

## **Gender and Food Politics**

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**Abstract:** From seed to table, the food chain is gendered.

When seeds and food are in women's hands, seeds reproduce and multiply freely, food is shared freely and respected. However, women's seed and food economy has been discounted as "productive work". Women's seed and food knowledge has been discounted as knowledge.

Globalisation has led to the transfer of seed and food from women's hands to corporate hands. Seed is now patented and genetically engineered. It is treated as the creation and "property" of corporations like Monsanto. Renewable seed becomes non-renewable. Sharing and saving seed becomes a crime. Diversity, nourished by centuries of women's breeding, disappears, and with it the culture and natural evolution that is embodied in the diversity is lost forever.

Food too is transformed in corporate hands. It is no longer our nourishment it becomes a commodity. And as a commodity it can be manipulated and monopolized of food grain sold to factory farms makes more money, it becomes cattle feed. If food grain converted to biofuel to run automobiles is more profitable, it become ethanol and biodiesel.

The consequence is the disappearance of food for billions. The contemporary food riots due to rising prices signal a new period of food scarcity.