is not white, was not consumed; and in part due to the fact that many of the intended recipients were already surviving on rice-based diets because it is a cheap staple. Thus more rice was not needed, but adequate fruit and vegetables and adequate protein was (Patel, 2007). Rather than solving vitamin A deficiency, 'Golden Rice' became a 'poster crop' for promoting the possibilities of GE, and helped in legitimising intellectual property laws which have furthered the ability of corporations to control food rights (McMichael, 2001).

These two conceptualisations of hunger confirm that food security remains prominent within development discourse and the issue with this is that hunger is misrepresented. Without grasping the true causes of hunger, it is unlikely that it will be eradicated. This is in spite of major top-down development initiatives, like the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals [MDGs]. The MDGs, in place since the early 1990's, are comprised of eight goals which are used to focus development initiatives. The first of these goals is to 'Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger' (United Nations, 2016). What is interesting about this goal is how it is framed. Found on the UN website, the goal is broken into achieving three targets (by 2015). These targets are to 'Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1.25 a day', 'Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all,

including women and young people' and 'Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger' (United Nations, 2016). Without going into explicit detail on how these targets will be achieved, it is concerning that the focus is on raising income to \$1.25 and ensuring people are employed over addressing the larger issues surrounding rights to food. Complementing this concern I reflect back to the previous argument made around Fair Trade as prolonging struggle, and see that similar arguments can be made about the arbitrary figure of \$1.25. What good is a higher income if access to food remains mostly the same? Rather, like other food sovereignty activists, I argue the fundamental issue surrounds power inequality within the food system.

Whilst there is an argument to be made in support of poverty alleviation as a form of hunger alleviation, I don't believe it should be the sole concern. It is true that often surrounding factors of poverty, such as access to clean drinking water and sanitation, affect nutrient-absorption and because of this, infrastructure is important (Patel, 2007; Young, 2012); but the pursuit of increasing wealth for the global poor may do little, if it is not encompassed within wider fundamental changes to the marketised food system.

The desire to alleviate hunger for the approximate 805 million people suffering (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2014) requires a nuanced approach to addressing change in the food system. Doing so will not only address 'undernutrition' but can also effect change for people suffering from 'overnutrition', as they are linked through chains of food production, distribution and consumption (Patel, 2007). This viewpoint was similarly shared by Matt from Kaibosh who spoke about the importance of matching food waste with food poor recipients to 'cancel each other';

'I saw pretty early on people weren't getting enough to eat because of poverty... people really struggle to get good food, and then at the same time, seeing how much really good food was just getting chucked out. Outrageous amounts! You've got to get someone to put these together and that's the solution' (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May).

It was similar observations by the Langlands that inspired the creation of Kaibosh.

'Overnutrition', 'Obesity' and Myths about the 'Diseases of Affluence'

'Overnutrition', generally thought to be caused by the overconsumption of food, and moreover food that is high in saturated fats, sugar and/or salt, is outnumbering incidences of hunger throughout the world. The World Health Organisation [WHO] report that over 1.9 billion adults (18 years or over) are overweight with 600 million considered obese (World Health Organisation, 2015). This is rapidly increasing too, considering the estimated 1 billion overweight in 2010 (McMahon, 2013; 44). This is significant as overnutrition, when left untreated, can lead to obesity-related diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes,

musculoskeletal disorders and cancer, to name a few, and ultimately cause death (World Health Organisation, 2015). These illnesses, once known as ‘diseases of affluence’ (because it was assumed only people who had money could afford to overconsume food) have been causing preventable mortalities throughout the world in unprecedented ways over the past few decades (Ezzati, et al., 2005; McMahon, 2013; World Health Organisation, 2015). Rather than being heavily correlated with wealth, overnutrition is more likely to be caused by poverty. This is understood in context of the previous chapter which discussed the connection between industrial agriculture and our economy, and how corporations are influencing access to food through manipulating prices to make cheaper food and typically, more unhealthy food. This, in conjunction with growing dependence on the marketised food system, explains the way people’s consumption of food is changing. Similarly, with an understanding of how food itself is changing, it is no wonder that obesity is on the rise and will likely become a pressing development issue (Ezzati et al., 2005; McMahon, 2013; World Health Organisation, 2015).

One of the largest concerns surrounding food changes is that increasingly food is containing ingredients that didn’t used to exist. Whilst there are numerous examples of such ingredients, one in particular, High Fructose Corn Syrup [HFCS], is important in context of the rise in obesity. HFCS is appearing in foods on supermarket shelves at an alarming rate and is an example of how food can be political.

Following the decline of food aid distribution throughout the Cold War, corn, one of the predominant components of food aid, was being produced in excess by the US (Patel, 2007). Left with the inability to consume the excess corn, the US invested in finding new uses for it, discovering the ability to make HFCS in the 1970s (and more recently they started producing ethanol – a primary biofuel) (Patel, 2007; Young, 2012). Despite the fact that producing HFCS is energy exhaustive²², it is a popular choice for US food corporations, and evident in many food products because it is sweeter than sugar, which is mainly produced in the Global South (see Figure 6.1), and cheaper than sugar. It also keeps US corn farmers employed (Euteneuer, 2011; Patel, 2007).

²² HFCS is produced through ‘wet milling’; corn is dried, sorted and then dipped in sulphurous acid. Then the germ of the seed is removed, washed, filtered, spun and heated with weak hydrochloric acid to make corn syrup. The resulting mixture, which is about three-quarters as sweet as sugar, is then cleansed and treated. To raise sweetness, the fructose is raised through reacting it with enzymes and then it is distilled and concentrated. Then it is diluted to meet industry standards (Buck, 2001; Patel, 2007).

Figure 6.1: Table of Sugar Producers 2010-2011

	Country	Production (millions of metric tons)
1.	Brazil	38.745
2.	India	26.000
3.	China	11.475
4.	Thailand	10.061
5.	US	7.210
6.	Mexico	5.495
7.	Pakistan	4.400
8.	France	4.275
9.	Australia	3.800
10.	Germany	3.565

(Source: adapted from figures in Euteneuer, 2011)

45 years on from the invention of HFCS, and it is a regular on supermarket shelves, hiding in many ingredient lists of so-called 'value-added' products under names like 'HFCS-90', 'corn syrup solids', 'fructose' or 'fructose syrup' (Buck, 2001; Minton, 2014).

Figure 6.2: A Label Containing HFCS



(Source: Author, 2016)

The importance of understanding the history of HFCS, as well as many other ingredients (like hydrogenated vegetable oils (from soy)), is that they are increasingly correlated with obesity; 'over consumption of HFCS could very well be a major factor in the "obesity pandemic", which correlated with the upsurge in the use of HFCS' (Bocarsly, Powell, Avena & Hoebel, 2010; 7). Additionally, they are increasingly difficult to avoid in the marketised food system; 'HFCS accounts for as much as 40% of caloric sweeteners in the United States' (Bocarsly et al., 2010). This is because food that is sweeter, saltier and fattier is easier to market and considered tastier by the majority of consumers (Jarosz, 2009a). These foods are also more addictive, and addiction in the marketised food system means profit (Patel, 2007). The reality is that the longer corporations can keep consumers within 'cycles of addiction', the better their financial forecast is, despite the fact that many people are being pushed into obesity, not from a lack of trying to avoid it, but from an unawareness of what healthy food really looks like and how to access it (Goodwin, 2015; Patel, 2007).

Meanwhile for consumers who can afford it, the multi-billion dollar diet industry provides an attractive route for people wanting to lose weight. Providing foods that claim to be 'low fat', 'low sugar' and 'low carb', corporations ensure that supermarket shelves are stocked with 'diet' foods and marketed to the masses (Bocarsly et al., 2010; Goodwin, 2015; Patel, 2007). Consumers continue to be bombarded with advertising of addictive foods. The end result is too often that consumers, paying not only with their money but also with their health, help to line the pockets of food corporations throughout phases of dieting and overconsuming or as Patel (2007) puts it, throughout being *stuffed and starved*. This is evident through transactions like the purchase of Slimfast by Unilever (the owner of Ben and Jerry's ice cream) in 2000 and acquirement of Jenny Craig by Nestlé (the Swiss chocolate company) in 2006 (Patel, 2007).

The occurrence of malnutrition cannot simply be attributed to a consumer's food choices, but must be understood in context within the larger picture of the marketised food system; many consumers are being manipulated for profit. This is happening at an alarming rate with 'Most of the world's population liv[ing] in countries where overweight and obesity kills more people than underweight' (World Health Organisation, 2015). This includes countries that have typically been viewed as part of the Global South, like Mexico and China, which are increasingly reporting obesity and obesity-related health pandemics (Patel, 2007; Young, 2012). Left unaddressed, overnutrition might join the list of pressing development issues, a point made in Ezzati et al.'s study (2005; 133) which concluded;

'When considered together with evidence on shifts in income-risk relationships within developed countries, the results indicate that cardiovascular disease risks are expected to systematically shift to low-income and middle-income countries, and together with the

persistent burden of infectious diseases, further increase global health inequalities. Preventing obesity should be a priority from early stages of economic development, accompanied by population-level and personal interventions for blood pressure and cholesterol'.

Food sovereignty functions as a nuanced lens for understanding the connections and chain reactions of inequality within the marketised food system. By briefly examining these connections, 'Grow Something' is understood as a political statement of resilience to the cumulative woes emerging from the food system.

Land Grabbing: A Catalyst for the Marketised Food System

One notable issue that is discussed within literature pertains to the continuing practices of 'land grabbing' (McMahon, 2013; Shiva, 2012; Wittman, 2011). Wittman (2011; 95) writes 'corporations and wealthy states [the Global North] secure land in the Global South to support their own domestic food supplies'. The procurement of land by the Global North, though happening in different forms throughout the world, contributes to an alarming global pattern where small-scale farmers, left landless, are further pushed into poverty (Shiva, 2012); 'Conservative (FAO) estimates suggest upwards of 30 million peasants lost their land in the decade after WTO was established' (Madeley, as cited in McMichael, 2009; 154). For many farmers, becoming landless not only signifies the loss of a livelihood, but also the loss of identity where too many farmers, left with an overwhelming sense of failure, take their own lives (Patel, 2007; Shiva, 2004; Shiva, 2012). Sometimes referred to as 'suicide farmers', this trend within the global agricultural community speaks to the devastating and often hidden impacts of the current food system, where India is amongst the countries being hit the hardest;

'The rigged prices of globally traded agriculture commodities are stealing incomes from poor peasants of the South. Analysis carried out by the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology shows that due to falling farm prices, Indian peasants are losing \$26 billion or Rs 1.2 trillion annually. This is a burden their poverty does not allow them to bear. Hence the epidemic of farmer suicides' (Shiva, 2004; 2).

In trying to financially keep up within a system of 'casino' commodity trading, as well as dealing with the effects of the Green Revolutions and contract farming, many small-scale (particularly Global South) farmers are entrapped by debt (Shiva, 1991; McMichael, 2009).

Contract farming, a significant form of Foreign Direct Investment [FDI] where large corporations contract South farmers to produce specific commodities (McMichael, 2009; Shiva, 2012), has added to global land ownership restructuring as many farmers, facing the possibility of losing their farm because they are in a debt trap, will sign a contract or take out a loan where often their land is used as security (Shiva, 2012). This loan is then often used to

purchase agricultural inputs to produce the contracted crop which requires exhaustive resources (as usually it is not native to the local climate and conditions) and unbeknown to the farmer, has set the potential of landlessness in motion (Shiva, 2012). It is for this reason that the food sovereignty framework remains critical of the Green Revolution discourse, and emphasises the need for agroecology as a form of breaking this cycle (Altieri, 2012; Shiva, 2012; Wittman, 2011).

Similarly, land grabbing can be seen as a form of neo-colonisation as it eerily reflects the kinds of confiscations and 'purchases' that happened throughout the colonies in previous times which resulted in extreme land wealth for the Global North (McMichael, 2012; Shiva, 2012). Contemporary land grabs are shifting power out of the hands of peoples in the Global South and into the hands of peoples in the Global North through the marketised food system (McMichael, 2012). This dismantling of power through land ownership is not only affecting farmers, but is also having a knock-on effect with rural peoples migrating en masse into urban centres, and from the Global South to the Global North (Armar-Klemesu, 2001; McMichael, 2012; Patel, 2007).

Urbanisation and Malthus' Ghost

Mass migration into urban centres is a phenomenon known as 'urbanisation' which can be defined as; '1. [The] increase in the proportion of a population living in urban areas' or '2. [The] process by which a large number of people becomes permanently concentrated in relatively small areas, forming cities' (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2003). Though urbanisation in itself is a tricky phenomenon to track, because different countries have different definitions of what qualifies as 'urban' (Bertinelli & Strobl, 2007), the general consensus is that urbanisation is occurring at a rapid rate throughout the world (Armar-Klemesu, 2001; Bertinelli & Strobl, 2007; Satterthwaite, McGranahan & Tacoli, 2010), and is concentrated within the Global South; 'For example between 1950 and 2000, urbanisation, defined as share of urban to total population, increased by 124 per cent in developing countries compared with 38 per cent in the industrial world' (Bertinelli & Strobl, 2007; 2499).

Urbanisation has led to feelings of fear for some of the participants, with one remarking 'I moved to Hong Kong for my wife's job. It was quite scary to see this kind of urbanisation – I thought it was quite extreme' (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May). This echoed food sovereignty literature on urbanisation, as many scholars are critical of how urban living is supporting ongoing power inequalities. For instance Roberts (2008), Satterthwaite (2010) and Schiavoni and Patel (2009) each discussed the widening gap between food producers and urban dwellers which has pushed food more heavily into being viewed as a commodity rather than an inherent right;

‘Steady migration to urban centres (every day about 190,000 people move to cities from the countryside), has generated new food distribution models and new types of intermediaries, such as hypermarkets and other large-scale food retailers. It has also led to a concentration of power over food production and distribution in the hands of TNCs [Transnational Corporations] which aim to control all the phases of the modern “food chain”, from the farm gate to the shopping trolley’ (Nyéléni, 2012; 2).

This is because urban housing is usually more compact than rural housing, and therefore many inhabitants have less access to land and other required resources to grow their own food, in turn using supermarkets, fast food outlets and restaurants as their main food sources (Armar-Klemesu, 2001; Nyéléni, 2012; Satterthwaite, McGranahan & Tacoli, 2010). This is significant in light of studies that correlate rising obesity with urban lifestyles as ‘Urban living – which alters transportation and occupational patterns as well as access to various foods – may affect nutrition and activity’ (Ezzati et al., 2005; 0408), along with increasingly more sedentary lifestyles (McMahon, 2013).

Given the emerging issues surrounding food production, there is a growing body of people who worry that increased urbanisation could eventuate in a global collapse of the food system as many farmers abandon farming (Armar-Klemesu, 2001; Satterthwaite, McGranahan & Tacoli, 2010); ‘Just under half of the world population now lives and works in rural areas, but in most industrialised countries, agricultural producers comprise less than five percent of the population’ (Wittman, 2011; 95). Activists affiliated with this concern emerge from both food security and food sovereignty, but depending on which theory they most agree with promote different solutions. In food security discourse, this concern appears most prevalently surrounding Malthusian narratives and is often followed with justifications for Green Revolution technology (Curtin, 1995). Contrastingly food sovereignty discourse focusses on how the current marketised food system is failing to feed the world because of issues of power and control. The reality however is that the world’s food production can feed approximately 9.3 billion people (McMahon, 2014). The issue is that much of the food produced is wasted or diverted to animal feed or biofuel production (McMahon, 2014). The implementation of only organic agriculture, whilst requiring higher labour inputs, would increase food outputs exponentially without requiring an expansion of current agricultural land bases (Badgley et al., 2007). Thus, whilst Malthusian concerns of the population expanding beyond food production capabilities can be put to rest, it is clear that issues around food access must be addressed.

This is particularly so in cases where poverty is impeding people’s rights to food. Not only is this adding to malnutrition, but it is having a knock-on effect on people’s access to livelihoods (Satterthwaite, McGranahan & Tacoli, 2010). Mass urban migration is driving down income potential in cities, as the increase in migrant workers creates competition for jobs. Due to

receiving a lower-income than the national average (Patel, 2007), migrant urban workers are increasingly dependent upon cheap food to feed themselves and opt for lower priced housing, causing pockets of urban poor to form, which is often accompanied by the creation of 'food deserts' (Armar-Klemesu, 2001).

The term 'food deserts' pinpoints the growing hurdles faced by the urban poor when accessing healthy and affordable food. Though food deserts can appear anywhere, they are characterised by 'their lack of whole grains, and fresh fruits and vegetables at reasonable prices' (Jarosz, 2009a; 2075). Whilst food deserts may occur for a number of reasons, the apprehension of food investors, such as supermarket chains, significantly adds to the likelihood of a food desert being created (Patel, 2007; Young, 2012). Because healthy food is less accessible, malnutrition is more prevalent within food deserts and leading to 'nutritional transition' (Schiavoni & Patel, 2009).

Nutritional Transition and 'Carnivores' Cravings'

'Nutritional transition', according to Young (2012; 65) 'describes a shift in consumption from traditional foods to a diet consisting of more processed foods and animal-based products; such shifts are correlated to increases in obesity'. This is significant for the ways it is affecting health in the Global South as, faced with poverty and the need to sustain themselves on cheap food, many South citizens are eating a more Westernised diet; where the shift is usually 'from a traditional diet high in cereals and fibre to a "Western" diet, high in saturated fat and added sugar as well as increases in processed foods and alcohol' (Young, 2012; 54). Major causes of nutritional transition are said to have increased rapidly from the 1980s with the expansion of global trade and FDI by agribusinesses and convenience food corporations (Young, 2012). This is happening on a global scale but in different ways. For instance, in Mexico 'The consumption of wheat-based instant noodles is now higher than that of beans and rice. Today, Mexicans drink more Coca-Cola than milk. The consequences are more than cosmetic. With nearly one in ten Mexicans living with diabetes' (Patel, 2007; 63).

Similarly, the participants shared their concern over what people are consuming and how it is affecting health on a mass scale. Kay said;

'Kids of today who have grown up on totally processed food and food from the supermarket (which is almost everyone) are consuming shit, like Coca-Cola, it's absolute shit and it cannot nourish us. There's no way that food can nourish us! In the 1920's we were getting in the Western world, a tenth of the fat soluble vitamins that we needed to maintain our health and a quarter of the minerals. There's a lot of evidence to show that since then it has gone downhill. My understanding is that we're really lucky if we're getting 1%. We know that we need 1200mg of vitamin A on a daily basis. Of

natural vitamin A. Well that comes from animal fat, fish heads, fish roe, fish liver, beef liver but how many people are getting that? And if you don't get that, you can't absorb the minerals... You can even look at people's faces and see what has happened with their nutrition in the last few generations because it changes the shape of your face and dental arches, all sorts of stuff. Health of your teeth, it's pretty clear, the science is there. But it doesn't fit the modern mainstream or paradigm health system so it's being ignored and denied. But it's obvious to me that if we don't eat properly we are going get weaker and weaker and we're not going to survive' (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

Concerned by her observation of what people were eating, Kay was inspired to effect change through Koanga Institute and does public talks about health and nutrition. Furthermore, this shift in diet is not only causing a loss of cultural food traditions and food staples, but is also a form of neo-colonisation. This emerged in the interview with Cathy as she shared her experience of nutritional transition;

'All peoples of the world with dark skin are more or less, allergic to lactose and to a lesser extent gluten. The whole obesity thing is that Māori are never fulfilled, hunger is never fulfilled because if they're buying the food – which they are – its all got milk powder and sugar and most of it has wheat. The effect on the digestive system is killing them basically. I say them, it's us. I'm the same. I can have toast one day and suddenly I'm back to feeling my frumpy self. If I can cut out bread, sugar, milk – I'm fine. It's not about looking, it's about metabolic energy. But it's very hard to eat like that as your standard diet. So nutrition is huge for indigenous people, because the food here is what is suitable for those with a DNA with a whakapapa from the Northern hemisphere' (Cathy, Biofarm, 4 June)

Cathy's worldview that the colonisation of food has led to health issues for whole sectors of society, in her case Māori, is troubling in light of the previously explored figures around obesity and obesity-related illnesses. I believe her linking of nutritional transition with indigenous obesity serves as a warning against the hidden aspects of the marketised food system, where the Westernisation/ neo-colonisation of food is in effect killing marginalised peoples. This is one reason why the food sovereignty framework emphasises indigenous rights.

For Cathy, this inspired her to form Biofarm;

'Me: So you're running a dairy farm, but you are lactose intolerant? How does that work?

Cathy: We don't put milk powder in our yoghurt. The yoghurt cultures are taking up the lactose. All you're getting from our yoghurt is probiotic bacteria which aids digestion. So we would never do a milk powder product' (Cathy, Biofarm, 4 June).

This demonstrates that part of decolonising food is about finding ways to resist the colonisation of food (a notion further explored in Chapter 7).

What's more, the colonisation of food is not only changing many people's health but also their access to traditional food, as affluent and health-conscious consumers are appropriating traditional diets and crops to service their own health. This in turn is raising the price of traditional food sources and making access difficult for some groups of people, 'Ironically, the Southern hemisphere is condemned to repeat the trajectory of the modernising North-hemisphere diet, just as health-conscious affluent Northern-hemisphere consumers are re-appropriating Southern-hemisphere diets' (McMichael, 2001; 217). Such appropriation is seen in the rising price and popularity of quinoa, which was traditionally an important food source for poor Bolivians and has now been priced beyond their financial means (Ehrenreich & Lyon, 2011). This substantiates food sovereignty's call for local people to have priority access to locally cultivated food.

Another leading indicator of nutritional transition is seen through the increasing consumption of meat (McMichael, 2001). The production and consumption of meat throughout colonisation not only set a precedent for mono-lithic type agriculture (where often native bush was burnt down to create pasture), but has become the world's primary agriculture export (McMichael, 2001). This was in part because of its role in war times, as the beef industry was important throughout WW2 because cattle, fed on maize and soya beans, were shipped around the world as a cheap and high-energy food source (McMichael, 2001). This was significant not only to the survival of soldiers, but also how meat consumption has become synonymous with ideas of masculinity.

Meat production (particularly beef) is not energy efficient, with production consuming more energy than the metabolic energy that results from consuming it (Jarosz, 2009a). Meat production is also resource intensive as it takes roughly one tonne of fresh water to grow one kilo of grain and roughly six kilos of grain to produce one kilo of beef (Patel, 2007). Environmental degradation is another cost of producing meat, with an average of 18 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions per year coming from rearing animals for meat, whilst almost three-quarters of the world's arable land is used to produce animal feed as livestock occupy another 30 percent of land (Jarosz, 2009a). Industrial agriculture is overproducing meat, with excess meat contributing to the fast food industry's ability to supply low-cost highly-processed meat meals to lower-socio-economic peoples. But these meals, though perhaps comforting, are correlated with increases in heart disease, obesity and lapses in food safety within many lower-socio economic communities (Jarosz, 2009a). Furthermore, because over half the world's grain is earmarked for feeding livestock, the price of grain has increased, creating a cycle where many poorer peoples are opting for these fast food meals (Young, 2012).

This is seemingly contradictory to the conceptualisation of meat, as many higher and middle-class people associate meat with wealth and strength; 'The consumption of meat-based proteins was a mark of wealth and social capital and represented strength and virility both today and as far back as the middle ages' (Jarosz, 2009a; 2074). This conceptualisation of meat may then explain the exponential increase of meat consumption throughout the world, where between the 1970s and 1990s meat consumption increased in the Southern hemisphere (largely comprised of the Global South) by 70×10^6 t, compared with 26×10^6 t in the Northern hemisphere (McMichael, 2001; 216).

In light of nutritional transition, caused in part by urbanisation, it is increasingly apparent that our marketised food system is making people sick, and especially poorer people, 'Both hunger and obesity disproportionately affect the poor and working poor, because cheap, fast food and high fat, highly processed foods are most generally available in poor neighbourhoods' (Jarosz, 2009a; 2075).

Approaches to 'Grow Something'

As part of mediating and negotiating these issues, 'Grow Something', offers a political tool of resilience. This is explored through the discourse of 'Grow Something' which can offer; 'A Form of Resistance', 'A Way to Reclaim Space' and 'A Form of Healing'.

A Form of Resistance

The discourse of 'Grow Something' became apparent throughout the interviews, as the participants spoke about growing food as a form of empowerment. Whilst in the previous chapter, I spoke about Cathy's viewpoint of 'Growing Something' as a way of dampening the power of supermarkets, participants at Koanga Institute conveyed it as a form of 'undercutting the system', a view shared by Larder, Lyon and Woolcock (2012) who frame agriculture as 'resisting the current failing system';

'I'm suddenly realising that organic food doesn't actually have to be expensive and that there's still a lot of unhealthy food in the health shops. It's just marketed as being organic but it's still full of the same sort of things, just different versions. I realised I can actually live by growing my own food and all the cycles that come into that. Like where does the waste go? How do I keep my rubbish down? The amount of rubbish I produce now compared to in the city is so much less. I probably knock it off like once every two months and it's like a shopping bag of rubbish' (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

This conceptualisation of 'Grow Something' shows that it's not only about accessing healthy food but is also a way to reduce rubbish. This is compatible with the fifth principle 'acting in harmony with the environment', as it involves better integration of waste. This was also

mentioned by Erin from Workerbe as she spoke about enacting food sovereignty through thinking about the food system in its entirety;

‘Start with food and what you eat and what you put in your body and think about where it comes from. That will start you on the path. Think about every aspect of it, don’t just get a bag of spinach. Think about the packaging – why is it wrapped in plastic? Where should I put that plastic?’ (Erin, Workerbe, 25 June).

This comment relays Erin’s feeling that many people are unaware of how their consumption of food is contributing to waste, and that food waste is not solely about the food that is consumed, but also the packaging used to transport and market food. In light of this, another participant spoke of ‘Growing Something’ as a ‘societal shift’;

‘I’ve been using the New World²³ bags that you get when you go shopping and I’ve been on the same bag for the past three months, compared to when you’re ‘living in society’. When I visit my daughter in Wellington, we generate one of those every couple of days from the packaging you get around food. It’s a total societal shift getting food that grows from the ground and not having it packaged and transported, it bypasses the whole waste generation cycle completely’ (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

As the participants spoke about rubbish and waste production within the food system, I found many correlated their discussion with critiques of urban living. Part of this, I feel, was in regards to food miles and packaging.

Food miles, the quantitative number of miles food travels between production and consumption, is an important component of the debate for local agriculture, as studies show locally grown food can substantially reduce the energy impact of conventionally produced food sources (Armar-Klemesu, 2001; Patel, 2007; Pirog & Benjamin, 2003). Pirog and Benjamin (2003) found that a basket of local produce on average travelled a distance of 56 miles between the farm and market in the US whilst conventionally farmed food travelled an average of 1494 miles. Thus, the discourse of ‘Grow Something’ functions as a form of resisting environmentally degrading practices within the food system, by not only reducing packaging waste but also reducing the energy used to transport food.

I found the negative connotations that some of the participants conveyed about urban living confusing. This was conveyed subtly through off-hand comments like, ‘We’re not influenced largely by city culture – which we don’t have a lot of time for’ (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May), as well as more prominent comments;

²³ A prominent supermarket chain in Aotearoa.

'We're personally critical of cities, about how unsustainable they are, but the reality is that it is the people who live in the cities that make our business viable. Without them in that city, we wouldn't be selling our yoghurt' (Cathy, Biofarm, 4 June).

I feel this comment is illustrative of a general feeling amongst rural producers and with deeper interpretation came to understand that the participants were likely highlighting city living as a metaphor for the marketised food system rather than critiquing urban living in itself. After all, many of the participants work within urban organisations where being outside the city could pose logistical difficulties. For instance, I imagine the close proximity of Kaibosh's food donors is a time-saver, operationally speaking. That said, Matt did convey a sense of being critical about food waste, where too often the ability to replace food, in part because it is cheap, contributes to food waste in a way I doubt is as prevalent amongst rural communities;

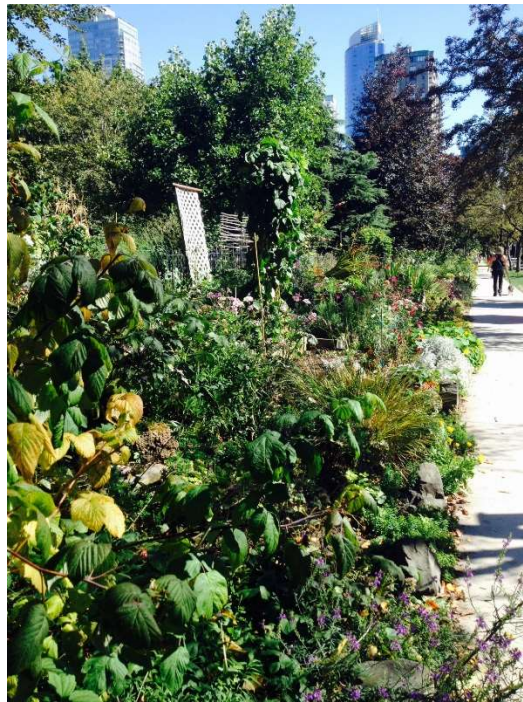
'I know that people's personal behaviour has changed after looking at what we're doing and the amount of food that is wasted. I know that my home behaviour's really changed as result of what I've seen in here. We used to be really casual about what we would throw away and what we'd use; 'Oh that doesn't matter, there's always more, it's cheap' but when you kind of live it day by day, it kind of changes your psyche. I know at home, we're really careful with how we shop and what we buy and that's been a direct influence of working here and our volunteers say the same thing' (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May).

Similarly, through 'Grow Something' the intrinsic value of food might be better understood, and in the city this could be done through increasing the profile of urban agriculture.

A Way to Reclaim Space

Urban agriculture provides a form of 'actively re-imagining contemporary agri-food systems' (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012; 57). This is important in context to the previous comments made on urban living, because urban agriculture could be key to making city-living more sustainable and help alleviate stresses on rural food producers (Armar-Klemesu, 2001; Badgley et al., 2007). What's more, urban food production is not unheard of. In the past, backyard food growing has been discussed by governments as a form of 'keeping the family going' throughout times of instability, such as WW2 Australia (Larder, Lyons & Woolcock, 2012); whilst today around the world, projects like 'Edible Curb sides' (see Figure 6.3) are becoming a popular form of community development.

Figure 6.3: Photo of Edible Curb Sides in Canada



(Source: Author, 2015)

For Marion, an agriculture project within schools provided a form of empowerment for a low-decile school in Porirua where profits from Commonsense Organics assist in the maintenance of the garden;

‘Marion: We used to run a sponsorship programme for people who bought at Commonsense Organics – 5% went back to their child’s school. What we found was that it was great but most of those schools were decile 9 or 10 so we thought we’ll scrap that and instead develop a donations system so that we can support decile 1 schools growing organically. So we now support five decile 1 schools out in Porirua to grow organically. Which is much harder with less photo opportunities than a decile 9 and 10 school but this is where the greatest need is and so we’re very committed to helping build that process up.

Me: So you’re helping them set up the garden?

Marion: We support the co-ordinator of their programme which they had already started in conjunction with the Porirua City Council and we came in behind and helped them. She was paid I think for 10 hours per term. We’ve changed that so she’s paid much more regularly. We’ve put more money into it so she’s able to do more’ (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May).

For Marion, such projects achieve more than meets the eye as they function as a form of resilience where families in need of additional food support can access food, helping to make

it a right. Similarly programmes where food is grown in schools are a way of reprioritising the survival skills mentioned in Chapter 5. This also came up in my conversation with Erin as she gave her reasoning of why Workerbe is concentrated within Wellington's centre;

'Me: So why did you choose to base Workerbe in the urban centre?

Erin: Because I went to the community gardens and there wasn't anyone there really but there was a lot of beautiful produce. Not a lot of people gardening though. I got involved with the local food network and learnt about the importance of local. Also the Christchurch earthquake had just happened and my flatmate from Christchurch was telling me about how hard she found it to get food. So it makes sense to have more urban gardens. There is only one highway in and out of Wellington, so really it's a form of crisis management!...Also there's so much instinctual knowledge gardeners know, so it's good to have a centre to share this knowledge and working in the city you more often garden with others, and gardening is more fun with other people...I look at gardens and spaces around the city and I think about what could be there, I think we can bring a better sense of where our food comes from to people' (Erin, Workerbe, 25 June).

Erin's explanations of the importance of urban agriculture demonstrate the numerous positive reasons for increasing urban gardening. Gardening can be as much a form of crisis management as it can be a way of reconnecting communities and encouraging people to interact with one another, both aspects of building 'food-based communities' (referenced in principle six).

Urban food production can also serve as an important form of complementing the wider food sector (Armar-Klemesu, 2001; Badgley et al., 2007). Wittman (2011) thinks of urban agriculture as being able to address niche markets, a viewpoint that is confirmed each time I browse Commonsense Organics and find artisanal products that have been created by city dwellers for other city dwellers.

That said, Kay shared that urban food growing can be more than complementary;

'Urban gardening is a big part of what we're learning and teaching here. You can just about grow all your food in a 200m space. If you've just got a balcony, you can do a lot with working beds. So a lot of people can garden in the city' (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

Urban agriculture is not only about fulfilling a niche market or creating resilience but is also an active form of reconceptualising and reclaiming spaces. It is a powerful form of addressing food deserts, where not only immediate issues of food poverty may be addressed, but also other factors of poverty (Armar-Klemesu, 2001; Badgley et al., 2007). Schiavoni and Patel

(2009; 686) discuss the powerful impact that urban agriculture has had throughout lower-socio-economic neighbourhoods in New York, where small community gardens and guerrilla gardening (when a gardener grows something on land they do not own) has helped renew 'the fabric of marginalised neighbourhoods, providing fresh food where it is otherwise scarce'. Similarly as 'many of these gardens and farms originated as abandoned lots that had been surrendered to drug dealing and waste disposal' reclaiming these spaces has increased surrounding property values (Schiavoni & Patel, 2009; 686). Thus 'Growing Something' is more than just a form of addressing the distribution of food, but also a form of alleviating the knock-on effects of poverty that can afflict lower-socio-economic areas (Badgley et al., 2007). In this sense, it provides a form of healing.

A Form of Healing

'Grow Something', according to the participants, also complements the consumption of nutrient-dense food, because home gardeners can be better aware of what is in their food and are able to reduce access issues to obtaining nutrient-dense food (Badgley et al., 2007; Schiavoni & Patel, 2009). This was expressed by Kay;

'Without nourishment we've got no food security, food sovereignty, we've got nothing. We have to be nourishing ourselves. It's not about kilos of food. It's about nutrient-dense food...You can be buying it at the farmers market and encouraging someone else to do it from your own local area, we're not all gardeners, I totally accept that' (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

It also emerged through discussions where the participants spoke about their concerns of mass production leading to the deterioration of food quality and 'nutrient density';

'We need nutrient density and to stop pillaging resources around the world. It's about bringing more awareness to people so they understand it's not enough to just eat better food but you need to eat better quality food. That may not seem like much of a concern right now but I can see it is starting to become a big problem' (Erin, Workerbe, 25 June).

This viewpoint, that people are unaware of 'nutrient density', led Erin to including workshops in the Workerbe model;

'Me: So you've been running workshops as well as delivering food?

Erin: Yes and I hope to be giving a lot of different workshops and incorporating other health professionals and videos in the big picture. I'd like Workerbe to be more present on screens in offices.

Me: So you haven't been preaching to the converted?

Erin: No, goodness no. It's not been that. Preaching to the converted, they're the ones keeping us going. Everyone is so excited to have this and buying the food. There's nothing like this in Wellington...We're just about clean eating and local food and as you can see it's expanding quite quickly' (Erin, Workerbe, 25 June).

Whilst, according to Marion, 'Grow Something' offers a natural form of encouraging healthier eating;

'Me: You said it would be great if people were growing their own food?

Marion: Absolutely! We absolutely encourage that and we sell seedlings and have a gardening section in each store to help our customers to grow their own food.

Me: What do you think is important about people growing their own food?

Marion: It teaches children about where food comes from. You'll also find children will eat more vegetables if they come straight from the garden. It would eventually make us sustainable and more resilient from shocks in our food systems – but that's a long way down the track. I love growing vegetables in my garden but I don't feed the family from it' (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May).

This closely links with Koanga Institute's framing of food as medicine where one participant said 'For most of us here, we believe food is medicine. It matters what we eat, we don't need to necessarily take pharmaceuticals if we're eating the right food and supporting our body' (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May). Another participant spoke about growing food as a way of 'getting healthier' (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

Lastly, the participants conveyed 'Grow Something' as a way of reconnecting with nature; 'Just start to grow something, even if it's just herbs on your windowsill, get your hands in the soil' (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May). In this, making the connection with nature is seen as a way of making a paradigm shift (explored further in Chapter 7);

'When children know and see where the food is coming from they make that connection and they eat more. It's notoriously difficult to get young children eating vegetables but when they pick the carrots out of the garden themselves and pull it out of the soil themselves, sowing the seed themselves they have that connection and they eat it... If you have a garden start growing organically. It needs to be organic – put your money where your mouth is, but also learn about growing, learn about your immediate environment' (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May).

For Kay, 'Grow Something' is a way of enacting the food sovereignty paradigm;

‘So food sovereignty for me is about honouring and encouraging and supporting people to step back into the process of co-evolution which means growing our own food or supporting people in our own local environments to grow food’ (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

Thus ‘co-evolution’, a term explored further in Chapter 7, encompasses the discourse of ‘Grow Something’ because of the way they are linked in the principles of food sovereignty. This is evident through the way ‘Grow Something’ establishes food as a right, empowers people against the woes of corporate globalisation and hunger, and encourages people to re-value food skills and the role of the environment in producing food.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has highlighted the global health paradox, in which the marketised food system is critiqued as creating epidemics of people suffering from undernutrition and overnutrition. This is then discussed in context with knock-on issues; such as the practices of land grabbing, which is leading to increasing urbanisation, which is causing nutritional transition, resulting in the health paradox.

This is contrasted with an exploration of the discourse ‘Grow Something’ which is argued to help people to break the cycles created by the marketised system. This discourse also promotes a way of creating resilience within communities and fostering healing through growing food and connecting with the environment – approaches consistent to the food sovereignty principles.

In the next chapter I look more closely at the intangible findings of this research and discuss profoundly spiritual aspects of the food sovereignty paradigm shift.

Chapter 7: Interpreting and Connecting with a Food Sovereignty Paradigm

Introduction

Whilst the preceding findings and discussion chapters have analysed and highlighted structural issues within the current food system, this chapter will focus closely upon participant experiences where I explore ways the participants are enacting the food sovereignty paradigm.

This chapter explores the deeper aspects of food sovereignty, such as the spiritual findings. This is not only an important form of decolonising research, but also a way of acknowledging other forms of knowing.

Co-Evolution and Agroecology: Forms of Connection

My first interaction with the term 'co-evolution' emerged from my discussions with Kay at the Koanga Institute as the participants shared their journeys of researching models for 'connection'. As this word was used repetitively throughout the interview, I began to understand the word as symbolising the process of connecting with nature and food in an every-day way but on different levels.

'Most of my shifts have been around understanding the depth of co-evolution. It's an easy word to understand but to realise what it means in your life and your body on a cellular level is an amazing journey. I think I have a long way to go but I'm feeling it happening on a different level. It's about making connections in ways we haven't before' (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

Like 'co-evolution', food sovereignty is about connecting with the food system in different ways and on different levels. Whilst on some levels food sovereignty fosters tangible solutions to tangible problems, on other levels, food sovereignty is about conceptualising and interacting with the world differently. This was a notion shared in conversations about 'co-evolution';

'I know it [co-evolution] sounds very spiritual and there is a spiritual side to it, but it is also a down-to-earth physical process; reconnecting in our day-to-day practice' (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

I have grappled with how 'connection' as a central focus allows for interpretation of food sovereignty in both deep and broad ways. Not only because 'connection' is an important tool for one to interact more deeply within their worldview (by looking at how they 'interrelate' with the 'other') but also because a lack of 'connection' within the food system has been highlighted by food sovereignty activists. Colonial processes of separation and categorisation have left

people with a food system that feels simultaneously close (because they interact with it every day) and far away (because it can feel like changing the system is too immense).

Entwining 'connection' with practicality has led me to present discourses around 'Market Solutions' and 'Grow Something', as these discourses work to put 'connection' back into the food system. However, as the epistemological and ontological framings of this research suggest, there are other available discourses within food sovereignty, because discourses do not always need to have tangible manifestations. Rather, knowledge within food sovereignty might exist within the realms of emotion, a sense of relationship or spirituality. Whilst there are many possible words to use here, the term 'connection' provides a useful platform for interpreting the 'paradigm shifts' many of the participants (as well as the literature) have communicated. Linking back to my explanation of paradigms and their ability to shift (in Chapter 4), I reiterate that a paradigm shift is a change in worldview.

The food sovereignty paradigm shift is a change in understanding and engaging with the world. For this reason, food sovereignty's fluid and malleable nature is profound for it allows for space to discuss a change in consciousness where people can connect with food in deeper ways. This emerged from the interviews as the participants shared experiences where food was said to be 'life' (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May); a way to fill 'the soul' and something that carries 'dignity, worth and social value' (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May); and 'family, community and love' (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May). They also spoke of food as providing 'a context to relate to one another' (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May) and as 'what we share' (Erin, Workerbe, 25 June). Food 'connects' people to what they know in their hearts;

'Starting here [Koanga Institute] has given me a whole new perspective on everything I knew to be true in my heart. It has reinforced all the beliefs that I held but had no way of expressing. It's been a real journey starting here. For the first time in my life I have nearly been singing on my way to work. In a way it's got more to do with the food than just the eating of it. There's a sharing of more than just the subsistence, it's an emotional feast, a spiritual feast, and it's everything combined, it's not just the seeds or the food' (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

Discussing food as an 'emotional' and 'spiritual feast' speaks to the powerful 'connection' that food can invoke. This is why I think Cathy says 'Grow Something' is a form of finding yourself (Cathy, Biofarm, 4 June) (see Chapter 5 for the quote).

Food sovereignty embraces 'co-evolution', where the principles provide a context to re'connect'. Whilst I have *lived* this research, I have found myself connecting to new forms of knowledge where my interpretations of food sovereignty have helped me to see a new paradigm in which messages about making 'heart decisions' because 'we've cut a lot of

connections' feel true to me (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May). In this sense, *living* this research has not only been a wonderful experience but it has also allowed me to deeply engage with the discourses shared by the participants and within the literature, where understanding agroecology has helped me to envision an alternative food system.

Like food sovereignty, agroecology is 'seen differently by different actors' (Wezel, as cited in Rosset, Machin Sosa, Roque Jaime & Ávila Lozano, 2011; 163); where it is 'both a science and a set of farming practices' (Altieri & Toledo, 2011; 588). I contend that agroecology offers a model for 'connection' with the environment as it guides farming practices to be holistic and healing. This is because agroecological food production requires farmers to have a relationship with their environment. This is achieved through balancing nutrient flows and taking measures to produce healthy and active soils (Altieri & Toledo, 2011; Altieri, 2012) by embracing a closed circuit ecosystem, or 'cradle-to-cradle' circuit (a phrase that means whatever is taken from the earth is returned to the earth, in order to maintain balance; and so it is engrained with nutrient flow) (McDonough & Braungart, as cited in Bargh, 2014).

'In a healthy ecosystem in which decay balances growth, soil regenerates through recycling of plant and animal matter. Plant agriculture, thus, requires animals for fertilizer. Crops that use nitrogen, such as wheat and rice, must rotate with plants that return nitrogen to the soil, such as pulses (beans, peas and lentils)...traditional agriculture...lets biological diversity do the work' (Curtin, 1995; 64-65).

Agroecology is contrary to many (if not all) forms of industrial agriculture because it fails to acknowledge the importance of balance. This is why many food sovereignty activists are wary of new 'eco' trends where materials like biofuels and bioplastics are promoted as being sustainable;

'All too often in the current sustainable movement, the substitution of one product or process by another has had unintended consequences. The use of corn as feedstock for both biofuels and bioplastics has increased the cost of grain, putting food security for millions at risk, and stimulated industry to embrace genetic controls to master standardized and predictable output. The use of palm oil for biodegradable soaps has destroyed huge tracts of rainforest and the habitat of the orang-utan. The appetite for shiitake mushrooms — a delicious and fine substitute for animal protein — has increased the felling of oak trees to provide the logs on which they grow' (Pauli, 2010; 25).

Living sustainably or attempting to solve problems without including a focus on balance can have unforeseen ramifications. Through embracing 'connection' and using the food sovereignty principles as a guide, people are better equipped to *live* food sovereignty. This was highlighted when one participant expressed a key moment in their paradigm shift;

‘When I came here [Koanga Institute] 2.5 years ago, I was adamant I didn’t want to eat meat, through lots of learning and discussions...I suddenly realised, the vision I was trying to do was in the same area but I had to shift my paradigm. I wanted to eat off the land etc. I thought not eating animals would be a part of that, but suddenly I realised that if I wanted to eat off the land and eat local I couldn’t be buying too much coconut oil from miles away. So where would I get everything from? A turning point was if I wanted to live this lifestyle I had to shift my thinking and try something different’ (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

Thus food sovereignty is not about being prescriptive and arguing what ought to be included in people’s food systems. Instead it serves as a platform for finding ‘connection’ within the food system and this has led to profound experiences for the participants.

Cathy’s journey in embracing Steiner philosophy (where ‘biodynamics’ is a form of agroecology) has allowed her to ‘live the dream of working with nature’ as well as re‘connect’ with her Māori whakapapa;

‘[Biodynamics] validated an indigenous growing system because it put a lot of emphasis on the influence of planets. That’s how Māori, well all indigenous peoples grew food, in accordance with our knowledge of the stars...Biodynamics had documented a lot of astrology which I found fascinating because in Māori culture it was all oral. My great grandmother married an Englishman so I grew up with the English whakapapa, but always had a yearning to find my roots. It was through biodynamic agriculture I made that connection...there’s a special place on our farm, it’s a paddock, and it’s surrounded by trees, where my husband’s grandmother used to have a bit of retreat. It was in that paddock I felt completely the presence of my great grandmother. She was saying to me “you are doing it right, this is how it is done”’ (Cathy, Biofarm, 4 June).

I see this as a taonga in this research because it signifies the deep and varying ‘connection’s made possible through a food sovereignty paradigm.

I found similar experiences were shared throughout my visit to Koanga Institute, where a focus on ‘regenerative living’ shifted my interpretations of a sustainable food model;

‘The main determinant if something is regenerative or not is whether it is able to renew, restore or revitalise its sources of energy and materials....A regenerative society is mainly going to be living either directly or indirectly on sunlight and using recycled materials rather than a one way trip to the ocean or land fill. In terms of people’s behaviour, I guess it’s a simpler lifestyle and not so much reliance on cars and having so many different social relationships’ (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

Whilst the logistical aspects of living in a regenerative manner are complex for the ways they mandate a change in most aspects of mainstream lifestyle (such as not relying on fossil fuels), Kay shared how regenerative living affected her on 'a cellular level';

'I don't really have the words but...I'm building a relationship with those plants and I find that I have a kind of psychic ability to know what they need. I can communicate with them. As that has developed I have realised that it is changing me on a cellular level...there was something of a difference with this food in terms of how it communicated with my body. It was more than the vitamins and the minerals and the proteins...it had something to do with whakapapa for a start...it's connected to your own whakapapa...our DNA recognises that food...there are parts of us that don't develop unless we are fully nourished. Indigenous people had a lot of gifts and skills which some of us are still able to tap into, but a lot of us aren't. My understanding is that we're shutting down because our bodies aren't being nourished. So things like the pineal gland which is our connection to the universe and our ability to connect with the wider world around us. Our bodies are so lacking in vitamin A and other fat soluble vitamins in nutrition that our whole skull is getting smaller. The spaces in the glands can't even fit anymore so they're underdeveloped and not fully functioning...if the pineal gland cannot develop because it's not getting nutrition, then we're not able to communicate as well with the world around us, which includes our food, and the universe' (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

This reference to the pineal gland suggests a learning that is counter to Western science. Though this science is not recognised by everyone, it is important because it is another form of knowing.

Kay's discussion of 'connection', with the plants, with her food, with whakapapa and with the universe, is linked with discourses surrounding decolonisation and is synonymous with fostering an IHER.

There are however arguments to be made about this form of representing 'Indigenous'. Too often the indigenous experience is portrayed through essentialist language. Smith (1999) is critical of this as she discusses the portrayal of indigenous as 'Trading the Other'. Whilst there are many levels to her critique, Smith (1999) reviews how indigenous ideas, language, knowledge, image, beliefs and fantasies are employed and reintegrated within a Western system; 'Trading the Other, intimately defines Western thinking and identity. As a trade, it has no concern for the peoples who originally produced the ideas or images, or with how and why they produced those ways of knowing' (Smith, 1999; 89). Moreover, Smith writes that throughout history indigenous peoples have been pushed into Western

discourses of indigenous as the 'savage' (Smith, 1999; 45) or as the 'Problem' (Smith, 1999; 90) and therefore the indigenous peoples can experience colonial reductionism.

Whilst on one hand, not including the below discourses could be a way of avoiding colonial reductionism, on the other hand, not including these discourses is a form of marginalising voices. This shows that decolonising research is challenging and needs to be done carefully.

Embracing Tikanga and Other Forms of Decolonising Food

The fluid and malleable nature of food sovereignty can and has been used in conjunction with other forms of knowing (Hutchings et al., 2012; Meyer, 2014; Pimbert, 2009). For example, in Malawi, the interpretation of food sovereignty has allowed for communities to re'connect' with their traditional crops and farming practices following a period of 'modernisation' (Msachi, Dakishoni, Kerr & Patel, 2009).

Through embracing food sovereignty, which to Northern Malawi farmers meant having control over how food is grown, and being able to grow food without relying on outsiders, the community began addressing change (Msachi et al., 2009). This shows that food sovereignty complements indigenous rights to self-determination (Hutchings et al., 2012; Meyer, 2014; Pimbert, 2009); and also illustrates that whilst IHER may exist for many indigenous peoples, indigenous food sovereignty is also about pragmatically dealing with issues. For Malawi farmers, this was achieved through running workshops on family nutrition and visiting homes to teach mothers about breastfeeding (Msachi et al., 2009). They also hosted 'recipe days' to encourage eating a traditional diet and to foster 'family cooperation' where men could take a more active part in reproductive roles and thus alleviate gender inequality (Msachi et al., 2009). North Malawi farmers reached out to Central Malawi farmers and recovered indigenous grains of sorghum and millet (which are more drought tolerant) allowing them greater food freedom. Food Sovereignty allowed space for decolonisation in a way that was natural to them (Msachi et al., 2009).

Food sovereignty as a form of decolonisation is manifesting in similar but different ways throughout the world. This makes 'connection' a useful tool in shifting perceptions; 'The most fundamental clash between Western and indigenous belief systems...stems from a belief held by indigenous peoples that the earth is a living entity, Mother Earth' (Adorno, as cited in Smith, 1999; 99). Whilst she is known by other names and is conceptualised in varying ways, a food sovereignty paradigm invokes 'connection' where Mother Earth is *living*. This brings her away from being an object and gives her inherent rights; 'the rights of nature combined with food sovereignty permit better care of biodiversity, while democracy and citizen participation set up the construction of pluri-nationalism, which, in turn implies a reorganisation of power based

on complementarity and reciprocity that goes beyond government and state institutions' (Villalba, 2013; 1435).

Hence because she is *living*, people can have a relationship with her and she cannot be owned or patented. This is one reason why many food sovereignty activists are anti GE because this science breaks apart the whakapapa of a living entity (Roberts et al., 2004). It also stops people from receiving her gifts which she 'gives for free' (Ghandi in Shiva, 2013; 62). Thus the legal framework surrounding the ownership of nature is viewed as illegitimate and wrong;

'We've received this amazing biodiversity in seeds from nature and our ancestors. We owe it to future generations to protect the richness of diversity, the integrity of the seed, and therefore we cannot obey any law that makes our seed saving a crime because it violates our ecological duty and since we have to obey a higher law, the law of Gaia, the law of the planet, the law of social justice, the law of protecting the rights of future generations, we do not recognise patents on the seed' (Shiva, 2013; 62).

Shiva's views highlight increasing tensions within the world as it is becoming increasingly illegal to save seeds or grow food outside of the mainstream food system; 'friends in Europe are being sued if they're saving seeds; friends in Latin America are being sued for saving seed. They tried to pass a law like that in 2004 in India' (Shiva, 2013; 62).

Rather, many activists work in accordance with a form of 'agrarian citizenship';

'The concept of agrarian citizenship creates explicit links between the struggles for political and ecological rights and practices, bringing the rights of nature into the food sovereignty equation (Wittman 2009b, 2009c, 2010 in Wittman, 2011). The agrarian citizenship approach acknowledges a socioecological metabolism as a crucial law of motion in agroecological transformation, in which the advent of capitalism and relationships of unequal ecological exchange commodified nature, separated urban consumers from rural producers, disrupted traditional patterns of nutrient cycling, and contributed to both hunger and environmental degradation' (Foster, 1999; Marx, 1973; Moore, 2010, as cited in Wittman, 2011; 93).

Through connecting with Mother Earth and building IHER, food sovereignty can be enacted, regardless of socio-economic status. Marion suggests it is not only about production and consumption decisions but about making a deeper 'connection' with nature;

'Me: What suggestions would you have for someone wanting a more holistic life?

Marion: If you have a garden start growing organically. Learn about growing, learn about your immediate environment. If you're in an apartment grow your own herbs. Just connect. Go for walks. In New Zealand we have so many amazing places to be. In

Wellington there's the sanctuary, the sea, we are so blessed and there's any number of things we can take advantage of...It's organic, so you don't have silver bullets. If you're gardening in your vegetable garden, do you have a silver bullet moment when suddenly it all falls into place? Maybe, maybe the first shoot that comes through in the Spring. I don't know. But then it happens again, and then again. It's organic, our growth is organic, and our learning is organic and our sharing is organic' (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May).

Enacting food sovereignty is about reintegrating lifestyle and priorities with Mother Earth. It is for this reason that Koanga Institute discussed this in terms of being 'indigenous';

'One of the words we are exploring is indigenous. So indigenous has a certain political context in NZ but increasingly for us it's about a relationship with the environment and not so much about political status. So we're exploring how we can become more indigenous. For me it's about being in the environment rather than being alongside it and using it. It's like you're totally meshed in that environment. And we've come to that understanding through ecology rather than culturally, I mean we have an indigenous culture, but it is so far back that we don't even remember it. Māori people still remember some of it because theirs is not so far back. I mean my indigenous culture was Celtic and we were colonised before them' (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

Whilst I remain sensitive to the political and structural injustices that many indigenous peoples continue to experience, and of the contentious adoption of the category of 'indigenous', this quote adds a powerful discourse to the debates surrounding colonisation. For Koanga Institute it comes back to 'connection' as 're-tribalising';

'We work really closely with Māori people. I've never read the Treaty...but I work in that paradigm all the time. Basically, it's about indigenous people and we're all indigenous somewhere way back, that's really important to remember... I operate in the paradigm that we all need to re-tribalise, we all need to look back and honour our past and honour each other and honour the environment around us. In the end that's the best we can all be. I believe that the Treaty is largely about that anyway. Working with indigenous people is a large part of what we do and all of our seeds are indigenous seeds, so there's no separation. It's all the same thing' (Kay, Personal Interview, 25 May).

This framing of 're-tribalising' can happen through varying ways. It is interesting that Kay has chosen the term 'tribal' to signify a form of 'creating villages in one form another' (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, May 29). Whilst arguably this could be perceived as romanticising the indigenous experience, which is conducive to 'Othering' (Smith, 1999), I believe Koanga

Institute are talking about a village that is a form of 'new post capitalist social relations', a phrase Brown and Pickerill (2009; 24) argue as accessed through activism.

For Cathy, 're-tribalising' can be seen through the establishment of Hua Parakore, because it is about bringing Kaupapa Māori to the forefront of producing food. Cathy shares;

'Hua Parakore is fantastic...It's the things that are important, the difference between our product and anyone else's product. The back story of where it has come from and why. Whereas the organic certification doesn't take any of that into consideration when they're giving the certificate for being organic. Whereas Hua Parakore says "well this is the story, the energy and the aroha going into the food and what you are passing on through the products". That for me is one of its strengths. The other is that it is for Māori. They don't have to go outside of tikanga to get a verification and validation (Cathy, Biofarm, 4 June).

Hua Parakore is an example of Māori food sovereignty that is harmonious with decolonisation because it is showing producers that there is another form of agriculture, a form harmonious with Kaupapa Māori tikanga;

'What's happening in most Māori agriculture is they have not adopted a sustainable tikanga-based method of farming. They're using the conventional methods; hydroponics, feeding animals imported food and before long they'll probably be the first to use GE. I have not found that the Māori in business relate their business to their culture. It's as if they're two different things...They're afraid to make mistakes because they were colonised and a victim does not believe they have the knowledge to face challenges. To me that's a victim mentality. Not confident in their own strengths. Although you'll get pockets of confident home gardeners and small community gardens, when it comes to the iwi and corporations, who are the drivers of the Māori economy, they're not interested. They get more mana from being the best in the Pākehā world than they do from the indigenous worlds. That's very difficult to get them to see that their business could be indigenous in the true sense of the word (Cathy, Biofarm, 4 June).

Whilst Cathy is critical of some Māori attitudes within agriculture, she does recognise a change in direction where some Marae are addressing change through nutrition; 'Marae kai is pretty cool these days. It's pretty nutritious and thought is going into nutrition. I think that's a new move and less than 10 years old. Nutrition now is becoming synonymous with feeding family on a large scale' (Cathy, Biofarm, 4 June).

Furthermore, food sovereignty is not anti-science (Wittman, 2011). Rather, the paradigm encourages science to be integrated with other forms of knowledge; 'We also understand that food sovereignty means building on local, traditional knowledge, in consultation with scientific

knowledge, using participatory methods and respecting ecological diversity' (Msachi et al., 2009; 701). This was similarly emphasised by Kay;

'I think before Western modern science, it [regenerative living] was done through observation, living in the natural world and passing on information through generations. But we are so disconnected from that now and need to learn that process again. I have found science to be really useful for helping us to learn the process. It's only useful as connecting us back to the old understanding and to trust ourselves. Our ancestors would have seen the patterns but may not have had the words through science that we have now... without science as a crutch and knowledge as a tool it'd be far more difficult for people to re-enter the process again' (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

For peoples who do not identify as indigenous, the food sovereignty paradigm, because of the weight that is given to indigenous ontologies, helps to foster 'Unity in Diversity' where people are encouraged to recognise the different customs cultures have around food. At Kaibosh this means not putting food on the floor;

'A lot of the groups we supply food to are Marae or Māori based groups so we try to make sure that we consult with them on cultural food things. This has changed the way that we do things. We used to be quite casual about putting food on the floor of the chiller. We never do that now because people have said "we're really uncomfortable with this". We just bought shelves and lifted the food off the floor' (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May).

Thus the principles of food sovereignty work in conjunction with processes of decolonisation, because the fluid and malleable nature of food sovereignty functions as a lens in which one may envision an alternative food system and be empowered to take incremental steps to enacting this system. Collectively this informs a new kind of society with 'food-based communities'.

'Unity in Diversity': Building 'Food-Based Communities'

By placing emphasis on the idea of the community, which includes all flora and fauna, a food sovereignty paradigm is conducive to notions of peace. Not only through the way that the community becomes a 'unit of life' (Villalba, 2013; 1430), but because it reconnects members of the community with intrinsic values and thus seeks to address inequality and violence.

Violence is apparent in the contemporary food system; from the destruction that plastic bags cause in the ocean, to the issues of domestic violence caused by unequal gender relations. In response, the food sovereignty paradigm orients the discussion of violence towards human rights (and ecological rights), where inequality is addressed through discussing power relations on the local, national, regional and international scale. Food sovereignty activists remain critical of development agendas like the Green Revolution, which Curtin (1995; 69) has

called a 'violent conquest of nature' and stated; 'the Green Revolution succeeded to a much greater degree than any overt form of militarism in reducing Third World peasants to political and economic dependence on Northern industrial and scientific powers' (Curtin, 1995; 70). Meanwhile, in response to gender-based violence many activists promote women's work. Women perform over half of the world's agricultural work whilst owning about 2 percent of land (Curtin, 1995; Patel, 2012; Wittman, 2011). Through embracing models of equality, La Via Campesina, as well as many other food sovereignty groups, employ forms of representative leadership, which includes women leaders and encompasses a focus on women's concerns (Desmarais, 2003). Through celebrating and valuing women's work, activists argue that inequality is softened (Schiavoni & Patel, 2009).

Forms of representative leadership are similarly evident in the models of the organisations where Marion spoke about their Board of Directors (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May), Matt spoke about Kaibosh's Board of Governance (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May) and Kay spoke about the Koanga Elders (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May). Whilst this form of leadership is not without hurdles, the participants spoke of representative leadership as being a form of sustainability and 'common sense' where collective decisions can be made for the well-being of the community. Representative leadership is thus about sharing leadership roles and responsibilities and making decisions collectively.

The organisations, in embracing a model of food sovereignty, also tended to be inclusive. This was seen through the way disadvantaged and marginalised peoples of the community have been reintegrated within the organisation models; where Commonsense Organics make a point of employing people with a refugee background (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May) and Kaibosh receive help from volunteers from Active – 'a charity that caters to people aged 17-25 with intellectual disabilities' (Boot, 2015).

For them, food works as a 'congruent to bring people together' (Matt, Kaibosh, 19 May) or a 'social glue' (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May) because it fosters interaction amongst people. This interaction might happen over a love of gardening where older gardeners have wisdom that younger generations might not have; 'The old gardeners have the seeds and they're the only ones that know them. They've had to grow them every year' (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May); or the interaction might be encouraged through food; 'So many people have come in to the store over the years and said my granny has a tree in the garden that has fruit like this. I haven't tasted food like this anywhere. Those kinds of things that are really important for people' (Marion, Commonsense Organics, 29 May). Overall, the interactions fostered within a food sovereignty paradigm are about 'connection', sharing, and having an awareness of others; where working collectively is more 'fun' (Erin, Workerbe, 25 June) and more sustainable because 'you can't do it all on your own' (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May);

'I guess through being able to share the knowledge of nutrient dense practices and gardening and where food comes from, hopefully people can recreate that or contribute to their urban environments, empowering people through knowledge and community. You can find things out but if you're doing it with people in a project it makes it more fun and doable. It's about education and awareness. More awareness around food sovereignty and the danger we're in right now because everyone is too busy right now and no one cares until they're faced with someone who is really sick or no food (Erin, Workerbe, 25 June).

Moreover, a food-based community does not necessarily need to be dependent upon close geographical proximity. Koanga Institute consider their community to be global;

'Koanga Institute will more and more become an important international centre for regenerative living...Already our permaculture and internship courses are filled with people from overseas...I have a lot of connections with overseas organisations of people doing similar stuff. We're pretty leading edge in the world with what we are doing here. There is no one else in New Zealand doing near what we're doing and all the local seed saving groups don't really want to know us. We've put out quite a lot of connections, and they don't get back, but they're all run on voluntary labour and it's really hard. It's hard for us because it's all voluntary labour, but they've got no paid staff all those seed saving groups. So I see my peers as being around the world and we mainly just work hard and do it here' (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

So food sovereignty is not inherently anti-globalisation, because globalisation can be used as a tool for connecting people. This paradigm re'connect's places on an international scale where it is less about the North-South binary and more about building communities on the local, national, regional and international scale.

So how does the food sovereignty paradigm begin? For one participant, it began with a loss of trust in the system;

'This whole journey is about sovereignty. My journey starts in a place of a major loss of trust in the systems, the government, and the economics. Then my journey is around empowering myself. Food is a practical way and major part of it. Being empowered myself and having the opportunity to make good choices and opportunities to not be dependent on something that is not reliable' (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

And how different is it to *live* the food sovereignty paradigm? For another participant it hasn't 'felt too different', it is just a shift in focus;

‘Growing your own food and being within this community...makes this lifestyle quite different, it doesn’t feel hugely different or hard, you have everything you need so it makes sense but for a lot of people, coming to a place like this might feel difficult because of the focus being totally different. We can live on a lot less just through trade and growing our food and not needing certain things. Like utilising second hand stores not because it’s a poor thing but because we can find what we need at a lower price, better value and there’s heaps of different stuff in one shop. It’s a shift in focus’ (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May).

In its simplest form, the food sovereignty paradigm is about making food a medium for change and implementing *good change*.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has explored the many meanings and experiences attached to the discourse of ‘connection’. It presents food sovereignty as having the ability to guide oneself through the process of ‘co-evolution’ where ‘connection’ is about *living* within the food system and thus working more harmoniously within ecosystems and embracing agroecology. Elaborating on ‘connection’, this chapter highlighted a call for IHER as a way to rebuild a relationship with Mother Earth. I have also spoken about ‘connection’ as an important tool for decolonising spaces and practices where ‘re-tribalisation’ is made possible. Through embracing ‘food based communities’, this chapter offers a powerful platform for interpreting and ‘connecting’ with a food sovereignty paradigm, and this, I suggest, is enacting food sovereignty.

In the next and final chapter I share my own journey of enacting the food sovereignty paradigm. This is followed by a summary of the key arguments made in this thesis as well as statements about limitations and ideas for future research.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Introduction

Through understanding and interpreting the different layers of food sovereignty in this research I have explored what it means to 'enact' food sovereignty in the context of Aotearoa and beyond. This research has constructed knowledge with the purpose of empowering people to embrace their own food sovereignty paradigm, and my own experiences of *living* this research have helped me to identify ways this shift might occur. Whilst it is difficult to communicate precisely what a paradigm shift consists of, in the following section I share my own experiences of the shift to give context for concluding this research.

Enacting My Food Sovereignty Paradigm

I remember the tingly feeling I had when I first realised that the concept of food sovereignty was much deeper than I first anticipated. It happened just as I was leaving the Biofarm site. In the car, driving down the dusty country road, I reflected on the interviews that I had conducted and thought about all the messages swimming around my head. Feeling a little overwhelmed by how I was going to portray them all with justice, I took a deep breath and allowed myself to feel the findings. It was then that it made sense; an almost profound clarity overcame me. It wasn't about looking at all the things that were wrong with the food system; food sovereignty is not only about problem solving. Food sovereignty, as a development paradigm in itself, is about changing the food system from the inside out and incrementally. Ultimately it is about letting food guide you in making *good change*. This meant that the stories shared by the participants were not simply about views and opinions; the participants were actually sharing with me their worldviews, their paradigms. They were helping me to understand their lifestyles and their feelings. In this context the food sovereignty paradigm remains holistic and cannot be prescriptive. It exists within a world where people's experiences within reality are different, where the motivations for feelings, behaviour and thoughts are complex. So food sovereignty is powerful as a concept that is guiding, but that allows space for people to enact their own autonomy.

The saturation of the food sovereignty paradigm has been harmonious with my own feelings and views of food. As I shared in the Prologue, food has always been a big part of my worldview; of me. The paradigm shift has allowed me to integrate food even more deeply with my understanding of the world, it has worked as a lens to see the interconnectivity of life, because food is life. So how has this transpired through my actions?

My consumption has been changing in a way that feels natural. I do my best to make the best decisions I can with the resources available to me. In some ways these decisions are easy. I buy organic where I can afford it, I support businesses that I see as operating ethically. I think

about the story the food has before I receive it. I think about the people, the animals and the environment that came together to make my food and I feel more thankful. I see food as both an entitlement for people, but also as a gift. Whilst this is not always the case, because I can be swept up in convenience and impulses, overall I see these changes happening. The shift is happening and it is evident through looking at how I am eating, what I am eating and why.

In this way the food sovereignty paradigm is not something that starts or stops, it is ubiquitous and flows in and out of the interactions, thoughts and feelings I have. Through finding connection with food and with Mother Earth, I am changing. Through exploring what it means to enact a food sovereignty paradigm, I have fostered new or dormant parts of myself, parts that want to find a 'way back'; to connect with my whakapapa, other people, social justice and to find joy in the simple and complex layers of the food system, to find grounding in nature and to promote a more peaceful way of life.

Food Sovereignty is a Concept and Development Tool

Through sharing my story of enacting the food sovereignty paradigm, it is clear that food sovereignty is philosophically different from food security. This is evident through the juxtaposition of food security's top-down approach and food sovereignty's bottom-up approach; where food sovereignty is fluid and malleable in nature, and thus harmonious to indigenous and feminist ontologies.

Food sovereignty is not prescriptive. It works to guide people in making better informed and ethical decisions within a food system that is currently rife with inequality and unsustainability. It calls for development that is *good change*; making development achievable through policies, programmes and projects, as well as through personal actions, ideas, thoughts and beliefs, because development is not clear cut, but omnipresent and inescapable. Through crafting a framework of food sovereignty around six principles, I have illustrated ways food sovereignty can manifest theoretically and tangibly where people are;

1. Recognising Food as a Basic Human Right
2. Ending the Corporate Globalisation of Hunger Through Re-Distribution
3. Creating Social Peace Through Food
4. Re-Valuing Food Skills
5. Acting in Harmony with the Environment
6. Calling for Agrarian Reform

This makes food sovereignty harmonious with autonomy, where people can define and enact their own food sovereignty paradigm. This paradigm, because of the guiding framework, is not free of moral prerogative and fosters decolonisation and activism where food sovereignty is manifesting in material and symbolic forms.

Food Sovereignty is Important in Aotearoa

Problems emerging within Aotearoa's food system are characteristic of trends happening throughout the world. This is seen in, but not limited to, issues of environmental degradation and corporate control over food and food-making resources, increasing occurrences of ill-health, and decreasing access to autonomy within the national (and globalised) food system. This has not only caused political issues for Māori self-determination and sovereignty, but many New Zealanders are experiencing issues connected with the force of neoliberal reform and a heavily marketised society.

Fortunately, aware of these issues, organisations are effecting *good change* throughout the food system in unique, creative, holistic, ethical and sustainable ways. From building models for regenerative living to stopping quality surplus food being needlessly thrown away, these organisations are ensuring people have a right to clean, nutritious, organic, fair trade and happy food that is produced using agroecological principles and complimentary to Māori food sovereignty.

There are Food Sovereignty Market Solutions in the Current Food System

The current food system is unequal. Due to the fact the food system is marketised, food is distributed within a 'zero sum game' where there are 'winners' and 'losers'; meaning that some people access too much food whilst others cannot access enough. The marketised food system is also operating in unsustainable ways which is resulting in levels of finite and natural resources plummeting.

As explained throughout this thesis, part of the issue is that the food system is used as a 'political weapon' (Patel, 2007). Food and food aid is causing harm to people's autonomy and rights to choose their own food system. Food is also being used as a manipulative tool to create financial dependence, on other countries and corporations, which is largely possible because of the distribution of power within the food system. Powerful stakeholders within the current marketised food system profit from using practices of exploitation.

These issues can be minimised through effecting *good change* around the consumption of food. Foremost, this comes down to having awareness of the exploitation of power within the system and, where possible, avoiding it. One way is through 'voting' in the system where purchasing more ethical products is a way of manipulating the supply-demand mechanisms of the marketised system. Whilst it is not always easy to know what is 'Ethical Consumption' because labelling can be misleading or a product might be ethical in one way and unethical in another. Through associating price with value, consumers can support business models that are working towards embracing a food sovereignty model. This is important given the corporate climate of the food system, where the push for cheap prices make it difficult to

compete with large corporations. Whilst it is appreciated that consuming more ethically can be a luxury inaccessible to some low income peoples, in these instances, it is recommended that through making small changes, like buying directly from food producers, 'growing something', not wasting food and making healthy consumption choices, the food system can be reformed through collective action, where people do what they can. However, food sovereignty is not only about tangible changes but also embraces changes happening on a mental and spiritual level.

'Growing Something' is a Way of Building Resilience to Rising Health and Resource Concerns

There are vicious cycles created through the current market system that pertain to different aspects of people's lives. This is evident through the growing health paradox with increasing numbers of people suffering from malnutrition; where some people are starving from undernutrition, whilst other people are falling ill from overnutrition. One explanation for this is the unequal distribution of food within the marketised system; in hand with the increasing separation of health from food consumption. In the development paradigm, food security measures are trying to address issues like ill health through targeting economic inequality but this is reasoned as only effective with changes around entitlements to food (Sen, 1981). The geographical placement of people within the health paradox varies on a local, national, regional and international scale and therefore countries cannot be defined through binary terms of being food poor and food rich. With the food sovereignty lens, it is evident that knock-on issues effected by the food system are complex and happening in different ways throughout the world, whilst global trends are apparent (Patel, 2007; Young, 2012).

For instance, the separation of price and value which has driven a mantra of cheap food, has displaced many food producers throughout the world, as many lose their farms and livelihoods due to debt traps. This then can push migration into urban centres, as food producers search for employment; leading to an influx of workers which drives labour competition, and often decreases wages. Migration and processes of urbanisation further place the burden of food production onto rural food producers; adding to concerns that Malthus theory of population outgrowing food production capabilities is possible. Urbanisation, in hand with corporate globalisation, has engendered nutritional transition where people are eating more Westernised and colonised foods despite the havoc caused to people's health (and the environment) (Ehrenreich & Lyon, 2011; Patel, 2007; Young, 2012).

However, through reforming food production, it is estimated that a population of 9.3 billion can be sustained (McMahon, 2013). Part of this reform is achieved through the discourse of 'Grow Something' where growing (at least a portion of) one's own food can foster resilience in face

of these aforementioned issues. This is because 'Grow Something' offers a path to undercutting the vicious cycles. It alleviates the burden of food production on food producers and the urban-rural binary. It also undercuts secondary issues of waste management, where food produced through the marketised food system is often transported in environmentally costly packaging. 'Grow Something' allows for the reclamation of space through shifting conceptualisations of where food can be produced, as well as providing a tool for people (including low-income peoples) to better access fresh and healthy food. It also fosters a healing paradigm, where food is understood to be medicine and ecological food production is seen as contributing to healing the environmental damage caused by industrial agriculture.

People Can Better Connect Through a Food Sovereignty Paradigm

The food sovereignty paradigm, which is understood as a change in worldview, perspective and/or behaviour (and which is evident through people's everyday interactions, thoughts, beliefs and understandings) fosters a process of 'connection'. This means that within a food sovereignty paradigm, processes of co-evolution, where connections are happening in every way and on every level, might help people to place themselves again *within* the food system. Broadly, 'connection' is conducive to an ontology of 'relationality' (Villalba, 2013; 1430); where people might find ways they are connected to 'the other' rather than separate from it.

Through embracing this ontology of 'connection', methods and practices of including people, animals and the environment are more holistic. Environmentally, food production methods often incorporate notions of agroecology where the environment is comprised of functioning ecosystems, which require balance to operate in healthy and efficient ways. This also pushes conceptualisations of the environment as being a living entity, where Mother Earth exists and has inalienable rights. Politically, embracing this shift is conducive to a form of decolonisation, where many indigenous ontologies embrace a notion of Mother Earth (Smith, 1999; Villalba, 2013). Whilst this research takes measures not to homogenise the indigenous experience or indigenous ontologies, it recognises that processes of decolonisation are accessible through everyday interactions and thought, because it is about the 'divesting of colonial power' (Smith, 1999; 98). This may be pragmatic, such as effecting change through workshops and community discussions; as well as intangible, where 'connection' can link people in profound ways with their whakapapa.

Overall, the 'connection' which is fostered within a food sovereignty paradigm links people through relationships. Relationships with Mother Earth, with whakapapa, as well as with each other. Building 'food based communities' might be one outcome of embracing a food sovereignty model for the way they re-orientate value within communities where there is 'unity in diversity' (Wittman, 2011).

Key Impacts of this Research

This research has constructed knowledge with the purpose of exploring what food sovereignty means in the context of Aotearoa and seeks to inspire and empower people to define and enact their own food sovereignty paradigm as part of effecting *good change*. In doing so, this research contributes significantly to the field of development and food both in academic and activist terms by;

- Making food sovereignty an accessible concept where the literature is represented within a framework, lens and paradigm.
- Shedding light on and supporting activist concerns about current marketised food system and the ways it is causing harm to peoples, animals and the environment.
- Embracing postcolonial discourse and suggesting ways interactions and thoughts within the food system may foster decolonisation.
- Contributing to postcolonial and feminist research and methodologies where *living* the research, in hand with embracing positionality and reflexivity, are argued as conducive to constructing positioned, situational and specific knowledge.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Despite the key contributions made by this research, there are some limitations and challenges faced in the construction of knowledge in this thesis. The irony is that promotion of the situated and specific nature of this research is also a limitation. This is because of the intricate connection between power and knowledge creation, and the ways this can be mediated through considerations of representation.

Whilst having the focus groups would have added another perspective to this research, doing so would have placed an unethical burden upon the organisations. This shows the complex boundaries within ethical research where researchers must remain sensitive to their participants' needs.

Additionally, upon reflection, I question whether corporations have been vilified throughout my portrayal of global food issues. Whilst I have strived to base my statements on evidence-based research, I feel it necessary to re-iterate that whilst many food corporations are acting unethically, this does not necessarily make them unethical. I have seen this transpiring throughout this research journey where I am noticing businesses and corporations moving towards more ethical and sustainable practices, such as New World's recent switch to recyclable meat trays from polystyrene ones (New World, 2015). It is with such observations that I foresee positive changes ahead in the food landscape and encourage food sovereignty activists to work alongside corporations to consult on and effect *good change*.

Furthermore, had I not had as many work and family commitments, I believe I could have strengthened this research through conducting more interviews and spending greater time in the field. Perhaps I could have interviewed a supermarket to get their perspectives on their own conduct.

This came down to my underestimation of the resources needed to conduct this research and unfortunately this rendered me unable to achieve some preliminary research aspirations, where I planned on publishing a brochure explaining and promoting food sovereignty. In hindsight though, I question the effectiveness of a brochure and feel that food sovereignty awareness might be better achieved through stronger collaboration between food sovereignty activists. The sharing of stories where food sovereignty has been achieved in different ways and in different places, help inform the body of food sovereignty literature. Whilst this is already transpiring in academia, where there are emerging reports of people's paths to enacting food sovereignty, I contend further additions work to strengthen the movement.

By the same token, I believe there is room for food sovereignty to be explored through action-based research. Looking back, I could have offered my services to help food sovereignty organisations to be stronger in the market place and in the community. For instance, one question posed by Cathy from Biofarm which warrants further examination is 'How can the market perception of food change food consumption behaviour?' This research could focus upon consumer perspectives and seek to discover how and why people make decisions to buy certain food items in the marketised food system. Such research is important because many organisations (like the ones in this research) face considerable resource challenges, where finances and time restrict the organisations ability to reach greater numbers of people. I believe increasing resources by answering questions or raising the profile of these organisations will foster a more cohesive food sovereignty movement.

Additionally, future research could focus exclusively on Māori perspectives on food sovereignty and explore and raise awareness for specific issues faced by Māori when claiming their right to self-determination.

Alternatively, future research could also look at the policies surrounding food in Aotearoa and seek to make policy recommendations to embrace a national food system that is better connected with the six food sovereignty principles. I envisage a research project of this nature working well in Christchurch City, as following the devastating 2011 Earthquake, the city is working towards building food resiliency through becoming the best edible garden city in the world (Christchurch City Council, 2016).

Given the situational nature of the concept of food sovereignty, the discourses around it can be fostered through everyday interaction. This will not only help to soften the issue that food

sovereignty is largely unrecognised, but it will also help to address the critique that food sovereignty is too idealistic. Through engaging with increasing literature on people experiencing their own food sovereignty paradigm, it is hoped that the narratives will snow ball into increasing paradigm shifts, as people become further motivated and are better aware of their own shift.

Closing Remarks

This thesis has grappled with the idea of a food sovereignty paradigm shift and explored ways it can be accessible to people from varying walks of life; showing that development as a form of *good change* is enacted by everyone through everyday interactions. This is significant because it demonstrates the power each person holds to effect change and work towards their own vision of utopia where inequality and unsustainability can be lessened.

Through enacting food sovereignty, it is not necessarily about making 'huge' and 'scary' changes (Focus Group, Koanga Institute, 25 May) to the ways people produce, distribute and consume food, but rather about making better informed 'heart' decisions (Kay, Koanga Institute, 25 May) where it is about identifying where change is possible and working incrementally towards that.

So really my question to you, the reader, is; how hungry are you for progress?

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Information Sheet



Hungry for progress? – Exploring food sovereignty in Wellington.

Participant Information Sheet

Researcher: Natasha Kula

Supervisors: Marcela Palomino-Schalscha, John Overton (Acting March, April)

Kia ora and thank you for showing an interest in this research project. Please read the information below to gain a better understanding of the project. If after reading this sheet you decide to be a participant in the research then many thanks from us. However, if you do not wish to be a participant, we thank you for considering this project and wish you all the best. Please note that should you wish to withdraw from this project at any time, there will be no disadvantage to you. Due to time restrictions, please do not withdraw after the 31 December 2015.

Who am I?

I am a Master's Student in Development Studies at Victoria University of Wellington. As part of the requirements of completing my Master's I am designing and implementing a project of my choosing. I have chosen to analyse the presence of food sovereignty in Wellington because I am passionate about food and nutrition and its impact on everyday life.

What is the project?

The project is centred around an analysis of four organisations and their interactions with Wellington, Aotearoa. I have selected these organisations because I feel they are pivotal to the current food sovereignty system in Wellington. I seek to find out why and how these organisations operate, and how these organisation may collaborate together to build a stronger alternative food production and distribution system. The research proposal has been reviewed and approved by Victoria University of Wellington.

What is the purpose of this project?

The purpose is to explore viable ways to strengthen an alternative and holistic food production and distribution system in Wellington City.

How will I proceed?

Naturally, at the heart of this project is people. I plan to hold semi-structured interviews with the founders of the four organisations. If you agree to take part in this project I will either invite you to take part in a face-to-face interview which will be held at a time and place of your choosing

Alternatively, I will invite you to attend a focus group with eight or fewer people that also see themselves as fulfilling a role in the selected organisations. I am hoping that the other people in this focus group will either contact me directly or be recommended to me during the initial interviews.

Both interviews should take approximately one hour, but they may be longer depending on the participants involved. The exact questions posed in the interviews and focus groups are subject to change due to the flow of the korero. That said, I will be asking about your roles in your affiliated

organisations, your views on food sovereignty and how you feel food sovereignty can become more ingrained in Wellington life.

If possible, I'd also love to visit the organisation site for observation. Whilst there, I will not be assessing the organisation but rather observing interactions between whanau and how the organisation is connected with the environment. Whilst there, I may request to take photos which I would like to include in the project and articles. Please tick the appropriate boxes on the consent form if you are happy for this to happen.

What will happen after the interviews?

I would like to record these interviews and focus groups so that afterwards I can type up transcripts of what has been said. These transcripts will only be read by myself and potentially my supervisors (stated above). I may also employ a transcriber to assist with my workload. In this case they will sign a non-disclosure sheet before they proceed. Parts of what has been said might appear in my final thesis and the articles but I will endeavour to make these contributions confidential, unless otherwise agreed. You may request a copy of the transcript of our korero.

Once I have analysed the information, I will invite all participants to a joint korero where I will present my findings and ask for your feedback and clarification, to ensure that I have represented your views with integrity.

Upon conclusion of the project, personal information will be destroyed, except for any raw data that was key to the findings of the project, unless otherwise agreed. This data will be held in secure storage for five years per university policy.

What if I wish to withdraw from the project?

You can withdraw through informing myself or my supervisors via email. Please note that withdrawals need to be made by 31 December 2015.

What will happen to the findings of the project?

The Master's project will be published and available at the Victoria University of Wellington library. I am also hoping to publish one or more academic and magazine articles from the findings.

Lastly, my tikanga recognises that research is about giving back to the community. It is my hope that upon conclusion of this project, you will receive a brochure that will contain the executive summary of the findings and some next recommended steps for strengthening Wellington's Food Sovereignty Movement.

I want to work in partnership with you, so if you have any questions or comments at any point in the research, please feel free to contact me or my supervisors on the details below:

Natasha Kula

E [REDACTED]@vuw.ac.nz

P [REDACTED]

Marcela Palmono-Schalscha

E [REDACTED]@vuw.ac.nz

P [REDACTED]

John Overton

E [REDACTED]@vuw.ac.nz

P [REDACTED]

Appendix 2: Consent Form



Hungry for progress? – Exploring food sovereignty in Wellington.

Participant Consent Form

I have read the participant information sheet and I understand the process for the interviews.

All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request information at any stage of the project.

By signing below, I consent to:

- My participation in the project which is entirely voluntary and free from coercion.
- Acknowledging that I am able to withdraw from the project at any time until the 31 of December, 2015.
- The exact interview and focus group questions changing according to the flow of the korero.
- Acknowledging that I am aware that I can refrain to answer any of the questions posed.
- The interview being transcribed. At the conclusion of the project the audio recording and transcripts of the interviews and focus groups will be destroyed except for the parts that are key to the findings of the project, unless otherwise agreed below.
- The results of the project being published. I acknowledge that this could be through varying mediums, such as through magazine/newspaper articles, journal articles and as part of a Master's Thesis.

I, _____ agree and consent to the above statements.

Signed:

Please tick where appropriate:

- ☐ I request that my input in this project remain confidential.
- ☐ I agree to my identity being revealed in this project, and am happy for any part of my official interview or focus group to be quoted in the project findings.
- ☐ I request that the researcher not visit the organisation site.
- ☐ I am happy for the researcher to visit the organisation site, provided that it is at an agreed time of my choosing.
- ☐ I ask the researcher not to take photos.
- ☐ I am happy for the researcher to take photos as long as I can screen them first. I am happy for these photos to be published in the project.
- ☐ I request a copy of the findings.
- ☐ I request a copy of the transcript of my korero.

I, _____ agree and consent to the above ticked statements.

Signed:

Appendix 3: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol

Introduce myself –

Name

Master's Thesis – Vic

Why have I chosen Food Sovereignty? Always loved food!

Research- hoping to come up with more practical steps in how Wellingtonians can access Food Sovereignty.

Discuss and retrieve consent form

Consent as an on-going process

Email me at any time

Brochure of findings

Questions

Question Sheet

Thank you

The importance of the interview and the admiration your work.

Opportunity to expand on anything said or change an answer?

Do you have any questions?

Is there anything I didn't ask that you would like to share?

Next steps – Hold a focus group with representatives

Write up transcripts and analysis

In the meantime, anything you find important, please feel free to contact me.

Give gift.



Hungry for progress? – Exploring food sovereignty in Wellington.

The questions presented below are representative of the kind of questions I will be asking throughout the interviews and focus groups respectively. This is not an exact script as the interviews are semi-structured.

Questions for the founders:

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself and the organisation.
2. What was your first inspiration for founding the organisation? Why was it set up?
3. Tell me about the process of establishing your organisation.
4. How has it evolved over time?
5. Are there any factors that have limited the impact of the organisation? If so, what are they and how are you trying to overcome them?
6. What are your aspirations for the organisation in the future?
7. What is your understanding of food sovereignty?
8. Do you feel that there is an important correlation between food sovereignty and your organisation?
9. How do you feel the organisation is contributing to Wellington on a/an:
 - Environmental level?
 - Economical level?
 - Social level?
 - Political level?
 - Spiritual level?
10. Has Te Tiriti o Waitangi played a role in moulding the organisation's operation and aim?
11. What do you know about:
 - Kai bosh?
 - Biofarm and Hua Parakore?
 - Koanga Institute?
 - Commonsense Organics?
12. Do you feel there is space for stronger collaboration between like-minded organisations?
13. Have you collaborated with like-minded organisations before? If so, please tell me about this experience?
14. How do you feel about the phrase a viable, alternative and holistic food production and distribution system? What wording would you use to describe a food sovereignty system in Wellington?
15. What would the food sovereignty system look like to you?
16. What do you think some of the challenges would be in strengthening the system?
17. How could such a system be designed to make your organisation more visible and accessible?
18. Is there anything else you would like to say about food sovereignty, your organisation or this project?