



Feeding Frenzy

a Discussion on Food, Fuel and Finance

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If the government is to be believed, we are undergoing a streak of freakily bad luck. First the credit crunch, then astronomical fuel price hikes and now a global food crisis. Could all these by any chance be connected?

Neoliberal policy makers and money-men clearly don't think so, since they are advocating more of the same medicine as a cure – further deregulation of food markets, more restructuring of developing countries sweetened by aid packages, more biotech and, of course, bank bail-outs to sustain the whole debt-addicted economy. In other words, propping up a system that will continue to force famished populations to grow export-only crops, to be fuel-intensively shipped to the developed world, to stock supermarket shelves at inflated prices for debt-encumbered consumers, while the famished producers pay through the nose for imported food at prices inflated by the flight of investment from mortgages into basic commodities. A vicious circle indeed.

But how can we best feed the world's swelling population? Is 'food sovereignty' a progressive or reactionary demand? Should biotech and industrial farming methods be embraced as a way of feeding a warming planet? Have we reached 'Peak Food'? Are bio-fuels, on balance, helpful or harmful? As food riots break out in Haiti, Cameroon and Bangladesh, and fuel protests by truckers threaten Europe's supply lines, what are the political possibilities of this conjunction of crises?

Mute magazine will be hosting an open discussion with contributions from: Gareth Dale (author of recent critiques of 'green capitalism' including 'On the Menu or At the Table: Corporations and Climate Change'), James Heartfield (author of *Green Capitalism: Manufacturing Scarcity in the Age of Abundance*), Helena Paul (co-director of Econexus, www.econexus.info and long term campaigner against GM and agrofuels), Graham Burnett (vegan-punk permaculturist and founder of Spiralseed.org.uk)

**Where: The Church House
Fletcher St (off Cable St)
London E1**

When: 1 July at 7pm

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