heirloom notes from an accidental tomato farmer
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Heirloom - Notes from an Accidental Tomato Farmer

A government consultant-turned-Union Square Greenmarket produce farmer describes his decision to resuscitate his family farm in Pennsylvania, efforts to grow heirloom tomatoes and obscure chili peppers, and successes as an in-demand provider for some of New York City's most exacting chefs. Reprint.

Princeton Alumni Weekly

Tomatoland - How Modern Industrial Agriculture Destroyed Our Most Alluring Fruit

2012 IACP Award Winner in the Food Matters category Supermarket produce sections bulging with a year-round supply of perfectly round, bright red-orange tomatoes have become all but a national birthright. But in Tomatoland, which is based on his James Beard Award-winning article, "The Price of Tomatoes," investigative food journalist Barry Estabrook reveals the huge human and environmental cost of the $5 billion fresh tomato industry. Fields are sprayed with more than one hundred different herbicides and pesticides. Tomatoes are picked hard and green and artificially gassed until their skins acquire a marketable hue. Modern plant breeding has tripled yields, but has also produced fruits with dramatically reduced amounts of calcium, vitamin A, and vitamin C, and tomatoes that have fourteen times more sodium than the tomatoes our parents enjoyed. The relentless drive for low costs has fostered a thriving modern-day slave trade in the United States. How have we come to this point? Estabrook traces the supermarket tomato from its birthplace in the deserts of Peru to the impoverished town of Immokalee, Florida, a.k.a. the tomato capital of the United States. He visits the laboratories of seedsmen trying to develop varieties that can withstand the rigors of agribusiness and still taste like a garden tomato, and then moves on to commercial growers who operate on tens of thousands of acres, and eventually to a hillside field in Pennsylvania, where he meets an obsessed farmer who produces delectable tomatoes for the nation's top restaurants. Throughout Tomatoland, Estabrook presents a who's who cast of characters in the tomato industry: the avuncular octogenarian whose conglomerate grows one out of every eight tomatoes eaten in the United States; the ex-Marine who heads the group that dictates the size, color, and shape of every tomato shipped out of Florida; the U.S. attorney who has doggedly prosecuted human traffickers for the past decade; and the Guatemalan peasant who came north to earn money for his parents' medical bills and found himself enslaved for two years. Tomatoland reads like a suspenseful whodunit as well as an expose of today's agribusiness systems and the price we pay as a society when we take taste and thought out of our food purchases.
Edible Memory - The Lure of Heirloom Tomatoes and Other Forgotten Foods

Each week during the growing season, farmers’ markets offer up such delicious treasures as brandywine tomatoes, cosmic purple carrots, pink pearl apples, and chioggia beets—varieties of fruits and vegetables that are prized by home chefs and carefully stewarded by farmers from year to year. These are the heirlooms and the antiques of the food world, endowed with their own rich histories. While cooking techniques and flavor fads have changed from generation to generation, a Ribston Pippin apple today can taste just as flavorful as it did in the eighteenth century. But how does an apple become an antique and a tomato an heirloom? In Edible Memory, Jennifer A. Jordan examines the ways that people around the world have sought to identify and preserve old-fashioned varieties of produce. In doing so, Jordan shows that these fruits and vegetables offer a powerful emotional and physical connection to a shared genetic, cultural, and culinary past. Jordan begins with the heirloom tomato, inquiring into its botanical origins in South America and its culinary beginnings in Aztec cooking to show how the homely and homegrown tomato has since grown to be an object of wealth and taste, as well as a popular symbol of the farm-to-table and heritage foods movements. She shows how a shift in the 1940s away from open pollination resulted in a narrow range of hybrid tomato crops. But memory and the pursuit of flavor led to intense seed-saving efforts increasing in the 1970s, as local produce and seeds began to be recognized as living windows to the past. In the chapters that follow, Jordan combines lush description and thorough research as she investigates the long history of antique apples; changing tastes in turnips and related foods like kale and parsnips; the movement of vegetables and fruits around the globe in the wake of Columbus; and the poignant, perishable world of stone fruits and tropical fruit, in order to reveal the connections—the edible memories—these heirlooms offer for farmers, gardeners, chefs, diners, and home cooks. This deep culinary connection to the past influences not only the foods we grow and consume, but the ways we shape and imagine our farms, gardens, and local landscapes. From the farmers’ market to the seed bank to the neighborhood bistro, these foods offer essential keys not only to our past but also to the future of agriculture, the environment, and taste. By cultivating these edible memories, Jordan reveals, we can stay connected to a delicious heritage of historic flavors, and to the pleasures and possibilities for generations of feasts to come.

Garden Variety - The American Tomato from Corporate to Heirloom

Chopped in salads, scooped up in salsa, slathered on pizza and pasta, squeezed onto burgers and fries, and filling aisles with roma, cherry, beefsteak, on-the-vine, and heirloom: where would American food, fast and slow, high and low, be without the tomato? The tomato represents the best and worst of American cuisine: though the plastic-looking corporate tomato is the hallmark of industrial agriculture, the tomato’s history also encompasses farmers’ markets and home gardens. Garden Variety illuminates American culinary culture from 1800 to the present, challenging a simple story of mass-produced homogeneity and demonstrating the persistence of diverse food cultures throughout modern America. John Hoenig explores the path by which, over the last two centuries, the tomato went from a rare seasonal crop to America’s favorite vegetable. He pays particular attention to the noncorporate tomato. During the twentieth
century, as food production, processing, and distribution became increasingly centralized, the tomato remained king of the vegetable garden and, in recent years, has become the centerpiece of alternative food cultures. Reading seed catalogs, menus, and cookbooks, and following the efforts of cooks and housewives to find new ways to prepare and preserve tomatoes, Hoenig challenges the extent to which branding, advertising, and marketing dominated twentieth-century American life. He emphasizes the importance of tomatoes to numerous immigrant groups and their influence on the development of American food cultures. Garden Variety highlights the limits on corporations’ ability to shape what we eat, inviting us to rethink the history of our foodways and to take the opportunity to expand the palate of American cuisine.

**Locally Grown - Portraits of Artisanal Farms from America's Heartland**

This beautiful new book by 30-year-old writer and photographer Anna H. Blessing introduces readers to the story of the modern heartland farm. The book explores how sustainable practices--and close ties to high-profile chefs and restauranteurs--have propelled the "locally grown" culinary movement into a central feature of life in major cities like Chicago. Blessing lays out the rich histories of 25 midwestern farms through beautiful photography, fascinating anecdotes from farmers and chefs, and up-close looks at what makes each farm so unique. Interest in sustainable farming has been growing rapidly across the country and around the world, emphasizing locally produced and grown foods in place of the mass-marketed offerings from corporate consortia. When inhabitants of major cities choose to purchase food raised in nearby farms, they not only support vital satellite economies, but also improve the social and ecological quality of life along with the environmental sustainability of the world around them. Now there are also innumerable top-tier dining establishments, led by esteemed chefs like Charlie Trotter and Paul Kahan, who scour farmers markets for natural ingredients and develop personal business relationships with small-time farmers to supply their restaurants with the best and most sustainable foods. Locally Grown shows how both long-standing and newly founded farms, along with urban farms and metropolitan nonprofit organizations like Growing Power and City Provisions, are boosting the sustainable food movement throughout Chicago and its neighborhoods. Each chapter profiles a different farm, outlining locale, scale, production, and inner workings while also revealing the captivating backgrounds of each farmer. Blessing shows how each farm and farmer are making efforts to improve sustainability, and describes the behind-the-scenes practices that have made locally grown food an increasingly important part of America's food culture. Contributions from each farmer, and from chefs they work with, are included in every chapter, lending an intimate feel to Locally Grown--recipes, how-to's and Q&As that together create a riveting account of the rapidly changing world of modern farming. Beyond profiling these Midwest farms, Locally Grown points out the best places to find, buy, and eat sustainably grown foods, as well as details on visiting the farms.

**Food Lit: A Reader's Guide to Epicurean Nonfiction - A Reader's Guide to Epicurean Nonfiction**

An essential tool for assisting leisure readers interested in topics surrounding food, this unique book contains annotations and read-alikes for hundreds of nonfiction titles about the joys of
comestibles and cooking.

**Best Food Writing 2009**

Best Food Writing 2009 authoritatively and appealingly assembles the finest culinary prose from the past year's books, magazines, newspapers, newsletters, and Web sites. This anthology features both established food writers and rising stars cookin...

**The Gramercy Tavern Cookbook**

One of the best New York restaurants, a culinary landmark that has been changing the face of American dining for decades, now shares its beloved recipes, stories, and pioneering philosophy. Opened in 1994, Gramercy Tavern is more than just a restaurant. It has become a New York institution earning dozens of accolades, including six James Beard awards. Its impeccable, fiercely seasonal cooking, welcoming and convivial atmosphere, and steadfast commitment to hospitality are unparalleled. The restaurant has its own magic—a sense of community and generosity—that's captured in these pages for everyone to bring home and savor through 125 recipes. Restaurateur Danny Meyer's intimate story of how Gramercy was born sets the stage for executive chef-partner Michael Anthony's appealing approach to American cooking and recipes that highlight the bounty of the farmer's market. With 200 sumptuous photographs and personal stories, The Gramercy Tavern Cookbook also gives an insider look into the things that make this establishment unique, from the artists who have shaped its décor and ambience, to the staff members who share what it is like to be a part of this close-knit restaurant family. Above all, food lovers will be inspired to make memorable meals and bring the warmth of Gramercy into their homes.

**Food, Power, and Agency**

Grounded in the work of Roland Barthes, Bruno Latour, Pierre Bourdieu, and Michel Foucault, this exciting book uses food as a lens to examine agency and the political, economic, social, and cultural power which underlies every choice of food and every act of eating. The book is divided into three parts - National Characters; Anthropological Situations; Health – with each of the eight chapters exploring the power of food as well as the power relationships reflected and refracted through food. Featuring contributions from historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and cultural studies scholars from around the world, the book offers case studies of a diverse range -from German cuisine and ethnicity in San Francisco after the Gold Rush, through Italian cuisine in Japan, to 'ultragreasy bureks' and teenage fast food consumption in Slovenia. By directly engaging with questions of agency and power, the book pushes the field of food studies in new directions. An important read for students and researchers in food studies, food history, anthropology of food, and sociology of food.