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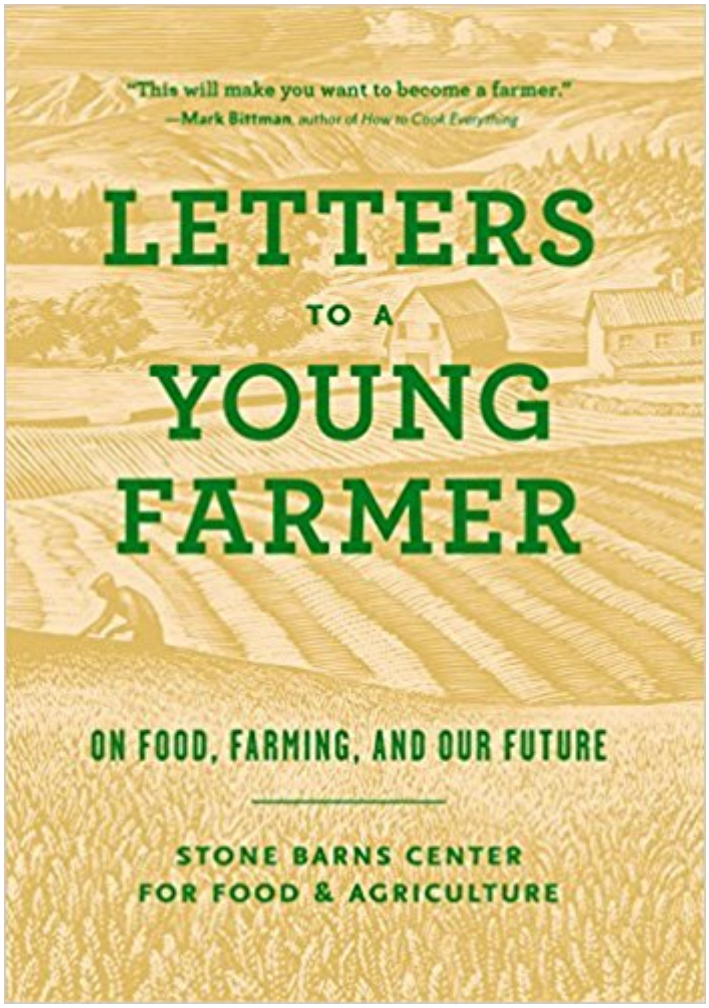
Letters To A Young Farmer: On Food, Farming, And Our Future



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Synopsis

Letters to a Young Farmer is for everyone who appreciates good food grown with respect for the earth, people, animals, and community. Three dozen esteemed writers, farmers, chefs, activists, and visionaries address the highs and lows of farming lifeâ ”as well as larger questions of how our food is produced and consumedâ ”in vivid and personal detail. Barbara Kingsolver speaks to the tribe of farmersâ ”some born to it, many self-selectedâ ”with love, admiration, and regret. Dan Barber traces the rediscovery of lost grains and foodways. Michael Pollan bridges the chasm between agriculture and nature. Bill McKibben connects the early human quest for beer to the modern challenge of farming in a rapidly changing climate. Congresswoman Chellie Pingree probes the politics of being a young farmer today. Farmer Mas Masumoto passes on family secrets to his daughterâ ”and not-soon-forgotten stories to us all. Other contributors include Temple Grandin, Verlyn Klinkenborg, Wendell Berry, Rick Bayless, and Marion Nestle.Letters to a Young Farmer is both a compelling history and a vital road mapâ ”a reckoning of how we eat and farm; how the two can come together to build a more sustainable future; and why now, more than ever before, we need farmers.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

With essays by Raj Patel Raj Patel is a senior research associate in the Unit for Humanities at the South African university currently known as Rhodes University and a research professor at the University of Texas at AustinÃ¢Â Â™s Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs. He is the author of Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World Food

System and The Value of Nothing. Karen Washington Karen Washington is an activist and farmer. She is co-owner of Rise & Root Farm in Orange County, New York, and cofounder of Black Urban Growers (BUGS) in the Bronx, New York. Danielle Nierenberg Danielle Nierenberg is president of Food Tank and an expert on sustainable agriculture and food issues. She founded Food Tank in 2013 as a nonprofit organization focused on building a global community for safe, healthy, nourished eaters. Bill McKibben Bill McKibben published the first book for a general audience about climate change, The End of Nature, in 1989. He has written many more books, including Deep Economy, in part an early account of the rise of local food, and he is the founder of the global grassroots climate campaign, 350.org.

"What a wonderful gift this book is" Ã¢Â Â"Naomi Starkman, founder and editor-in-chief, Civil Eats.

Ã¢Â ÂœAn extraordinary harvest of wisdom" Ã¢Â Â"Tom Philpott, food and agriculture correspondent, Mother Jones.

Ã¢Â ÂœThis will make you want to become a farmer.Ã¢Â Â• Ã¢Â Â"Mark Bittman, author of How to Cook Everything.

"In Letters to a Young Farmer, three dozen farmers, chefs, writers, professors, immigrants, gardeners, scientists, activists, Native Americans, and even a Congresswoman, share their stories and lessons. No dry litany, these are passionate voices deeply connected to the earth. With an eye to the future, the letter writers' hands are full of soil, necks brown from working in the elements or foreheads lined from incessant negotiations about farm issues. There's no other compilation with such a breadth of knowledge, deep traditions, and forward thinkers involved in raising the food we eat..Alice Waters, Chez Panisse founder, cookbook author, and food activist...writes that, 'Taste will truly wake people up and bring them back to their senses and back to the land.' Letters to a Young Farmer is full of that awakening and we need it more than ever." - Edible San Diegoâ œYoung people face a steep and uncertain climb on their journey to farm. Letters to a Young Farmer is fuel for the moments when they might turn back. With love, respect, and a hearty embrace, the bookâ ™s authors show a new generation of farmers that their work is at the very foundation of life on Earth.â • â "Lindsey Lusher Shute, executive director and cofounder, National Young Farmers Coalitionâ œWhat a wonderful gift this book is to all aspiring farmersâ "full of sage wisdom, passionate encouragement, and practical advice from some of the greatest food and farming heroes

of our time. Their words will inspire and remind you why farming is indeed the most important work to be done.â • â ”Naomi Starkman, founder and editor-in-chief, Civil Eatsâ œThis will make you want to become a farmer.â • â ”Mark Bittman, author of How to Cook Everythingâ œThe chance to make a difference in quality of life for all depends on the soil and those who care for and nurture the earth. New young farmers are on the front lines in the struggle for survival, the future of our children and theirs.â • â ”Neil Young, Farm Aid"[Letters to a Young Farmer] is.shot through with cautionary tales about the folly of large-scale corporate farming, misguided government programs, the graying of the American farmer, and the precipitous decline in their numbers. But the warnings are balanced by plausible strategies for reforming our food system, practical advice, and optimism regarding farming's future in this noble, difficult field." - Kirkus Reviews"Those writing at the intersection of nature and literature lend their thoughts to Letters to a Young Farmer, an impassioned essay collection for anyone interested in a closer relationship with the environment. Kentucky farmer and poet Wendell Berry and his daughter, the activist Mary Berry, write letters, as does the Kentucky-raised novelist Barbara Kingsolver, who champions dirty coveralls, Southern accents, and women in the field." - Garden and Gunâ œAn extraordinary harvest of wisdom from a ragtag crew of farmers, cooks, and agitatorsâ ”and a must read, not just for young farmers, but for anyone with an interest in a robust food supply in our era of climate chaos.â • â ”Tom Philpott, food and agriculture correspondent, Mother Jones"[Letters to a Young Farmer].draws on the collective wisdom of three dozen of the most respected figures in agriculture today-farmers, chefs, writers, philosophers, and activists-to answer a single question: "What would would you say to young people just starting out to farm?' The answers range from personal stories to practical advice, including wise reflections on how to grow healthy footman ways that treat land, animals, and people with respect." -CivilEats"The message in [Letters to a Young Farmer] is that farming is hard, important, and needs to be taken seriously and thoughtfully (though with appropriate humor). Farmers, young and old, are speaking up for themselves, and everyone who eats can learn something from them..The essays form a cohesive vision of contemporary farming, including real solutions for problems such as climate change and jobs in rural areas." - Library Journal"The book is a call to arms not only for young and would-be farmers, but also for anyone who cares about the food system in general. Although the public's awareness of the issues confronting farmers certainly won't be raised overnight, Letters to a Young Farmer is an important step forward. As [Barbara] Kingsolver writes in one of the first letters, 'We need farmers every single day of our lives, beginning to end, no exceptions. We forgot about that for awhile, and the price was immense. Slowly, we're coming back to our senses. Be patient with us. We need you." -marthastewart.com"Longtime advocates of sustainable agriculture join with

new voices for a comradely take on the challenging future of farming.. warnings are balanced by plausible strategies for reforming our food system, practical advice, and optimism regarding farming's future in this noble, difficult field." - Kirkus Reviews"Leaders of the food world, such as farmer Joel Salatin, animal-science professor Temple Grandin, and chef Dan Barber, share wisdom for farmers - and eaters. A reminder to support those who are brave enough to nourish us." - Eating Well Magazine

Martha Hodgkins is communications director at Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture. A former editor of Nature Conservancy magazine, she is the editor of In Response to Place: Photographs from The Nature Conservancy's Last Great Places and The Field Guide to The Nature Conservancy.Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture is on a mission to create a healthy and sustainable food system that benefits us all. A nonprofit organization, Stone Barns Center works to develop a culture of eating based on what farms need to grow to build healthy soil and a resilient ecosystem. In its quest to transform the way America eats and farms, the organization trains farmers, educates food citizens, develops agroecological farming practices, and convenes change makers. Stone Barns Center, 25 miles north of New York City, is home to the celebrated Blue Hill at Stone Barns, under the direction of chef and co-owner Dan Barber, a multiple James Beard awardâ "winner.

Wonderfully entertaining and relatable essays about farming, shopping, cooking and eating for people of all ages. Colorful writing that may or may not inspire one to become a farmer, but it will awaken in everyone the desire to be more aware of how food gets to our table.I learned so much about the conscious buying and preparing of the foods we consume...it is a terrific read. This book would make a long-lasting-and-often-referred-to gift for anyone that eats, as well as to young gardeners who will certainly get a lot out of the more detailed essays on farming. The title really could be "Letters to Everyone Interested in the Food We Grow, Cook and Eat". Highly Recommended

Positive, inspirational and thoughtful. Good reading at the lunch table before heading back out. I haven't read all of the essays, but am picking my way through them. So far, so good.

Fantastic book. Also look for "greenhorns: The Next Generation of American Farmers50 Dispatches from the New Farmers Movement" (2012).

inspiring, motivating, beautiful. cool people you know of writing personal letters to aspiring farmers! we need all the encouragement we can get.

Amazing simply written and inspiring

Books teach things!

This book is an absolute must read for young farmers, seasoned farmers, and eaters!I read a letter each night before I go to bed, and am reminded of the hard - but rewarding work that farming is. But, also reminded of the intense need for a more sustainable food system. It's empowering, encouraging, uplifting, and disheartening all at the same time. A much needed reminder of the change that we all need to be a part of and a thoughtful representation of the challenges and triumphs a farmer goes through.

Just the title is so perfect. Especially as we are at an inflection point in the future of agriculture in the U.S. with so many farmers "aging out". The book is a thoughtful collection from key thinkers and doers in this space. I find them impressive and their writings important.

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