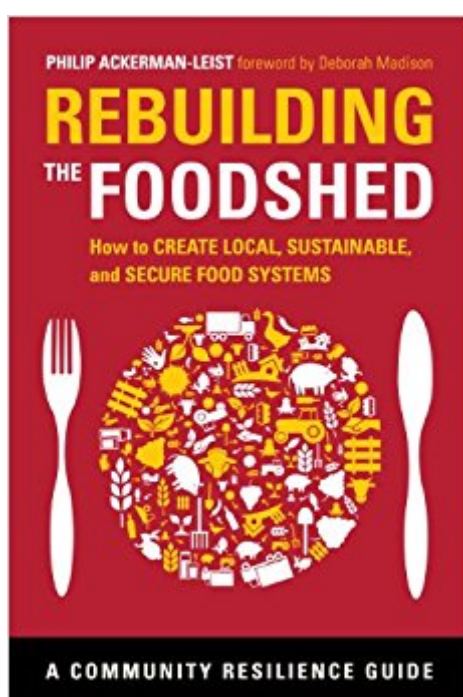


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# Rebuilding The Foodshed: How To Create Local, Sustainable, And Secure Food Systems (Community Resilience Guides)



## Synopsis

Droves of people have turned to local food as a way to retreat from our broken industrial food system. From rural outposts to city streets, they are sowing, growing, selling, and eating food produced close to home—and they are crying out for agricultural reform. All this has made "local food" into everything from a movement buzzword to the newest darling of food trendsters. But now it's time to take the conversation to the next level. That's exactly what Philip Ackerman-Leist does in *Rebuilding the Foodshed*, in which he refocuses the local-food lens on the broad issue of rebuilding regional food systems that can replace the destructive aspects of industrial agriculture, meet food demands affordably and sustainably, and be resilient enough to endure potentially rough times ahead. Changing our foodscapes raises a host of questions. How far away is local? How do you decide the size and geography of a regional foodshed? How do you tackle tough issues that plague food systems large and small—issues like inefficient transportation, high energy demands, and rampant food waste? How do you grow what you need with minimum environmental impact? And how do you create a foodshed that's resilient enough if fuel grows scarce, weather gets more severe, and traditional supply chains are hampered? Showcasing some of the most promising, replicable models for growing, processing, and distributing sustainably grown food, this book points the reader toward the next stages of the food revolution. It also covers the full landscape of the burgeoning local-food movement, from rural to suburban to urban, and from backyard gardens to large-scale food enterprises.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Publishers Weekly-For a somewhat wonky book about food policy, *Rebuilding the Foodshed* is unusually humorous and open-minded. Vermont farmer and professor Ackerman-Leist ruminates his way through the conundrums and possibilities of local food, demonstrating how words and their definitions can shed light on and transform our understanding of the rapidly evolving, often confusing, emotion-fraught questions of what people eat, where the food comes from, who has access to what, and how the answers to these questions affect the lives of eaters and growers. Let's call food production farming, he suggests. "Farming is about energy flows. Food production is about a terminal point in the act of agriculture." He finds solutions in the actions of pioneers of food production, distribution, and education, including D-Town Farm "step into transcendence" in a deteriorating Detroit suburb that recycles waste to grow vegetables and mushrooms, harvest honey, and help revitalize the devastated local economy. Ackerman-Leist also examines New North Florida Cooperative's farm-to-school program. With insight, he demonstrates how communities can bridge and transcend the "false divides" he pinpoints in the local-food conversation: urban/rural, small-scale/large-scale, local/international, and all/nothing.

ForeWord Reviews- From the Acknowledgements section on, Philip Ackerman-Leist's newest book is highly enjoyable, sincere, and informative. An associate professor at Vermont's Green Mountain College, Ackerman-Leist heads up the Farm and Food Project at the college and has years of experience in homesteading. So, when he asks questions about sustainable and local food, it is from a deeply personal perspective. Readers will appreciate the well-researched arguments and examples, as well as the academician behind them. Ackerman-Leist embarks on a personal challenge to define these buzzword categories of "local" and "sustainable." He exhaustively tackles all of the logistics of creating a truly local food system as he engages and entertains readers. Key to Ackerman-Leist's goals is engaging more members of the community in local food initiatives. Addressing the growing problem of food insecurity as it relates to underutilized or lack of local food systems, as well as taking on the food justice issue, must be priorities for concerned locavores. In searching for answers, he highlights several groundbreaking citizen/producer-owned programs as well as problematic status quo operations. Getting healthy food into the hands of all people requires that we pull the elitist label off of anyone who has an interest in healthy, local food. The author's writing style entirely

succeeds in making an academic line of questioning feel fun, relevant, and accessible to all who are interested. Ultimately, this is a great book that will catapult readers into a highly critical understanding of the many complex issues with food and localized agriculture in the United States, as well as offer possible solutions. Ackerman-Leist writes with lively panache, an unlikely but somehow well-suited style for talk of such serious problems. This book is highly recommended for anyone who hopes to be part of the evolution.

Choice- "The third volume in the Community Resilience Guide series, this book explores themes similar to those in Michael Bryan's Food Security and Paul Roberts's The End of Food. Just as Michael Carolan recognizes in The Real Cost of Cheap Food, Ackerman-Leist (environmental studies, Green Mountain College) acknowledges the complex, confusing issues associated with local food, without detracting from its counterpoints. Much of Ackerman-Leist's argument focuses on how a locavore approach is articulated within a larger food production cycle. The book is divided into three sections. Part 1, 'Dilemmas,' presents several questions related to the meaning of local food. Sections titled 'Drivers for Rebuilding Local Food Systems' and 'New Directions' follow. 'Drivers' provides excellent discussions of energy and the environment and a fresh look at the implications of food security and food justice, addressing topics such as equitable access, agricultural workers, and different agricultural commodities. The concluding section examines sometimes neglected areas, including current agricultural education or the role of incubator farms, before expanding the concept of local food into community-based food. Ackerman-Leist's task is not simple, but his approach is stimulating and worthwhile. Summing Up: Recommended." "Now that it's not just acceptable but fashionable to write about local food systems, lots of people do it. Few pay close attention, however, as Ackerman-Leist does in this volume, to the variously shaped components successful local systems will require and the multiple efforts around the country working to create them. A wise, informed, and thoroughly useful book."--Joan Gussow, author of Growing, Older and This Organic Life

"By now we have all learned that local food is about much more than food miles. Philip Ackerman-Leist has eloquently helped us to understand just how comprehensive the concept is: how our food system must be redesigned if it is to be reliable and resilient, how that design must be guided by principles of ecology, justice, health, and humility, and how to put such theories into practice for farmers, chefs, consumers, and communities. A practical guide for anyone interested in imagining our food systems of the future."--Frederick Kirschenmann, author of Cultivating an Ecological Conscience: Essays from a Farmer/Philosopher

"The future of food is local. But how do we transition from our current globalized, supermarket-centered food world to one that's human-scaled and ecosystem-friendly? This book shows how communities across America are reclaiming the ability to

feed themselves. It's inspiring as well as informative. If you eat, you really should read it."--Richard Heinberg, author of *The End of Growth* and *Peak Everything*"*Rebuilding the Foodshed* introduces readers to local food systems in all their complexities. In moving from industrial to regional food systems, communities must consider an enormous range of factors, from geographic to socioeconomic. Difficult as doing this may be, this book makes it clear that the results are well worth the effort in their benefits to farmers and farm workers as well as eaters."--Marion Nestle, professor of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health at New York University and author of *What to Eat*"Phillip Ackerman-Leist has been in the trenches of food-systems change for well over a decade, from farm to school. Now he has elegantly laid out the principles of how to redesign foodsheds for greater food security, justice, and energy efficiency, while engaging communities in making tangible innovations on the ground. He is undoubtedly in the best place to address these issues, since Vermont communities have accomplished more food relocalization than those in any other state."--Gary Paul Nabhan, pioneer in the food relocalization movement, author of *Coming Home to Eat* and *Renewing America's Food Traditions*

Kirkus Reviews- In-depth scrutiny of the modern food system and suggestions on how it should change. Ackerman-Leist (*Up Tunket Road: The Education of a Modern Homesteader*, 2010) explores how to take food production and distribution away from the mega-corporations and place it in the hands of local communities and small farms. He analyzes energy consumption from the field to the refrigerator; the environment, with "the idea that a sustainable food system is one that begins and ends with the careful management of the foundation of it all: the soil

How can we recover a sustainable, resilient, equitable food production capability in this country? Few understand the complexity of this question as well as Philip Ackerman-Leist, and fewer have the perspective to propose rational, workable solutions that can be implemented now. As a founding member of a local food system which has now grown to three cities over the past 6 years, this book deeply resonated with me. I have seen the future of food, and it is local, creates rewarding careers, produces higher-quality food with far less waste, and it serves public safety better than the built-to-fail system we have now. This is a topic we can and must get a handle on as a nation, and this book is the place to start.

"*Rebuilding the Foodshed*" covers a lot of ground. The book seeks to help describe and promote local food systems and discusses how local food systems impact various topics such as food

justice, food security, biodiversity, energy conservation, and environmental stewardship. I'm not sure if the author's vision is economically viable, but "Rebuilding the Foodshed" is an interesting read nonetheless.

The most comprehensive, easily navigable book on the subject of food security, food justice and changing the food system I've read. Excellent, important book for anyone looking to make a change to how Americans get food.

interesting

I am working a real community type garden this summer. Local kids are helping, and many ideas came from this book. If you have room, you too should grow veggies and herbs, and pretty flowers. All make life a happier place!

Without being "preachy" Philip makes this very important subject become alive and pertinent to all of our lives whether you're a farmer, foodie or just involved in your community and its prosperity. He's got all the information you need to become active, involved and knowledgeable in this most important subject. Nancy Pieson

An excellent read.

One of the more unbiased books I've read about local agriculture, but does still certainly promote it.

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