La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation

Canadian Food Studies

the journal of the Canadian Association for Food Studies
la revue de l'Association canadienne des études sur l'alimentation

Vol 4 No 1 (2017)

CHANGING FOOD STATUS AND PERCEPTION

canadianfoodstudies.ca

c/o Department of Health Sciences
Lakehead University
955 Oliver Road
Thunder Bay (ON) P7B 5E1

ISSN: 2292-3071

IN THIS ISSUE

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Sabrina Doyon's study, for example, illustrates this perfectly: over time, the common eel and sturgeon fish caught in the St. Lawrence River estuary have become in-demand status food, leading to efforts to certify it as a PGI (protected geographical indication). She asks the critical questions: Would this type of certification, applied to local fish, help build its image as alternative? Would it contribute to an alternative distribution network?

Published: 2017-05-26

photo - David Szanto

Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 1–3 May 2017

Canadian Food Studies La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation

Editorial

Perceptions and practices in an evolving food system

Ellen Desjardins

It is serendipitous when a series of submissions to the journal seem to embed a similar theme. In this issue we present several original research articles that offer critical, in-depth analyses of evolving practices in various "alternative" food settings, coupled with perceptions among farmers, retailers, and consumers about their roles and choices in this ever-changing milieu. We are very pleased that two of these articles are based on research from Québec, written in French. They originate from a two-day symposium in Montréal in May, 2016, on the topic of alternative food systems. A synopsis of this conference is provided in this issue as an event review by Boulianne and Mundler.

Newman, Powell, Nickel, Anderson, Jovanovic, Mendez, Mitchell, and Kelly-Freiberg take us to the agriburbs of Vancouver, where they have investigated the gradual marketing shifts among four farm stores that have embraced the "rural idyll" of urban consumers, or romanticization of farm life. Maltais, for his part, presents the gentrification of small urban food shops in Montréal that have repositioned themselves as "alternative", catering increasingly to consumers who prefer more locally-sourced niche products. In both cases, the supportive public and higher profits represent a beneficial side of these increasingly multifunctional enterprises; nevertheless, both researchers' findings also include on-going challenges and critical perspectives.

On the eastern side of the country, MacLeod brings us the second stage of her ethnographic research with Cape Bretoners, documenting perceptions of farming and personal identities tied up with their experience of the ecological food movement. Similar to the previously-mentioned authors, she identifies both negative and positive aspects of this movement—steering us away from ideology and towards reality. The survey-based study of Baumann, Engman, Huddart-Kennedy, and Johnston in Toronto also reveals greater complexity among the drivers of consumer perceptions and choices of local and organic food.

DOI: 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v4i1.238
ISSN: 2292-3071

It becomes clear, from this collective research—derived from the voices of producers, sellers and eaters in longitudinal studies—that the meanings of food can be transformed, and that these meanings can in turn transform food operations, networks, and even identities. Doyon's study illustrates this perfectly: over time, the common eel and sturgeon fish caught in the St. Lawrence River estuary have become in-demand status food, leading to efforts to certify it as PGI (protected geographical indication). She asks the critical questions: Would this type of certification, applied to local fish, help build its image as alternative? Would it contribute to an alternative distribution network? She argues that it's not simple, and that historical, social, political and economic aspects of fisheries management must be reviewed before decisions are made.

Tourangeau's analysis takes research on influencing public perceptions to a deeper epistemological level. Focusing on discourses meant to inform the public about the merits—and non-merits—of GMOs, he compares anti-biotech campaigns materials with what might be termed the "GMO doublespeak" of a government backed industry. He offers critical insights on how power can be exerted in subtle ways, and reveals the underlying power imbalances embedded in the strategic use of language—for example, with the appeal to values such as "feeding the poor" and "protecting the planet".

Food insecurity is also the offspring of systemic power imbalances, including those inherent in academic institutions which tend to ignore the nourishment needs of students. Entz, Slater, and Desmarais have studied food insecurity at the University of Manitoba, according to perceptions of post-secondary students, and suggest, in turn, systemic solutions.

We urge you to forage through the book reviews, both English and French, of recent works by Lenore Newman, Caroline Durand, and Guptill, Copelton, and Lucal. The "shepherding" of submissions in French has been made possible by the addition of Natalie Doonan, of Montréal, as our newest associate editor, in January 2017. We welcome Natalie to the team.

The editorial team appreciates their continued collaboration with the CAFS Journal Governance Committee, established in June 2016: Rebecca Schiff, Lenore Newman, Jennifer Brady, and Kristin Lowitt. We thank the University of Waterloo for providing our OJS online platform, plus essential library staff support.

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Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 4–23 May 2017

Canadian Food Studies La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation

Original Research Article

Farm stores in agriburbia: The roles of agricultural retail on the rural-urban fringe

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Abstract

This investigation highlights the role of on-farm stores on the rural-urban fringe near Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada. Farming near a large urban centre was found to create opportunities for higher returns such as marketing of local food and-agritourism. However existence of farming near urban areas depends on higher returns and a supportive public. Longitudinal case study of four farm stores operating nearly year round within the Agricultural Land Reserve revealed that the farm stores catered to a rural idyll that reflects cultural conceptions of farm life. We suggest the multifunctional landscape of the farm store provides economic and cultural benefits, and should be considered as sustaining agriculture. However operators must shape their offerings according to a dialectic with the non-farming public who have strong expectations of the farm experience. The study revealed that farm store operators in particular share the rural idyll of urban consumers, though agritourism operators are more consciously including rural elements in their operations. Though multifunctionality was a choice, it was influenced by the customer base and created its own challenges and costs.

Keywords: Rural-urban fringe, farm retail, agriburbia, agritourism, multifunctionality, local food, agricultural land reserve, rural idyll

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DOI: 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v4i1.211
ISSN: 2292-3071

Introduction and literature review

The rural-urban fringe is a site of rapidly changing and highly diverse landscapes, where industrial, residential, and agricultural land uses come together along complicated borderlands. The transition from city to countryside is a critical interface where different aspects of human activity coexist. Food production is one critical element of this landscape; MacDonald and Keil (2012), for example, discuss the long role of the suburb as a source of fresh produce and protein for the city. The pattern of such production can be understood in spatial terms that have changed little since the work of von Thünen (1966), who explained the geographical distribution of food production near cities; high value and perishable crops such as dairy were closest to urban markets, and less valuable row crops moved to the hinterlands as populations rose. In short, land cost near cities ensures that farms are small, and production diverse and intensive.

Despite the globalization of food chains, the rural-urban fringe is still the site of robust food production. As Jackson-Smith, Clark, Sharp, and Inwood (2008) note in the American context, counties on the rural-urban interface produce twice the farm gate sales as those counties located farther from urban areas. However loss of farmland to urban sprawl is a major challenge in most areas of the rural-urban fringe (See Nixon and Newman (2016) for a local overview) In the Canadian context, one municipality in our study area, Abbotsford, BC, produces twenty two percent of the Province of British Columbia's farm gate receipts (Ministry of Agriculture, personal communication). Abbotsford is at the heart of the region studied in this paper.

This study is part of a larger project to understand how farmland coexists with other land uses on the rural-urban fringe. Abbotsford and the surrounding Fraser Valley are typical of a landscape known as *agriburbia*, a form in which agriculture plays an active use. On the rural-urban fringe, agriburbia presents as an area where agricultural production is complexly intertwined with other uses (Newman, Powell, & Wittman, 2015). Agriburban regions are unusual as they contain both a large residential population and a large diversity of small farms, creating a very fertile landscape for agricultural retail and tourism. The term "agriburbia" was coined by historian Paul Sandul (2010) to describe late-nineteenth century planned suburban developments which incorporated land for citrus production and other commercial horticulture activities and which were well connected to urban centres by transportation networks . Moving beyond Sandul's historical case study of planned integration of agriculture and residential development, *agriburb* can be applied more generally to areas which show a mixture of suburban development and economically-significant agriculture. Such mixing of residential and business development with farms is found throughout Canada and the United States, though it has been predominantly unplanned. Sprawling housing development often leapfrogged across the landscape, leaving sections of farmland between suburban areas (Conzen, 1960).

In this paper, we examine the Fraser Valley region to better understand the interface between agricultural production and the resident population. We are particularly interested in how non-farm residents interact with the rich agricultural landscape that surrounds them. We treat this interaction as a dialectic; as Ed Soja (1980) explores, there is a dialogue between

culture and space occurring at the micro level that shapes cities. In the case of farmland on the rural-urban fringe, the continued existence of farmland in such regions depends heavily on the desires and opinions of surrounding non-farming residents. In this paper, we specifically study how the socio-spatial dialectic unfolds at on-farm retail outlets.

The continued existence of farmland on the fringe is important for several reasons, but in the case of the study region, the value of agricultural production is worth noting. The soils in the Fraser Valley are among the richest in Canada. The quality of the land combined with a climate of mild winters, rare freezes, and warm summers yields growing conditions that support a wide range of crops, including vegetables, berries, mushrooms, cereals, floriculture, and nursery stock. There is also diverse animal livestock production in the Fraser Valley, including poultry, dairy cattle, beef cattle, sheep, goats, horses, and pigs. British Columbia leads Canadian provinces in the production of blueberries, cranberries, and raspberries, and ranks second or third in several other commodities, including nursery products, mushrooms, dairy products, calves, and poultry; the Fraser Valley dominates the province's output of these agricultural products (BCMAL, 2012; FVRD, 2011). Accordingly, agriculture is a major driver of the economy in the Fraser Valley. The government of the Fraser Valley Regional District (which includes fringe areas but not metropolitan Vancouver) has identified agriculture as the foundation of the region's economy. Analyses of economic impact have determined that agriculture generates at least 11,300 full-time equivalent jobs and generates CAN $1.8 billion in expenditures in Abbotsford alone; in Chilliwack, agriculture generates roughly 30 percent of the economic activity. Using conservative economic multipliers, agriculture's total value to the Fraser Valley is estimated at being over CAN $2.5 billion (FVRD, 2011).

In agriburbia, agricultural production competes directly with residential development. In the Fraser Valley, as in other areas where high-quality farmland aligns with intense development pressure, agriburbia exists because of farmland preservation initiatives. In 1973, legislators in British Columbia passed the Agricultural Land Commission Act, which included both a directive to establish an Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) of productive lands zoned as protected farmland, and established a provincial Agricultural Land Commission to oversee the ALR. Land protected by the ALR totalled roughly 5 percent of the province's land area, though the most productive of these lands are concentrated in three areas, one of which is the Lower Mainland, which includes metropolitan Vancouver and the larger Fraser Valley. A full description of the ALR can be found elsewhere (for example, (Stobbe, Eagle, & Van Kooten, 2010) In the context of this study, the ALR is important as it stabilizes the rural-urban fringe, making the long-term investment needed to open a farm store practical.

The emergence of farm stores in this region follows from the exceptionally high costs of farming near urban development, the difficulty in acquiring additional land, and the availability of a ready market for high quality product. Despite their productivity and economic importance, there are ongoing questions about the financial viability of farming operations in the Fraser Valley (see, for example, ISFS & BCFSN, 2016). Even with the presence of the Agricultural Land Reserve, there is still considerable purchase of land by non-farmers in speculation that it

might someday be excluded from the reserve and opened to residential or industrial development (Stobbe, Cotteleer, & Van Kooten, 2009, explore this aspect of the rural/urban fringe). Land prices are largely prohibitive for existing farmers looking to expand their operations, families in need of additional lands so new generations of farmers can join their operations, and new farmers. This has led some farmers to turn to diversify their on-farm operations, with farm stores being one such avenue of diversification.

"Farm stores" are permanent, on-farm retail outlets which, in addition to serving as year-round shopping destinations for items produced both on- and off-farm, may also be part of enterprises providing recreation and entertainment through *agritourism* activities. Using four case studies, we investigate the functions of farm stores in agriburbia. We were particularly interested in three distinct roles of farm stores; the role farm stores play in agritourism, whether farm stores help strengthen the demand for locally-produced food, and how farm stores help to shape and are shaped by the *rural idyll*, or the image that the public has of farm life.

Farm stores and agritourism

Agritourism is a focus of interest as an increasing number of operators on the rural-urban fringe are taking advantage of a large urban customer base and the growing interest in farm-related activities to increase farm gate sales through farm-related business activity. Extensive literature has emerged surrounding agritourism and its role in rural development. Useful overviews of agritourism exist about the study area (Ainley & Smale, 2010; Stobbe et al., 2010; Tew & Barbieri, 2012) and about direct marketing of farm products (Park, Mishra, & Wozniak, 2014; Tippins, Rassuli, & Hollander, 2002). Schilling et al. (2012) describe agritourism as a way for farmers to utilize all of the resources of their farms, and found that the large majority of agritourism activities occur on small farms such as those found in our study area as well.

This paper adds some attention to the understudied intersection of these areas, exploring those operations that blend direct sales with agritourism. The question of the role of on-farm retail operations in the agriburban landscape is particularly important in British Columbia, where the use of farm land is highly regulated. As part of maintaining British Columbia's Agricultural Land Reserve, there are strict rules for the construction of farm buildings and business activities that can take place on protected farmland. The intention of these regulations is to prevent excessive intrusion of non-agricultural uses onto the province's limited amount of land that is suitable for farming. Through our study of the role that farm stores play in the agriburban landscape, we argue that they play a key role in local food systems, as well as contribute to the goals of sustaining agricultural activity and the agricultural land base in the region.

We drew on several definitions of agritourism in this work. Arroyo, Barbieri, and Rich (2013) define agritourism as "farming-related activities carried out on a working farm or other agricultural settings for entertainment or education purposes" (p. 45). Che, Veeck, and Veeck (2005) define it more specifically as "any agricultural operation that caters directly to the general public with retail sales and/or the provision of services, involving food, fiber, flowers, trees,

shrubs, and other farm products and conducting sales at the production location" (p. 227). In the study region, the nature of direct sales on farm falls under guidelines and restrictions for what kinds of businesses can operate and what kinds of structures can be built on ALR lands. The Agricultural Land Commission provides policies protecting on-farm "farm retail sales," which it defines as activities where all of the farm products offered for sale are produced on the farm where the sales are taking place. Specifically, "the total area, both indoors and outdoors, used for the retail sales of all products [should] not exceed 300 m^2". In addition, "if at least 50 percent of that retail sales area is limited to the sale of farm products produced (A) on the farm on which the retail sales are taking place, or (B) by an association as defined in the Cooperative Association Act to which the owner of the farm on which the retail sales are taking place belongs" (Commission, 2016). The ALC also provides policies guiding agritourism activities on ALR lands, allowing "agri-tourism activities, other than accommodation, on land that is classified as a farm under the Assessment Act, if the use is temporary and seasonal, and promotes or markets farm products grown, raised or processed on the farm" (Commission, 2003). Agritourism activities involving accommodations are regulated by other policies, and permanent agritourism activities require approval by the ALC (Commission, 2003).

While these are policies set at the provincial level, much of the actual regulation of farm land use occurs at the local government level, and there are provisions for local governments to enact bylaws to further regulate farm retail and agritourism activities. These bylaws require approval by the Ministry of Agriculture. Despite the policies set out by the ALC, retail and agritourism activities on ALR lands can be contentious issues. The significance of the issues is indicated by the September 2015 production and distribution of a discussion paper entitled, "Regulating Agri-tourism and Farm Retail Sales in the Agricultural Land Reserve." This document includes draft bylaw standards that the Minister of Agriculture sought feedback on for several months before implementing as official bylaw standards to guide the municipal development of zoning and farm bylaws; the official bylaw standards had not been released at the time of submission of this article. This document indicates that local governments in British Columbia had been seeking greater clarity regarding agritourism and farm retail sales (BCMA, 2015). Questions over the appropriateness of farm stores on ALR land underscore the need for their study. We included questions regarding regulations in our interview protocol.

Farm stores across the Lower Fraser Valley, and particularly our four case studies, are regularly listed in directories of agritourism opportunities directed largely at urban residents. As noted in (Feagan, Morris, & Krug, 2004) the customer base for agricultural marketing near large centres is dominated by customers who prize experience as much as food, though we will discuss how this can take many forms in practice. Indeed, in scholarly literature, farm stores are often considered as a component ~~of~~ or subcategory of agritourism enterprises (Che et al., 2005; Talbot, 2012). Barbieri (2010) makes some distinction by noting that agritourism can have synergies with other on-farm enterprises, as farm visitors are likely customers for on-farm stores and restaurants. As we demonstrate in this paper, these farm stores need to be considered beyond the context of agritourism as their primary functions extend beyond drawing recreation- and

entertainment-driven tourists to farms; however, they also need specific consideration outside of the larger umbrella of direct marketing, since they provide experiences beyond only the opportunity to purchase farm goods, including service of prepared foods. This multifunctionality is in part driven in our case study area by a robust local food movement.

Farm stores and the local food movement

Local food is a large part of Canada's culinary identity (Newman, 2017), and the West Coast is a particularly active hub of interest in using local products. The term "locavore" was coined in Northern California by a group of women who committed to eating locally after reading Gary Nabhan's (2009) book *Coming Home to Eat*[1]. However, it was a couple from Vancouver, Alisa Smith and Jamie MacKinnon, who popularized the term with their book *The 100 Mile Diet* (2009). Local food has become a watchword of Vancouver cuisine. Regional place-based food initiatives have been positioned as a sustainable alternative to long global agricultural chains, and the rural-urban fringe is often the site suggested for such initiatives. A rich body of research supports the development of place-based food initiatives, such as Marsden's (2013) work on the role of regional food systems in sustainable development in both the country and the city, and Friedmann's (2007) work on connecting public institutions and other large food purchasers with local producers. Discussion of the potential impact of regional place-based food systems has never been more robust.

At farm stores, the public interacts directly with the agricultural lands that surround their communities, engaging in a dialectic with the source of their food. Soja describes spatial dialectics as two-way, and we did want to confirm that this is true; what the customer purchases is certainly shaped by what is grown, but does the customer base influence what is produced? We were particularly interested in the nature of the customers using farm stores. We were also interested in how well these stores perform for the farmers who run them, and for the farmers who market product through them. On the surface, providing agritourism venues and provisioning the local market are two very different activities, and we were interested in how operators balance these two different markets. While farms in agriburbia produce food sold both locally and exported they may also serve many other functions.

Multifunctionality is well-described in a synthesis written by Zasada (2011), multifunctionality involves "integration of land uses and functions beyond traditional food production", and was developed "as a framework for rural development to enable agriculture to cope with post-productive challenges" (p. 641). Zasada notes that "Multifunctional agriculture encompasses various strategies and activity fields for farms, such as diversification on and off the farm, specialisation in production and processing, direct marketing or measures in nature and landscape management" (p. 641). In particular, Zasada (2011) notes that the interplay with the

[1] Originally published in 2001.

urban area of multifunctional peri-urban agriculture is not fully understood, and needs further research. However the demands, values, and perceptions of urban residents play a significant role in the multifunctionality of agriburban farms (Ives & Kendal, 2013).

Farm stores and the countryside idyll

The authentic scarcity provided by seasonality is part of the consumer's expectation of what a visit to farm country should entail. The vision of the farm in the collective imagination, including elements of traditional or stereotypical rural imagery, are part of what has been referred to as "the countryside ideal" and elsewhere has been deemed "the rural idyll" (Bell, 2006; Bunce & Bunce, 1994). The above forces of demand for local food and agritourism shape what urban customers expect when visiting a farm store, but there are larger social constructs of what a farm looks like. We were curious as to what extent operators shape their stores to meet what they think customers expect, a set of culturally-entrenched expectations of how farms should appear. Zasada (2011) has noted that, "Although there is generally a high appreciation of farmland in the countryside around towns, the visual aspects of the agricultural countryside are prioritised" (p. 642).

Bunce and Bunce (1994) present the countryside ideal as a product of popular culture and our minds, while also arguing that it has grown beyond literature and philosophy "into the realms of popular and tangible expression in the actual landscapes and living spaces of modern society" (p. 2). This is embodied when on-farm businesses display (whether or not they are actually in use) such items as rusty scythes, antique tractors, hay bales, wooden barrels, red barns (in images or as structures), rail fences, gingham curtains and other symbols of what rural, and in particular rural agricultural, life is imagined to be like. As Hinrichs (1996) has observed, the rural idyll has implications for farmers: "Whereas the social role of rural producers once rested largely on their actual production of food, fuel or fiber, their present social role also encompasses the presentation of idealized images of rural life, valued by groups originating from or based elsewhere" (p. 260).

Rurality, and the symbols surrounding it, have become commodities to be consumed. At the most basic level, this relationship influences crop choice; as Powell and Engelhardt (2015) note in the case of the pumpkin, its role as an element of popular culture and its position as a food crop is complicated. Unlike many crops grown on small farms, pumpkin sales spike sharply for the fall holiday season. Based on our preliminary observations of farm stores, we hypothesized that use of visual elements of the countryside ideal, including traditional or stereotypical farm and rural imagery, in their farms and farm buildings would be a consistent part of their business environments. In our study, we both observed elements of the rural idyll through photographic documentation and included questions to probe the intentionality of farm imagery.

Applied research methods

In this study, our team used a multiple case study method, following the collective case study model identified by Stake (2005) in which a group of cases is studied to allow for comparison. Even with multiple sites, a case study methodology is limited in that one can't draw general conclusions from a handful of cases, but case study methodology is an appropriate tool when a holistic, in-depth investigation of a specific space is needed (Feagin, Orum, & Sjoberg, 1991) The four case studies have been chosen to provide a diversity of expected information content. We gathered information on all such farm enterprises in the region (shown in figure 1), and then analysed blogs and chose the four most popular sites for close analysis. These include two sites that have farm retail as a primary focus, one with agritourism as a primary focus, and one with a balance of the two.

Through interviews, visits, and photographic documentation we followed a broadly phenomenological method described as topography or *place-writing* that has been used by Coles (2013) in a study of Bourough Market in London; capturing spaces that are at heart full of sights, sounds, smells and tastes is always incomplete at best, but certainly is supported by repeated visits and the use of photography. We also informally interviewed local decision makers to follow up on identified conflicts between operators and various levels of government; as several active land-use decisions were in progress on-record interviews were declined, but several informal conversations provided insight.

While our work on agriculture and peri-urban development in the Fraser Valley region meant that we had familiarity with the farm store landscape, in the course of our case study work, we identified the need for a database and map of the types of farm retail outlets that our case studies represented. We established a database of farm stores in the Lower Fraser Valley, beginning with what we knew from our experience in the region, and completed using internet searches, lists on BC and municipal websites, and verification of the existence and characteristics of listed stores through phone calls and visits. We chose the Lower Fraser Valley (areas south of the Fraser River, along with Richmond, which is at its mouth), as this area corresponded to detailed mapping of changes in the Agricultural Land Reserve over time that other members of our research centre had been working on. After finalizing the database in Microsoft Access, we used Arc GIS to map the location and characteristics of these farm stores on a base map of the Agricultural Land Reserve. Our database of farm stores only includes permanent on-farm retail outlets. We did not include seasonal farm stands, or farm markets which are not situated on farms, though the roles of these in the agriburban landscape could also be fruitful areas of study.

Results

The construction of a farm store database yielded a list of 49 farm stores in our study area of municipalities south of the Fraser River and Richmond. Of these farm stores, 47 are located on farms within the ALR, and 2 are located on farms outside of the reserve.[2] These stores are shown in Figure 1.

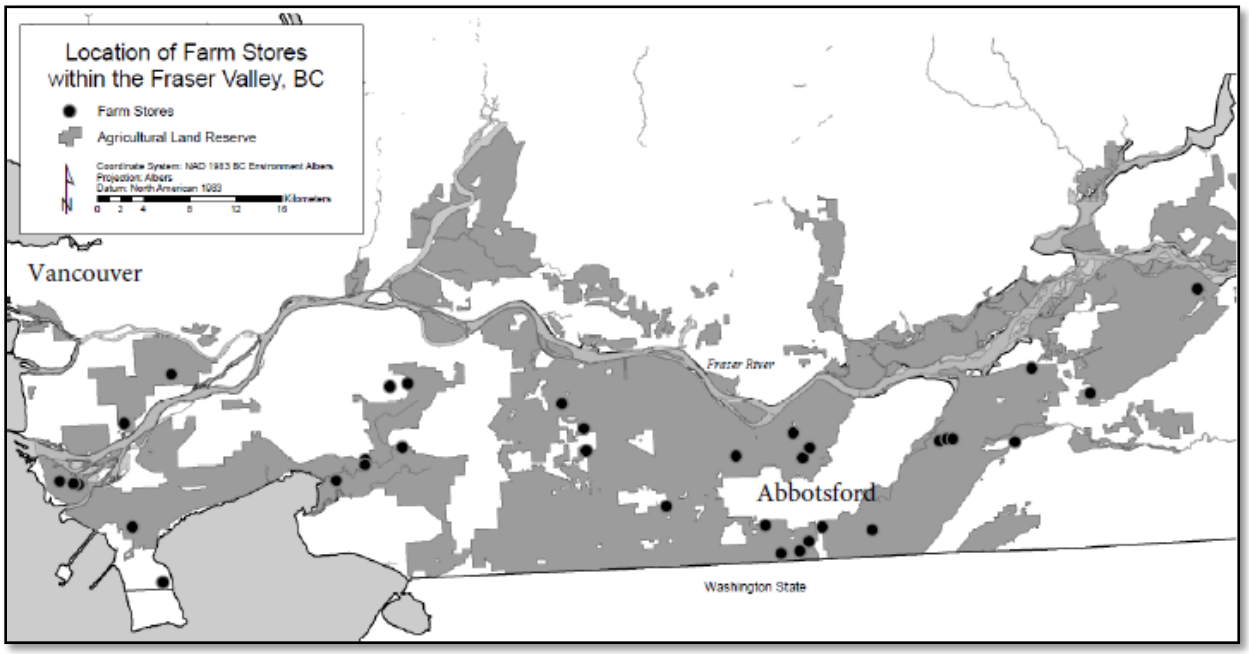

Figure 1: Farm stores south of the Fraser River and in Richmond, in the Lower Fraser Valley of British Columbia. Cartography credit: Kathryn Kelly-Freiberg.

From this larger sample we chose four sites for close analysis as explained above. All four of our case study sites are located in the ALR; we chose to exclude the two sites outside of the ALR as possible case studies in part because they are so unusual and in part because they operate under a different set of regulation. Within this still large subset we chose sites that were year round or very close to year round, and explicitly brand themselves as agritourism sites. We then chose four of roughly the same size within an order of magnitude. Their locations are within agriburbia at two scales. First, they are part of the agriburban region surrounding Vancouver. Second, they are each located in peri-urban areas surrounding the urban centres of the municipalities in which they are located. All of the locations advertise to consumers in both Vancouver and municipalities throughout the Fraser Valley. The locations are shown in Figure 2.

[2] While farm operations outside of the ALR are rare in the Fraser Valley, a few isolated ones do exist in several municipalities.

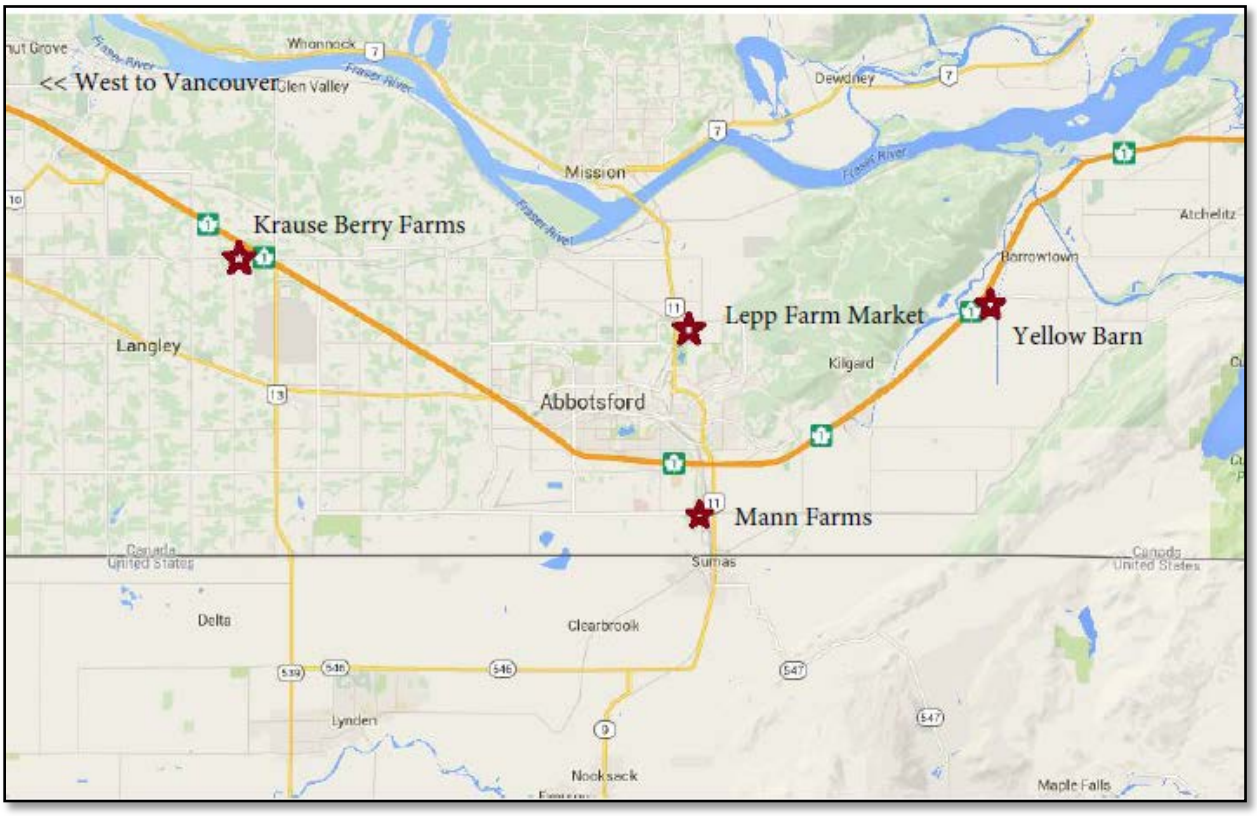

Figure 2: Four farm store sites near Abbotsford selected for study (Map by Lisa Powell, created using Google Maps)

Site descriptions and photo analysis

Through multiple site visits and through coding the interviews for "history", the research team assembled descriptions of each site. We photographed items typical of the rural idyll, and followed up with discussion in the interviews.

Maan Farms Country Experience: Maan Farms is located near the urbanized area of Abbotsford, British Columbia, a few minutes off of the Trans-Canada highway. Jawahar and Gurbachan Maan and their three children started Maan Farms in 1977. In 1982, they opened their first farm stand on McKenzie Road in Abbotsford. They initially sold field vegetable crops and some strawberries; when community members expressed interest in buying fruits locally, they expanded their range of berries and other crops. They opened a second roadside stand in 1995 on Townline Road, and opened their current location, also on McKenzie Road, in 2006. In 2006, Maan Farms added a corn maze, pumpkin patch, and Upick berries to their farm stand; in 2007, they added a play area and petting zoo, and began to offer school tours. In 2012, Maan Farms added a barn facility, which included a country kitchen (food service), country market, and banquet hall, and in 2013, they opened an Estate Winery. The barn facility burned in the summer of 2014, and has now reopened.

According to Amir Maan, grandson of the founders, 80 percent of the products sold at Maan Farms are grown locally, including the fruits and vegetables grown on their land, which comprise approximately 95 percent of the total locally-produced items they sell. Amir noted that he has seen increased consumer demand for local food and for agritourism activities, which he said "go hand in hand" in people "knowing where their food comes from." To help satisfy local demand through its own products and brand, Maan farms is developing its own packaging so that it will be "just as easy and efficient to purchase here as it is at Safeway"[3].-Amir acknowledged that from a business standpoint it would be better to be located closer to Vancouver, where some of their customers come from; however, it would not be as practical to sell the fresh products from their farm land, which is in several locations around the municipality of Abbotsford. In addition to retail and agritourism, Amir emphasized the educational component of Maan Farms, which includes offering formal school tours and providing an opportunity for visitor-customers "actually coming out to the farm, learning, being educated and really getting a sense of what it takes to grow their food and how it actually ends up on the dinner table. So it just has been more of actually putting thought into what they are actually eating."

Maan Farms includes several items of what could be thought of as rural idyll, including red barn structures, a petting zoo, antique tractors, hay bales, and their signature "Gotel 6" goat motel. Amir frames these elements as educational, as providing access for urban families to encounter farm animals. The farm and stand is within the ALR, and their high ratio of on-farm product falls within the ALC guidelines for land use. They did not report any problems with other elements such as the kitchen and haunted corn maze.

The Yellow Barn: The Yellow Barn is in the municipality of Abbotsford, but sits nearly exactly between the urban sections of Abbotsford and Chilliwack. It is located at an exit from the Trans-Canada Highway, and this exit also serves as the primary route to two popular outdoor recreation areas. It is very visible from the highway in both directions. Since 1973, Alex and Marjorie Hodgins-Smith have grown sweet corn, selling it in relatively small quantities from their yard. Prior to the opening of the farm gate shop, they grew 60 acres of corn, all of which was sold wholesale to vendors traveling to Vancouver to sell it out of their trucks. Their farming operation struggled during the recession of the early 1980s, and, knowing they had the potential to diversify by growing other vegetables, in 1986 they purchased the property on No. 3 Road where the Yellow Barn is now located. They opened for business in 1987 as Hodgins-Smith Family Produce. The building has always been yellow and green, the primary colours of corn. Customers and the public alike would refer to the building not by its name, but by its pseudonym, The Yellow Barn, which eventually became the official name of the business.

When Hodgins-Smith Family Produce initially opened, they grew seventeen varieties of sweet corn; to meet demand, they now grow multiple varieties of vegetables, including ethno-culturally Asian ones. The Yellow Barn sells both corn and other vegetables from the fields surrounding the store, as well as from offsite fields and other local producers; in the summer

[3] A multinational grocery chain.

months they also sell produce from BC's Okanagan region. In addition to produce sales, the Yellow Barn also sells preserves, canned goods, and baked goods produced on site, as well as some general grocery and snack food items. They have a deli counter that focuses on locally-sourced meats and cheeses, and a small restaurant. They also sell some antiques and other used items in their entry foyer, as well as some convenience household and toiletry items that may be of use to nearby residents and those traveling to the outdoor recreation areas.

Figure 3: The Yellow Barn (Photo by Lenore Newman)

While the Yellow Barn does not currently have any additional agritourism activities, for a ten year period from the early 1990s through the early 2000s, the Hodgins-Smiths held hour-long "pumpkin tours," which involved educational components. Marjorie described them as "a good way to bring the city to us." The pumpkin tours proved to be too much work for the return. The Hodgins-Smiths still encourage their staff to offer educational information to customers by answering questions about food sources and preparation. The farm store, in particular its restaurant, has become a popular local meeting place for people from the surrounding communities of Abbotsford and Chilliwack, who say, "Oh we'll just meet at the Yellow Barn." It is also located directly on popular commuter routes, and serves as a market to both locals and those passing through on their way to the recreation sites. The Yellow Barn meets the rural idyll primarily through its structure which, as one might expect, is a large yellow barn. The store sits within the ALR, but no issues around operating were reported at the time of the interview. The café within the barn continues to grow in popularity.

Krause Berry Farms & Estate Winery: Krause Berry Farms & Estate Winery is located on 248th Street in Langley, BC, a municipality which is part of the Metro Vancouver Regional District. It is the closest to Vancouver of the four case study sites; while the location is near the

Trans-Canada Highway, several kilometres of driving on rural roads are required to reach Krause from the highway. Alf Krause, along with his wife Sandee, have been farming parts of the location for over 40 years. Alf started the operation by planting one acre of strawberries in 1974. When the processing industry became stale, the Krause family identified that in order to make more money it needed to engage in direct marketing, production of value-added products, and diversification. Krause Berry Farms began operating as an agritourism venture in 2000; their property is now over 200 acres, which hold both berry (strawberries, blueberries, blackberries) and vegetable fields, in addition to the all the facilities for their agritourism operation.

According to Krause, when they diversified their business beyond growing berries for the processing market, they did so with the Vancouver market in mind. The Krause family found that people were willing to drive up to an hour to visit the farm, and they were 15 minutes closer to Vancouver than competing operations in Abbotsford. In addition to fresh produce, Krause's retail store sells products made from their farm output, including preserves, syrups, pies, and other baked goods. Their store also sells canning supplies, along with gifts and décor items. The restaurant strives to offer innovative foods, such as corn pizza. For its agritourism offerings, Krause offers seasonal u-pick berries, and during the summer season, offers "country tractor train rides," a baby farm animal area, and large picket fenced *Future Farmers at-Play* playground. With the goal of mutual promotion and benefit, Krause has partnered with other food and farm businesses on 248th Street, including a turkey farm, honey farm, alpaca farm, and a butcher shop, to create the Otter 248 Street Historic Trail.

Krause Farm is by far the operation that plays most heavily to the rural idyll. Iconography includes covered wagons, a cowboy-themed wine room, a general store featuring traditional country crafts, and many other elements of country kitsch. Of the operations, Krause is much less a farm store and more of a destination, though people do come to purchase berries or take part in the u-pick. Their berry pies and corn pizza are well known in the region, and can be purchased and taken home.

Figure 4: Retail store at Krause Berry Farms (Photo by Lenore Newman)

Lepp Farm Market: The Lepp Farm Market sits on Highway 11, on the periphery of Abbotsford. Robb and Charlotte Lepp have operated the farm adjacent to the store for several decades, raising pork, chicken, corn, and other vegetables. The Lepp family had been selling corn from a shack near the market's current location since 1995; they initially sold their farm products to other retailers in Abbotsford and elsewhere. The Lepp family identified the need for a store where they could sell their own products. In 2009, they opened the market in its current form, with the goals of both selling their own farm output locally, and offering gourmet food products and ingredients that were not easy to source in the Fraser Valley outside of the City of Vancouver. Stephanie Wiebe, Lepp's Produce Manager, who has worked there five years, noted that during the summer time, over half of the produce sold comes from the Lepp farm land. The Lepp family also continue to raise pork and chicken on the farm where the store is located, and sell it in the store. The Lepp family also has an orchard in the Okanagan, where they raise apples, peaches, apricots and cherries.

In addition to retail sales of produce, meat, cheese, bread, and grocery items, Lepp Market also has a deli counter and an in-store café. The deli serves meats primarily raised in BC and processed on site. The café also focuses on meats raised by the Lepp family, and employs a Red Seal chef [a Canadian professional certification]. According to Wiebe, the location on a main road into the urbanized part of Abbotsford helps to make Lepp a convenient place to shop for individuals driving to and from work, as well as people who live nearby. Lepp Market also attracts customers from both the Abbotsford area and the more distant urban centre of Vancouver through its seasonal corn and peach festival, BBQ competition, Christmas market, and cooking classes.

Of the case studies, Lepp Farm employs the least rural imagery, though the structure is vaguely barn-like and displays sometimes feature hay bales. Of the operations, Lepp has had the most conflict with their local government; local retailers have complained that Lepp receives unfair advantage by operating on the ALR. Of the stores Lepp Farms is the closest to downtown Abbotsford, and most closely resembles a retail store in range of products and in strength of offerings across seasons. Though they are constrained by ALR rules in what they offer, they pay much lower taxes as their store is located "on farm". They are currently considering removing the store site from the ALR to resolve this tension.

Agritourism, local food and the rural idyll

From the interview transcripts we also coded for local food and agritourism, in an attempt to understand how each operator balances these two sides to rural retail in this region. In the case of Mann farms, they maintain a strong focus on local foods despite a significant secondary focus on agritourism. As Amir Mann noted, "That's where we pride ourselves is on it has a Mann Farms label you know it's locally grown by us." He sees the agritourism as complementary and as a tool for drawing customers from farther away. He says of Vancouverites, "they want to have a farm experience. So when people do come out to our farm they stay there for more than a couple

hours. Sometimes [they] stay here for half a day: they kind of go through the petting zoo, they go through the corn maze, [they take] a hay wagon ride."

Amir has focused on providing a unique experience that doesn't compete with surrounding stores, but rather complements potential farm circle tours (brochures are available in Abbotsford for customers wanting to visit a variety of agricultural outlets in a day). He explains "We always try to separate ourselves. That's helped tremendously [in terms of establishing a brand]. And not having to compete because when you provide some sort of different niche or product such as agritourism."

The Yellow Barn has expanded from primarily offering corn to offering a much wider array of products. They stressed the importance of their location (at an important freeway junction). They describe their growth as organic: "but people did come for our corn and from there we just developed and expanded." Even the name of the operation emerged from the customers as noted above. "People come here to meet other people from other places, and would agree to meet at 'The Yellow Barn' and so I decided we would just call it the Yellow Barn." The Yellow Barn diversified further with a small restaurant area, which they saw as critical to extending business hours. They note, "And, no with the little restaurant, well, I've felt I've needed to do that. In the mornings it can be as dead as a doornail here, or it had been in the past.

Now it is not. You come by here at 9:00 – 9:30 in the morning and the parking lot is full because they're in here (the restaurant side). But then come noon, we have lots of restaurant people at noon as well. But then, maybe I should say 1:00 or so the business shifts and it's all over there (on the produce market side)." Marjorie also noted the importance of local foods, and suggested a shift in housing style for increased popularity. In short, people without gardens need access to local foods. She observes, "You know, so they can't grow anything. So the next best thing is to come to a place like ours. So that's one of the changes. People don't live on any property. A lot of them don't live on property where they can grow things."

Marjorie also commented on agritourism being, in their case, too much work. "A few years ago we did pumpkin tours and that I felt was a good way to bring the city to us. I just go too tired. I did it for 10 years and every October by the end of October I was a basket case. We did up to 6 tours a day. They were basically an hour and you had a half hour in between to get ready for the next tour to come and it rained a lot in October."

The Krause family diversified to make their farm economically viable given a shrinking processing industry and rising land costs. Krause notes, "We were looking how to economically make more money. The process industry was very stale, just staying the same. So the only way you could make more was by either, economies of scale, getting larger and larger, and finding ways to reduce expenses, because the income was always dictated. So it was looking for ways to control our own destiny."

They see their proximity to the city of Vancouver as an advantage: "Location is always a very important part of agritourism. If you don't have a location then you have to develop a reason or a means of getting people to come out to your location. And because our location was beneficial to a degree because we're closer to Vancouver." They also note the importance of

berries, despite their strong focus on agritourism: “the initial draw was fresh berries. And then from there, seeing what people can do with fresh berries, because you can only buy so many. But then … you can already have a finished dessert like the pie, or corn pizza is a product that we came up with because we can only sell so many corn cobs, but we can sell more corn on another venue as well, another added value product. So it’s finding ways to use the product in number of ways but it all starts with the fresh berries as the focus.”

Lepp Farm Market followed a similar evolution with a very different outcome. The Lepp family attempted to fill a niche, a representative comments that “I mean they always had the corn shack on the corner, but they wanted a place where they could sell their own products. “All they were doing was shipping everything else elsewhere and there was no place in Abbotsford that was doing anything like this.” Lepp then branched out through seasonal events: “We've done in the past a big BBQ competition, we have our Christmas at the farmer table event coming up, so a big Christmas market that we do outside.” Lepp intentionally caters to a different shopper than some of the other markets: “We do cater to people who are more of a high end client, but that's because of what we offer. Everything that we bring in is really good quality I think that people, now, compared to years ago care about where their food is coming from more and they want to know where it's coming from more. So, I mean we're a part of circle tours.”

The aesthetic of each stand was surprisingly unconscious. The Yellow Barn is painted in tallow and green, the colours of corn. At Lepp, questions about the hay bales did not reveal any really targeted marketing; farm stores use hay bales. At Mann’s the Mann family have more directly embraced the rural idyll with tractors, and petting zoo structures in barn shapes. And at Krause, the family sees the old west motif and the country store as part of the experience their customers are coming for, right down to the “porch” café where one can eat corn pizza and berry pie.

Discussion and conclusions

While each of the case study sites is unique, they contribute to a broader understanding of how farm stores function in the agriburbia. Each of the four case study sites began as a farming operation focused on producing a limited number of food crops and adopted multifunctional agriculture as part of strategies for economic sustainability and/or expansion. Of our four case studies, three significantly incorporated agritourism activities beyond retail sales of farm products and on-site dining, and the fourth had offered agritourism activities in the past. All of the case study sites focused their businesses around the provision of high quality, locally-produced and value-added foods made from locally-grown ingredients, and interviewees indicated that they value their role in connecting consumers to the source of their food.

All of the case studies are successful businesses, suggesting that farm store sales and agritourism are likely to be positive adaptations to the challenges of farming near a major urban centre. As noted by the Krause family the option to expand the farm’s land base wasn’t available

(small farm sizes are common near cities) and so value-added and intensive production are required. The owners of the Yellow Barn and their move away from pumpkin tours highlight one of the downsides of agritourism: it is labour intensive. Farmers offering both agritourism and farm gate sales must balance workload with reward. There was also a general sense among the interviewees that one could diversify too much and thus diminish a key niche or brand. In studying agritourism, the provision of local food, and the catering to a rural idyll, we found a delicate balance. Operators could draw on all three, but each operator in this study picked one main aspect to highlight. Likely developing a brand requires this approach. This is an interesting avenue for further study.

Though we can't draw general conclusions from case studies in one area, it is likely that in regions on rural-urban fringes where there is both an interest in local food and a varied farm landscape on small farms, farm stores will appear. Their popularity, which is increasing according to the interview subjects, hints at the wider interest in local foods eaten in season.

Our study found that not only urbanites are drawn to such operations, but that local customers were also very important to these businesses. While the case study site most closely located to Vancouver, Krause framed its customer base as primarily from that city, the other three operations indicated that the local populations and residents from surrounding municipalities were significant parts of their customer base. Accordingly, these farm stores serve key roles in enabling local consumers to purchase locally-produced foods; in the case of Maan Farms and Lepp Farm, local items are offered by the local businesses at a similar level of convenience to what they would be in a large chain supermarket. In addition to food system localization, the farm stores can serve other important functions in the day-to-day lives of members of the communities in which they are located, and our case studies echo Barbieri's (2010) findings about the positive extra-economic effects of such on-farm entrepreneurial efforts. For example, the Yellow Barn contributes to strengthening community ties by providing a meeting place, and all of the sites foster community food and agriculture education to some degree. Lepp donates time, money, and product to various causes in the Abbotsford community.

While we acknowledge the limitations of generalizing from case studies, the broader literature on farm diversification discussed above and the demands of the regional land economy suggest that it is likely that farm stores throughout the agriburban region surrounding Vancouver serve similar functions. Farm stores help to maintain the economic viability of family farms, to localize food systems, and to provide educational opportunities for consumers. By helping to maintain the financial viability of farm operations on ALR lands in agriburbia, farm stores help to protect these lands as they reduce the likelihood of their being sold to buyers speculating on the possibility of their being removed from the reserve. By educating consumers about food and agriculture, farm stores help to build local support for agriculture and for preservation and protection measures such as the ALR. While close attention to the use of ALR lands for purposes other than farming itself is essential, this study indicates that farm stores have the potential to play a vital role in sustaining agriculture in the Lower Fraser Valley, a role which may be replicated elsewhere.

As a final finding, the operators reported only somewhat consciously designing their stands and attractions to meet the rural idyll. To a large degree they designed them to mirror their own assumptions of what a farm selling to the broader public should look like, in effect showing the rural idyll is internalized among farmers as well, even though they know this image does not reflect the true nature of the modern farm. More study into this effect is needed.

Acknowledgements: We would like to acknowledge the support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the research office of the University of the Fraser Valley. The primary and secondary author would like to thank the student authors, who put so much work into this project. We would also like to thank our reviewers for their excellent comments.

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Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 24–43 May 2017

Canadian Food Studies La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation

Article de recherche

Petits commerces de bouche et réseaux alimentaires alternatifs: un regard montréalais

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Résumé

Cet article aborde les réseaux de distribution alimentaire alternatifs par l'une de leurs extrémités jusqu'ici négligées dans la littérature comme dans le débat public: les petits commerces de détail urbains. Ceux-ci se multiplient sur plusieurs rues commerçantes dans les grandes villes depuis quelques décennies, à la faveur d'un embourgeoisement de la population des quartiers limitrophes. Cette gentrification entraîne une sophistication des préférences de consommation et favorise un repositionnement des petites entreprises commerciales vers des créneaux plus pointus, à l'abri d'une grande distribution en croissance. Sur la base d'une enquête de terrain de deux ans et d'une trentaine d'entrevues semi-directives réalisées auprès de propriétaires d'établissements commerciaux dont l'offre est entièrement ou partiellement composée de produits ou de services alimentaires, l'article examine les stratégies déployées par les commerçants pour se constituer comme alternatifs, les avantages d'un tel positionnement et les difficultés qui l'accompagnent. Producteurs et distributeurs alternatifs constituent ainsi deux maillons d'une chaîne qui ne peut donc être qualifiée d'alternative que tant qu'elle s'attache à se démarquer de l'univers de la consommation de masse.

Mots-clés: commerce de detail; distribution; alimentation; réseaux alimentaires alternatifs; petit commerce

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DOI: 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v4i1.189
ISSN: 2292-3071

Introduction

Les débats et les travaux sur les réseaux alimentaires dits « alternatifs » ont généralement mis l'accent sur la vente directe et les circuits courts de distribution comme les marchés fermiers ou l'agriculture soutenue par la communauté, faisant souvent l'impasse sur des modes de distribution sans doute moins champêtres ou novateurs, mais tout aussi importants dans le développement de filières agroalimentaires non industrielles et dans l'émergence de nouvelles cultures gastronomiques locales (Lemasson, 2006). Tel est notamment le cas des petits commerces de bouche, dont le nombre augmente à nouveau au Québec après des décennies de déclin (Groupe Marché, 2007). Ce renouveau des boucheries, fromageries, boulangeries et autres épiceries fines s'est ainsi fait en parallèle avec le développement d'une agriculture elle aussi qualifiée d'alternative, dont les petits commerces spécialisés constituent souvent l'un des principaux points d'écoulement – comme le soulignait d'ailleurs le rapport de la *Commission sur l'avenir de l'agriculture et de l'agroalimentaire québécois*, communément appelé rapport *Pronovost* (CAAAQ, 2008). Néanmoins, les recherches sur la commercialisation de ces produits ont à ce jour disproportionnellement fait état de la situation des producteurs (Bérard & Marchenay, 2004; Guthman, 2004; Paxson, 2013; Trubek, 2009) ou des consommateurs (Johnston & Baumann, 2010), sans que ne soit réellement éclairé et explicité le rôle pourtant fondamental des distributeurs (Blay-Palmer & Donald, 2006), et notamment des détaillants.

Au Québec, en dépit de travaux fondateurs sur les nouvelles filières agricoles de terroir, notamment vinicole (De Koninck, 1993) ou fromagère (Boulianne, 2010; 2013), le caractère alternatif de ces nouveaux modes de distribution reste à ce jour peu défini et souvent pris pour acquis dans les milieux pratiques. Ainsi, lorsqu'il évoque la « distribution alimentaire alternative », le ministère québécois de l'Agriculture des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation se contente de nommer cinq structures de commercialisation des produits agricoles: les marchés publics, les kiosques à la ferme et l'autocueillette, l'agrotourisme, le commerce électronique et l'agriculture soutenue par la communauté (Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation, 2015). Sans expliciter les critères permettant de qualifier ces structures d'alternatives, on les distingue tout de même clairement, dans l'usage, des petites boutiques spécialisées comme les boucheries (Robitaille, 2012, p. 7). Le ministère précise bien que les consommateurs choisissent ces modes de distribution pour trois raisons: avoir un contact plus direct avec les producteurs; soutenir la production agricole locale et régionale; acquérir des produits frais — insistant par là même sur la grande proximité qu'ils établissent entre les producteurs et les consommateurs. Mais les liens entre ces motivations et les cinq structures évoquées apparaissent pour le moins fragiles. Il est en effet possible d'acquérir des produits frais et régionaux dans la plupart des petits établissements commerciaux et même dans plusieurs supermarchés, en particulier chez les indépendants affiliés, qui comptaient au Québec pour 59,5 pourcent du volume des ventes au détail réalisées dans les commerces alimentaires généralistes en 2015 (Condon, 2016, Mars, p. 28). En outre, s'agissant de marchés *publics* et non strictement *fermiers*, le contact avec le producteur n'apparaît pas toujours aussi direct que ne le suggèrent les

représentations souvent idéalisées de cet équipement ancien (La Pradelle, 1996; Tunbridge, 2001). À Montréal notamment, les revendeurs de fruits et de légumes sont nombreux sur les marchés, au moins depuis le dix-neuvième siècle (Bergeron, 1990; Brouillette, 1991). C'est sans compter les bouchers qui ne sont que très exceptionnellement producteurs de leur viande, les boulangers qui fabriquent souvent leur pain dans l'arrière-boutique ou les restaurateurs qui effectuent une partie significative du travail de production du service « repas au restaurant » et qui donnent au passage une grande visibilité aux produits locaux et artisanaux. L'engouement actuel pour la proximité et le local (Hess, 2009; Savage, Bagnall, & Longhurst, 2005) semble donc avoir favorisé le maintien de représentations et même de définitions officielles parfois en décalage avec la réalité empirique de ces filières.[1] Car on voit bien, à la lumière des quelques exemples précités, à quel point la production et la distribution des produits alimentaires alternatifs ne sont en réalité que deux segments d'une même chaîne, tout au long de laquelle tant le caractère alternatif que sa valeur marchande sont créés avant d'atteindre la sphère de la consommation (Callon, Méadel, & Rabeharisoa, 2000).

Dans ce contexte, il apparaît nécessaire de mieux baliser et de mieux comprendre le caractère alternatif des nouveaux réseaux de distribution alimentaire. C'est l'objectif principal de cet article. Nous le ferons du point de vue d'un acteur jusqu'ici négligé, le petit commerçant urbain. Nous examinerons d'abord les logiques qui amènent plusieurs d'entre eux à se constituer et à se présenter comme alternatifs, c'est-à-dire à se distancier, dans la réalité comme dans les discours, des pratiques couramment utilisées par la grande distribution, en faisant notamment affaire avec des réseaux de petits fournisseurs plutôt qu'avec des grossistes. Il s'agira ensuite d'examiner les difficultés propres à ce type de pratiques. Nous conclurons en abordant la nature des liens entre les petits producteurs et les petits commerçants, de manière à circonscrire le rôle que ces derniers peuvent jouer dans le développement d'une production agricole alternative, à la lumière de leurs trajectoires et de leurs réalités professionnelles respectives.

Nous faisons donc l'hypothèse qu'il existe une homologie de position entre les petits commerçants alternatifs et les petits producteurs alternatifs. Nous verrons en effet que le mouvement de polarisation entre une grande distribution généraliste et des petits établissements de plus en plus spécialisés fait écho à celui survenu au sein de la production agricole entre une industrie agroalimentaire standardisée et un nombre croissant de petits producteurs artisanaux, dont la voix est portée au Québec par des organismes comme l'*Union Paysanne* et *Solidarité rurale*. Ils occupent ainsi des positions analogues sur leurs marchés respectifs, des positions que l'on qualifie habituellement de « challengers » en sociologie économique (Fligstein, 1996): leur raison d'être est la remise en question de leurs concurrents qui dominent quantitativement le marché. En outre, ils partagent souvent un même rejet de la production de masse, une volonté commune de s'affranchir de ce que Baudrillard (1972, p. 29) appelait les « stigmates de la production industrielle ». Ils cherchent ainsi, chacun à sa manière, à faire « contrepoids aux

[1] Tel est également le cas de l'association des marchés publics du Québec qui considère ses activités de distribution comme « une extension des activités de production et de transformation à la ferme » (Association des marchés publics du Québec, 2014, p. 7)

tendances globalisatrices associées à des phénomènes néfastes sur les plans sociaux et environnementaux » (Boulianne, 2010, para. 15).

Méthodologie

Cet article s'appuie sur une enquête de terrain de deux ans, réalisée entre l'automne 2011 et l'été 2013 sur deux rues commerçantes du centre de Montréal: la rue Ontario Est, dans l'arrondissement Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve et la rue Notre-Dame Ouest, dans l'arrondissement Sud-Ouest. Ces deux secteurs traditionnellement ouvriers ont notamment été choisis parce que la part relative du commerce de bouche y a considérablement augmenté dans les dernières décennies. Dans le commerce des biens, les effectifs de la catégorie alimentaire ont ainsi augmenté de 10,3 pourcent sur la rue Notre-Dame et d'un remarquable 40 pourcent sur la rue Ontario entre 1971 et 2011.[2] Dans le domaine des services, on observe une augmentation encore plus importante de la catégorie restauration pendant la même période: 65,6 pourcent dans le Sud-Ouest, 104,2 pourcent dans Hochelaga-Maisonneuve.

Cette prépondérance du commerce de bouche s'explique d'abord par la présence dans les deux quartiers d'un marché public municipal, un équipement longtemps tombé en désuétude qui jouit aujourd'hui d'un regain de popularité, particulièrement auprès des populations urbaines soucieuses de l'environnement et de leur alimentation (Gonzalez & Waley, 2013; Johnston & Baumann, 2010). Mais l'augmentation de la part relative de la catégorie alimentaire est aussi incontestablement liée à la croissance des couches moyennes salariées depuis les années 1960 et à la nature particulière de leurs habitudes de consommation: moyennes, elles aussi, mais résolument éclectiques et marquées par une forte volonté d*'esthétisation du quotidien* (Featherstone, 2007). Les lieux de consommation culinaire, en particulier les bars (Ernst & Doucet, 2014; Luckins, 2009; Lugosi, Bell, & Lugosi, 2010; Mathews & Picton, 2014), les cafés et les restaurants, contribueraient ainsi à une importante restructuration du commerce des quartiers centraux dans les métropoles du tertiaire avancé.

Selon cette lecture, les nouveaux établissements alimentaires se distinguent des anciens par la nature de leurs marchandises et de leurs prestations. La cuisine y est davantage influencée par les gastronomies étrangères (Van Criekingen & Fleury, 2006, p. 120) ; « la nourriture est cosmopolite, mais plus dans le sens de l'hybridité que de l'authenticité. Différence, fait-maison et gourmet en sont les principaux thèmes » (Bridge & Dowling, 2001, p. 102, nous traduisons). Établi par la sociologue Sharon Zukin (1991, p. 212) dès le début des années 1990, le parallèle entre l'émergence d'une *nouvelle cuisine* et le retour aux quartiers anciens apparaît encore plus fondamental aujourd'hui, certains auteurs parlant même désormais de *gentrification culinaire* (Bell, 2004, p. 55) pour souligner le rôle central des classes moyennes urbaines dans la restructuration des *hiérarchies de goûts* et l'émergence de nouveaux types d'établissements de

[2] Calculs réalisés par l'auteur à partir de l'annuaire montréalais des rues Lovell, 1971-72, 1977, 1982, 1987-88, 1992, 1997-98, 2006-07. Les données de 2011 ont été obtenues lors d'un recensement terrain.

restauration. Cette transformation de l'offre commerciale apparaît donc étroitement liée à celle de la population, et plus précisément à l'augmentation du capital économique et culturel à l'intérieur de la zone naturelle de chalandise des commerces, un embourgeoisement que confirment d'ailleurs les statistiques socio-économiques disponibles pour les deux quartiers étudiés.[3]

Cet article mobilise un matériau empirique double: d'une part des données statistiques sur l'évolution du commerce des deux quartiers, compilées à partir d'anciens annuaires téléphoniques à chaque année de recensement pour la période 1971-2011 (Schlichtman & Patch, 2008); d'autre part un corpus de 30 entretiens qualitatifs réalisés auprès de commerçants proposant un assortiment au moins en partie composé de produits ou de services alimentaires.[4] Ces commerçants ont été recrutés dans leur magasin sur la base d'un échantillonnage non aléatoire réalisé à partir du registre des entreprises du Québec et diversifié quant à deux dimensions principales: l'ancienneté de l'établissement et le type de produits ou de services offerts. D'une durée moyenne d'un peu plus de 50 minutes, les entretiens ont principalement traité du parcours et des choix personnels et professionnels du propriétaire. L'approche était résolument inductive et encourageait chaque participant à baliser son univers social et professionnel, en lui demandant d'identifier ses fournisseurs, ses concurrents, ses clients et d'expliciter les critères discriminants mobilisés dans leur appréciation respective, de même que la nature et la fréquence de ses interactions avec chacun d'eux. Les extraits d'entretiens rapportés dans le texte sont anonymes. Les commerçants sont identifiés par un numéro[5] et par l'ancienneté de leur établissement (les anciens sont en activité depuis plus de 10 ans).

Résultats

L'échantillon comprend 11 établissements de restauration: deux cafés, un bar et huit restaurants, dont certains faisaient aussi office de traiteurs. Du côté des biens, on compte quatre boulangeries-pâtisseries, six boucheries et neuf autres établissements spécialisés (fromagerie,

[3] Alors qu'il ne représentait que 63 pourcent de celui de la région métropolitaine au recensement de 1996, le revenu individuel moyen de la zone primaire de chalandise de la rue Ontario en frôlait les 75 pourcent en 2012, selon les données de l'Agence fédérale du Revenu. Celui de la zone primaire de la rue Notre-Dame a connu une évolution encore plus marquée, passant entre 1981 et 2012 de 62 pourcent à 90 pourcent du revenu individuel moyen de la RMR. L'évolution d'un indice de statut social calculé par Walks et Maaranen (2008, p. 87) témoigne par ailleurs d'une augmentation du capital culturel dans les deux quartiers. Dans Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, il passe de 0,36 au recensement de 1961 à 0,86 à celui de 2006. Dans le Sud-Ouest, l'écart est encore plus important car l'indice passe de 0,23 à 1,04 pendant la même période et dépasse donc désormais la moyenne montréalaise. Nous remercions les professeurs David Hulchanski et Alan Walks, de l'Université de Toronto, d'avoir partagé ces données avec nous dans le cadre du *Projet de recherche sur les quartiers en transition*.

[4] Sur un total de 50 entretiens auprès de commerçants de types divers.

[5] Les participants à l'enquête ont été numérotés de P01 à P50. Nous ne révélons pas le sexe des participants pour préserver leur anonymat.

tisanerie, confiserie, vrac, et cetera). Les 30 participants ont des trajectoires personnelles et professionnelles variées (tableau 1): neuf sont des autodidactes, six sont des artisans ayant précédemment travaillé dans d'autres commerces comme chefs ou comme pâtissiers avant de se lancer à leur compte, cinq sont de jeunes entrepreneurs scolarisés dans des domaines divers et 10 sont arrivés au commerce au terme d'une réorientation de carrière, incluant cinq professionnels « défroqués » ayant quitté une carrière prospère d'avocat ou de fiscaliste par désir d'entreprendre ou pour vivre de leur passion pour la bière artisanale ou le café. 18 d'entre eux s'inscrivaient de façon marquée dans un créneau de qualité, c'est-à-dire que le propriétaire se distinguait par des efforts de promotion particulièrement élaborés mettant l'accent sur la qualité de la marchandise où qu'il militait, bien au-delà des murs de son établissement, à l'amélioration qualitative de l'offre commerciale de la rue ou du marché.

Tableau 1: Profil des participants

ENTREPRISES				**PROPRIÉTAIRES**					
Ancienneté		**Structure**		**Âge**		**Formation**		**Parcours**	
> 10 ans	9	Solo	8	< 30	4	Secondaire régulier ou moins	5	Traditionnel	9
< 10 ans	21	Couple	8	30-39	10	Technique	13	Artisan à son compte	6
		Famille	8	40-49	6	Universitaire	12	Jeune entrepreneur	5
		Partenariat	6	50-59	6			Professionnel défroqué	5
				60-69	3			Autre réorientation	5
				> 70	1				
	30		30		30		30		30

Parmi ces derniers, environ une dizaine affichaient un niveau de prix significativement supérieur à la moyenne de leur quartier. Cette prépondérance du créneau qualité s'explique par la mainmise de la grande distribution sur les segments plus basiques de l'offre commerciale, particulièrement ancienne dans le cas du commerce alimentaire.

La polarisation du commerce alimentaire

La grande distribution alimentaire est implantée au Québec depuis le début du vingtième siècle (Théberge, 1985), mais les anciennes rues commerçantes conservent jusqu'aux années 1960 un certain monopole spatial sur une clientèle certes peu fortunée, mais relativement stable parce que

captive et plus homogène (Polèse, 1978). Ce marché de proximité s'est considérablement érodé depuis, l'accroissement de la mobilité individuelle permettant aux citadins de s'approvisionner ailleurs que dans leur propre quartier. L'implantation de supermarchés au cœur même de la plupart de ces artères a en outre progressivement absorbé une partie importante de la demande alimentaire locale.

On constate aisément les effets de cette concentration du capital sur le tissu commercial des deux quartiers étudiés. Ainsi, alors qu'elles étaient autrefois nombreuses et bien réparties sur le territoire, les épiceries généralistes disparaissent rapidement à partir des années 1970, si bien qu'on n'en compte plus qu'un petit nombre sur chacune des deux artères 40 ans plus tard. Pour la seule décennie 1970, la chute est de 75 pourcent sur la rue Notre-Dame et de 50 pourcent sur la rue Ontario. Cette baisse est en partie compensée par l'augmentation du nombre de « dépanneurs »—quasi inexistants en 1971—et dont une grande partie semble d'ailleurs être le résultat d'une conversion des épiceries familiales dont ils occupent souvent les emplacements et conservent parfois le nom. Cette évolution est à notre connaissance assez peu documentée pour la période récente (Bélair, 1983, p. 9), mais un ancien épicier du quartier Saint-Henri laisse entendre qu'il s'agit d'une trajectoire répandue: « J'avais déjà eu un commerce. J'ai toujours été dans l'alimentation. On appelait ça une épicerie à l'époque, puis après ça on a viré ça en dépanneur. Comme tout le monde » (P49, Ancien).

Jusqu'en 1981, le nombre de commerces spécialisés décline également—quoiqu'à un rythme moindre que celui des épiceries généralistes. Dans le Sud-Ouest, le nombre des boucheries, boulangeries et autres petits établissements de bouche remonte cependant de près de 50 pourcent dans les décennies 1980 et 1990 avant de se stabiliser au début des années 2000. Sur l'ensemble de la période, il a augmenté de 40,9 pourcent. Dans Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, c'est surtout avec la réouverture du marché public municipal en 1995 que le nombre de petits commerces de bouche a recommencé à croître. Il surpassait en 2011 de 35,7 pourcent son niveau de 1971. Cette polarisation de plus en plus généralisée du commerce des biens témoigne de l'accaparement progressif du marché généraliste par la grande distribution, alors que les établissements plus petits se positionnent plutôt dans des niches distinctives: des horaires différents dans le cas des dépanneurs (Kirby, 1978; 1986), la qualité pour les petits commerces de bouche spécialisés et souvent plus haut de gamme.

Tableau 2: Évolution des effectifs commerciaux des deux rues à l'étude, 1971-2011

		1971	1981	1991	1996	2006	2011	Δ 1971-2011	
								n	%
Notre-Dame	**Alimentation**	**39**	**28**	**34**	**40**	**43**	**43**	**4**	**2,6**
	Générale	17	6	5	5	6	6	(11)	(64,7)
	Spécialisée	22	19	23	30	30	31	9	40,9
	Dépanneurs	0	3	6	5	7	6	6	600
	Restauration	**32**	**23**	**24**	**26**	**37**	**53**	**21**	**65,6**
Ontario	**Alimentation**	**25**	**23**	**31**	**34**	**34**	**35**	**10**	**40**
	Générale	8	6	4	5	5	3	(5)	(62,5)
	Spécialisée	14	12	17	17	14	19	5	35,7
	Dépanneurs	3	5	10	12	15	13	10	333,3
	Restauration	**24**	**18**	**32**	**38**	**32**	**49**	**25**	**104,2**

Source: Calculs réalisés par l'auteur à partir de l'annuaire montréalais des rues Lovell, 1971-72, 1977, 1982, 1987-88, 1992, 1997-98, 2006-07. Les données de 2011 ont été obtenues lors d'un recensement terrain. Les données pour l'année 2001 ne sont pas disponibles.

Des bas prix vers la qualité

La grande distribution a accès à des économies d'échelle hors de la portée des petites entreprises. Rappelons simplement qu'en 2012 au Québec, la marge brute moyenne des magasins d'alimentation indépendants ne représentait que 80 pourcent de celle des magasins à succursales et leurs bénéfices nets d'exploitation, à peine plus de 13 pourcent.[6] Ces économies contribuent à un abaissement des prix à un niveau inatteignable jusqu'alors, transformant durablement le marché de la vente au détail. En effet, si des chaînes comme *Steinberg* avaient toujours axé leur marketing sur les économies qu'elles faisaient réaliser aux consommateurs (Gibbon & Hadekel, 1990), c'est bien dans les années 1980, après le rachat des magasins *Dominion* par *Provigo*, qu'a lieu à Montréal la première « guerre des prix » entre les grandes chaînes de supermarchés (Provost & Chartrand, 1988, p. 202). C'est aussi dans les années 1980 et plus encore dans les années 1990 que se déploient dans la métropole les enseignes à rabais *Super C* et *Maxi*, aujourd'hui présentes dans plusieurs quartiers centraux et notamment sur les deux rues à l'étude. L'introduction récente de rayons alimentaires tant dans les chaînes de pharmacies que dans les magasins de marchandises diverses tend également à accentuer la concurrence dans le segment

[6] Statistique Canada. *Enquête annuelle sur le commerce de détail*. Tableau 080-0023 : Estimations financières fondée sur le Système de classification des industries de l'Amérique du Nord (SCIAN) par genre de magasin, annuel. Calculs de l'auteur.

de la nourriture bas de gamme, ces entreprises se spécialisant dans les produits à gros volume (Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation, 2015, p. 28). On assisterait dès lors au sein des quartiers centraux à la diffusion d'une nouvelle culture de consommation, différente par son envergure et ses moyens: multipliant les réclames, les « spéciaux » et les « circulaires » (Merrilees, McKenzie, & Miller, 2007).

La croissance de la grande distribution alimentaire et son influence grandissante sur les réseaux d'approvisionnement rendent donc de plus en plus insoutenable la position des petits commerces indépendants, cela bien au-delà du seul commerce alimentaire. Dans les deux quartiers, ces établissements étaient souvent peu spécialisés et s'inscrivaient dans une logique de prix que plusieurs commerçants ont qualifié de « raisonnables ». Sans entrer dans la logique des aubaines et des produits d'appel vendus à perte— typique de la grande distribution et qu'ils auraient d'ailleurs bien du mal à imiter—plusieurs petits commerçants entendent ainsi rester concurrentiels « en moyenne », une stratégie particulièrement répandue chez les bouchers établis de longue date:

> Je te dirais que dans nos prix, c'est très ressemblant à ce qu'on doit avoir dans les chaînes, à part les items qui sont en spécial, qu'eux autres vendent en bas du prix coûtant pour attirer une clientèle. Mais nos prix, en règle générale, sont les mêmes que dans les chaînes, même que parfois on vend moins cher.[7] Mais ça, les gens ne le savent pas… Quand le [supermarché à rabais] *Super C* a ouvert il y a quelques années, on s'est dit qu'ils allaient nous tuer. Et finalement ça n'a même pas paru. C'est pas la même clientèle. Ici on a une spécialité de viandes fraîches. *Super C*, ce n'est pas du tous les mêmes gens… C'est surtout des BS et nous on n'en a pas vraiment. Ils vont chercher les ventes… (P12, Ancien).

On constate l'ambiguïté de la position de ce commerçant qui juge ses prix concurrentiels avec ceux de la grande distribution, tout en indiquant un peu plus loin dans l'entretien ne pas desservir la clientèle la plus pauvre, celle des assistés sociaux. Dans son commerce établi de longue date, ce boucher indique par ailleurs ne pas avoir radicalement transformé son offre au fil des ans. Ses propos suggèrent plutôt que ce serait le marché de la viande qui se serait polarisé entre des grandes surfaces et des supermarchés, d'une part qui vendent toujours moins cher une viande préemballée non transformée sur place, et un ensemble de petits établissements plus haut-de-gamme, d'autre part.

Au marché Atwater, dans le Sud-Ouest, certains bouchers sont ainsi nettement plus actifs dans cette dernière logique et multiplient les marqueurs de distinction: viande biologique, réseaux de petits producteurs, coupes françaises, personnel européen. Mais tous s'inscrivent sans forcément l'avoir cherché dans un créneau nostalgique de boucherie « à l'ancienne » par leur

[7] Cette affirmation semble toutefois contredite par des enquêtes d'associations de consommateurs réalisées au marché Atwater, où est installé ce commerçant (Dô, 2005, Juin).

seule présence dans cet imposant bâtiment patrimonial et par leur allure « traditionnelle » : comptoirs à l'ancienne, sarraus blancs, viande empaquetée sur place dans un papier rose plutôt qu'en emballage sous vide, enseignes vieillottes. L'importante baisse des prix menée par la grande distribution aurait donc de facto exclu de la catégorie des bas prix tous ceux qui cherchent à rester concurrentiels « en moyenne », creusant la gamme vers le bas à un niveau où les indépendants ne peuvent suivre en dépit des efforts de certains pour demeurer accessibles au plus grand nombre. De plus en plus, la logique des bas prix « raisonnables » des petits commerçants apparaît résolument incompatible avec celle des « aubaines » et du « discount » pratiquée par la grande distribution, dont les « spéciaux » et les produits d'appel s'apparentent souvent à une forme de dumping (Péron, 2004).

On observe également une évolution des habitudes de consommation qui tend à réduire le volume des ventes, une diminution que les bouchers sont encore une fois parmi les premiers à constater. En effet, la consommation de viande rouge a diminué dans les dernières décennies en raison de multiples facteurs: expansion du marché des plats préparés, diminution de la taille des familles, préoccupation croissante pour l'alimentation et la santé, popularité du végétarisme et du végétalisme, généralisation des peurs alimentaires dans le sillage des épidémies de grippe aviaire ou de vache folle (Fischler, 2001; Freidberg, 2004), crainte de ce que le sociologue Claude Fischler (1990, p. 209) a qualifié d'*objets comestibles non identifiés*, et cetera. Plusieurs bouchers observent ainsi que « les gens ne font plus de commandes comme dans le temps » (P17, Nouveau), une réalité sans doute liée à l'augmentation du nombre de ménages d'une seule personne et qui affecterait grandement la rentabilité de leur commerce: « Avec des petites portions c'est plus difficile d'avoir un total élevé qu'avec des grosses portions. Par contre, c'est normal, les familles sont plus petites. Donc il faut travailler plus pour vendre ce qu'on vend, qu'autrefois quand j'ai commencé. Avant, c'était toutes des grosses commandes » (P19, Ancien).

Qu'on soit petit ou grand, maintenir un niveau de prix bas suppose en effet, pour générer un bénéfice raisonnable, un certain volume de ventes. La diminution de la consommation rend ce positionnement de plus en plus intenable pour les petites entreprises, plusieurs étant dès lors contraintes d'augmenter leurs marges pour compenser la baisse de volume: « Ça prend du volume… C'est bien beau vendre des petites affaires, là… C'est ça le problème aujourd'hui, c'est que tu as moins de volume. Mais c'est la vie et il faut s'adapter à ça… Tu montes tes prix. J'ai toujours haï ça monter les prix… Mais des fois, t'as pas le choix » (P12, Ancien).

Réseaux de fournisseurs alternatifs et constitution d'un assortiment original et distinctif

Pour être considéré légitime et donc accepté par le consommateur, un niveau de prix plus élevé doit offrir une contrepartie, entendue ici de façon large comme une qualité socialement valorisée. C'est sans doute le grand intérêt de la petite production alternative pour ces commerçants. De tels réseaux leur permettent en effet de se distinguer de la grande entreprise, de se poser en alternative attrayante à des modes de distribution de plus en plus critiqués par une frange de la

population (Quéniart, Jacques, & Jauzion-Graverolle, 2007). Le succès des petits commerces reposerait donc de plus en plus sur la singularisation et le *niche marketing*, des stratégies qui s'inscrivent dans un déclin plus général de la production de masse dans les économies du tertiaire avancé, au profit d'un capitalisme renouvelé par une *marchandisation de la différence* (Boltanski et Chiapello, 1999, p. 592) et caractérisé par une très grande variété de produits et surtout de services de consommation. Comme l'a résumé le propriétaire d'un café indépendant suite à l'ouverture d'une grande chaîne à proximité de son établissement, « être à côté d'un *Tim Hortons*, c'est moins mauvais que j'aurais pensé parce qu'il y a quand même plein de monde qui ne veulent pas s'associer à cette culture-là » (P03, Nouveau).

À travers leur assortiment atypique, local ou traditionnel, ces commerçants se rattachent ainsi à des univers valorisés par la nouvelle clientèle mieux nantie: « Les gens qui vont entrer ici ne veulent pas manger un hamburger, ils veulent manger un bon « grilled cheese » avec du jambon bio, du fromage qui vient de l'île-aux-Grues avec du thym bio et ils sont prêts à payer le prix… c'est ces gens-là qu'on vise » (P25, Nouveau).

> On vend de la qualité, mais avec la qualité vient un certain prix. Je pense que les consommateurs et les commerçants, on a évolué ensemble. Il y en a pour qui ça a été un peu plus long, mais les commerçants se sont ajustés au niveau de la qualité de ce qu'ils proposaient aux clients. La clientèle aussi s'est « améliorée », les Québécois ont voyagé… ils revenaient d'Europe et disaient: « on a goûté à telle ou telle affaire, peux-tu nous en avoir? ». Fait que c'était à nous, les commerçants, de faire des recherches et puis ça s'est fait progressivement. Je prends un exemple: du baloney, on n'en vend plus parce que les gens ne nous en demandent plus (P23, Ancien).

La disparition du *baloney*, le « saucisson de Bologne », pilier traditionnel de l'alimentation populaire québécoise, marque ici symboliquement cette évolution de la clientèle, le passage d'une alimentation bourrative à une culture gastronomique plus sophistiquée que reflète aujourd'hui l'assortiment de cet établissement, composé essentiellement de produits du terroir québécois et d'importations européennes.

On constate le rôle central que jouent désormais les petits commerçants dans la rencontre d'une offre et d'une demande de plus en plus pointues. En effet, le régime de concurrence monopolistique dans lequel cherchent à s'inscrire plusieurs de ces commerçants se caractérise par un renouvellement accéléré et continu des pratiques de vente. Le marché des produits de niche est plus volatile que celui de la consommation courante, la demande étant plus que jamais façonnée par les modes et le marketing. Pour les produits très spécialisés, la valeur repose en effet sur des critères très subjectifs de qualité. Elle est donc largement sociale et dépend de la capacité du commerçant à convaincre le consommateur, à jouer le rôle d'impresario de « ses » producteurs, de *banquier symbolique* de sa marchandise (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 6). En France, le sociologue Lucien Karpik a ainsi montré comment, « à côté d'une économie classique composée

de biens standardisés dont les propriétés sont connues du consommateur, se développe la sphère des biens et des services qui se caractérisent par l'incomplétude et qui ne peuvent être réellement définis qu'après l'achat » (Karpik, 1989, p. 206). C'est ce qu'il appelle le marché des singularités, qui se caractérise par des « relations marquées par l'incertitude sur la qualité [de] produits singuliers » entre des vendeurs et des acheteurs à la recherche de la « bonne singularité » (Karpik, 2007, p. 38). Ce qui distingue ce marché des autres est donc ce qui fait son intérêt pour les offrants, à savoir une « asymétrie de l'information favorable au producteur » (Karpik 2007, p. 42), qui peut alors tirer profit de « situations dans lesquelles le client, à la différence du vendeur, a du mal à distinguer la mauvaise qualité de la bonne, alors que pour lui cette distinction est importante » (Karpik, 1989, p. 202).

Dans ce contexte, nombreux sont les commerçants alimentaires qui mettent de l'avant leur relation particulière à leurs fournisseurs. Ainsi dans une boucherie du marché Atwater, on peut voir défiler, sur un écran de télévision placé en évidence à l'entrée de l'étal, les fermes et les producteurs dont les viandes sont distribuées sur place. Au même numéro, la propriétaire affiche fièrement une plaque rappelant son statut d'agricultrice de l'année. En face, une boucherie se spécialise dans les viandes biologiques et l'indique clairement sur son enseigne. Ces discours sans doute sincères peuvent toutefois s'avérer assez superficiels. Un boulanger va ainsi importer du beurre de Nouvelle-Zélande et plusieurs commerçants distribuent une grande variété de produits importés, même si on essaie à travers un ensemble de subterfuges de les rendre aussi vertueux que possible. Lorsque les produits ne peuvent être locaux, pour des raisons souvent climatiques, certains commerçants usent de procédés discursifs pour légitimer leur provenance, idéalement en la valorisant dans un curieux mélange de localisme et de cosmopolitisme: « On choisit que des produits du terroir, et ce qui n'est pas du terroir, mettons l'huile d'olive… il n'y en a pas au Québec, mais il y a la belle excuse, c'est une Québécoise mariée avec un Grec qui y a des oliviers en Grèce et ils partent six mois par année chercher l'huile. C'est la plus québécoise des huiles d'olive » (P02, Nouveau).

Cette mise en récit témoigne de la grande flexibilité avec laquelle le principe de traçabilité est mobilisé pour pallier certains accrocs inévitables à l'approvisionnement local. Tous ces éléments—proximité, taille restreinte, caractère artisanal, exotisme—sont d'ailleurs souvent associés jusqu'à se confondre dans les discours, une vague référence à l'Europe venant souvent cautionner et incarner cet idéal de proximité: « C'est une boutique 100 pourcent locale, québécoise. Je mise vraiment sur les régions ressource… Toutes les régions qui ont un taux de chômage plus élevé, on essaie de les pousser vraiment. C'est grâce à eux qu'on mange bien » (P08, Nouveau).

Que ce commerçant fasse référence aux « régions ressources » ayant traditionnellement occupé une place très marginale dans l'agriculture québécoise en raison de leur climat particulièrement rigoureux témoigne sans doute d'une vision en partie romancée de la ruralité et de la production alimentaire. Mais même romancée, celle-ci s'appuie sur des principes éthiques et esthétiques forts qui poussent cet entrepreneur à développer des liens avec ces territoires en déclin. On constate ici que ce positionnement n'est pas qu'un slogan publicitaire, mais qu'il peut

aussi prendre sa source dans des valeurs personnelles des commerçants, dont plusieurs abordent l'univers de la boutique avec un ensemble de valeurs non strictement entrepreneuriales, témoignant même d'une forte idéologie progressiste et environnementaliste. Tel est notamment le cas de cette boulangère: « On remonte jusqu'au producteur parce qu'on croit beaucoup à la naturalité et on croit qu'il ne faut pas faire les choses comme les gros commerciaux le font, même si on est gros. On connaît les agriculteurs qui produisent notre blé. On sait où ils sont, on a vu leur champs » (P38, Ancien).

Contraintes et difficultés d'un approvisionnement alternatif

Au-delà de la valeur marchande et des principes moraux, il y a également des avantages nettement plus prosaïques pour un commerçant à s'associer à des petits producteurs locaux. Avoir un réseau stable de fournisseurs situés à proximité permet de négocier plus facilement les quantités, les frais et les dates de livraison ou même d'aller chercher la marchandise soi-même. Mais ces assortiments uniques, aussi originaux et différents que possible, compliquent aussi considérablement le travail des commerçants qui doivent pour les composer faire preuve d'une grande inventivité et investir considérablement de temps et de ressources dans la constitution de réseau de petits fournisseurs souvent nettement moins prévisibles. En effet, la constitution d'un tel réseau implique souvent la participation à des associations ou à des réseaux institutionnels comme la *Guilde des herboristes* ou l'*Union paysanne*, l'abonnement à des revues spécialisées ou à des groupes sur les réseaux sociaux en ligne: « Il y a un congrès annuel ou je peux en rencontrer. Parfois aussi, à partir d'un producteur j'ai réussi à en connaître d'autres parce qu'il dit: « J'en en ai plus mais peut-être qu'elle, elle en aurait ». Donc à partir de là on développe une relation. Ça fonctionne vraiment par relations là-dedans, parce qu'ils sont rarement affichés sur Internet. Comme ils ne sont pas gros, souvent ils ne vendent que sur leurs terres et ce sont des gens qui les connaissent qui vont acheter leurs produits » (P47, Nouveau). En témoigne également ce restaurateur:

> Ça reste très artisanal comme milieu. Une fois que t'es rentré, tu te ramasses avec des fournisseurs qui sont toujours en stock limité. Alors ils se mettent à livrer à du monde qu'ils aiment bien ou à du monde qu'ils savent qu'ils vont faire un bon travail. Et en tant qu'acheteur, il y a une situation de rareté ou moi je suis un peu *poigné*. C'est moi qui les appelle pour qu'ils me vendent des trucs. Mais en même temps ça permet de développer des relations particulières qui vont faire que tels produits on est les seuls à les avoir et il y a du monde qui vont venir chez nous pour ça (P20, Nouveau).

On constate bien ici tout le paradoxe de ce positionnement, en ce que la rareté—et donc la valeur—des avantages qu'il confère est directement liée à la difficulté de son établissement.

La spécialisation d'une boutique ou d'un magasin dépend largement de l'originalité de son assortiment et, partant, de son réseau de fournisseurs qui permet au commerçant de s'approprier une partie du capital symbolique des producteurs. Plus ceux-ci sont petits, lointains, artisanaux, traditionnels—tout ce qui permet de les distinguer de la production industrielle de masse—est valorisé, perçu comme intrinsèquement positif. Il s'agit également d'une prise de distance vis-à-vis des rendements et de l'efficacité de la production industrielle.

C'est évidemment dans les commerces d'aliments périssables que cet approvisionnement s'avère le plus délicat. Plus le producteur est petit, plus ses méthodes sont naturelles, plus la production est susceptible de fluctuer dans le temps. Les bouchers doivent donc manœuvrer de manière à préserver des liens de confiance et ne pas fragiliser leurs producteurs, tout en assurant une offre stable à leur clientèle: « Je suis fidèle. Tu sais, tu peux pas acheter de plein de monde. C'est pas de même que ça marche. Il faut qu'il y ait une loyauté et une parole. Mais t'en prends toujours deux parce que s'il y en a un qui a une 'bad luck,' toi tes clients qui ont réservé des dindes, ils n'en auront plus pour Noël ou pour l'Action de grâces. Donc j'en ai un qui me livre tel jour et l'autre tel autre jour. On se sécurise » (P17, Nouveau).

La saisonnalité des produits constitue aussi un défi, car la clientèle des commerçants urbains n'est souvent pas aussi fidèle et convaincue que peut l'être celle d'autres réseaux alternatifs, comme l'agriculture soutenue par la communauté (Quéniart et al., 2007, p. 188). Il devient dès lors difficile pour le commerçant de concilier la préservation des aliments et les normes sanitaires, d'une part, et les exigences esthétiques de clients comme les présentoirs ou les emballages à l'ancienne, d'autre part. La gestion des stocks est donc plus complexe qu'elle ne l'était quand les habitudes de consommation étaient à la fois plus régulières—les ménagères faisaient un marché hebdomadaire voir même mensuel de viande—et plus standardisées. En témoigne ce boucher: « C'est un fait, les gens veulent savoir ce qu'ils mangent. Mais ça ne veut pas dire qu'ils achètent plus. Ça prend du volume… C'est bien beau vendre des petites affaires, là… Il faut que tu en vendes en maudit des magrets de canard pour te faire une paye, pour payer ton stock, pour payer ton loyer, pour payer tes fournisseurs » (P12, Ancien).

Conclusion

Ce qui fait l'originalité de la viennoiserie, du repas gastronomique au restaurant ou de la tisane biologique relève tout autant du travail du commerçant que de celui du producteur de la matière première. C'est à travers l'ensemble de la chaîne de distribution que la singularité des biens et des services—c'est-à-dire ce qui constitue leur caractère alternatif à la production de masse—est produite et surtout valorisée de manière à s'insérer dans la sphère de la consommation. Car si la qualité perçue dépend bien de caractéristiques concrètes, elle procède aussi largement d'une mise en récit et d'efforts variés de promotion visant à communiquer ces caractéristiques et à les rendre assimilables et crédibles aux yeux des consommateurs. On sait en effet que ceux-ci misent « sur la confiance envers le commerçant ou le producteur qui devient même, dans certains cas,

équivalente et parfois supérieure à la certification […], certains n'hésitant pas à acheter des produits qui ne sont pas certifiés par un organisme, se fiant à la parole du commerçant qu'ils connaissent et avec qui ils peuvent échanger » (Quéniart et al., 2007, p. 187). C'est donc la proximité sociale et géographique des petits commerçants avec les classes moyennes urbaines qui leur permet d'agir comme intermédiaires, assurant en aval une médiation entre les goûts des consommateurs et la nouvelle production locale dont ils se font ainsi les porte-voix. Ils apparaissent de plus en plus influents en dépit de leurs ressources limitées, comme l'a d'ailleurs montré Manon Boulianne dans le cas des filières fromagères qui dépendraient tout autant des circuits courts que des « détaillants spécialisés qui connaissent personnellement les fromagers et fromagères, ainsi que leurs produits et les procédés de fabrication auxquels ils recourent, et qui peuvent en informer la clientèle » (Boulianne, 2010, para. 12).

Il apparaît difficile, au terme de ce survol, de définir a priori et donc d'essentialiser le caractère alternatif tant de la petite production que de la distribution alimentaire. Il est en effet dans la nature de certaines entreprises de croître et d'éventuellement compter parmi les figures dominantes de leurs industries respectives. L'absorption de petits producteurs fromagers par la coopérative *Agropur* (Beauchamp, 1988, p. 243), le rachat de microbrasseries locales comme *Unibroue* par les géants *Sleeman* et *Sapporo* ou encore l'intégration récente des supermarchés ethniques *Adonis* et des boulangeries-pâtisseries *Première Moisson* au sein de *Métro* témoignent de la capacité de la grande distribution à absorber progressivement les petites entités innovantes. Il semble ainsi plus fécond de définir la distribution alimentaire alternative non pas comme le prolongement ou le canal d'écoulement d'une production alimentaire alternative, mais comme étant elle-même une alternative à la grande distribution, de la même manière que la production alternative est une alternative à l'industrie agroalimentaire aujourd'hui dominante. Producteurs et distributeurs alternatifs constituent ainsi deux maillons d'une chaîne qui ne peut donc être qualifiée d'alternative que tant qu'elle s'attache à se démarquer de l'univers de la consommation de masse.

Aborder les différents acteurs du processus de distribution comme composante d'une chaîne, d'un réseau ou d'une filière suppose la prise en compte de chacun des éléments qui composent ces collectifs, de même que la nature et la force des liens qui les unissent. C'est ce que nous avons tenté de faire dans cet article, en examinant les réseaux alimentaires alternatifs du point de vue des petits commerçants urbains. Ce regard particulier est lui-aussi partiel et bénéficierait d'un examen approfondi des interactions survenant entre les détaillants et les consommateurs, notamment pour comprendre comment la confiance est produite sur un temps long, non seulement à travers des dispositifs conscients mais aussi par un ensemble de liens moins strictement économiques de voisinage.

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Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 44–67 May 2017

Canadian Food Studies La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation

Original Research Article

Ecological food practices and identity performance on Cape Breton Island

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Abstract

Globalization often has a disruptive effect on traditional industries and economies. This article investigates localized responses to economic challenges in Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. Traditionally, the island's economy was resource based and centred on fishing and coal mining. Agriculture has always contributed to the island's economy, although concentrated in particular regions; but more recently, promotion of local and ecological food practices has revitalized food production. Using a critical ethnographic approach, I examine Cape Breton's ecological food movement as a cultural practice through which participants—producers, farmers' market vendors, and consumers—articulate local distinction and perform their identities. This study builds on my earlier investigations (2016) into how divergent discourses shape emergent local-ecological food practices in Cape Breton, and attends more closely to farmers' accounts of their experiences. Ecological food initiatives raise critical questions of access, labour, cultural identification, and power relations; however, I argue that they also present cultural, economic, economic, and social opportunities.

Keywords: ecological food; food practices; identity performance; place; Cape Breton

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DOI: 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v4i1.172
ISSN: 2292-3071

Introduction

This study explores the emergence of an ecological food movement on Cape Breton Island during the twenty-first century. In recent decades, a number of farm start-ups have occurred on the island and most of these are small-scale farms practicing organic techniques (MacLeod, 2016). Artisanal methods of food production in Cape Breton can be seen, in part, as a response to economic challenges in a region that has experienced ongoing unemployment and outmigration resulting from declining resource-based industries such as fishing, coal mining, and steel making (MacLeod, 2016). Government representatives and business leaders have identified tourism and agriculture as sectors for potential expansion. Ecological food initiatives contribute to developments in both sectors through farmers' markets, food festivals, and restaurant offerings that are promoted to tourists and local residents. Alternative food practices—such as growing heritage seed varieties, using artisanal methods to produce honey and cheese, and raising free-range chicken, pork, and beef—also reflect broader local and ecological interests in the twenty-first century. As a lifelong resident of Cape Breton, a consumer of local-organic food, and a cultural critic, my goal is to understand this movement and its significance for food producers and local communities in this region.

Farmers in Cape Breton come from a range of backgrounds, including lifelong inhabitants as well as residents who have relocated from other regions. All farms on Cape Breton Island are relatively small-scale and incorporate some traditional methods such as pasturing livestock. Commodity producers, however, use conventional agricultural products such as chemical fertilizers and commercial feed that ecological producers reject as harmful to livestock, natural environments, and human health. My study focuses on the specific subgroup of farmers who use traditional techniques and provide natural diets—through free-range conditions—for their livestock. What does the ecological food movement look like in this region? How do people self-identify with this movement and how do they create a distinctive culture (Beagan, Power, & Chapman, 2015; Johnston, Szabo, & Rodney, 2011)?

Ecological food practices tend to uphold discourses that critique the industrial food system and promote local, organic, and fair trade foods as tastier, healthier, more environmentally sustainable, and more socially equitable than mass-produced foods sold in commercial grocery outlets (Lynch & Giles, 2013; Pilgeram, 2012; Shugart, 2014). *Local*-ecological food discourses deepen this discourse by illuminating the mutually dependent relationships between producers and consumers, and among people, animals, and natural environments (Aucoin & Fry, 2015; Feagan, 2007; Glowacki-Dudka, Murray & Isaacs, 2012; Sumner & Wever, 2015). These intricate associations give rise to overlapping identifications that intermingle and transform one another as people engage with notions of health, community, and political activism. For example, interest in healthy eating encourages advocacy for local autonomy, animal welfare, and environmental protection. Public and commercial engagement with these issues, in turn, enhances communal bonds and advances alternative economies. In this manner, local acts—intentionally or unintentionally—contribute to larger movements for social

and economic change. I am interested in exploring how these developments unfold and how people describe the significance of their activities.

All food discourses embody moral and ethical dimensions that shape perceptions of people and their food habits (deSolier, 2013). Associations with food are central to the construction of individual and collective identities: distinctive tastes and foodways serve as indications of character, collective belonging, and social status. Existing research demonstrates that ecological food initiatives raise critical questions of access, labour, cultural identification, and power relations (Pilgeram, 2011; Slocum, 2007). My study attends to the moral aspects of identity performance and to ethical issues of status and class positioning that underlie ecological food practices. In other words, I examine how local-organic food practices shape notions of selfhood, and delineate boundaries of cultural difference that embody judgments of respectability, responsibility, and discernment.

Yet, importantly, ecological food practices also present opportunities. Sustainable farming and fishing activities contribute to local economies and support offshoot industries such as restaurants and culinary tourism—developments that are crucially important in Cape Breton to offset unemployment and outmigration. Involvement in ecological food practices also offers personal and social benefits, contributing to individual wellbeing, communal bonds, and cultural resilience. The collaborative efforts of multiple stakeholders can foster relationships and enrich cultural autonomy within rural communities. Taken together, these economic and social benefits offer ways to sustain localities, protect natural environments, and enact meaningful individual and collective identities (Glowacki-Dudka et al., 2012; Sims, 2009; Tiemann, 2008).

Methodology

I used a *critical ethnographic* approach to understand the meanings of ecological food practices in processes of identity construction among local organic food producers. Critical ethnography involves detailed analysis of cultural practices to deconstruct ideology and value transparency, revealing power relations and injustices while arguing for more equitable social and economic arrangements (Madison, 2005). I engaged in interviews and participant observation to understand the ways in which ecological farmers negotiate their identities and advance an alternative food politics through their involvement in Cape Breton's local-organic food movement. I chose these methods of data collection because they align with my objectives of accessing food producers' accounts of their experiences and exploring the significance—personal and political—of ecological food practices in this particular region at this particular time (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; Lofland & Lofland, 1995). A critical ethnographic lens enabled me to link expressed and observed "facts" in light of values and to reflect on my cultural positioning and its role in this analysis (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; Madison, 2005; VanMaanen, 1988).

To examine alternative food practices in Cape Breton, I conducted in-depth, unstructured interviews with 14 farmers who practice a range of ecological food production methods such as

using organic fertilizers and pesticides (compost, manure, companion planting, crop rotation, etc.), planting heritage seed varieties, minimizing mechanization, and raising free-range chickens, beef, lamb, and pork. Four participants had direct familial connections to the island while others had relocated from other regions. One respondent was a hobby gardener who shares her produce with neighbours and friends; another participant was a local food advocate and farmers' market manager; all others were market farmers who sold their products farm-gate, at farmers' market venues, or through the Cape Breton Food Hub. Four respondents had spouses who worked off-farm or collected a pension that supplemented their household incomes. All of my respondents were conscientious consumers who avoid processed foods and source local-organic ingredients for their households. During interviews, I asked my respondents to describe their involvements in ecological food, their reasons for engaging in alternative food practice, and the rewards and challenges of their efforts. I also asked them about their clientele and their food consumption habits. I invited all respondents to provide any pertinent information or insights that I had not requested. In closing, I asked interviewees to suggest additional participants for my research. I transcribed each interview and coded participants' responses to identify important themes, shared experiences and opinions, individual standpoints, unusual occurrences, and discrepancies.

My initial contact was a local food advocate who manages a farmers' market and worked as the principal organizer for the Pan-Cape Breton Food Hub Co-op, which distributes locally produced foods to consumers across the island. This individual provided me with a list of potential informants and subsequent interviews proceeded through snowball sampling. Close relationships among ecological farmers—and my acquaintance with some of these individuals through my ecological food consumption—made this method highly effective for my purposes and many respondents encouraged their friends and associates to participate in my study. Although some ecological farmers in Cape Breton are lifelong island inhabitants, local-organic food producers have wide-ranging backgrounds. Some had lived briefly in Cape Breton or had extended family in the region and returned to raise their children after attending university or working elsewhere. Others had no familial attachments but moved to the island as young parents or retirees to live close to the land. My study focuses on this diverse group of farmers who chose to farm ecologically in Cape Breton. These interviews are ongoing as I further develop my investigations to enhance my understanding of place-making and explore the possibilities and limitations of culinary tourism in this region.

In addition to conducting interviews, I engaged in participant observation, visiting workshops, farmers' markets, food festivals, and other spaces where local-ecological foods are promoted and celebrated. In these spaces, I observed interactions between food vendors and consumers; purchased organically grown foods; conversed with farmers about their work and the significance of ecological food practices; listened to public talks about food issues and alternative food movements; and learned how to ferment vegetables, plant container gardens, identify and forage for native food plants, and chop a whole chicken into various pieces including boneless chicken breast.

Throughout my analysis, I use the terms "local-organic" and "ecological" to refer to foods produced on small-scale farms using traditional methods, and marketed in venues such as farmers' markets, farm-gate sales, and CSAs (community supported agriculture). My goal is to understand how ecological food practices shape identities for these cultural participants and how their activities enhance notions of place, enrich rural communities, and contribute to local economies. Many of my respondents began farming for personal reasons such as concerns for their family's health or a desire to work independently and out-of-doors. Over time, they became more politically aware and critical of the industrial food system and its destructive consequences for humanity, animals, and natural environments. My investigations thus centre on how the personal and political overlap and how local practices can have greater significance.

Findings

During encounters with ecological food participants in Cape Breton, I learned that local-organic producers come from a range of cultural and regional backgrounds and have varied reasons for engaging in local-organic food practices. Most of my respondents stated their preferences for rural living and for independent, outdoor work. Many also identified personal health concerns as a main reason for their initial involvement in ecological food. A significant number of participants stated that health concerns became increasingly important when they began planning their families, and many respondents emphasized the importance of healthy, safe environments for raising their children.

Personal reasons for engaging in ecological food practices often extended to wider concerns about environmental protection, animal welfare, and local autonomy. I discovered that local-organic food producers in Cape Breton are knowledgeable and engaged community members who participate in food workshops, organize community garden projects, and support initiatives such as farmers' markets and the Pan Cape Breton Food Hub—activities that link producers and consumers and enhance collective affiliations. These ecological food practices serve as sources of identity and offer particular ways of demonstrating that one is a good person and an engaged community member. Commitment to local-organic food can also serve as a marker of discriminating taste that distinguishes those who recognize and appreciate wholesome, delicious food from those whose diets contain mostly processed ingredients.

Cape Breton's alternative food movement is an emergent practice; however, this development is expanding through the efforts of its participants. Limited availability and comparatively higher prices for ecological food invite a clientele of relatively affluent and well educated consumers, but my respondents were acutely aware of this inequity and expressed a sincere desire to make their products affordable while ensuring adequate compensation for farmers. They emphasized the contributions—actual and potential—of alternative food practices to the island's economy. Ultimately, this study revealed that marginal practices have broad

significance: local-organic food initiatives can enrich communities and illuminate possibilities for building local economies.

The following sections offer my account of unfolding events in Cape Breton, as I learned from my research. I explore how people embraced alternative food discourses to connect food to their identities. I also reflect on the various ways that ecological food practices shaped people's understandings of place through associations with economy, geography, culture, and traditionalism. My significant findings included evidence of "moral selfhood" and of links between personal concerns and political acts. Importantly, these developments brought to light the class dimensions of food practices and the ways in which alternative food movements reinforce and challenge prevailing class differences.

Connecting food to identity

Theoretical context: Foucault and Bourdieu

I frame my discussion of identity within existing research on this topic. Questions of selfhood are ancient in origin and fundamental to humanity but become predominant concerns for cultural participants in late capitalist, postindustrial societies characterized by neoliberalism, consumerism, and individualism (deSolier, 2013, p. 164). Michel Foucault (1998) describes *technologies of the self* as the various practices through which individuals perform identities that express culturally established understandings of qualities such as integrity, productivity, achievement, and happiness. Attending to performance reveals identities as self- constituted and self-constituting—constructed through social interactions and influenced by prevailing arrangements.

Because food is intimately embodied and fundamentally social, food practices operate as important technologies of the self that offer ways to perform identities, sustain relationships, and define cultural boundaries (Beagan & Chapman, 2015; deSolier, 2013; Pilgeram, 2012; Slocum, 2007). Shared food practices delineate ethnic, regional, and national affiliations while divergent tastes and culinary traditions are fundamental indicators of cultural difference (Bourdieu, 1984; Fischer, 1988). Food traditions contribute to the formation of *habitus*, the deeply ingrained and enduring affinities, abilities, and patterns of behaviour that differentiate cultural groups within a society.

Development of habitus is an unconscious social process shaped by experiences and structural arrangements but adapted over time as individuals act within changing circumstances. Food practices are thus power laden: taste, etiquette, and culinary knowledge are forms of cultural capital that demarcate class distinctions and sustain social hierarchies (Beagan, Power, & Chapman, 2015; Bourdieu, 1984).

Our associations with food, then, are complex cultural productions that are not necessarily empowering but that nonetheless offer possibilities for negotiating meaningful forms

of identity and community. Food practices take on ethical and political dimensions when people engage in alternative practices to resist the industrial food system and promote values of environmental protection, animal welfare, and social justice. In this study I explored these complexities to understand how participants in ecological food practices on Cape Breton Island create moral selves and perform regional and class identities through such activities as gardening, free-range farming, direct selling in community markets, and consuming local, organic foods.

Discourses of the alternative food movement in Cape Breton

The expansion of ecological food practices in Cape Breton is observable in the emergence of numerous, small-scale farms that follow traditional and organic techniques (MacLeod, 2016). Most of these farms are not "certified organic" and many actively resist certification for various reasons, including the cost and inconvenience of regulations and the corporatization of "organic" foods. Martin Aucoin and Matthew Fry (2015) argue that alternative food movements have undergone a shift from political activism to resist the industrial food system to a "quality-driven movement that focuses on values, relationships and methods surrounding production, distribution, and consumption of food" (p. 63). Cape Breton Island's ecological food movement reflects this transition, embodying political dimensions but advancing its politics through appeals to the social and economic benefits of participating in local food systems. For ecological producers, the distinction between organic and conventional practices is of central concern even when conventional foods are locally grown.

Participants in Cape Breton's alternative food movement invoked discourses of consumer autonomy, health, and community development in describing their relationship to food and reasons for engaging in local-organic practices. These discourses intersected and overlapped with varying emphases as individuals envisioned and enacted their identities. The discourse of consumer autonomy emphasizes individual accountability for making responsible and ethical food choices (Smithers, Lamarche & Joseph, 2008), although this discourse does not typically address corporate power and economic disparities that limit consumers' ability to choose responsibly (Guthman, 2008; Lynch & Giles, 2013).

The discourse of health similarly shapes notions of *moral selfhood*, encouraging individuals to engage in ecological food practices to safeguard physical and emotional wellbeing (Beagan & Chapman, 2015; Biltekoff, 2013; Shugart, 2014). Moral selfhood refers to dimensions of the self that are judged—by oneself and others—as principled and praiseworthy. This health discourse frequently becomes an ethical one when participants describe their commitment to ecological food as a demonstration of caring for others—family members, local food producers, the broader community—and acting to ensure animal welfare and environmental sustainability (Smithers, Lamarche & Joseph, 2008). Yet definitions of health, too, are culturally constructed and discourses of healthful eating acutely embody class connotations. Health is a

"moral discourse" that articulates and affirms established understandings of what constitutes a good person or an upstanding citizen (Biltekoff, 2013)

Discourses of community development were particularly prominent in discussions of ecological food in Cape Breton, a factor that may reflect the island's history of economic instability and unemployment. Ecological food practices offer participants ways to perform their identities through productive and ethical forms of activity. In performing their identities through associations with food, ecological food producers in Cape Breton engage in place-making, defining Cape Breton as a particular type of locality and affirming their attachment to it (Schnell, 2013). My respondents described their connection to the land, along with the possibilities and challenges they face in adapting to local weather patterns and natural environments. Their materially productive work corresponds with traditional sources of identification on the island such as employment in the fishery and coal-mining, and with less economically important pursuits—such as sport fishing, hunting, and berry-picking—that remain popular pastimes in the region. These pursuits are not central to local economies but have commercial value when promoted as tourist attractions or marketed through farm-gate sales, restaurants, and other venues. My respondents' descriptions exemplify how ecological food practices sustain enduring identifications with rural places and nurture connections to local environments, economies, and communities.

Connections to place

Economy, geography, and place

My conversations with ecological food participants highlight the significance of local-organic food movements for authenticating locality in response to social and economic change. The importance of place and "the local" intensifies when regions lose their sense of identity (Feagan, 2007), a collective experience in Cape Breton following the disappearance of cod-fishing and coal-mining industries and the commodification of local culture through increasing tourism promotion. Economic upheaval destabilizes traditional identities but local food systems—including local food tourism initiatives—can become powerful symbols of regional identities and cultural distinction (Feagan, 2007). On the other hand, ecological food practices bring people together and provide intimate knowledge of local climates and environments that contributes to understandings of and identification with geographic locales. Kathy and Craig described Cape Breton as a safe, wholesome place for raising children with its slow pace of life, traditional values, and extended social networks. Yet their comments also depicted the island as an unlikely place for farming that demands physical and mental strength to cope with an inhospitable climate and infertile soils:

> *Kathy:* we got to raise our kids here in Cape Breton, which was a wonderful thing… I enjoy the work; it's forever challenging you,

> physically, mentally. You never have all the answers, you're always learning, you're always trying to figure out what you did wrong and doing it better next year… It's really, really hard work but the seasons all bring something new and even winter when things are much, much slower, it gives you a chance to recharge and do some reading and do some research and plan and that's what I find satisfying about it I guess…
>
> *Craig:* [T]here is no soil or virtually none. We had to build our gardens with manure and sheep composting and stuff like that. This place is all clay with about that much sod on top and so it grows grass like crazy. When I first came here it was trees as high as this ceiling here—hawthorns and wild apples and spruce trees—so I mowed those down and then once we put animals onto it the grass started coming back and with chickens out there fertilizing things it got a good *whoomf* and off it went. As far as grass goes it's good but for the rest of it we have to pretty well build gardens with compost.

Other respondents offered similar descriptions and remarked that Cape Breton's varied and abundant grasses provide an excellent environment for grass-fed cattle and other grazing animals, but ruefully acknowledged that conditions are less favourable for other types of agriculture (Farmer 1, June 25, 2015; Farmer 4, April 28, 2015).

Cultural dimensions of place

Geographic attributes intermingle with cultural qualities to define places. A significant percentage of Cape Breton's ecological food participants relocated to the island from areas with vibrant local organic food cultures. For these individuals, involvement in Cape Breton's local food movement provided a way to sustain a coherent sense of self while relocating to an unfamiliar geographic space. Shelly, a hobby gardener and committed ecological food consumer, demonstrated this desire to maintain established food practices after moving to Cape Breton from British Columbia. She described her relocation as a significant contributing factor in her interests in gardening and ecological food. In comparison to the variety of local and organic foods in British Columbia, Shelly discovered that the availability of fresh foods in Cape Breton was quite limited. Her dissatisfaction with Cape Breton's food choices is common among Canadians who relocate to Nova Scotia from urban centres and are disappointed to discover the high cost of food and inadequate selection in the region (Beagan & Chapman, 2015, pp. 179-185).

Cape Breton's reduced range of food choices results from many factors, including poor soil, remote location, and a short growing season. Rural localities such as the Annapolis Valley on mainland Nova Scotia have abundant fresh fruits and vegetables for much of the year but even these areas lack access to cosmopolitan cuisines. Halifax offers more food choices than

those found in rural communities—particularly for dining out— but available options are few in comparison to cities such as Toronto and Vancouver (Beagan & Chapman, 2015, p. 172). Newcomers' dissatisfaction suggests different tastes and expectations among urban and rural residents that give rise to differing perceptions of urban and rural places. Urban areas are typically defined as cultured and cosmopolitan while rural areas, in comparison, are picturesque and homogeneous (Beagan & Chapman, 2015; Beagan, Power & Chapman, 2015; Thorpe, 2012; Everett, 2009).

Yet Shelly, like other participants in this study, did not express this view; to the contrary, my respondents emphasized the advantages of open fields, natural pollinators, and a moderate climate for expanding local-organic food production in Cape Breton (Farmer 1, June 25 2015; Farmers 5 & 6, July 21, 2016; Farmer 7, August 15, 2016; Farmer 8 August 16, 2016). In contrast to studies of foodie cultures and culinary tourism that suggest urban dwellers appreciate the pristine landscapes and traditional values of rural localities but disdain the unsophisticated tastes and limited experiences of rural inhabitants, my respondents' views may reflect their identification as producers as well as consumers of ecological food.

Place and rural traditionalism

Helen, in particular, has embraced the island's rural traditionalism and stated that experiencing Cape Breton's folkloric culture shaped and enriched her subsequent outlook and activities. Reflecting on this experience thirty-three years later, she presented a vivid depiction of place:

> I first came to Cape Breton to study Gaelic so when I was 22, I came out here as just a summer student… And I was so engaged not only with the language and traditions, which were significant then, they were still living, there was still a living tradition… but I also got to live in Cape Breton when the vast majority of people were practicing that sort of rural self-sufficiency style of farming. There were some commercial farms but the normal way of living was to be self-sufficient and it was not a largely cash economy…even in 1982 there was a lot of either barter or well you cut your own wood, all that kind of thing. And there was still a lot of men that farmed with horses, there were women that made their own cheese and did their own weaving, that knew about plants for doing dying, you know all that stuff. That was still not a kind of romantic conceit for a hippy-back-to-the-lander. That was part of an unbroken, living, traditional culture. So I got to see that at a time when it was still part of Cape Breton… And I was really captivated by the intersection of folk culture if you like and the scientific understanding of agriculture and things like that (April 28, 2015).

After several years as a market gardener in Ontario, Helen moved back to Cape Breton to farm but discovered that hybrid varieties fared poorly in the island's environmental conditions. Her efforts to produce viable crops in Cape Breton led to experiments with heritage seed varieties and participation in organizations that oppose genetically modified foods and advocate for local control and farmer sovereignty. Thus attachment to and practice in a remote, rural place has encouraged forms of activism with more wide-spread significance.

Moral selfhood

In describing their activities and identifications, my respondents revealed food as a medium through which they expressed autonomy, resourcefulness, diligence, and taste, along with concern for animals and natural environments. Preference for locally, ecologically produced food was often instilled in childhood through family values and habits. In adulthood, these individuals transmitted these attitudes and behaviours to their own children. Local food advocate and farmers' market manager, Naomi, explained how her family background shapes her participation in Cape Breton's ecological food movement:

> So I guess to start at the beginning, my parents were homesteaders that moved here from the US so I was kind of raised on subsistence farming, off the grid sort of bizarre family (laughs). So in that way, food and food production and organic practices have always just been part of life. And I've always gardened through my whole adult life… (August 21, 2013).

An appreciation for the rewards and challenges facing ecological producers and a desire to make local-organic food more mainstream has encouraged Naomi's advocacy and involvement in such developments as the Pan Cape Breton Food Hub.

Childhood experience—including family values and growing up in a region where local farm produce is available and affordable—contributed significantly to many respondents' tastes, practices, and attitudes toward food (Farmer 1, June 25, 2015; Farmer 6, July 21, 2016; Farmer 7, August 15, 2016; Farmers 8 & 9, August 16, 2016). Shelly's desire for more and healthier food choices encouraged her to experiment with a small backyard vegetable garden, an undertaking that has become her passion. Through trial and error, she developed significant skills and proudly shares the bounty of her garden with neighbours and friends. She described the benefits of participating in ecological food production as profoundly personal:

> I just have so much joy when I grow my own food; I want to share that, it just gives me so much pleasure… what I have now is a kitchen garden so the number one reward for me is how I feel when I'm gardening. Like it's the same as if I have a great yoga

> class or something like that. It's that feeling of just relaxation, some kind of accomplishment (June 5, 2014).

Her emphasis on pleasure as central to her experience with ecological food practices is not trivial; on the contrary, the pleasurable experience of producing and consuming local-organic food is fundamental to its political potency. Amory Starr (2010) maintains that alternative food movements are unique in their use of pleasure to encourage participation. The emotional and material rewards of growing and eating fresh, wholesome food and of building social relationships encourages people to voluntarily assume the work of producing and consuming ecologically. Like Shelly, many of my respondents spoke about the gratifications of outdoor work, tasty food, and newfound friendships. Their comments evoke the fundamental sociality of food practices, illuminating how associations with ecological food overlap with related histories of conviviality through such activities as home-cooking (whether or not those activities are ecological).

Shelly's comments also defined gardening and sharing the bounties of harvest as a moral undertaking through which she affirms her connections to family and community members. She suggested that meaningful assessments of economic stability must include non-economic factors such as quality of life that enrich individual and collective experience:

> I think that the economic value [of growing your own food] is definitely not as quantifiable as producing food to sell at a market but what I'm interested in maybe is quality of life, what value does that have in a community? Longevity and overall physical and mental health, what kind of economic value does that have?... So by growing all my greens this spring…I managed to connect with ten or fifteen people in my community that I didn't know before who are growers which led me to being a part of the [Cape Breton University] garden, so making these connections has a huge benefit, not direct economic benefit but I think that is the future of our culture. I mean we can't sustain this growth forever, there's no way, so we have to use these other markers as our markers of success I guess, like health markers and that kind of stuff (June 5, 2014).

Shelly did not see health, longevity, and community participation in quantifiable terms although economists routinely calculate the value of these life experiences. Through gardening, she has enhanced personal wellbeing, built social relationships, and nurtured the ecosystem of her local community. Gardening offered a form of productive activity that subtly resisted consumerist values. She expressed awareness of environmental issues but emphasized that personal and social rewards—including economic savings—were more important to her than political issues:

> I know that what we're paying for is the cost of [food] shipping…. and that just kind of makes me angry. So it's more a cost issue and it's impractical for our food to be coming across the continent when we can just make it here or grow it here. I don't know that I have any huge wider environmental—I don't know; I feel a little guilty saying that—but that's less important to me than the local benefits and the personal benefits of gardening….

The moral dimensions of food practices thus can be distinct from larger concerns invoked in ethical food discourses such as those of animal welfare and environmental stewardship (Beagan & Chapman, 2015). Yet Shelly's comments illustrated that moral and ethical positions overlap in complex ways:

> I'm pretty proud of myself that I didn't have to buy any of my greens at Sobeys. I know Sobeys is a Maritime business and everything but…I'm happy when I can grow my greens that maybe are grown in the States, like collards and stuff like that, we get from the States. Well I don't have to do that because I can grow them in my garden so it's one little way that I can do my part or whatever…. I know that one person growing kale in their backyard isn't going to make a difference but I think it is spreading awareness little by little. I'm definitely, in case you haven't noticed, more interested in the very grassroots level.

Political acts

Shelly's focus on growing fresh food to provide for her own household differed from other respondents' efforts to earn a living and intervene in the industrial food system. Yet her appreciation for the personal and social benefits of gardening was shared among ecological producers, as was her recognition of intersecting personal and political concerns. In fact, most ecological producers cited personal concerns as the initial motivation for experimenting with ecological techniques, but emphasized that their views had become more politicized over time (Farmers 2 & 3, October 25, 2014; Farmer 5, July 21, 2016; Farmer 7, August 15, 2016; Farmers 8 & 9, August 16, 2016). Craig and Kathy began raising free-range chicken when Kathy became pregnant with their first child:

> His background is in geology and I'm an elementary school teacher so we kind of fell into it, learned as we went…[Our daughter] is turning 23 and we were expecting her when we got started. And that was one of the reasons we got started was, you know, granola mom gotta be eating just the right foods while I'm pregnant and so we started raising a few chickens on our own and

> then the neighbours asked us to raise a few and family and it just it kept growing and growing from there (October 25, 2014).

Kathy's self-identification as a "granola mom" suggested an understanding of selfhood—as environmentally and socially aware and committed to eating natural foods—sustained and performed through free-range, organic farming. Her concerns about food quality and personal health aroused interest in others' welfare that engendered her political awareness and community involvement:

> I guess that's our primary reason is we want to be eating good food; we want to be supplying good food and it kind of grew out of that. I've gotten more involved in some of the community gardens, the politics of growing local, and getting people back to eating real food, cooking real food since then. Certainly our primary reason was for the food we were eating ourselves and it's kind of become a bit of a mission since then (laughs).

Personal and social concerns in turn led to enhanced awareness of animal welfare and environmental issues. As Craig explained, "That's when—especially for the chickens and the pigs—the way they're raised is just horrible. So that's one of the reasons we started raising our own and we've become more militant about that (laughs)" (October 25, 2014). Kathy echoed this view, stating that interest in healthy eating, which motivated her family's free-range, organic farming techniques, extended to concerns about inhumane animal treatment and destruction of natural environments. This activist stance shapes their involvement in food production and their household consumption habits:

> [A]nd it's the same thing, sourcing the stuff that we don't grow ourselves. I will buy beef from other producers that I know how they're raising their animals, how they're treating the animals and that that animal had a good life but eating out, I don't order any of the dishes that, you know, I pretty much go vegetarian when we're eating out. I don't buy any of our meats in a conventional grocery store.

Thus identification with overlapping discourses of health, animal welfare, and environmental sustainability has encouraged forms of identity performance that express a lifestyle committed to ecological food. Both Craig and Kathy stated that raising their children in rural Cape Breton, adapting to cycles of nature, and engaging in physically and mentally challenging work were substantial rewards of farming. They also emphasized the significance of ecological food practices for building relationships that enhance communities:

> *Kathy:* We've got a really loyal customer base; we lose a few people you know each year from people moving away or downsizing their family or for a variety of reasons but … our customers bring us more customers every year too and we kind of like having that wide base…it's nice to have a lot of different customers (Oct 25, 2014)
> *Craig:* I felt satisfied when that guy came up the other day and said I had some of your lamb last night and it's the best lamb I've ever tasted in my life. Now that makes you feel good. And we've met an incredible number of really good people
> *Kathy:* Really wonderful people
> *Craig:* Close friends and stuff like that so I guess the rewards aren't monetary but still we made a living…

Bonds of community established through ecological food practices offset—and even outweighed—the modest income rewards of this endeavor.

For Kathy, university education and professional employment as a teacher provided a secure pension that eased the financial uncertainty of acting in accordance with her ethical and political values. This cultural and economic positioning was not unusual among the ecological food producers that I interviewed. Nine of my respondents held university degrees and four practiced farming as a supplementary source of income offset by one partner's higher paying professional salary or pension. They acknowledged that their involvement in farming would be difficult or impossible without their additional financial resources, but their commitment was nonetheless evident in their willingness to perform challenging labour and incur expenses that constrained rather than enhanced their economic circumstances.

The political stakes for ecological food producers were particularly demonstrated in their comments regarding organic certification. Farmers criticized unnecessary fees, restrictive regulation, and corporatization of the term "organic" as serious impediments for small-scale farmers with slim profit margins. Costs for certification are reflected in high prices for foods labelled "organic" that make these products unavailable to consumers with limited incomes. Most respondents emphasized the importance of challenging the industrial food system and making ecological food more mainstream; however, one farmer suggested that conventional and ecological farming are complementary rather than oppositional practices. In his view, the uniqueness and authenticity of artisan products justifies their high price and promoting these foods to affluent consumers creates a market niche for small-scale producers practicing traditional methods:

> I've found a good kind of middle ground, like, I don't go to farmer's markets anymore just because I'm too busy making cheese… So last summer I think I was doing five farmers' markets and my cheese was suffering because all I was doing was driving. So I'm not against farmers' markets; I think they're great. I think

> what people should be looking at, they should be looking at their pricing and not out-pricing themselves…. They should actually be looking at the value of their product, the time that they put in, and what they should be selling it for. If you can explain to your customer 'this is what it cost me to do this' they don't mind paying…. [So] I would go 'I'm in this category; I'm going to concentrate in the fine cheese category and making the best product that I possibly can and whatever the market can bear, that's what I'm going to be charging (Farmer 1, June 25, 2015).

This respondent described himself as a professional chef, a business owner/manager, and an artisan farmer producing a unique, high quality product. He emphasized the importance of enhancing farmers' incomes and distanced himself from the political objectives of many alternative food movements:

> Costs are all over the place and because small farms have small purchasing power… you know how should these guys be making more money off their farms is more interesting to me than doing some of the other stuff because it gets very political and it becomes about issues not related to making money, of surviving doing this.

He acknowledged that his views differ from those of most ecological producers and attributed this difference to his background as a business owner and his family's cultural capital and financial stability. In particular, his educational and professional experiences, combined with his wife's professional occupation, were advantageous for navigating bureaucratic policies and managing the family's farming and cheese-making operations. This farmer defended regulations as safeguards against unethical and potentially dangerous farming practices. Working within the system rather than attempting to change it was an unusual perspective among my respondents, but all ecological producers emphasized the importance of traditionally produced, high-quality foods and of adequately compensating small-scale farmers for their labour. Several respondents also discussed the need for consumer education to ensure safe food handling of organically produced foods (Local Food Advocate, August 21, 2013; Farmers 2 & 3, October 25, 2014; Farmers 5 & 6, July 21, 2016).

When I explicitly asked if marketing artisan cheese was an ethical undertaking, this farmer downplayed ethics but offered a thoughtful explanation that highlights the entanglement of personal and ethical viewpoints:

> No, for me it's the quality of the product first; that was always our goal. The ethical and the ecological to me are more important to myself so that just kind of comes through anyway about how we farm and how the ones that we support farm. I am never going to go for organic status because if I have an animal that's ill and I'm

> not allowed to treat it because I may lose my certification? That certification didn't mean anything to me because that animal is not going to die if I can do anything about it. And then all of a sudden Walmart has organic; I'm like this doesn't mean the paper it's written on.

Importantly, this perspective is not unethical but articulates a "complementary" medical position that balances practices to ensure animal welfare. Like many respondents in my study, this farmer criticized overuse of antibiotics but argued that allowing animals to suffer in order to comply with organic policies is equally unethical. The compromise he described arises in many life situations, including when people eat nutritiously, exercise, and rely on medical treatment for illnesses and injuries that require such expertise. The complexity of such situations will always raise ethical questions and require individuals to act according to their values and principles.

In addition, his disapproval of organic products sold in Walmart justifiably criticized corporate appropriation of the term "organic" to mislead consumers about the origins of mass-produced foods. This respondent's disdain also may have reflected his desire to distinguish artisan cheese as fine food. From this perspective, ecological producers who market their products in big box stores are selling out to the industrial food system and undermining the integrity of alternative food practices. Yet many ecological producers, including the owner of Stonyfield Organic Yogurt, reject this claim and argue that making organic food mainstream advances their goals of protecting the environment and making ecological food more widely available.[1]

The stakes surrounding organic certification were particularly high for some farmers in my study who stated that the expense and bureaucratic process of maintaining organic status impeded their ability to differentiate their products in order to recover the significant costs of their labour. Canadian regulations prohibit non-certified farmers from using the word "organic" to promote their products, so farmers with varying allegiances to ecological practices often use terms such as "local" and "natural" in order to appeal to customers concerned about taste, personal health, environmental protection, and animal welfare. One farmer stated that ambiguity surrounding farming practices creates misconceptions among consumers that disadvantage farmers with deep ecological commitments:

> [W]e are organic… And we won't pay for the fees…it's a little bit ridiculous …to actually pay all of that money for certification…[so] everyone else we know charges the same thing we do or just slightly under to undercut us actually (laughs)…but they're not organic and it's provable because if people look at the rules… So when you're just trying to be a small farmer and an

[1] In 2001, Danone Incorporated purchased 40% of Stonyfield shares and by December 2003 owned 85% of the company. CEO, Gary Hirshberg, maintains control of Stonyfield but expresses ambivalence about the long-term implications of "selling out" to the global-capitalist food system (Bloomberg 2006, Goodman 2003).

> ethical farmer…the biggest thing is you can't compete—you absolutely just can't compete with those industrial farms. You just can't. You've got your licensing for all the different things to pay for, if you were certified, you've got your certification. Everything that you do is much harder… (Farmer 5, July 21, 2016).

Her comments revealed tensions not only between farmers practicing conventional and alternative methods but also among ecological producers competing for a small market segment. Challenging circumstances for small farmers were compounded by tax regulations and government programs designed to meet the needs of large-scale, conventional food producers:

> Their programs are very difficult; they're very challenging [for a small farm]. The application process requires so much input and you actually have to—their programs are limited in that they'll pay 50%, so you still have to come up with say $1000 to get $1000. So their programs are difficult; I've only been able to successfully use one of them, which worked out okay, I was in favour of it (Farmer 6, July 21, 2016).

Ecological food participants acknowledged government's responsibility to ensure an adequate and safe food supply for their constituents and understood that changing the food system is a complicated and long-term undertaking. Yet they questioned the short-sightedness of supporting mass-produced, genetically modified foods and criticized government policies that privilege corporate interests, particularly when corporate practices endanger public health and natural ecosystems. Farmers also criticized corporations for deceptively marketing cheap, industrially produced foods as "healthy," "natural," and "organic." Most ecological food participants envisioned meaningful change as an incremental process that would ultimately impact global-industrial food practices.

One farmer summed up his hopes for the ecological food movement: "I believe in the slow revolt. You want to change things at a pace that it stays changed. Sudden catastrophic changes don't work but if you get enough people…" (Farmer 6, July 21, 2015). Like other participants in my study, he emphasized the significance of consumer demand in enlarging ecological food production and revolutionizing the prevailing food system, but acknowledged limits to the transformative power of consumer culture such as misleading advertising that obscures the production practices of global capitalist food systems, and high prices for ecologically produced foods that position them as an extravagance for erudite, affluent consumers.

It's all about class

Food producers' depictions of their clientele reflected the fundamental significance of class relations within all food practices. My respondents stated that consumers of local and organic

foods were predominantly—although not exclusively—financially well-off and relatively well educated. Some suggested that quality was often as important—or in some cases more important—to consumers than ecological practices. One farmer stated that consumers are ethically committed but emphasized that quality is the most important factor for most of his clientele. He described his typical customer as:

> Thirty-five to fifty-five, predominantly professionals, mean average income sixty grand plus (laughs). Yeah that's my customer… my second biggest is the under twenty-five kind of hipster kind of crowd. Now those two groups really are where my money is made because it's a high priced item. So 60-some dollars a kilogram so you're not gonna get a lot [of cheese]. But it's gooood… (Farmer 1, June 25, 2015).

Young "hipster" consumers may have not attained the affluence of older professionals but many are white university students whose oppositional perspectives and expectations of social mobility shape their consumption habits and distinguish them from those less aspiring and discerning. For this farmer, the precarious nature of operating a small business and the distinctive qualities of fine cheese justified its premium price, which in turn determined the clientele for such products and enabled these consumers to exhibit status by demonstrating their financial security and refined tastes. In his view, hierarchies of taste that sustain class distinctions are unavoidable and perhaps even acceptable given the uncertain financial circumstances of small farms and the labour-intensive process of producing artisanal foods.

Other respondents offered similar characterizations of their clientele as predominantly white and well educated with relatively high incomes and sophisticated tastes. Their customers were teachers, university professors, healthcare workers, and other professionals. Shelly aligned herself with this demographic as she described participants in local-organic food practices: "I would say, I mean, they're all university educated; it just happens to be my circle of friends. Lots of them are teachers, maybe they're not making a middle-class income but they're squarely middle class in terms of education, their ideas, political ideas, everything like that, absolutely" (June 5, 2014). Her comments evoked the significance of habitus in shaping food preferences and practices. Research suggests that, to a large extent, consumers of ecological food have forms of cultural capital that encourage their distaste for industrially produced foods and economic resources that enable them to purchase local-organic products (Johnston, Szabo, & Rodney, 2011; Pilgeram, 2012). Consumption of ecological food thus offers a way to express membership in a particular group and differentiate oneself from those who do not share its tastes and values.

Gender was a less predictable factor but most respondents agreed that local-organic food appealed more to women than to men, who seemed to follow women's decisions involving food (Farmers 3 & 4, October 25 2014; Local Food Advocate, August 21, 2013). As one farmer laughingly stated, "The vast majority of our customers are women. The husbands sort of get drug (sic) along" (Farmer 3, October 25 2014). Respondents attributed this gender imbalance to

women's roles as caregivers and cooks within the family, responsibilities that make healthy eating a primary concern for many women.

In contrast to consumers' privileged economic standing, the ecological food producers in Cape Breton whom I interviewed were, for the most part, not affluent although, as noted earlier, a significant number of farmers had occupations or pensions to supplement their farm incomes. Those who earned their living by farming became resourceful in adapting to significant economic constraints, yet even these farmers had ecological knowledge and political awareness that conferred cultural capital and complicated their class positioning. Helen took pride in her self-sufficiency and frugality and, during our interview, questioned prevailing notions of "need" and "quality of life":

> Homesteading you're feeding yourself at best; farming you're earning your living from it and there is a distinction there, so you know, we might have all started as homesteaders at one point but sooner or later you give up your day job and you start earning your living from it. There's a large retirement sort of community too but you know, if you've got a great government pension and you want to play at farming, good for you but most of us can't afford that. It's not to say that they're not doing a great job but when you want to offer it as a viable livelihood for a young person you've got to prove that you don't need to go get a government pension before you get to do it; you need to be able to earn a living at it. Yeah, sure, can you make a living at it; I think you can. I think it depends on how you want to do it and I think it depends on the amount of effort you're willing to put in to it…. I mean I do earn my living on the farm. I'm not saying I'm rich but I pay my bills and I guess for a farmer that is kind of rich, you know, and I don't live high. We do an awful lot ourselves, we built our own house for example, but like anything you have to do a cost-benefit analysis between do you have to call the plumber or do you figure out how to do it yourself right (laughs)? But you also have to be very creative… (April 28, 2015).

She maintained that the political and ethical importance of ecological food practices warrants reconsideration of materialistic values, a perspective that was shared among many of my respondents. Importantly, one young farmer in my study had recently resigned from his job to work full-time on the farm with his wife (Farmer 7, August 15, 2016), and another young couple stated that—although one partner was casually employed—they expected in the near future to achieve their goal of earning their income solely by farming (Farmers 8 & 9, August 16, 2016). Cape Breton ecological food participants in this study were acutely aware of the class dimensions of alternative food practices and expressed a desire to make ecological food more affordable and widely available while ensuring adequate incomes for farmers. They emphasized the importance of consumer awareness and collective resistance for critiquing the prevailing food

system and establishing more equitable economic and cultural relations. Studies in other regions have demonstrated similar class contradictions within alternative food movements. These contradictions do not negate the importance of such initiatives but they do underscore the importance of confronting issues of access and inclusion that limit the social and economic benefits of local-organic food practices (Pilgeram, 2011).

Concluding reflections

In the twenty-first century, ecological food movements have increasingly focused on local food initiatives. Many critics have denounced such initiatives as reactionary and exclusionary, but this study builds on scholarship demonstrating that local-ecological food movements can expand possibilities for building meaningful identities and revitalizing communities. My conversations with ecological food participants in Cape Breton revealed how local-organic food practices operate as sources for identity performance and community building in a geographically remote region of Canada that has experienced declining traditional industries and outmigration from rural localities.

Ecological food discourses define local-organic food as healthful, flavorful, environmentally responsible, and beneficial to local economies. Individuals in my study draw on these discourses to perform their identities in ways that validate their sense of being a good person, community member, and citizen, while also positioning them within overlapping and nuanced class affiliations. Embracing ecological food can be a way to distinguish oneself from those less culturally refined or economically advantaged. Yet, for many local-organic food participants, concern for taste, quality, and personal health encourages political and ethical awareness of issues surrounding animal welfare, ecological relations, community autonomy, and social justice.

Local food discourses authenticate attachments to place, an awareness and validation that is particularly important in rural regions—such as Cape Breton—facing social and economic challenges. Through their involvement in alternative food practices, my respondents defined Cape Breton as a rewarding place to live and work, and demonstrated that alternatives to the industrial food system can enhance individual and collective experience. Steven Schnell (2013) argues that place based activism is essential for envisioning and enacting meaningful, lasting change in a globalized world. Thus local food initiatives are not necessarily defensive and exclusionary; to the contrary, they foreground the importance of participatory practices and present alternatives to the industrial food system. Developments such as local food movements are forms of place-making through which people reconnect with their communities and natural environments. Identifying with and caring about “this place” and “this locality” encourages caring about places in general that enhances possibilities for establishing more equitable social and economic relations (Schnell, 2013, p. 82).

In Cape Breton, I have argued, involvement in ecological food is a strategy for validating rural identifications, building autonomous communities, advancing alternative economies, and nurturing responsible relationships with the natural world. My respondents' activities illuminate the ways in which personal concerns relate to political issues and affirm that local actions can contribute to broader efforts for meaningful social and economic change.

This study foregrounds the significance of Cape Breton's local-organic food movement by focusing on farmers' own accounts of their experiences and identifications. Nevertheless, my investigations are limited by their particularity, and my findings do not represent the experiences and perspectives of all ecological food participants in Cape Breton or in other regions. In addition, local-organic food practices include a range of activities that are beyond the scope of this study and, importantly, a more comprehensive analysis of Cape Breton's alternative food movement would examine efforts to establish environmentally responsible fishing methods. Investigations into policy changes and culinary tourism also would create a more complete picture of the opportunities and challenges facing ecological food participants in Cape Breton. Consequently, building on existing research to reveal the complexities of local developments brings the potential to assist ecological food initiatives in other locales.

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Personal Interviews

To respect participants' privacy, all interviewees are identified by pseudonyms in this study.
Farmer 1. Interview with author. June 25, 2015.
Farmer 2. Interview with author. October 25, 2014.
Farmer 3. Interview with author. October 25, 2014.
Farmer 4. Interview with author. April 28, 2015.
Farmer 5. Interview with author. July 21, 2016.
Farmer 6. Interview with author. July 21, 2016.
Farmer 7. Interview with Author. August 15, 2016.
Farmer 8. Interview with Author. August 16, 2016.
Farmer 9. Interview with Author. August 16, 2016.
Hobby Gardener & Ecological Food Consumer. Interview with author. June 5, 2014.
Local Food Advocate. Interview with Author. August 21, 2013.

Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 68–86 May 2017

Canadian Food Studies La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation

Original Research Article

Organic vs. local: Comparing individualist and collectivist motivations for "ethical" food consumption

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Abstract

We extend prior research on "ethical" food consumption by examining how motivations can vary across demographic groups and across types of ethical foods simultaneously. Based on a survey of food shoppers in Toronto, we find that parents with children under the age of 5 are most likely to report intention to purchase organic foods and to be primarily motivated by health and taste concerns. In contrast, intention to purchase local food is motivated by collectivist concerns—the environment and supporting the local economy—and is associated with educated, White, women consumers. In addition to highlighting this distinction in motivations for organic vs. local food consumption, we also argue that the predominant "individualist" and "collectivist" framing in the scholarly literature should be reformulated to accommodate an intermediate motivation. Organic food consumption is often motivated by a desire to consume for others (e.g. children) in ways that are neither straightforwardly individualist nor collectivist, but rather exemplify a caring motivation that is intermediate between the two.

Keywords: ethical consumption; organic food; local food; consumer motivations; caring consumption

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DOI: 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v4i1.191
ISSN: 2292-3071

Introduction

The *ethical consumer* features prominently in modern discourse on citizenship and morality. A much-studied, often-critiqued, and often-praised practice, ethical consumption is alternately termed "green consumerism" (Schuitema & De Groot, 2015), "sustainable consumption" (Lundblad & Davies, 2016), or conscious consumption (Willis & Schor, 2012). It refers to consumption that is thought to simultaneously pursue two distinct classes of motivations. On the one hand, ethical consumption, like consumption writ large, pursues individual goals and desires. On the other hand, it marries these self-oriented motivations with a desire to pursue "sustainability and social harmony" (Johnston, 2008), or reflect "personal and moral beliefs" (Crane & Matten, 2003). Ethical consumption, then, pursues both individualist motivations and collectivist motivations (Schrank & Running, 2016).[1]

Increasingly, scholars are turning to the domain of food shopping to understand the motivations and contradictions of the ethical consumer. Two common types of ethical foods are organic and local. In much of the popular discourse for local and organic foods, individualist and collectivist motivations are framed not as competing, but as complementary. That is, consumers bring both individualist and collectivist ideals to bear on their purchasing decisions. Surprisingly little research compares motivations to consume organic and local foods by asking participants about these forms of ethical consumption simultaneously. In the existing literature on sociodemographic and motivational patterns behind "organic" and "local" (defined below) food consumption, several patterns exist (e.g., regarding the role of gender and health concerns) alongside a few inconsistencies (e.g., regarding the role of income) (Hughner, McDonah, Prothero, Shultz II, & Stanton, 2007; Tregear & Ness, 2005). There is, then, a need for further research on these questions.

We set out to determine whether and on what basis organic and local food can be conceptualized as distinct forms of ethical consumption. Our findings paint an intriguing picture of the demographic features and motivations that differentiate intention to purchase organic vs. local food. Because intentions precede consumption behaviours, our findings are relevant for understanding what sets organic food consumers apart from local food consumers. This picture allows us to make important contributions regarding how organic and local food can be conceptualized as distinct forms of ethical consumption.

Consumer demographics and motivations for ethical consumption

There is considerable literature that has investigated consumer orientation toward various forms of ethical consumption and the factors that motivate them. While this literature has made great progress, a clearer understanding of ethical consumption requires analysis of its narrower forms,

[1] Other terms that are employed to capture this distinction include personal vs. societal (Bianchi & Mortimer, 2015) or consumer-minded vs. civic-minded (Johnston, 2008). We see these terms as all centering on a distinction between self-oriented and other-oriented concerns.

because particular moral issues can vary by realm and by product. For example, some consumption choices are more obviously implicated in questions of environmental degradation (e.g., automobiles, beef), while others invoke questions of human rights, labor justice or social inequality (e.g., clothing, coffee). Different kinds of ethical consumption can vary in their significance and in their appeal to consumers, and prior research shows that there is considerable awareness among consumers of these differences (Jensen & Mørkbak, 2013).

To gain a better understanding of ethical consumption dynamics, many researchers have studied ethical consumption in food, and specifically organic and local foods. Organic food research is facilitated by the existence of certification bodies, which allow for the definition of organic food to be relatively clear in the minds of consumers. Although certification standards vary, organic generally refers, in the minds of consumers, to the growing of food without synthetic chemicals, genetic modification, and with high standards for the treatment of livestock. Local food research must contend with the lack of a standard definition. Definitions of local are flexible, but the smaller the distance between sites of food production and consumption, the more local food is. We review the research on consumer sociodemographics and motivations separately for organic and local foods to allow for comparisons.

Organic

Sociodemographics

Hughner et al. (2007), in their review of the literature on who buys organic food, find variation across studies but several consistent themes as well. They find that most research reports that organic consumers are female, that younger consumers hold more positive attitudes towards organic food, and that older consumers are more likely to buy organic food. In contrast, the findings on income and education as predictors of organic consumption and predictors of attitudes towards organic food were mixed.

Other research published more recently by Hughner et al. (2007) supports the idea that women purchase more organic food or have more positive attitudes toward organic food (Aguirre, 2007; Akgüngör, Miran, & Abay, 2010; Arvola, & Hursti, 2001; Gonzalez, 2009; Hamazoui, Essoussi, & Zahaf, 2008; Lockie, Lyons, Lawrence, & Mummery, 2002; Lodorfos & Dennis, 2008; Magnusson, McEachern, & McClean, 2002; Quah & Tan, 2009; Sangkumchaliang & Huang, 2012; Sonderskov & Daugbjerg, 2011).[2]

Regarding the relationship between education and consumers' propensity to purchase and/or support organic food products, most recent research finds a positive associate between the two (Aguirre, 2007; Curl et al. 2013; Dettman & Dimitri, 2009; Dimitri & Dettman, 2012; Hamazoui et al., 2008; Lockie et al., 2002; Magnusson et al., 2001; Quah & Tan, 2009; Roitner-Schobesberger, Darnhofer, Somsook, & Vogl, 2008; Sangkumchaliang & Huang, 2012;

[2] A very small minority of studies fail to support this predominant finding (Roitner-Schobesberger et al., 2008; Zepeda and Li, 2007).

Thøgersen & Zhou, 2012; Zepeda & Li, 2007). In contrast, the relationship between income and organic food consumption is not clearly established, with some studies finding evidence for a positive relationship (see, e.g., Aguirre 2007; Dimitri & Dettman, 2012; Krystallis, Vassallo, Chryssohoidis, & Perrea, 2008; Roitner-Schobesberger et al., 2008), and others finding a lack of a relationship (Kriwy & Mecking, 2012; Zepeda & Li, 2007) or very weak or nonlinear relationships (Curl et al., 2013; Dettman & Dimitri, 2009; Haghiri, Hobbs, & McNamara, 2009; Lockie et al., 2002).

The relationship between organic food and age is likewise complicated, with a few studies finding that younger consumers may be more confident in labelling schemes and have positive attitudes towards organic foods (Magnusson et al., 2001; Sønderskov & Daugbjerg, 2011) or purchasing organic foods more frequently (Curl et al., 2013), while others find that older consumers are actually purchasing organic products more frequently (Haghiri et al., 2009; Sangkumchaliang & Huang, 2012), or no relationship with age (Lodorfos & Dennis, 2008).

Motivations

Regarding motivations behind purchasing organics, there is a consistent finding that health concerns are paramount. In their review of 277 empirical studies, Hemmerling, Hamm, and Spiller (2015) find that health protection (described as individualist) is by far the most important among all motivations for purchasing organic food, with the individualist motivation of taste a distant second, and the collectivist motivation of environmental protection third (p. 283). In a range of other studies in the literature, this finding about the ranking of motivations for organic food purchasing is supported. Health concerns are primary, followed by a preference for the perceived better taste or freshness of organics, while the perceived environmentally-friendly practices of organic food production are typically a minor motivation for most consumers (Adams & Salois, 2010; Aguirre, 2007; Ahmad & Juhdi, 2010; Gonzalez, 2009; Haghiri et al., 2009; Hamazoui et al., 2008; Lockie et al., 2002; Lodorfos & Dennis, 2008; McEachern & McClean, 2002; Roitner-Sangkumchaliang & Huang, 2010; Schobesberger et al., 2008; Thøgersen & Zhou, 2012).

Local

Sociodemographics

Unlike organic food consumption, local food consumption behaviors and attitudes are not strongly and consistently associated with any particular demographic variables in prior research, with most studies finding very weak or non-significant relationships (Bingen, Sage, & Sirieix, 2011; Brown, 2003; Cranfield, Henson, & Blandon, 2012; Tregear & Ness, 2005; Zepeda & Li, 2006). While gender is mostly not a significant predictor of local food consumption, a small minority of studies find that women are more likely to buy local food (Khan & Prior, 2010;

Megicks, Memery, & Angell, 2012). Similarly, although most studies do not find any relationship with age, a minority of studies finds that older (approximately 50+) consumers are more likely to purchase local food (Khan & Prior, 2010). Existing research typically reports nonsignificant effects for income and education on intention to purchase local food (Megicks et al., 2012; Zepeda & Li, 2006).

Motivations

Prior research on the motivations behind consumption of local food supports a focus on several motivations. In contrast to the convergence in the literature regarding motivations for organic food, studies vary in their identification of the most important motivations for purchasing organic food. Across and within studies, consumers are found to be influenced by the collectivist motivations of desire to support local producers and/or the local economy as well as to protect the environment, alongside the individualist motivations for food that is fresher, tastes good, and is perceived to be healthier (Adams & Salois, 2010; Aguirre, 2007; Brown, 2003; Carpio & Isengildina-Massa, 2009; Cranfield et al., 2012; Khan & Prior, 2010; Megicks et al., 2012; Tregear & Ness, 2005; Weatherell, Tregear, & Allinson, 2003; Zepeda & Deal, 2009).

Overall, we find little consensus in the literature concerning the sociodemographic correlates of orientations in favor of local food purchasing, and there appears to be evidence that consumers hold a range of individual and collectivist motivations. For both organic and local food, motivations emerge as stronger predictors of intention to purchase than do sociodemographic variables. Regarding organic food, there is more consensus on a few sociodemographic correlates, and on the priority of individualist motivations over collectivist. It is clear that further research is still needed. At the same time, the individualist motivation of health underlying an orientation in favor of organic food should be further examined. Recent research by Lee (2016) finds that the presence of young children in the household is a very strong predictor of intention to purchase organic food. This research is in line with a study by Reifer and Hamm (2011), which finds that among families who frequently consume organic food, consumption shifts away from organics as the children become adolescents. These findings raise the question of how to understand the health motivation for organic consumption when the health of children, rather than only the self, is involved.

Methods

Data collection

This paper employs intercept survey data on consumers' food shopping intentions. The survey was designed by the authors to connect intentions to purchase ethical foods to socio-demographics and motivations. The survey was administered in Toronto by four research

assistants working in teams at a variety of food shopping locations, which included both discount and upmarket chain grocery stores, as well as farmer's markets.[3] The research assistants were instructed to approach adult shoppers randomly and ask them to complete a paper copy of the survey, which required between five and ten minutes to complete.[4] The times and days of survey administration were varied to ensure that respondents were reached across different times of day and different days of the week (both weekdays and weekends). The total number of surveys administered was 1,200, and after dropping cases with missing data on the variables we analyze, our models employ samples of 917 and 941. The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. The sample matches well the general Toronto population in terms of racial minority status, household income, education levels, and age, with a slight underrepresentation of those over 60 years of age. Women are overrepresented relative to their proportion in the population, but not relative to their disproportionate role as food shoppers in the household (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). All questions were pretested and screened for validity and reliability with required edits made prior to data collection.

Participants were offered a coffee-shop gift card or a high-quality chocolate bar as an incentive for participation. They received the incentive after completing the survey; we do not see any implications of this incentive for our findings. Data collection took place between June and September, 2011. Like many large North American cities, Toronto is a context in which discourses of ethical consumption have received prominent media attention for many years, so we assumed that there was sufficient opportunity for broad consumer engagement with ethical food consumption.

Variable construction

Our first dependent variable was a dichotomous measure of intention to purchase organic food. We constructed this measure through answers to the question "The last time I went shopping, I made an effort to buy organic food." People who agreed with this statement were categorized as having an intention to buy organic food, while people who disagreed or were neutral to this statement were categorized as not having an intention. Our second dependent variable employed the local food analog question to the first dependent variable ("The last time I went shopping, I made an effort to buy local food").

Although there is debate about what constitutes local food, we allowed respondents to employ their own definitions of local food because we were interested in examining their

[3] We control in our models (without reporting results) for whether the survey was administered at a farmers' market, and our multivariate results are not driven by the sampling method. All survey locations offer local and organic food options. For a comprehensive discussion of the advantages and disadvantages and data implications of intercept surveys, see Blair, Czaja, and Blair (2014), especially chapters 4 and 5. A copy of the survey is available on request from the fourth author.

[4] Respondents were required to read and write English in order to complete the survey. Participants signed a consent form which gave the researchers permission to use their information anonymously, and they were supplied with their own copy of the consent form.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	461	39.1
Female	719	60.9
Age		
18 - 30	462	39.3
31 – 40	276	23.5
41 – 50	207	17.6
51 – 60	141	12.0
> 60	89	7.6
Minority Status		
White	757	65.5
Visible minority	398	34.5
Income (x 1000)		
< 20	207	19.0
20 – 30	122	11.2
30 – 40	119	10.9
40 – 60	173	15.8
60 – 100	233	21.3
>100	238	21.8
Education		
High school or less	227	19.4
College or trade diploma	128	11.0
Some university	229	19.6
Undergraduate degree	337	28.9
Professional or graduate degree	247	21.2
Children in Household (dummy variables)		
None Under 5	971	83.6
At least one under 5	190	16.4
None 6-12	1025	88.2
At least one 6 - 12	137	11.8
None 13-18	1103	86.3
At least one 13 - 18	159	13.7
Organic Consumption (Intention)		
High Organic	681	60.7
Low Organic	441	39.3
Local Consumption (Intention)		
High Local	489	42.9
Low Local	651	57.1
Primary Motivations		
Collectivist	366	35.6
Individualist	661	64.4

Note: Based on 1200 surveys administered; not all questions were answered by all respondents.

understandings of their consumption.[5] We acknowledge that there are gaps between attitudes, intentions, and behaviors (Zepeda & Nie, 2012). Nonetheless, the study of consumer intentions is a large and important area of research, including within the study of ethical consumption. McEachern et al. (2010) argue that focusing on intention is important due to the acknowledged barriers to purchasing (time, convenience, and cost). Additionally, as Elliott (2013) writes, the study of consumer intentions is important for investigating connections between consumer motivations and product choices, and can do so in ways that are sometimes obscured in studies of purchasing behaviors.

Our key independent variables were derived from reported motivations for intentions to purchase ethical foods, based on survey questions that asked respondents their motivations for buying organic or local food and to identify which motivation was their primary one. The questions provided a list of potential motivations, including health protection, environmental concerns, farmer livelihoods, social justice in developing countries, concern for workers' health and safety, and the option for writing in another motivation. Based on respondents' choice of primary motivation, we created two dummy variables that represent respondents' motivation as either "individualist" or "collectivist." Individualist motivations included health protection and the taste, freshness, convenience, or quality of food. Collectivist motivations included environmental concerns, social justice, farmer livelihood, and concern for workers' health and safety. In order to address questions specific to health motivations, we also created two further dummy variables. One variable represents the primary motivation of health concerns, and the other represents the remaining individualist concerns (food taste, freshness, etc.).

Our other independent variables were those sociodemographic variables most commonly employed in consumption studies, namely gender (female = 1), race (minority = 1)[6], age, income, education, and the presence of children in the household.[7] In addition, as the survey was administered at both conventional food stores and farmer's markets, we controlled in our models for survey location (not reported in tables).

Analysis

We used multivariate regression to estimate the effects of the independent variables on each of our two dependent variables. As each of our dependent variables was dichotomous, we employed logistic regression. Our models were structured according to a logic that allowed us to first understand the sociodemographic characteristics that are associated with the intention to buy

[5] It is also true that in the Toronto area, grocery stores, both expensive chains and bargain chains, make efforts to identify items as local whenever possible, most commonly with signs that indicate when food is from the province of Ontario.

[6] Due to small cell sizes, we are forced to collapse racial groups other than White into a single category.

[7] For this variable, we used responses to survey questions that asked about the presence of children 5 years of age or younger living at home, 6 -12 years of age living at home, or 13 – 18 years of age living at home. We coded respondents as either having at least one child in a given bracket or having none in a category. It was possible for respondents to be coded as having children in more than one bracket.

organic food and local food respectively, as well as the effect of the presence of children in the household. Following that initial model, we introduced the focal independent variable of consumer motivation. Specifically, we assessed the relationship of collectivist motivations relative to individualist motivations with the intention to purchase organic food and to purchase local food. In order to further interrogate how motivations influence intention to purchase, in the third model we examined collectivist motivations and health motivations separately from other individualist motivations. We turn next to our findings, first for organic, and then for local food.

Findings

Organic food as family health strategy

Table 2 presents our results regarding intention to purchase organic food. In model 1, being female and in an age group older than the reference group of 18-30 were significantly and positively correlated with intention to purchase organic food. As with prior research, income had no relationship to the dependent variable. Surprisingly, there was no correlation in our sample between education and intention to purchase organic food either. In contrast, the effect of having children under the age of 5 was especially strong, with the odds ratio indicating that those with children 5 and under in the house were more than twice as likely as other consumers to intend to purchase organic food. Having older children in the house was not significantly associated with the intention to purchase organic food.

In model two we introduced the variable of holding collectivist motivations, omitting individualist motivations as the reference category. We saw a slight improvement in the model fit and virtually no changes in the associations of the statistically significant sociodemographic variables. Regarding the motivations themselves, there was no significant difference in the likelihood of holding a collectivist vs. an individualist primary motivation among those who intend to purchase organic food. In other words, both motivations existed among these shoppers. The third model introduced a dummy variable for holding collective motivations and another dummy variable for holding health motivations, with the omitted reference category being holding individualist motivations other than health.

We learned two important things from these odds ratios. First, health motivations were significantly and strongly correlated with intention to purchase organic food. Second, collectivist motivations were significantly correlated with intention to purchase organic food at the $p<0.1$ level of significance, now that the comparison group is individualist motivations apart from health. This change in the odds ratio for collectivist motivations between model two and model three suggests that there was both an important difference with holding individualist motivations apart from health (i.e., taste and freshness and food quality), and a degree of commonality between the tendency to hold collectivist motivations and health motivations.[8] Importantly, we saw the odds

[8] In results not shown here, we also ran a model with collectivist motivations as the omitted reference group. In that model, the odds ratio for health motivations was not statistically significant.

Table 2: Logistic regression of sociodemographics and motivations on intention to purchase organic food

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Female (reference = Male)	1.41*	1.40*	1.38*
	.151	*.151*	*.151*
Age (reference = 18-30)			
31-40	2.02***	1.99**	1.98***
	.201	*.201*	*.201*
41-50	1.59*	1.58*	1.52*
	.214	*.214*	*.214*
51-60	1.94**	1.95**	1.95**
	.238	*.238*	*.238*
> 60	1.85*	1.81*	1.78*
	.302	*.303*	*.302*
Race (reference = Non-White)			
White	1.33	1.36	1.36
	.161	*.163*	*.161*
Income (in thousands) (reference = <20)			
20 – 40	1.05	1.05	1.05
	.258	*.238*	*.258*
40 – 60	0.84	0.85	0.83
	.241	*.258*	*.241*
60 – 100	1.16	1.16	1.15
	.253	*.241*	*.253*
> 100	0.96	0.96	0.99
	.238	*.253*	*.238*
Education (reference = High school or less)			
College or trade diploma	1.12	1.11	1.08
	.281	*.281*	*.281*
Some university	1.32	1.31	1.28
	.242	*.242*	*.242*
Undergraduate degree	1.47	1.46	1.43
	.231	*.232*	*.231*
Prof. or grad. degree	1.27	1.27	1.28
	.248	*.248*	*.248*
Children in Household (reference = no children)			
5 or under	2.11***	2.11***	2.08***
	.213	*.213*	*.213*
6 – 12	1.00	.978	.972
	.235	*.239*	*.235*
13 – 18	0.64	0.85	0.66
	.239	*.239*	*.239*
Primary motivation (reference = individualist)			
Collectivist		.85	
		.154	
Primary motivation (reference = individualist apart from health)			
Collectivist			2.27 ^
			.461
Health			2.83**
			.454
N	917	917	917
Pseudo R^2	0.10	0.11	0.11

^ p< 0.10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 *** p < 0.001

Note: Table reports odds ratios. All models control for location where survey was administered. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

ratio for gender and presence of young children in the house remain significant, with rather large effect sizes.

Local food as collectivist concern

Table 3 presents the results of our logistic regression model of intention to purchase local food. In our first model estimating intention to purchase local food, we saw that women were more likely than men, consumers 30 years of age and younger were dramatically less likely relative to all older age groups, and that non-White consumers were less likely than White consumers. Income was not associated with intention to purchase local food, although having an undergraduate degree made a respondent much more likely to intend to purchase local food relative to those with a high school diploma or less education. In contrast to the case for organic food, there was no significant relationship with having children under five years old in the house and the intention to purchase local food.

In model 2 we introduced the dummy variable of having collectivist motivations, omitting the variable for individualist motivations as the reference category. While the sociodemographic variables remained mainly unchanged, the model fit improved, and we saw that there was a statistically significant relationship with holding collectivist motivations. This was a clear contrast to the case for organic food. In model 3 we included the dummy variable for collectivist motivations and the dummy variable for holding health motivations, while the omitted reference category was holding individualist motivations apart from health. Compared to when the reference category included health, we saw that collectivist motivations had an even clearer and stronger relationship with intention to purchase local food. At the same time, health motivations themselves were not significantly correlated with the dependent variable, relative to other individualist motivations. Interestingly, the odds ratio for having an undergraduate degree remained significant and large across the models, and the odds ratio for having a professional or graduate degree reached significance at the $p<0.05$ level in the final model. We saw here an interesting set of relationships including race, education, and collectivist motivations.

Multiple motivations

The regression results suggested that multiple motivations exist for both organic and local food consumption. To illustrate and directly compare the different primary motivations behind intention to purchase local and organic food, Figure 1 displays the probability of having individualist vs. collectivist motivations for intention to purchase organic vs. local food while holding all other variables at their average logit values.

Table 3: Logistic regression of sociodemographics and motivations on intention to purchase local food

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Female (reference = Male)	1.50**	1.58**	1.55**
	.154	*.157*	*.157*
Age (reference = 18-30)			
31-40	3.08***	3.40***	3.40***
	.213	*.217*	*.218*
41-50	2.75***	2.93***	2.83***
	.217	*.220*	*.221*
51-60	3.17***	3.17***	3.16***
	.250	*.252*	*.253*
> 60	3.11***	3.48***	3.44***
	.323	*.327*	*.328*
White (reference = non-white)	1.85***	1.71**	1.71**
	.161	*.164*	*.164*
Income (in thousands) (reference = <20)			
20 – 40	0.88	0.86	0.86
	.238	*.242*	*.243*
40 – 60	1.13	1.16	1.10
	.257	*.261*	*.248*
60 – 100	1.08	1.08	1.06
	.246	*.247*	*.248*
> 100	0.99	0.99	1.01
	.260	*.263*	*.264*
Education (reference = High school or less)			
College or trade diploma	1.16	1.21	1.19
	.280	*.282*	*.282*
Some university	1.28	1.34	1.32
	.241	*.244*	*.244*
Undergraduate degree	2.18**	2.23**	2.24**
	.236	*.238*	*.239*
Prof. or grad. degree	1.62	1.63	1.65*
	.231	*.255*	*.256*
Children in Household			
5 or under	1.45	1.50	1.47
	.241	*.233*	*.233*
6 – 12	0.76	0.82	0.81
	.241	*.243*	*.236*
13 – 18	0.63	0.62	0.64
	.231	*.235*	*.236*
Primary motivation (reference = individualist)			
Collectivist		2.072***	
		.163	
Primary motivation (reference = individualist apart from health)			
Collectivist			3.95***
			.414
Health			1.99
			.406
N	941	941	941
Pseudo R^2	0.17	0.21	0.21

^ p< 0.10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 *** p < 0.001

Note: Table reports odds ratios. All models control for location where survey was administered. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

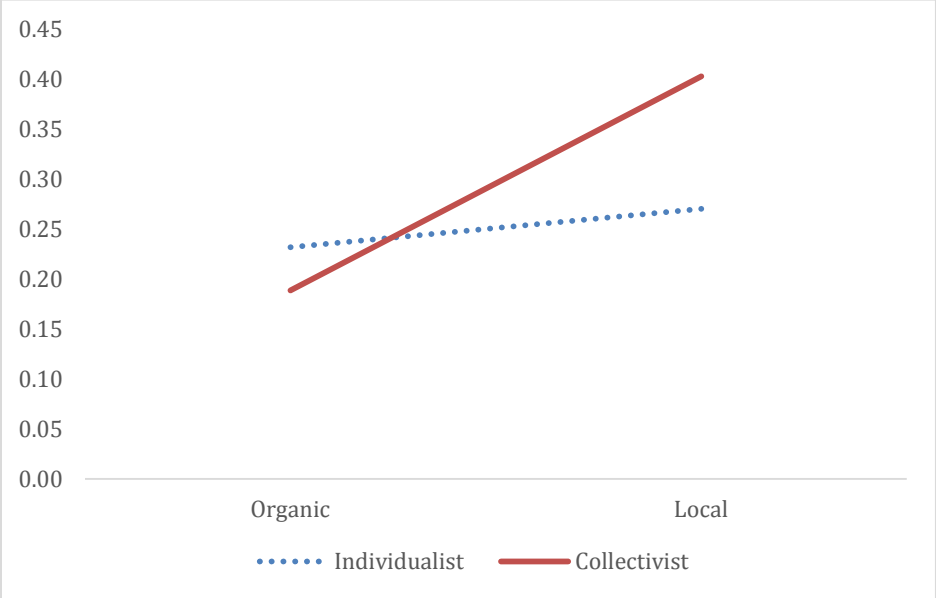

Figure 1: Fitted probabilities of having primary individualist and collectivist motivations for intention to purchase organic and local food

Individualist motivations were related to both organic and local food intention to purchase, with a just slightly higher correlation with local intention. Collectivist motivations were less strongly related to organic intention and much more strongly related to local consumption. We can see that both organic and local food consumption had multiple motivations. However, we can clearly see that organic and local consumption intentions related quite differently to collectivist motivations.

Discussion and conclusion

We analyzed survey data on consumer demographics and motivations for intention to purchase organic and local food in order to understand the multidimensionality of "ethical" food options. Our key findings include a difference in primary motivation for consumers intending to purchase organic vs. local food. Intention to purchase local food was more strongly motivated by collectivist concerns than is organic food. In addition, intention to purchase local food is associated with well-educated, White, women consumers. In contrast, we found that intention to purchase organic food, but not local food, was strongly associated with women who have very young children in the house. This relationship to children under five conforms to one of the (controversial) strands of organic food consumption discourse that is prominent in the market, which emphasizes the healthfulness of organic food, especially for young children, who have been found in some scientific studies to be most strongly affected by pesticides and ablest to

benefit from the maximum nutritional qualities that organic food is often claimed to possess (Lu et al., 2006). Our findings strongly suggest that organic and local food should be conceptualized as distinct forms of ethical consumption.

Research on ethical consumption tends to share the popular understanding that motivations for ethical consumption are either individualist or collectivist (accepting, of course, that consumers can be motivated by both kinds of concerns). Within this framework, concerns for healthfulness are understood as individualist. However, to the extent that organic food consumption is often motivated by a desire among mothers for health protection of young children, we would argue that the individualist conceptualization of this motivation is not an accurate label.

Instead, we would point to earlier research on conventional (non-ethical) consumption that has identified motivations that can be usefully applied to the case of organic food consumption: specifically, Thompson's (1996) concept of caring consumption, Miller's (1998) concept of "shopping as sacrifice" (Miller, 1998), and MacKendrick's (2010) concept of "precautionary consumption" (MacKendrick, 2010). What these three perspectives on consumption share is a framing of consumption as underscored by a sense of social connection and caring for others for whom consumers, particularly women, are personally responsible. In different ways, each applies well to our findings about the intention to purchase organic food.

At the same time, the application of these perspectives on consumption to organic food complicates the usual individualist vs. collectivist distinction used to understand ethical consumption. This complication introduces a distinction between collectivist motivations that are concerned with *distant others* (society, workers, the world) and collectivist concerns for *proximate others* (those to whom we have personal obligations). Our findings provide broader support for the findings of Cairns, Johnston, and MacKendrick (2013), which show that mothers' organic food shopping is influenced by contemporary mothering norms. These norms frame feeding children as an opportunity to protect their health and purity, an important goal best pursued by avoiding pollutants while maximizing nutrition. The authors argue that this generates a mothering ideal that they refer to as feeding the "organic child." Health protection motivations for the self are clearly individualist, but health protection motivations for small children are self-oriented in a meaningfully different way. For this reason, we propose that research on organic food consumption must be open to more nuanced accounts of how ethical consumption is motivated in more complicated ways than can be accommodated by an individualist vs. collectivist dichotomy. The "win-win" formulation of ethical consumption common in popular and marketing discourses does not quite capture the range of goals and needs that consumers must consider in their ethical food consumption choices, some of which are intermediate between "self" and "society."

For local food, we found that the presence of young children in the household is not an important influence on orientation toward local food consumption. Despite the room for income to play a role, since local foods are more expensive in the context of the survey location of Toronto, income was not a significant predictor in any of the models. In contrast, education was

positively related to an orientation toward local foods, as was White racial self-identification. The race finding was particularly interesting in the context of multicultural Toronto, where there is not a strong pattern of White/non-White residential segregation. In other words, the racial difference was not attributable to differential access to local food, especially since the locations surveyed are urban and easily accessed by car or by public transportation. We speculate that the association between education, race, and the collectivist motivations for intention to purchase local foods reflects a socially-bounded culture of civic-minded food consumption (Alkon & McMullen, 2011). Among some highly educated, White, female consumers, buying local foods may be a cultural practice that is given meaning by its collectivist ethical implications, such as community building, support of the local economy, and environmental protection (Alkon & McMullen, 2011).

We have focused in this paper on clarifying the motivations behind different forms of food consumption typically considered "ethical." From a food scholarship perspective, while the pros and cons of the growth of the organic and local food sectors have been discussed (e.g., Goodman, Dupuis, & Goodman, 2012; Obach, 2016), there has been relatively little discussion of the respective motivations that underlie organic and local food purchasing. The alternative food market has mainly been approached with a win-win framing that promotes ethical consumption as a way to satisfy seemingly disparate motivations (Johnston & Cairns, 2012). While critiques of this win-win framing and its intersections with neoliberal ideologies are important, it is also important to empirically study what motivates consumers, and to disaggregate the motivations for various products within alternative food networks. While civic-minded motivations may inspire consumers' intentions to buy local foods, the drive to purchase organic food is quite distinct. Organic food purchases may ultimately support political ends such as environmental protection, as well as other collectivist motivations. Nonetheless, we found in our survey an important primary consumer motivation for intention to purchase organic food: the responsibilities of care work, particularly the health concerns of mothers of small children looking to protect and nurture young bodies.

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Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 87–107 May 2017

Canadian Food Studies La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation

Article de recherche

Mise en marché et certification de l'anguille et de l'esturgeon de l'estuaire du St-Laurent : des « vendredis maigres » aux produits fins

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Résumé

L'indication géographique protégée (IGP) est une certification encore peu appliquée aux produits de la pêche. Le présent article documente les efforts d'établissement de ce type de mise en marché émergent et alternatif avec une IGP pour l'anguille argentée et l'esturgeon noir de l'estuaire du St-Laurent au Québec. Plus particulièrement, cet article cherche à comprendre le processus qui conduit à entamer des démarches de certification et interroge les avantages d'une IGP et les enjeux auxquels font face ses promoteurs. L'IGP évite-t-elle les écueils propres aux autres types de certification halieutique? L'IGP permet-elle de développer une alternative à la commercialisation conventionnelle et ses problématiques? Peut-elle contribuer à la structuration d'un réseau alimentaire alternatif? Cet article veut nourrir les réflexions que suscitent ces outils de certification à la lumière d'un nouveau cas et propose que l'examen historique, social, politique et économique des pêches, de leur gestion, de leurs efforts de conservation et de leur commercialisation soit nécessaire à la compréhension des enjeux propres aux démarches de certification et de mise en marché alternative et à leur mise en œuvre.

Mots-clés: pêches; Québec; certification; écologie politique

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DOI: 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v4i1.190
ISSN: 2292-3071

Introduction

Cet article interroge les formes de mise en marché alternatives via le processus d'instauration d'une Indication géographique protégée (IGP)des anguilles argentées (*Anguila rostrata*) et des esturgeons noirs (*Acipenser oxyrinchus*) de l'estuaire du St-Laurent. Ses objectifs sont de comprendre quels processus ont menés à l'élaboration de ces démarches et quels en sont les intérêts. Bien que les moyens déployés par les écocertificateurs afin d'assurer la soutenabilité des pêcheries ont été documentés, il s'avère que la plupart des approches préconisées sont trop « biologisantes », priorisant la conservation de la ressource sans égard aux dimensions humaines inhérentes aux activités de pêche et propres au réseau alimentaire (Olson, Clay et Pinto Da Silva 2014). De plus, il a été souligné que la cohabitation de plusieurs normes mobilisant une diversité de critères non harmonisés était susceptible de confondre les consommateurs et n'avait pas vraiment accru ni la soutenabilité ni la consommation écoresponsable (Olson *et al*., 2014). Les efforts de sensibilisation portent essentiellement sur les espèces dont la consommation serait préférable et n'abordent pas les enjeux propres aux modes de production et de mise en marché. Les certifications les plus en vogue, telle celle du Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) et du Blue Ocean Institute, ont été critiquées du fait qu'elles n'encadrent que les pêches industrielles des pays développés, qu'elles impliquent des frais importants aux organisations certifiées, qu'elles exacerbent les inégalités Nord-Sud en renforçant les mécanismes de gouvernance mondialisés et privés et que, plutôt que de favoriser des pêcheries durables, elles ne viseraient qu'une exploitation durable des poissons (Constance et Bonanno, 2000; Ponte, 2008, 2012; Olson *et al*., 2014).

L'Indication géographique protégée est un type de certification encore peu appliqué aux produits de la pêche (Bérard et Marchenay, 2002; Urquhart et Acott, 2013). Les travaux de Bérard et Marchenay, à propos du cas de la carpe des Dombes, soulignent que le mode de tenure, le type de répartition des capitaux dans la région concernée et l'activité économique principale des acteurs directement impliqués dans la production de la denrée certifiée sont centraux à la définition de l'IGP. Aussi, la richesse de l'historicité d'une pratique de mise en valeur d'un produit est au cœur des attentions d'encadrement des IGP malgré le défi que représente la mise en valeur d'une plus-value culturelle issue de considération patrimoniale (Bérard et Marchenay, 2002).

Il est reconnu qu'une IGP peut contribuer à l'élaboration d'un réseau alimentaire plus soutenable et « alternatif ». Whatmore, Stassart et Renting (2003) décrivent l'IGP comme une approche de mise en marché de nourriture qui ne s'inscrit pas dans les rouages standards d'une production de masse en parvenant à redistribuer la valeur dans l'ensemble des maillons impliqués du réseau, qui s'appuie sur la confiance entre les producteurs et les consommateurs et qui articule de nouvelles formes d'association politique et de gouvernance de marché. Le réseau alimentaire alternatif s'inscrit dans un réseau de production-distribution-consommation plus favorable au bien-être des producteurs, des communautés environnantes et consommatrices, au développement territorial et à la protection environnementale. Il s'appuie notamment sur

l'autoproduction, la mise en marché de proximité, des labels qualité, la production biologique, l'agrotourisme et les valeurs liées à la proximité et la confiance (Mundler et Boulianne, 2016). En plus de ces aspects, l'IGP contribue à une traçabilité rigoureuse des produits et à la protection envers la contrefaçon. Enfin, l'IGP favorise la pérennisation de l'activité concernée et le maintien de la ressource elle-même en favorisant des aménagements et des conduites propices à la biodiversité des écosystèmes et des éléments composant les paysages cultivés (Bérard et Marchenay, 2006, p. 17). Ainsi, l'IGP s'inscrit dans un ensemble de pratiques émergentes de marchandisation et de certification où diverses initiatives alternatives reconfigurent le réseau alimentaire « conventionnel » par de nouvelles formes structurantes pour le développement régional et favorables à une mise en valeur de la biodiversité propice à la préserver.

Le présent article documente les efforts d'établissement de ce type de mise en marché émergent et alternatif par une IGP qui reconnaîtrait les singularités propres aux pratiques des pêches à l'anguille argentée[1] et à l'esturgeon noir dans l'estuaire du St-Laurent. Cette documentation se fonde sur une démarche d'enquête ethnographique réalisée entre 2013 et 2016 ayant mené, notamment, à la collecte de données documentaires et des entrevues avec des pêcheurs. Plus particulièrement, il cherche à comprendre le processus qui conduit à entamer des démarches de certification et interroge les avantages d'une IGP et les défis auxquels font face ses promoteurs au Québec. L'IGP peut-elle éviter les écueils propres aux écocertifications halieutiques? Peut-elle favoriser un développement autre, plus soutenable, libéré des trajectoires destructrices des modes de production et de commercialisation conventionnels? Peut-elle contribuer à la structuration d'un réseau alimentaire alternatif?

Cet article veut nourrir les réflexions que suscitent les écocertifications et les appellations contrôlées à la lumière d'un cas halieutique inusité. Il propose que l'examen historique, social, politique et économique des deux pêches apparentées et candidates solidaires à une désignation, tant du point de vue des approches de gestion, des efforts de conservation et des modes de commercialisation dont elles ont fait l'objet, soit nécessaire à la définition d'une mise en marché alternative propice à contribuer significativement à la pérennisation de leurs ressources biologiques renouvelables et des activités de valorisation. Cette documentation permet de situer et d'appuyer l'intention d'insertion de ces pêches dans le « club sélect » émergent des *Indications géographiques protégées* du Québec. La commercialisation de ces pêches a d'abord été marquée par des pratiques artisanales et la vente locale de poissons frais, voire vivants, non transformés, puis par une distribution limitée, monopolisée par un très faible nombre de revendeurs, complémentée et en passe d'être substituée par une approche de transformation et de distribution à l'intention des touristes et des locaux qui mise sur le caractère local, la qualité distinctive et les valeurs culturelles associées aux produits proposés. Tout au long des mutations successives des mises en valeur de ces deux poissons, le développement capitaliste, les politiques

[1] L'« anguille argentée » est l'appellation courante pour les anguilles d'Amérique (*Anguilla rostrata*, Lesueur, 1817) au stade adulte en dévalaison migratoire (dans l'estuaire laurentien, il s'agit en grande majorité de femelles, les plus grosses connues de l'espèce).

de gestion et de conservation et les transformations socioéconomiques régionales ont été déterminants. Les enjeux actuels de leur commercialisation et la volonté de créer une IGP qui leur serait adaptée ne peuvent être saisis sans tenir compte de ce contexte.

Mise en contexte: les pêches d'anguilles argentées et d'esturgeons noirs de l'estuaire du St-Laurent

Les pêches d'anguilles et d'esturgeons noirs ont été très généreuses historiquement. Pendant des siècles, ces espèces ont été capturées dans le St-Laurent et son bassin versant. Les premiers colons français rapportent que les autochtones pêchaient déjà l'anguille et l'esturgeon (Fortin et Lechasseur, 1993; Giguère, 1973). Jusque dans les années 1950, les anguilles ont été la deuxième espèce la plus pêchée au Québec après la morue (« Catching Canadian eel », 1880). La très probable disparition de ces pêches, conséquente à la possible extinction des anguilles et des esturgeons, a été annoncée depuis plusieurs décennies. Les populations d'anguilles au Québec sont maintenant à moins de 1 pour cent de ce qu'elles auraient été au moment du contact. En 2010-2011, seulement 155 000 femelles adultes auraient migré vers la mer des Sargasses (Verrault Mingelbier et Dumont , 2012; Robitaille et Tremblay, 1994). L'esturgeon noir quant à lui a été désigné espèce menacée au Canada et en voie d'extinction aux États-Unis; seule la population québécoise fait exception (Verrault et Trencia, 2011; Verrault, l'Italien et Paradis, 2017). Les causes principales de ces diminutions drastiques sont anthropiques et sont la conséquence du développement économique du fleuve et de son bassin versant et de la multiplication des barrages hydroélectriques qui y ont été établis (Doyon, 2015).

Ces pêches se pratiquent dans L'Islet et le Kamouraska, deux municipalités régionales de comté (MRC) de l'est du Québec qui couvrent respectivement 2459 km^2 (18 000 habitants) et 3065 km^2 (21 000 habitants) (*Répertoire des municipalités*, 2017). Le Kamouraska est l'une des huit MRC de la région administrative du Bas-St-Laurent qui compte 200 000 habitants. Ces régions sont emblématiques de l'estuaire du St-Laurent, elles sont marquées par un paysage littoral qui cède graduellement la place à des terrasses successives et au plateau appalachien. L'activité principale est l'agriculture, plus particulièrement la production laitière. La récolte forestière est également une source de revenus non négligeable dans les hautes terres de l'arrière-pays (Gouvernement du Québec, 2017). La pêche y demeure une activité importante, bien que nettement moindre qu'en Gaspésie, aux Îles-de-la-Madeleine ou en Côte-Nord. La valeur des débarquements en 2008 s'élève à 9,4 millions $, représentant environ 10 pour cent de la valeur des débarquements des pêches du Québec (*Revue Statistique 2010-2011*, 2015). Les pêches du Bas-St-Laurent sont surtout représentées par la pêche à la crevette nordique et au crabe des neiges, qui sont très lucratives et dont les débarquements se font plus à l'est dans les MRC de Rimouski et de Matane. Les débarquements et la valeur des pêches de la région de Kamouraska et L'Islet sont minimes en comparaison. Les débarquements d'anguilles n'a été que de 49 tonnes en 2014 (*Pêche et aquaculture commerciale*, 2016), tandis que les captures d'esturgeons noirs ne

peuvent dépasser 60 tonnes par année, une quantité qui n'est par ailleurs jamais atteinte (45 tonnes en 2014) (*Pêche et aquaculture commerciale*, 2016).

Au cours des vingt dernières années, la gestion de ces pêches a mené à des transformations importantes quant à l'ampleur de ces activités. Dans le cas de l'anguille, un programme de rachat de permis pour contrôler la mortalité par captures a été instauré en 2007 et a fait passer le nombre de permis de 67 à 21 (Verrault, Dussureault, Pelletier et Gagnon, 2013). De ces 21 permis, seulement 15 d'entre eux étaient maintenus actifs par 12 pêcheurs en 2016 (Doyon, 2017). L'esturgeon noir quant à lui est géré par le biais d'un quota annuel global de 60 tonnes couplé par des règles de mensurations des prises admissibles (Verrault et Trencia, 2011). Ce quota est divisé en 30 permis dont disposent 13 pêcheurs. Parmi eux, 7 se consacrent à la fois aux pêches d'anguilles et d'esturgeons (Doyon, 2017).

La très grande majorité des pêcheurs rencontrés ont une stratégie d'économie familiale mixte où ils ne se dévouent pas exclusivement à la pêche. Ils combinent principalement la pêche en tant que source de revenus complémentaires à la production laitière. Les sites de pêche à l'anguille où sont installées les fascines sont d'ailleurs situés à l'extrémité nord de leurs lots agricoles qui bordent le littoral. Il n'en a cependant pas toujours été ainsi. Avant les années 1990, la pêche a déjà été une activité florissante au Bas-Saint-Laurent, constituant un pivot culturel et économique pour la région et impliquant plus de 1000 pêcheurs (Bourget, 1984; Gilbert, 1995; Martin, 1990). En effet, jusque dans les années 1980, en continuité avec des siècles de prélèvements halieutiques permettant par le salage et de boucanage de conserver le poisson durant les hivers, toutes les espèces de poissons présentes dans l'estuaire pouvaient être débarquées et vendues localement. La géographie côtière singulière du Kamouraska semble avoir de tout temps été propice à des captures abondantes d'anguilles (Gilbert, 1995; Verrault et Tardif, 2009). Il s'y pratique encore aujourd'hui une pêche unique caractérisée par une technique à gué, ancrée sur l'estran, appelée pêche à la fascine où des coffres collecteurs sont vidés manuellement à pied à marée basse. Par cette technique, les habitants de la région ont pu capturer des bélugas, des anguilles et des esturgeons noirs (Doyon, 2017).

Méthodologie

Les données d'enquête terrain auxquelles cet article fait appel ont été recueillies dans le cadre d'une recherche anthropologique en cours[2] portant notamment sur les activités de mise en valeur de l'environnement au Bas-St-Laurent. L'ethnographie a eu lieu dans les villages de Rivière-Ouelle (1050 habitants) et de Kamouraska (598 habitants) dans la MRC de Kamouraska. C'est dans cette région que se trouvent les derniers sites au Québec où est encore capturée l'anguille

[2] Recherche intitulée « Patrimonialisation de la nature, conservation et valorisation environnementale au Québec et en Catalogne » et financée par le programme savoir du Conseil de recherche en sciences humaines du Canada (2013-2018). La recherche a reçu l'approbation du Comité d'éthique à la recherche de l'Université Laval.

d'Amérique et dans la région adjacente de Montmagny (MRC de L'Islet), où se pratique l'unique pêche à l'esturgeon noir sauvage dans le monde. Il n'y a pas de pêche à la civelle au Québec et la pêche à l'anguille jaune (stade juvénile), qui a très longtemps été pratiquée dans le Lac St-Pierre, 400 km en amont, n'existe plus. Cette unicité explique ainsi le choix du site d'étude.

Les informations ont été obtenues par le déploiement d'une combinaison de méthodes ethnographiques et documentaires : observation, observation participante (participation au déroulement des activités aux côtés des participants, dans ce cas-ci la pêche), entretiens informels et entretiens semi-dirigés (Denzin et Lincoln, 2000) d'une part et, d'autre part, revue documentaire et historique de la pêche et de la région du Kamouraska ainsi que revue de documents d'archives (municipales, muséales et privées), de rapports gouvernementaux colligeant les statistiques de prises et de ventes et d'articles de journaux (*Le Devoir*, *Le Soleil*, *Cape Breton Post*, *Boston Globe*, *Portland Press Herald* et la couverture régionale de Radio-Canada). Les données ont été colligées par des notes de terrain, des photos et des enregistrements vidéo pris par l'auteur.

Les entrevues et les observations participantes avec 13 pêcheurs (actifs et retraités) et leurs familles ont été menées entre juillet 2013 et juillet 2016. Un intérêt particulier a été porté aux prises, aux techniques de capture, aux rondes de visites des fascines ainsi qu'aux initiatives de transformation et de mise en marché. Les pêcheurs participants étaient âgés entre 35 et 74 ans et étaient associés dans leurs activités avec des membres de leur famille ou avec leur conjointe, qui participent également à la pêche et à sa transformation. Ces divers associés ont aussi contribué à la recherche dans le cadre des observations, observations participantes et des entrevues. Les questions posées concernaient notamment leur histoire personnelle et familiale de pêche, pour plusieurs remontant à des centaines d'années, les particularités des techniques employées, les enjeux concernant la gestion des pêches et la conservation de la ressource et les pratiques de mise en marché, notamment l'IGP. Des entrevues avec des chercheurs travaillant pour le ministère de la Forêt de la Faune et des Parcs et le ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation ainsi qu'avec des responsables des tables de concertation et de conseils de recherche ont également été réalisées durant cette même période.

Résultats

La pêche à l'anguille et sa commercialisation: marginalité et mise en marché conventionnelle

La mise en marché des anguilles n'a jamais été aisée, même pour les pêcheurs qui en sont venus à posséder leur propre poissonnerie (Doyon, 2017). Jusqu'aux années 1960, les anguilles étaient vendues localement au porte-à-porte; un répondant raconte : « mon oncle faisait la tournée à bicyclette des rangs dans les hautes terres pour vendre nos anguilles! Quand il a arrêté, c'est moi

qui ai pris la relève. » (cp[3] pêcheur, novembre 2013) Dès les années 1920, avec l'arrivée du transport sur rails, les anguilles étaient aussi acheminées aux États-Unis par train, vivantes dans des boîtes remplies de glace (Gilbert, 1995; cp pêcheur, novembre 2013). Jusqu'aux années 1960, les prix demeurèrent bas, de sorte que le nombre de pêcheurs n'a pas augmenté pendant cette période (Gilbert, 1995). Le gouvernement n'avait alors pas encore établi de mesure de gestion de ces pêches. De 1950 à 1970, les prix augmentèrent peu à peu, passant de 9 cents à 1 $ le kilogramme en 1960, puis à 5 $ à la fin des années 1960 (Gilbert, 1995). Un pêcheur se rappelle : « c'était le bon temps! De l'anguille, il y en avait! On n'arrêtait jamais! Et on aimait ça, c'est excitant de faire des grosses pêches! » (cp pêcheur, octobre 2013) Ces hausses de prix ont été liées aux exportations qui allaient croissant vers l'Allemagne et les Pays-Bas. L'anguille, jusqu'alors une ressource de subsistance, est alors devenue commercialement lucrative. À partir des années 1960, les ventes étaient principalement vouées au commerce extérieur.

Face à ce contexte favorable, le gouvernement décida d'octroyer des permis de pêche à tous ceux qui en faisaient la demande afin de faire profiter le plus grand nombre de cette source de revenus émergente très intéressante dans cette région peu prospère. Bientôt, la région accueillit plus de 1000 pêcheurs actifs. Le but du gouvernement était d'augmenter les revenus des habitants de la région et de promouvoir sa modernisation (Doyon, 2015). Cette politique aurait conduit à une intensification non contrôlée de l'effort de pêche et, selon certains pêcheurs, à des excès. Un pêcheur mentionne : « c'était les années où le gouvernement disait que "le soleil brille pour tout le monde", mais quand quelque chose devient à tout le monde, ce n'est plus à personne » (cp pêcheur, mars 2015).

Au cours des années 1960, guidé par le programme fédéral du bureau d'aménagement de l'Est-du-Québec, le gouvernement du Québec a instauré une stratégie concernant les pêches artisanales, recommandant la fermeture de toutes les pêcheries « non productives » et de faible valeur commerciale (Gilbert, 1995). Les anguilles échappent au couperet en raison des revenus importants qu'elles génèrent. En 1974, le gouvernement paye même un voyage d'études à des pêcheurs d'anguilles de l'estuaire du St-Laurent en Scandinavie afin qu'ils y apprennent des techniques de pêche plus efficaces qui y avaient été développées. Il avait également payé la réfection des équipements de pêche et employé des techniciens spécialisés pour installer de nouveaux types d'équipements (Gilbert, 1995).

Pendant cette période d'abondance à la fois de la ressource et des revenus, les pêcheurs bénéficient de bons prix, mais ne contrôlent aucun aspect de la commercialisation. Cette dernière est déléguée entièrement à un individu qui achetait directement et individuellement aux pêcheurs leur production et la revendait à des acheteurs d'un réseau comportant vraisemblablement des

[3] L'expression « cp » réfèrera dans l'article à « communication personnelle ». Ces communications proviennent d'un des pêcheurs ou représentants institutionnels rencontrés pendant la recherche. Les extraits entre guillemets sont des extraits de verbatim d'entrevues enregistrées et les autres communications personnelles sont tirées d'entretiens ou d'échanges courriel. Pour respecter la confidentialité des échanges en vertu du certificat d'éthique à la recherche octroyé, les communications personnelles sont anonymes dans le texte.

poissonneries asiatiques en Ontario (cp pêcheur, novembre 2013 et novembre 2015). Les pêcheurs sont alors satisfaits de ce fonctionnement, comme le raconte l'un d'entre eux : « Ça nous arrangeait, c'était moins d'ouvrage. On laissait les anguilles dans un coffre devant la maison, et l'acheteur passait les récupérer. Il nous envoyait notre chèque pendant l'hiver quand il finissait de vendre notre production » (cp pêcheur, novembre 2013).

Cette exclusion des pêcheurs du processus de commercialisation est exacerbée par leur éloignement physique des marchés centraux de Montréal, de Toronto et de la côte est américaine et par leur unilinguisme français. Par ailleurs, les pêcheurs n'ont pas historiquement voulu se regrouper pour structurer autrement la mise en marché. Ils ont longtemps refusé de collaborer à cette étape du processus par manque de temps pour établir une procédure, mais aussi parce qu'ils ont traditionnellement la plupart été scrupuleux de ne pas révéler leurs statistiques de captures (révélatrices de leur revenu) aux autres pêcheurs (cp représentant institutionnel, mars 2013). Ils ont aussi longtemps pensé tirer un meilleur profit en négociant individuellement avec leur acheteur et en consolidant leur lien personnel avec ce dernier plutôt qu'en collectivisant la mise en marché (cp représentant institutionnel, mai 2014).

Avec le scandale de la contamination des anguilles dans les années 1970[4], leur exportation en Europe est suspendue et n'a ensuite jamais repris. Le faible volume pêché depuis les années 1990, lié au déclin drastique des populations au Québec, ne le permettrait plus de toute façon (Gilbert, 1995). Contrairement à d'autres produits, comme le lait ou le porc, la commercialisation des produits de l'anguille n'a pas été appuyée par l'État.

Depuis les années 1980, la vente se concentre sur le marché canadien, plus particulièrement les marchés chinois de Montréal et de Toronto (cp représentant institutionnel, mars 2015). À l'intérieur du Québec, les ventes n'ont pas repris autant qu'avant les années 1960. Deux raisons peuvent, entre autres, être avancées. D'une part, avec la désaffection de la population québécoise pour la pratique religieuse, les familles ont peu à peu cessé leurs pratiques de jeûne carné les vendredis (les « vendredis maigres »). D'autre part, la disponibilité soudaine dans les supermarchés d'autres types de poissons plus faciles à cuisiner et à saveur peu prononcée, comme les salmonidés et des poissons blancs surgelés, a volé la vedette à ces bêtes ingrates et pugnaces selon les cuisinières ménagères canadiennes-françaises ; « elles sont impossibles à tuer » m'a rapporté une femme âgée de 70 ans, fille de pêcheur.

Depuis une dizaine d'années, les jeunes pêcheurs de la relève veulent transformer les processus de commercialisation et veulent redorer la réputation de l'anguille injustement mal-aimée. Ils témoignent dans le cadre de la recherche qu'ils sont insatisfaits du système qu'implique un acheteur-revendeur unique. Ce dernier emploie d'ailleurs des tactiques de négoce dont la plupart ne sont plus dupes. En effet, bien qu'il recueille la marchandise directement auprès des pêcheurs, il ne remplirait pas toujours sa part de l'échange selon les « règles du jeu » et ne paierait pas immédiatement la marchandise qu'il accapare. Les pêcheurs relatent qu'il

[4] Des bisphénols polychlorés et des organochlorés ont été retrouvés dans la chair des anguilles provenant, notamment, des industries militaires, d'aluminium, de l'automobile et des pâtes et papiers.

emploie différents subterfuges afin de différer les paiements : « une fois, il nous a dit qu'il avait oublié son argent chez lui, sur son comptoir. Une autre fois, il se plaignait qu'il avait dû faire des réparations sur son camion et qu'il ne pouvait pas nous payer plus cher. » (cp pêcheur, mars 2015). Les pêcheurs sont conscients de leur situation précaire, savent qu'ils sont dépendants de cet unique lien de vente, et ils se demandent chaque automne si cet acheteur vieillissant se présentera.

Certains poissonniers locaux tentent depuis quelques années de remplacer l'acheteur d'anguilles solitaire traditionnel en offrant de meilleurs prix et en prêchant qu'ils sont à même de stabiliser les achats. La confiance semble toutefois difficile à établir. Quelques pêcheurs tentent de développer un réseau de vente auprès des acheteurs chinois de Toronto, un réseau que contrôlait jusqu'à présent l'intermédiaire exclusif. Plusieurs barrières doivent être levées dans ce projet, en plus de celle de la langue, dont la consolidation d'équipements pour la conservation et le transport sur une longue distance des anguilles vivantes et la compréhension des règles non écrites des transactions dans le cadre d'une autre culture d'affaires (cp pêcheur, novembre 2015).

L'esturgeon noir: gestion d'une nouvelle pêche commerciale et son marché

L'esturgeon noir est une espèce qui est de nouveau pêchée commercialement. Il avait complètement disparu du fleuve de 1967 à 1978 (Verrault et Trencia, 2011; cp pêcheur, mars 2015). Au milieu des années 1980, les pêcheurs d'anguilles les ont vus réapparaître dans leurs fascines où ils étaient traditionnellement capturés. Les pêcheurs ont alors entrepris de profiter de cette nouvelle manne à un moment où le déclin des anguilles s'accélérait brutalement.

Alors que l'esturgeon noir avait toujours été pêché à gué, c'est au tournant des années 1980-90 que certains individus, grâce à un capital amassé notamment avec la pêche à l'anguille pour certains et du fait d'une expérience familiale particulière dans le transport maritime (croisiéristes) pour d'autres, ont entrepris de se munir de bateaux afin d'aller à la rencontre de l'esturgeon au large et d'y tendre des filets pour les capturer. Un pêcheur raconte : « Le fleuve est incroyable et trouver des nouveaux sites de pêche c'est merveilleux » (cp pêcheur, mars 2015). Cette stratégie s'est avérée très lucrative pour ces premiers audacieux et, rapidement, les autres pêcheurs les ont rejoints dans cette nouvelle pratique de pêche. En quelques années, le moyen estuaire fut ratissé par de petites embarcations des mois de juin à septembre : une nouvelle petite pêche commerciale voyait le jour.

Dans la foulée, ces nouvelles expériences de pêche révélèrent des quantités importantes de captures, étonnamment beaucoup plus élevées que ce que permettaient les pêches à gué traditionnelles. Certains pêcheurs ont alors sonné l'alarme préventivement, menant les responsables gouvernementaux à rationaliser cette nouvelle intensité de prélèvement (cp représentant institutionnel, novembre 2013; pêcheur, mars 2015). Des mesures de gestion de l'espèce furent donc instaurées. Cette gestion de la pêche a été fondée en tenant compte des récents savoirs et pratiques acquis par les pêcheurs embarqués. Ce sont même les pêcheurs qui ont proposé les délimitations des zones de pêches exclusives. Ces zones correspondent, *grosso*

modo, aux espaces maritimes qui se trouvent directement face aux lieux de vie des pêcheurs. La quantité d'esturgeons pouvant être prélevée est gérée par l'attribution d'un quota aux pêcheurs en fonction de la longueur de filet auquel chacun a droit. En plus d'une quantité annuelle fixe, les pêcheurs se doivent, sur la base de mensurations réglementées, de remettre à l'eau les gros géniteurs ainsi que les juvéniles (Verrault et Trencia, 2011). Malgré certaines réticences initiales, les pêcheurs collaborent pleinement et affirment que ces mesures ont permis d'assurer la santé des stocks de cette espèce très lucrative. Un pêcheur soutient : « c'est plus de travail de bien gérer l'esturgeon. Ça veut dire prendre des mesures, étiqueter, remplir des formulaires, mais ça vaut la peine! On le voit clairement que le nombre d'esturgeons est en croissance! C'est bon pour nous ». (cp pêcheur, mars 2015) Cependant, la commercialisation des esturgeons est menacée du fait de la précarité du statut attribué à cette espèce à l'échelle internationale.

La vente de la chair des esturgeons noirs sauvages n'est légale qu'à l'intérieur des frontières du Québec. Ailleurs dans le monde, le statut d'espèce protégée interdit sa vente[5]. Les relatives faibles quantités pêchées n'approvisionnent qu'un petit nombre de points de vente. Les poissonneries locales stabilisent leur offre en établissant des ententes avec les pêcheurs. Une règle du commerce de la chair sauvage d'esturgeon noir exige un étiquetage sans ambiguïté distinguant celle de l'esturgeon d'aquaculture du Nouveau-Brunswick. Une entreprise y élève une espèce très apparentée, l'esturgeon noir à museau court (*Acipenser brevirostrum*), à la fois pour sa chair et le caviar, dont la stratégie marketing mise sur la renommée et l'attrait historique de l'esturgeon noir sauvage.

Transformation, nouveau marché et patrimoine

Afin d'amenuiser les contraintes de mise en marché propres aux deux espèces vedettes de l'estuaire, l'anguille et l'esturgeon, et afin d'améliorer leur marge de profit dans un contexte où les captures sont limitées, certains pêcheurs ont fondé leurs propres poissonneries[6]. Ces propriétaires-pêcheurs y vendent leurs prises, bien entendu, et tentent de sécuriser leur approvisionnement en rivalisant entre eux afin de fidéliser les fournisseurs-pêcheurs. En plus de mettre en avant la fraîcheur de leurs produits, ces poissonniers sont aussi transformateurs. Ils proposent une grande diversité de produits cuisinés : coquilles Saint-Jacques chair fumée, sauces à pâtes alimentaires, lasagne, pâtés, sushis et « merines » (néologisme dont plusieurs revendiquent l'origine désignant des rillettes de poissons et de fruits de mer où l'anguille est un ingrédient vedette). Pendant l'été, certaines poissonneries offrent même un service de

[5] L'esturgeon noir a le statut d'espèce en péril à l'échelle mondiale et sa commercialisation est interdite. Au Québec, son statut n'est pas aussi précaire. Il est décrété comme étant « menacé » par le Comité sur la situation des espèces en péril au Canada (COSEPAC) et la vente de sa chair est permise au Canada.

[6] Les poissonneries spécialisées dans la vente d'anguilles et d'esturgeons noirs sont à Kamouraska (n:2), à La Pocatière (n:1) et à Montmagny (n:1).

restauration. Les habitants de la région s'y approvisionnent, mais ces dernières sont surtout profitables pendant la saison touristique estivale. Un poissonnier évoque le caractère distinctif de cette saison : « l'été c'est complètement fou! On ne dort plus tellement il y a de clients et de préparations à faire! L'été est court, il faut en profiter! » (cp pêcheur, mai 2015)

D'autres pêcheurs, sans posséder une poissonnerie, transforment leurs captures, grâce notamment aux services de transfert de savoir-faire de l'Institut de transformation agroalimentaire de La Pocatière. Ces initiatives se sont amorcées lorsque les pêcheurs ont constaté que, malgré l'instauration en 2007 du programme gouvernemental de rachat de permis, les captures d'anguilles et, conséquemment, les revenus, n'augmentaient pas. Par la valeur ajoutée importante, la transformation permet d'atténuer la décroissance des revenus des ventes (cp pêcheur, novembre 2015).

La transformation s'effectue dans des conditions contrôlées. Les produits transformés, telles des rillettes et des saucisses d'anguilles, sont distribués par des marchés de poissons, des épiceries fines et des supermarchés de la région et d'ailleurs au Québec. Leur vente bénéficie fortement du passage des touristes estivaux friands de ces produits disponibles dans les commerces locaux. Le profit sur les produits transformés est important. Alors que, par exemple, l'anguille vivante est vendue 8 $ le kilogramme, le prix du produit transformé peut varier entre 55 $ et 85 $ le kilogramme. Le processus de transformation est élaboré et les pêcheurs ne peuvent le faire simplement à la maison. Le ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec exige l'application de normes rigoureuses quant aux conditions d'élaboration de produits transformés qui sont conditionnelles à l'émission des permis de vente. Ces pêcheurs et leur famille investissent beaucoup de temps, d'argent et d'énergie pour accomplir de telles valorisations de leur matière première. Ils doivent acquérir des compétences en cuisine, transformation et mise en marché; louer un espace aménagé selon les normes; s'enregistrer en tant que compagnie; consacrer du temps pour faire connaître leurs produits dans divers festivals et évènements promotionnels (généralement éloignés de leur lieu de résidence). Toutes ces étapes prennent un temps considérable et exigent un investissement personnel difficile à conjuguer avec les activités de la ferme et la vie familiale (cp pêcheur, novembre 2015).

Certains pêcheurs se sont associés pour mutualiser les coûts et les résultats sont encourageants. En plus de la vente au détail, ils tentent aussi de développer des partenariats avec des chefs vedettes dans certains restaurants qui favorisent les menus saisonniers à base de produits québécois distinctifs. La compétition est toutefois féroce dans le marché de niche des produits du terroir. Bien que l'intérêt envers les produits locaux s'accroît, les pêcheurs trouvent ardu le placement de leurs produits dans les épiceries spécialisées urbaines où ils ont peu d'emprise sur l'effort promotionnel. Un pêcheur rappelle « Comment est-ce que je peux savoir si le marchand prend soin de mes produits dans son congélateur ou s'il laisse que mes produits soient tous cachés au fond et que les autres prennent ma place dans l'étalage? Je ne peux pas le savoir, et je ne peux pas y aller toutes les semaines pour vérifier. » (cp pêcheur, novembre 2015).

Depuis quelques années, cette nouvelle mise en marché est accompagnée d'une couverture médiatique sans précédent concernant les pratiques de ces pêches en tant qu'elles incarnent un patrimoine culturel fascinant au cœur d'un paysage préservé spectaculaire. Des nouvelles dans les journaux, des émissions de radio et de télévision ont des programmations culinaires qui ont été consacrées à ces espèces[7]. On y souligne les racines canadiennes-françaises et autochtones du rapport avec les mannes saisonnières qu'ont été ces espèces. En plus des médias, d'autres promotions ont surgi en région : une exposition ambulante de photos (2012-2013) a présenté l'art de la pêche à la fascine; un film documentaire par Evelyne Guay (Chagrin d'eau douce, 2010); un festival perdure en Charlevoix (Le festival de l'anguille de Petite-Rivière-St-François), malgré qu'on n'y pêche plus depuis des décennies, et un musée privé (Le musée de l'anguille de Kamouraska), géré par une retraitée de la pêche à l'anguille, est ouvert au public l'été. Finalement, l'équipement de la pêche est promu en tant qu'élément paysager patrimonial du littoral régional qui est mis en évidence sur les itinéraires écotouristiques bas-laurentiens (*Circuit des paysages*, 2014). Ces initiatives insistent sur le caractère traditionnel de la pêche qui plaît aux touristes, mais occultent les enjeux contemporains auxquels les pêcheurs font face.

La récupération patrimoniale des pêches commerciales du fleuve est intéressante d'un point de vue culturel et muséal. Toutefois, les pêcheurs ne voient pas nécessairement de retombées économiques à ces initiatives qui les mettent à l'avant-scène. En effet, un des pêcheurs révèle : « Nous on veut participer à toutes ces initiatives de promotion, aux émissions d'information et on est intéressé à s'associer avec des noms connus, mais pour le moment, nous n'avons pas encore vu les résultats de tout ça. Notre espoir est que ça nous aidera un jour » (pêcheur, novembre 2015). Il semble que l'imaginaire auquel renvoient ces patrimonialisations met en valeur un fleuve de loisir et de beauté plutôt qu'un lieu de pratiques, de travail et d'exploitation des ressources, des dimensions qui cadreraient de moins en moins avec les idéaux en faveur de la conservation du patrimoine visuel et culturel qui déferlent sur la région.

L'Indication géographique protégée: vers une valorisation des produits locaux

À la suite d'une sollicitation du ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation[8], l'Association des pêcheurs d'anguilles et d'esturgeons s'est engagée en 2014 dans une démarche visant à attribuer un statut d'indication géographique protégée aux pratiques des deux pêches qui

[7] Parmi ceux-ci, notons notamment l'émission de radio de ICI Radio-Canada Première « Bien dans son assiette », les émissions de télé de ICI Radio-Canada « La semaine verte », d'Explora « Océania », de Télé-Québec « Martin sur la route » et la chronique du chef Jean Soulard dans le journal *Le Soleil*.

[8] Le ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation compte un programme pour le développement de produits certifiés, créé à la suite de la Loi sur les appellations réservées et les termes valorisants. Le MAPAQ est responsable de démarcher des produits et des groupes de producteurs qui seraient susceptibles de pouvoir s'insérer dans ces procédures.

la concernent. Les objectifs gouvernementaux relatifs à l'IGP sont de caractériser une production par son originalité, sa spécificité et sa distinction d'un produit de masse; de permettre que son origine soit retracée et clairement identifiée et que cette production ne puisse pas être reproduite ailleurs. Toutes ces caractéristiques s'appliquent clairement aux anguilles et aux esturgeons de l'estuaire du St-Laurent.

L'IGP est comprise par les agents gouvernementaux comme un outil de développement régional par l'accent promotionnel qu'il met sur les dimensions artisanale et patrimoniale ainsi que sur la notion « d'économie du terroir ». Cet étiquetage permettrait, selon les responsables du gouvernement qui ont été rencontrés dans cette étude, de redonner de la valeur à ce qui en avait perdu. Cependant, ces représentants précisent que malgré la visibilité accrue qu'offre l'IGP, il n'est pas réaliste de penser qu'elle puisse constituer un outil permettant d'augmenter les ventes à court ou moyen terme et que les producteurs doivent voir cette démarche comme un investissement avec retour à long terme (cp représentant institutionnel, octobre 2015, mai 2015).

Les pêcheurs rencontrés souhaitent qu'une éventuelle IGP contribue à faire connaître leurs produits au Québec et ailleurs dans le monde. Ils espèrent aussi que cela favorise une éducation populaire à propos de ces espèces devenues mal aimées et méconnues. De plus, les pêcheurs rencontrés pensent tous que l'IGP pourrait favoriser des efforts de maintien, voire de restauration des populations. D'une part, ils pensent que cela pourrait permettre de résister aux politiques de gestion et de conservation du gouvernement fédéral, qu'ils craignent avoir l'intention de « fermer ces pêches » notamment par un arrimage rigide aux politiques du Conseil sur la situation des espèces en péril au Canada visant à resserrer les statuts de conservation en faisant passer l'esturgeon noir au statut d'« espèce en voie d'extinction » et l'anguille argentée au statut d'« espèce menacée » sans égards aux populations particulières à l'estuaire du fleuve (particulièrement la vigueur des esturgeons noirs) (Verrault *et al*., 2017). D'autre part, ils pensent que l'IGP pourrait protéger la spécificité de l'esturgeon noir de l'estuaire face à la menace que représente la commercialisation des très proches parents esturgeons à museau court issus d'élevages au Nouveau-Brunswick. Enfin, du côté des anguilles, les pêcheurs rencontrés pensent que l'IGP pourrait contribuer à lutter contre les ravages que leur semble occasionner l'exploitation exponentielle des civelles dans les Maritimes et sur la côte de la Nouvelle-Angleterre depuis les énormes contraintes imposées à cette pêche en Europe[9].

Le développement récent de l'aquaculture de caviar d'esturgeons au Nouveau-Brunswick met aussi en marché de la chair de « réforme » (jeunes mâles et vieilles femelles) sur le marché québécois et canadien. La stratégie publicitaire qualifie ce poisson comme étant « écologique et durable » par contraste avec les captures d'esturgeons sauvages faites au Québec. On y élude que des prélèvements de géniteurs sont régulièrement nécessaires dans la population sauvage d'esturgeons à museau court de la rivière St-Jean (N.-B.). Selon les pêcheurs québécois, l'interdiction de pêche qui leur pend au-dessus la tête ne serait pas le fruit du hasard. Elle

[9] Au milieu des années 2000, l'Union européenne a fermé l'exportation des civelles vers les fermes d'élevage chinoises en vue de protéger la population gravement menacée d'anguilles d'Europe.

coïnciderait avec l'entrée sur le marché, après de longues et coûteuses années de recherche et de développement, des produits d'élevage enfin devenus rentables. En peu de temps, cette récente capacité de production aquicole aurait selon les pêcheurs d'esturgeons rencontrés saturé en chair d'esturgeons les grandes surfaces de distribution alimentaire, entravant encore plus le laborieux effort de mise en marché déployé par les pêcheurs québécois.

Quant aux civelles, capturées à l'embouchure des rivières des Maritimes et de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, la pression de récoltes atteint des records (Casselman et Cairns, 2009; Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada [COSEWIC], 2013; Crook et Nakamura, 2013). Loin des difficultés de commercialisation des anguilles argentées de l'estuaire, la soif des fermes d'élevage asiatiques est telle qu'un kilogramme de civelles vivantes peut atteindre 5000 $ (Mistler, 2014). L'engouement que cela suscite est tel que les pêcheurs d'anguilles adultes de l'estuaire craignent que cela ait un impact malheureux sur la reproduction de l'espèce dans quelques années. Ils croient que l'IGP pourrait leur donner un levier supplémentaire dans leur plaidoirie contre une éventuelle surexploitation.

Le mécanisme de mise en place d'une IGP dépend d'un responsable au sein du ministère et est encadré dans un processus organisé et fermé. La première étape consiste à réaliser une étude de cas (cp représentant institutionnel, juillet 2016). Elle a été complétée en 2015 par une firme de consultants où sont présentés les résultats d'une enquête réalisée auprès des pêcheurs quant à leurs pratiques de pêche et la commercialisation de leurs produits (Jacques, Rivas et Danyod, 2015). Ensuite, le projet doit être accepté par le ministère puis repris par le Conseil sur les appellations réservées et les termes valorisants (CARTV), un organisme indépendant qui doit le reconnaître et s'engager à son tour dans le processus.

Ces étapes peuvent sembler simples et rapides à franchir. Dans les faits, toutefois, le processus est long (au moins 3 ans) et est confronté à plusieurs enjeux complexes, particulièrement dans le cas d'une IGP halieutique. Les réalités inhérentes à ce type de production sont hétérogènes, difficilement commensurables et correspondent peu aux normes bureaucratiques qui balisent la désignation des appellations réservées et des IGP agricoles. Les cahiers des charges concernant la production et la transformation de l'anguille et de l'esturgeon diffèrent grandement de ceux de la production de viande d'agneau ou de cidre de glace. Les critères d'appellation contrôlée définis en contexte agricole sont difficiles à adapter aux pêches, notamment afin de prendre en compte l'hétérogénéité de leurs organisations professionnelles et la diversité de leurs intérêts. Cette complexité semble confondre les décideurs. Jusqu'à maintenant, il en a résulté un grand flou quant à la structuration de l'IGP envisagée par les pêcheurs de l'estuaire. Malgré le dévouement et les actions déployées par les pêcheurs dans cette démarche, il semble que le dossier stagne du côté de l'administration.

Toutefois, comme nous l'ont précisé des répondants institutionnels ainsi que des pêcheurs, la question du cahier des charges ne serait pas un problème, car leurs pratiques de pêche sont techniquement très bien définies depuis des décennies. Quant à la traçabilité, elle leur apparaît facile à documenter, car l'aire de répartition ou de capture des espèces est très localisée. Ces aspects seraient même plus faciles à clarifier que ce qu'aurait eu à parcourir en ce sens le vin

de glace par exemple (cp représentant institutionnel, octobre 2015, mai 2015). Dans ce cas, les producteurs ne recourraient initialement pas aux mêmes techniques de production, ce qui influençait l'uniformité du produit final.

Par-delà les accrocs à l'adaptation des critères, le développement et les suivis courant d'une IGP impliqueraient des coûts importants qui devraient être assumés par l'association des pêcheurs et par les transformateurs. La structuration des cahiers des charges et du plan de contrôle coûterait plus de 93 000 $ (Jacques *et al*., 2015). De plus, les frais annuels par espèce et par pêcheur seraient environ de 1000 $ (représentant institutionnel, octobre 2015, mai 2016). Ces frais sont très élevés en comparaison avec les revenus que procurent les pêches et prohibitifs compte tenu du caractère incertain et imprévisible des captures. L'éventualité d'une mutualisation des frais n'est pas évidente à concevoir compte tenu du caractère indépendant des pêcheurs en ce qui a trait aux questions de ventes (cp représentant institutionnel, mai 2015). Ces enjeux socioéconomiques sont de potentiels freins à l'instauration des IGP. Ils éclairent le fait que les dimensions biologiques des pêches ne peuvent être les seules prises en compte lors de l'instauration de mécanismes de mise en marchés alternatifs.

Discussion

IGP, outil complémentaire aux programmes de certification?

Les nouveaux mécanismes de mise en marché développés ces dernières années par les pêcheurs de l'estuaire, notamment par leurs transformations innovantes des produits, ainsi que les démarches pour l'implantation d'une IGP sont intéressantes selon plusieurs échelles de considération : celle des intérêts des pêcheurs eux-mêmes, celle de la valorisation des produits et celle du réseau alimentaire régional. Ils permettent en effet une bonification de la valeur marchande des produits ce qui se traduit par un gain de bénéfices, du moins pour les pêcheurs-transformateurs. Ils sont au cœur des efforts actuels du développement touristique régional qui s'inscrivent dans l'intérêt accru observé ces dernières années envers les produits du terroir et des produits fins (Boulianne, 2013; Hinrichs, 2003). Leur traçabilité exceptionnellement limpide favoriserait de plus le développement régional (Ilbery et Kneafsey, 2000, 1998; Urquhart et Acott, 2013). Les traits propres à ces produits et les démarches conduisant à l'éventuelle avenue d'une IGP qui leur serait propre s'inscrivent dans une mouvance de conscientisation des consommateurs et des producteurs quant au rôle structurant que sont les activités de productions alimentaires dans la constitution du territoire (Barham, 2002, 2003) et de lieux significatifs (DeLind, 2011).

L'IGP serait susceptible d'éviter plusieurs écueils inhérents aux programmes d'écocertification, car ils permettent une reddition de compte rigoureuse, une traçabilité transparente et des retombées locales quant aux pratiques et revenus qui en sont tirés (Bérard et Marchenay, 2002, 2006). Le programme de l'IGP permettrait d'éviter le biais « biologisant »

souvent reproché aux écocertifications qui se limitent à des mesures quantifiables relatives à la ressource (Olson, Clay et Pinto Da Silva 2014; Ponte, 2008). L'IGP s'appuie certes sur les particularités d'une espèce ou d'un produit, mais aussi sur les processus de production, certifiés dans un cahier des charges, et intègre les mécanismes et dimensions sociales et historiques propres à l'aliment reconnu en tant qu'il contribue à un patrimoine non seulement naturel, mais aussi culturel (Bérard et Marchenay, 2006; Urquhart et Acott, 2013; cp représentant institutionnel, mai 2015, juillet 2016). La traçabilité telle que valorisée par une IGP est propice à contribuer au développement régional et potentiellement au tourisme local, comme Urquhart et Acott (2013) le soulignent avec le cas des pêcheries du sud de l'Angleterre. L'IGP diffère également du type de gouvernance privée inhérent aux outils d'écocertification (du type du MSC) par l'appui et l'encadrement gouvernemental dont elle fait l'objet, bien que, comme le souligne Guthman (2007), les enchevêtrements entre les secteurs privés, non gouvernementaux et étatiques soient complexes.

Enfin, l'IGP pourrait favoriser le développement du réseau alimentaire grâce à l'intérêt qu'elle suscite chez les producteurs eux-mêmes. En effet, ces derniers lient le processus de production et la distinction régionale de leur produit avec les impératifs d'une saine intendance de l'écosystème estuarien et des territoires qui lui sont tributaires. Ils sont au cœur de la gestion de ces ressources depuis plus de 20 ans et ils y participent activement (Doyon, 2015). Ils y voient un outil de protection non seulement des espèces concernées et de la biodiversité des écosystèmes qui les engendre, mais aussi de protection de leur ancrage culturel et social, une valeur ajoutée, à l'instar de ce que soulignent Bérard et Marchenay (2002). Les savoirs et les pratiques sont fondamentaux à la légitimité d'une IGP et en retour, son implantation favorise leur mise en valeur, appuyant le réseau alimentaire local.

IGP et diversité des produits, des processus et des intérêts

Les institutions bureaucratiques qui développent les IGP prennent peu en compte les interprétations et les intérêts des producteurs qui aspirent à un tel étiquetage lorsque les problématiques de ces derniers s'écartent des objectifs formels traditionnels des modèles d'IGP déjà existants, se limitant aux pratiques contenues dans le cahier des charges et à la traçabilité. Par-delà la promotion de la commercialisation régionale, la contribution potentielle d'une IGP à la protection des ressources biologiques renouvelables commercialisables et de la biodiversité des écosystèmes et des paysages qui les engendrent (tel que proposé par les pêcheurs d'anguilles et d'esturgeons de l'estuaire au Québec) n'est pas envisagée par leurs gestionnaires parce que ces enjeux ne constituent pas le corps premier des objectifs qu'ils poursuivent. Pourtant cette contribution ne leur serait pas contradictoire avec leurs objectifs de normalisation des pratiques, de traçabilité et de développement régional. Elle pourrait même être un moteur additionnel

propice au développement et au fonctionnement des IGP qui, par ailleurs, seraient dans un état de stagnation en ce moment au Québec[10].

Le manque de créativité et d'ouverture à l'innovation dans l'adéquation des objectifs gouvernementaux des IGP aux problématiques soulevées par des producteurs (comme celles vécues par les pêcheurs québécois de l'estuaire du St-Laurent) semble se traduire par une incapacité à pallier à d'autres enjeux fondamentaux : 1) la lourdeur administrative et les coûts de la certification ne sont pas adaptés à la singularité de leurs pratiques historiques de production et de transformation (qui correspond désormais à une activité et un revenu complémentaires); 2) à leur organisation sociale et économique marquée par l'atomisation de leurs activités (les pêcheurs ne favorisant pas la mise en commun leurs dépenses et revenus et ayant toujours travaillés individuellement); 3) aux contraintes de mise en marché qui ont contribué à maintenir, jusqu'à tout récemment, la mainmise d'un acheteur-revendeur unique et aux faibles revenus que procurent ces pêches.

À la lumière de l'expérience vécue par les pêcheurs de l'estuaire du St-Laurent, le modèle unique des IGP révèle une rigidité normative et une tradition uniformisatrice qui ne parviennent pas à absorber les processus et réalités propres à plusieurs produits qui auraient pourtant avantage à se prévaloir de ce type de certification. Les considérations qui parviennent difficilement à être lissées dans une procédure administrative sont nombreuses : la santé des écosystèmes qui engendrent ces produits, les singularités des structures d'associations de producteurs, l'hétérogénéité des milieux socio-économiques, la diversité des produits transformés corollaires de la production première reconnue, la culture locale et la valeur patrimoniale des produits. Ce manque de souplesse du modèle unique, qui peine à s'adapter aux pêches d'anguilles et d'esturgeons, peut contribuer à expliquer le faible et stagnant nombre d'IGP reconnues au Québec jusqu'à présent. Les particularités propres aux produits et aux producteurs candidats s'insèrent pourtant en revanche en plein dans les préoccupations des réseaux alimentaires et comportent des dimensions historiques, politiques et sociales d'une cohérence telle que leur reconnaissance pourrait accroitre le développement régional par la commercialisation telle que prétend prôner le gouvernement provincial par les IGP.

Conclusion

Le développement de nouveaux mécanismes de mise en marché alternatifs aux modèles conventionnels dans le secteur halieutique est rendu possible par différentes stratégies qui tablent sur la mise en valeur des produits, du terroir et du territoire ainsi que sur des considérations propices à pérenniser leur production et leur consommation. Les pêches à l'anguille et à l'esturgeon dans l'estuaire du St-Laurent s'inscrivent dans une telle approche depuis près de 10

[10] La démission en février 2017 de la directrice du Conseil des appellations réservée et des termes valorisant en signe de protestation contre l'immobilisme étatique face à ces enjeux est éloquente.

ans. Plus récemment, les pêcheurs ont entamé des démarches de certification de leurs produits et de leurs pratiques dans le cadre d'une éventuelle IGP. Ce changement dans les processus de commercialisation, d'une situation où les pêcheurs sont exclus des mécanismes de mise en marché à une où ils participent à la transformation et à la commercialisation, est intéressant et pourrait contribuer au maintien de ces pratiques de pêches traditionnelles.

L'itinéraire du processus de marchandisation des anguilles et des esturgeons de l'estuaire du St-Laurent et les démarches pour l'instauration d'une IGP qui leur serait propre est parsemé d'embûches. Un paysage littoral dépourvu de fascines et des poissonneries bas-laurentiennes sans anguille pourraient sévèrement effriter le souci de restauration de cette espèce. Et ne plus pêcher les esturgeons noirs dans le cadre d'une planification rationalisée pourrait les vulnérabiliser envers des valorisations illicites où la tentation de confondre leur chair et leur caviar aux offres de l'aquaculture serait forte. Par contre, soutenir la continuation de ces pêches en les reconnaissant par une IGP, et renforcer ainsi l'intendance structurée et intégrée de ces espèces est beaucoup plus susceptible de nourrir une relation soutenable avec ces espèces. Persévérer à les commercialiser dans le cadre d'une IGP pourrait contribuer à une motivation collective susceptible d'activer et de soutenir des efforts de maintien et de restauration de ces populations de poissons. En innovant dans le domaine halieutique, l'IGP pourrait donc proposer un modèle propice à combler les lacunes des écocertifications halieutiques existantes qui se contentent de mesurer les stocks, l'impact des équipements sur les écosystèmes, les prises secondaires et les types d'équipements. Une telle IGP pourrait contribuer à l'émergence d'un réseau alimentaire alternatif halieutique, notamment en associant ces produits à un territoire bien circonscrit, en reconnaissant l'intégrité minimale des écosystèmes tributaires et en décrivant et valorisant les dimensions socio-environnementales de leur mise en valeur.

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Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 108–138 May 2017

Canadian Food Studies La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation

Original Research Article

GMO doublespeak: An analysis of power and discourse in Canadian debates over agricultural biotechnology

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Abstract

It has been over 20 years since Canada's first commercially grown genetically modified (GM) crops were approved, and debates over these contentious products continue to gain momentum. Literature exploring Canada's GMO debates has yet to focus specifically on the discourse of pro-biotech public relations campaigns and anti-biotech movements. This paper helps fill this gap with an analysis of power relations regarding efforts to inform public opinion on the topic of agricultural biotechnology. I explore these power relations in two arguments. First, I argue that the Canadian state's overall positive position toward agricultural biotechnology provides leverage to pro-biotech public relations, while delimiting the direction of anti-biotech campaigns. Second, I argue that the potency of pro-biotech frames are constituted and sustained by historically and culturally embedded norms and values, which add additional challenges for anti-biotech campaigns. These findings reveal a clearer picture of the complexity of power relations within agri-biotech discourse, and the extent to which anti-biotech groups may be disadvantaged in these debates.

Keywords: agricultural biotechnology; GMO; power; discourse; Canada

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DOI: 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v4i1.208
ISSN: 2292-3071

Introduction

More than two decades since the first commercial approvals, agricultural biotechnology remains in a state of serious contention both in Canada and around the world. Controversy continues to rage over the potential issues posed by genetically modified (GM)[1] foods and crops, including impacts to human and animal health, the environment, and the agri-food market (Kondoh & Jussaume, 2006). Policy development as well as consumer and market acceptance are impacted by the known and/or perceived risks and benefits of agricultural biotechnology. As public policy for GMOs has developed, so too have the ways in which GMOs are framed and discussed. This also means GM technology is susceptible to forms of "doublespeak", or language use that obscures, alters, or re-creates the meanings and understandings of GMOs and their impacts. In an effort to explore connections between these discourses and wider power relations regarding the development and influence of GMO policy, this paper examines the language use within pro-biotech public relations discourses and anti-biotech campaign discourses.

On the one hand, organizations such as the Council for Biotechnology Information (CBI)[2], which represents companies including Monsanto and Bayer CropScience (CBI, 2011f), use various campaign strategies to inform the public about the importance and benefits of biotechnology. On the other hand, organizations such as the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN)[3] oppose these efforts, pointing to the risks of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and questioning the claims of agri-biotech supporters. Though clear power differentials exist between these organizations and their available resources, important insights can also be gleaned through an analysis of materials (such as advertisements, brochures, and factsheets) from both sides of the debate that represent the sorts of messages Canadians receive regarding GM foods and crops. Analysis of these documents reveals how complex power relations impact the production, dissemination, and reception of GMO discourse.

Anti-biotech campaigns have been successful in Canada on numerous occasions, but these victories appear to be localized "wins" within the relatively unchanged Canadian GMO policy climate. While several GM products have been successfully blocked from entering Canada's market, likely by the assistance of CBAN and likeminded groups, there remains a strong pro-GM industry and regulatory system in the country. What factors might explain the definite, but overall limited, success of anti-biotech efforts? This article operationalizes a

[1] GM ("genetically modified") and GMO ("genetically modified organism") are the preferred terms used in this article to refer to plants that are also referred to as genetically engineered (GE), transgenic, and living modified organisms (LMO). All of which can be considered methods of agricultural biotechnology. GM crops are identified as developed through breeding processes that do not naturally occur. See CFIA (2007) for a more detailed explanation of these terms.

[2] The Council for Biotechnology Information is a "NAFTA-aligned, non-profit association" with individual websites for biotech information regarding the United States, Canada and Mexico (CBI, 2011g). Only the Canadian (English) site is examined here in depth.

[3] CBAN is a network made up of 16 members, who include: Canadian Organic Growers, GE Free Yukon, No More GMOs Toronto, and the Saskatchewan Organic Directorate.

multiform approach to power in order to explore the language, contexts, and social relations influencing debates over GMOs vis-à-vis campaign and publicity materials. The purpose is to expose under-acknowledged conditions and characteristics within GMO debates to help explain the embedded power structures supporting pro-biotech discourses, and the ways in which this discursive climate influences the overall successes and limitations of anti-biotech campaigns. These campaigns represent an important voice pushing back against the current power structure within the Canadian agri-biotech sector, providing key challenges to the current emphases on technological competitiveness and economic growth.

Discourse analysis of 42 key informational documents (campaign reports, flyers, etc.) reveals two key findings regarding power relations (both overt and underlying) in Canada's agri-biotech sector. First, the Canadian state's overall positive position toward agricultural biotechnology is influential in providing discursive leverage to pro-biotech publicity materials, while predisposing and delimiting the directions of many anti-biotech campaign materials. Second, pro-biotech frames are attached to popular values and constructed within historical, cultural, and normative understandings of "truth" production, which increases their resonance; while anti-biotech campaign materials appear more stymied by these conditions. Overall, these findings help to illustrate the complexity of power relations within agri-biotech discourse, and the extent to which anti-biotech groups are disadvantaged in these debates. Importantly, the concepts of *technological progressivism* and *scientism* are used in this study to highlight the sort of normative assumptions that enable the framing of certain problems as solvable through agricultural biotechnology. Technological progressivism (or technological determinism), is the view that technological development is not only beneficial, but inevitable; such ideas can be dated back to the Enlightenment and the de-legitimation of the Luddites in the 19th century (Kleinman & Kinchy, 2003; Kleinman & Kloppenburg, 1991, p. 432). Scientism is the idea that facts, being superior and more credible, must be kept distinct from values—a distinction that has roots as far back as Plato and the creation of science as a profession (Kleinman & Kinchy, 2003). These two terms are employed in an effort to extend the discussion of power relations beyond the agency of actors in order to expose what relations, norms, histories and ideas enable/disable this agency. This analysis is meant to fill a gap in Canadian research on GMO media and discourse analysis, as well as contribute to wider discussions regarding power and biotechnology.

Power and language in GMO debates

Throughout the last two decades an array of debates over agricultural biotechnology has consistently appeared within social and political domains. Much of the discourses surrounding GM foods and crops remain embedded in binary divisions such as safe/not-safe, sustainable/unsustainable, necessary/unnecessary, and so forth. For instance, a key debate over the value and necessity of agricultural biotechnology is over its capacity to feed a growing population. One view states that GMOs are necessary to feed eight billion people in 2025

(Borlaug, 2004); the opposing view is that this claim is mostly rhetoric designed to both maintain the illusion that GMOs are needed, and to mask the overall failures in addressing global hunger with these technologies (Chopra, 2015). Such socio-political divisions are interlaced with scientific debates, which often become more divisive through the translation and communication of scientific research in varying mediums (for instance pro-biotech public relations materials and anti-biotech campaign materials).

Research on GMO safety has focused on either demonstrating that GM foods and crops are *as safe as* conventionally made foods and crops, or establishing the need for additional research due to remaining uncertainty and complexity. Scientific research, particularly since 2006, has examined the safety of genetically modified foods, including issues of toxicity, adverse effects, and health risks, and according to Domingo and Bordonaba (2011) displays "a certain equilibrium in the number of research groups suggesting, on the basis of their studies, that a number of varieties of GM products (mainly maize and soybeans) are as safe and nutritious as the respective conventional non-GM plant, and those raising still serious concerns" (p. 741). More recently, Hilbeck *et al*. (2015) contributed to the discussion by claiming that no scientific consensus on GMO safety has been reached—a publication that includes notable GMO critics in the list of authors, such as Vandana Shiva and Brian Wynne. Adding to this debate, the United States' National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2016) recently released an extensive report titled "Genetically Engineered Crops: Experiences and Prospects", which includes statements claiming the lack of proof that GM foods are less safe than other foods made from non-GM ingredients. Each side of this scientific division is emphasized and mobilized in an effort to win public approval. For example, large-scale corporations and supportive governments mobilize particular discourses that depict GMOs as beneficial and safe, consistently pointing to a lack of scientific proof that GMOs are dangerous, and emphasizing the similarities of genetic modification with conventional plant breeding. Conversely, anti-biotech groups often emphasize the opposite, pointing to the remaining uncertainty regarding GMO safety, and the unique risks they pose. As these debates continue in scientific, political, and social domains, there remains a need to better understand the impacts of GMO discourse and the associated relations of power.

GMO doublespeak and historical resonance

Power and language in GMO debates is an important area of research, helping to reveal the role of discourse in battles over public opinion. In this article, the discursive domain of GMOs is explored to illustrate the influence of normatively and historically embedded discourses, and the power effects that may undulate from their deployment. Though there are plenty of examples of "GMO doublespeak"—the strategic political framing of GM products and their impacts—important insights are also found in an exploration of the histories, norms, and ideas in which these frames are embedded.

An important example of framing in GMO debates is in the area of intellectual property (IP). While opponents of GM technologies point to concerns regarding increased corporate

control over seeds and related issues, proponents defend IP mechanisms like plant breeders rights and patents as necessary tools to stimulate—and recoup—investments in these technologies. In Canada, these types of protections have been increasing since the 1970s (see Phillips, 2013). Important to this article, global corporations are not only capable of deploying significant resources to explicitly pursue wider protections, but they also engage in discursive games to increase the acceptance of strong IP mechanisms (Sell, 2009). Corporations frame opposition to IP rights as a defense of intellectual piracy; opponents to this frame argue that the protections themselves are a form of piracy—*biopiracy* of the genetic resources and traditional knowledges of developing countries (see Drahos & Tansey, 2008; Shiva & Holla-Bhar, 1996). On this point, Drahos and Tansey (2008) explain that leverage can be gained by framing arguments along commonly accepted values/principles; these "floating points of leverage" can be deployed by powerful and less powerful actors alike.

Pro-poor narratives which position GM foods and crops as the solution to world hunger are prevalent in agri-biotech discourse, and represent another key example wherein language use in GMO debates is embedded in the power of framing (see Chopra, 2015; Glover, 2009; 2010; Kleinman & Kloppenburg, 1991). Glover (2010) highlights the ways in which perceptions regarding agricultural biotechnology have been shaped by narratives of how GMOs will help to alleviate global hunger and poverty. Ideological commitments to double food production for a growing population, however, work to marginalize issues like global diet and lifestyle trends (Tomlinson, 2013). According to Tomlinson (2013, p. 81) "the imperative to double global food production by 2050" is now ubiquitous when discussing international food security policy[4], but the key is whether or not this imperative is used as a normative goal or a projected (and not necessarily desirable) future. If the prediction that we will need to double food production is transformed into a normative imperative, wherein we commit to finding a way to actually double food production to satisfy population growth, we may fail to explore other options to improve access, distribution, and waste, for instance. A reason for this transformation, Tomlinson (2013) suggests, may be that the goal of doubling global food production aligns well with ideological commitments to economic growth, liberalized trade, and technological and scientific problem solving. Glover's (2009) research explains how hidden assumptions that have shaped the pro-poor narrative of agricultural biotechnology "have involved the radical simplification of the complex agronomic and livelihood contexts into which GM crops have been inserted". This process of simplification helps to illustrate the connections between power and discourse—the ways in which technological assessments can be translated into political commitments. Sharratt (2001a) contributes to this argument, stating:

> Genetic engineering is sold as the solution to world hunger and increasing environmental degradation in an attempt to justify and legitimate genetic engineering as a technological fix for problems

[4] The Millennium Development Goals (particularly Goal 1) and the Post-2015 Development Agenda are important sites for this discussion of international food security policy.

> that are largely social, political, and economic rather than technical. (p. 8)

A pre-occupation with technological and scientific solutions to global problems may restrict our vision, shadowing more efficacious alternatives such as re-peasantization[5]. Such efforts to influence public perceptions and policy debates regarding agricultural biotechnology involve complex power relations which include discursive battles over the production of "truth".

"Truth", or more precisely, the power and politics of truth, represents an important site for analysis regarding GMO discourse. In Foucault's (1984) view, in each society there is a general politics or regime of truth, which refers to

> the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (p. 73)

Scientific discourse, including the actors and institutions that produce it, plays a key role in our current truth regime. Wynne's (2001) critique of contemporary GMO policy illustrates this role, particularly "the ways in which science has become the culture of policy rather than its key intellectual resource" (p. 472). Dominant constructions of GMO discourse position scientific knowledge (specifically conventional, reductionist forms of science) as objective and unquestioned, and public discourses as ungrounded and emotionally based. As such, public perceptions are represented as opinions without any intellectual weight, while the scientific knowledge culture remains unreflexive of its own value commitments (Wynne, 2001).

In their analysis of Monsanto's efforts to shape public opinion and political debate over biotechnology, Kleinman and Kloppenburg (1991) outline how "discursive elements with historical resonance" are drawn from in order to create a positive image of biotechnology—two prime examples being technological determinism and scientific expertise (p. 427). According to Kleinman and Kloppenburg (1991), these historically embedded ideas benefit Monsanto's efforts to create "an image of biotechnology as developing inevitably along a particular trajectory, as immanently and universally beneficial, and as a realm appropriately assessed only by experts" (p. 431). These authors illustrate the potential impacts of historically and normatively embedded understandings of what counts as "truth", and how these understandings are deployed. GMO debates include long-standing discursive battles over how to view and understand new technologies; this fight over the "truth" about GMOs deserves further critical attention.

[5] Re-peasantization, or the restoration of varying forms of peasant agriculture, has been promoted to counter "the threat presented to world food security by the third crisis and by food empires" (van der Ploeg, 2007, p. 332).

The Canadian government's dual role as regulator and promoter of agricultural biotechnology has been criticized for its biased, uncritical approach to GMO regulation (Abergel & Barrett, 2002; Andrée, 2002; Magnan, 2006). A narrow risk focus and prioritization of technological innovation and economic competitiveness has impacted the extent to which the Canadian state has engaged the public in the development of agri-biotech policies (Abergel & Barrett, 2002). According to Magnan (2006), not only does Canada's supportive position on biotechnology limit its capacity to respond to public concerns, but we can also expect future public relations efforts to vie for support of these technologies.

Although the approval for growing GM crops in Canada has been continuing since the 1990s (i.e. corn, soybean, canola, and sugar beet), anti-biotech campaigns have also been successful on numerous occasions over this time period. For example, in 1994, opposition from several different Canadian organizations was successful in blocking the use of recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH) in Canada[6] (Sharratt, 2001b). Also, Eaton (2009; 2011; 2013) has thoroughly cataloged a similar coalition that successfully opposed the introduction of GM wheat in Canada in the early 2000s. These "victories", however, are not necessarily a bellwether of more cautious agri-biotech policy in Canada. The instances when GM foods/crops have been successfully opposed in Canada represent specific "wins" in the anti-biotech campaign, but have not materialized into an effective transformation of Canada's use and development of GM technology in general. This article contributes to such scholarly discussions of how anti-biotech campaigns have been successful on specific occasions, but less successful in generating more systemic changes. It examines discursive battles in the Canadian agri-biotech arena and identifies varied instances of power imbalance in order to expose important biases and predispositions with regard to public information on GM foods and crops.

Four dimensions of power

Exploring the impacts of power relations within debates over agricultural biotechnology requires an understanding of the diversity and complexity of these relations. As a theoretical concept, power has been defined and categorized with considerable depth and breadth (see Dean, 2010; 2012; Digeser, 1992; Haugaard, 2002; 2012; Lukes, 1986). A fusion of many works and ideas affords this study the theoretical strength to thoroughly analyze power relations within agri-biotech discourse in Canada. This study approaches power as (1) a capacity that is possessed and deployed, by actors such as corporations for example (see Fuchs, 2007; Clapp & Fuchs, 2009), and (2) as a constitutive, underlying force that establishes and influences other forms of power

[6] For a detailed examination of the rBGH controversy in the U.S., including a discussion of shifting patterns of discourse and the consumption politics of food, see Buttel (2000).

(see Digeser, 1992; Rye, 2014). These two approaches to power are interrelated, and in many ways reinforce one another.

Approaching power as a capacity that is possessed and deployed, Fuchs (2007) and Clapp and Fuchs (2009), describe three forms of power: *instrumental*, *structural*, and *discursive*. *Instrumental* power involves the direct influence of one actor on another. Clapp and Fuchs (2009) usefully conceptualize instrumental power to examine impacts of agri-food corporations on global food systems, for instance, corporate lobbyists have the capacity to influence policy formation. Dahl's (1957) early conception of this form of power focuses on the capacity actors have to influence actions/events through their own actions. Bachrach and Baratz (1962, p. 948) extend Dahl's power concept to include a second "face" of power which investigates the "mobilization of bias"; actors exert power by "creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process". This form of power is referred to by Clapp and Fuchs (2009) as *structural* power, an example being agri-food corporations articulating disincentives such as the consequences of lost jobs or added costs to farmers and consumers if too many restrictions and regulations are placed on the industry. These two categories (or "faces") of power represent important, more explicit, instances of influence and control.

Lukes (1974; 1986) offers a third dimension of power wherein subjects act voluntarily due to modifications in their own values and beliefs. This understanding of power shares similarities with Castells (2013) work on communication power, as well as Gramsci's (1971) discussions of consensus and common sense; however, the focus here is the application of Lukes' work to the concept of *discursive* power (see Fuchs, 2007; Clapp & Fuchs, 2009). Clapp and Fuchs (2009) describe this form of power as preceding decision-making, involving the framing of issues around certain norms and values. This form of power acknowledges the role of media and other public relations mechanisms in framing political issues. The discursive strategy of framing agri-biotech issues is an essential focus of this study; of particular interest is how the strength of certain frames being deployed are (at least in part) constitutive of widespread, long-standing normative assumptions.

Accounting for the influences of such assumptions, Dean (2010, 2012) and Digeser (1992) outline a fourth dimension of power founded upon the works of Foucault (see 1977, 1980). This fourth dimension is referred to here as *constitutive*[7] power. Constitutive power provides a critical divergence from the first three dimensions of power—particularly on the point

[7] Digeser (1992) provides a strong explanation of this form of power and refers to it as the fourth face of power, or "power$_4$". In order to align the terminology for this type of power with the more descriptive terms used by Clapp and Fuchs (2009) for the first three forms, I have chosen the term *constitutive* power, which is consistent with the language (which draws heavily from Foucault) used to describe this form of power (See Foucault, 1977; 1980; Haugaard, 2002). The term constitutive also reflects what Barnett and Duvall (2005) refer to as "social relations of constitution", which involves a like-minded application of the fourth dimension of power. Previous uses of the term 'constitutive power' are inconsistent. While some authors position constitutive power as possessed and deployed by actors, such as the state (see Browning & Christou, 2010; Neocleous, 1996), others view constitutive power as embedded in socially and historically developed norms and discourses (see Jennings, 2011; Rye, 2014). The present study adopts the latter view.

of agency. Constitutive power is not possessed but rather forms the space for exercising power through the historical development of norms and discourses in which actors participate and interact; it comprises the background conditions that form subjects and enable/disable the capacity for agency (Digeser, 1992). Dean (2010) explains that it is useful to look beyond "the identification of agents of power" and to "attempt to understand the kind of power relations in which such forms of agency appear" (p. 461). In this sense, there is a form of power that exists outside of the actions of agents operating towards their own ends. In this study, power is approached in four dimensions to add to the understanding of pro-biotech and anti-biotech battles for public attention. All four types of power interlace in varying combinations depending on the social context. This application of power offers insights into how distinct and interconnected forms of power can be identified, and how certain topics, opinions, and values toward agricultural biotechnology are enabled or constrained.

An example of constitutive power is the influence of scientific discourse in agri-biotech debates. That is, the dominant discourses of scientific reasoning are suitably conceptualized in this fourth dimension of power in order to examine their influences on decision making, and the production of knowledge in general. Andrée (2005) explains that scientific discourse deploys its own form of influence by placing limitations on what makes sense. It should be asked, as Foucault (2003) has:

> What types of knowledge are you trying to disqualify when you say that you are a science? What speaking subject, what discursive subject, what subject of experience and knowledge are you trying to minorize when you begin to say: 'I speak this discourse, I am speaking a scientific discourse, and I am a scientist.' (p. 10)

Actors without scientific-technical knowledge are limited in their capacity to influence policy, regardless of their level of interest in the policy outcome (Andrée, 2005). In this sense, scientific discourses (as a dominant norm) enable and constrain the capacity for agency—the capacity to possess and exercise certain forms of power. Such views are an essential expansion to the study of power relationships within language use regarding agricultural biotechnology. Certain forms of knowledge are embedded in historical and normative understandings of truth which are mobilized by actors vying to win public support.

Utilizing the above framework, this article outlines how—based on a combination of varying power relations—some discursive[8] strategies are more powerful than others. Instrumental and structural power relations (such as the supportive actions of the Canadian state) establish a favourable climate for pro-biotech discourse. Further, discursive strategies such as pro-biotech frames are deployed to influence opinion, and such strategies are advantaged by the

[8] To be clear, this article applies a four dimensional power framework to an analysis of discourse. One of the key dimensions of power that is being looked at is *discursive* power, which involves the use of conversation, text, an so forth (i.e. discourse) to influence/persuade other actors. The other three dimensions of power are utilized in this article to add new insights into what influences the development and deployment of pro- and anti-biotech discourse.

constitutive power of historically embedded normative assumptions. I propose a fuller engagement with the breadth of power relations is necessary to help make room for a more open-ended inclusion of public opinion, and to help add momentum to anti-biotech campaigns that are focused on incisive and systemic critiques.

Data and methods

A total of 42 key informational documents were compiled from pro-biotech publicity materials and anti-biotech campaign materials[9]. The unit of analysis was limited to materials directed at the Canadian public by the CBI and CBAN whose mandates are to disseminate promotional and oppositional information about agricultural biotechnology, respectively. Materials published by these two organizations from 2010 to 2015 were selected to provide an up-to-date representation of language use and problem framing within Canadian GMO debates. All materials were collected via relevance sampling; using key words and targeting two specific organizations (the CBI and CBAN) allowed for a systematic isolation of relevant materials (Krippendorff, 2012). Sampling was performed on web search engines (e.g. Google) and the respective websites of the CBI and CBAN. Web materials, including advertisements, pamphlets, flyers, booklets, web pages, and other downloadable documents were compiled. The materials by CBAN were a combination of single-page flyers for campaigns and multi-page booklets with detailed information. Materials from the CBI consisted largely of brief, three to four page documents covering a specific topic (for example, drought), but also included a cookbook and an activity booklet for children. Documents were selected in a way that covered a wide array of material types, all within a similar time-frame and target audience. Audio/video materials were not included. The documents were manually coded, and analyzed in an iterative process utilizing insights from sociological discourse analysis (see Ruiz Ruiz, 2009) and critical discourse analysis (see Jäger, 2001; Fairclough, 2001; 2013).

The methods used in this study involve a combination of textual analysis, contextual analysis, and reflexive interpretation. First, textual analysis involves looking at the wording, metaphors, and other grammatical elements of a text (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Second, contextual analysis involves outlining the context of the material being analyzed; including considerations of authorship, audience, and dissemination. Third, reflexive interpretation "involves making connections between the discourses analyzed and the social space in which they have emerged" (Ruiz Ruiz, 2009, p. 25). Here, the social, cultural and historical context of a particular discourse is reviewed. This phase takes place throughout textual and contextual analysis. Following Ruiz Ruiz (2009), analysis was "conducted in a constant and bidirectional manner among these three levels" (p. 25). The methods of discourse analysis employed here leave important questions to be answered by future research. More extensive document analyses

[9] Further details about these documents are available from the author.

as well as in-depth participant based investigations regarding public engagement with these discourses, including how certain ideas are interpreted in different ways, will add useful developments to this study's findings. Results from the analysis are outlined below.

Results

Canada's stance: Pro-biotech boon and anti-biotech battle

It is well established that the Canadian state plays a dual, contradictory role as both regulator and promoter of biotechnology (Magnan, 2006; Prudham & Morris, 2006). This dual role contributes to the production of discourses by both industry and the Canadian state which appear mutually supportive, including the use of complementary (and sometimes identical) language in descriptions of Canada's approach to regulating agricultural biotechnology. Furthermore, Magnan (2006) explains that "given the state's role in regulating and actively promoting the technology, government-sponsored public consultations have taken on the aura of public relations and have risked foreclosing meaningful opportunities for debate" (p. 25). This stance by the Canadian state works to stifle approaches to more open and transparent policy development.

According to Kneen and Kuyek (2002), successive Canadian governments have supported the biotech industry since 1980. The supportive stance of the Canadian government is depicted in their deployment of instrumental and structural power to advance the development of the agri-biotech sector. Federal policies like the 1983 National Biotechnology Strategy and the 1998 Canadian Biotechnology Strategy are strong representations of instrumental power as they are explicitly designed to foster development and innovation in the sector. These policies helped create a favourable climate for GMOs and established agricultural biotechnology as an economic, technological, and scientific priority in Canada.

An important aspect of the Canadian Biotechnology Strategy was the creation of the Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee (CBAC), which Health Canada (2005) describes as "an arms-length committee consisting of multidisciplinary experts and members of the general public". CBAC's activities regarding the regulation of GM food in Canada offer a clear example of structural power; critics have described the nomination procedures for the members of CBAC as biased against experts critical of biotechnology (Magnan, 2006), and the stakeholder consultations held in 1998 and 2001 as undemocratic, because they were private, by-invitation meetings (Barrett, 2002). As Gerlach, Hamilton, Sullivan, and Walton (2011) describe it:

> The format, structure and nature of the process results in participation by direct stakeholders and excludes the population at large. As a result, conclusions and recommendations are predetermined and robust exchange over ethical and social concerns is neatly avoided (p. 117-8).

The Canadian government effectively mobilized their bias towards the development of a biotechnology sector through CBAC's consultation efforts.

Canada's regulation of agricultural biotechnology has also been criticized for its case-by-case, product-based approach. Each novel agricultural product is assessed and regulated based on its novelty, not on the processes of production (CFIA, 2007). This system regulates several different product development technologies[10] within the same legislative framework, focusing on the characteristics of each individual product. Instead of viewing GM products as being developed from a distinct process needing unique regulatory mechanisms (e.g. GMO laws), GM products are grouped with other "novel agricultural products" and regulated within a system already set in place (Tait & Levidow, 1992). One particularly contested aspect of these product-based regulations is the concept of *substantial equivalence*. The essential idea is that GM crops deemed compositionally similar to crops already approved and on the market, may be exempt from certain safety assessments and other requirements because their risk is deemed comparable to an already approved crop (see Clark, 2004; Prudham & Morris, 2006)[11]. Substantial equivalence, and other aspects of Canada's GMO regulatory system, such as the efficacy of tests for toxins and allergens (see Clark, 2004) and a purely voluntary labelling standard for GM foods, provide grounds for critiques that this system is weighted in favour of industry development and away from a precautionary logic (see Prudham & Morris, 2006). This regulatory framework is an important component of the overall positive stance to biotechnology taken by the Canadian state. Of particular interest to this study is how the Canadian state's instrumental and structural power in this area might shore up pro-biotech publicity discourse. Analysis reveals that the Canadian state's supportive stance on agricultural biotechnology, including the establishment of product-focused regulations, acts as a boon to pro-biotech publicity materials and a point of critique in anti-biotech campaign materials.

Canada's positive stance is a boon to pro-biotech discourse

The Canadian state and the agri-biotech industry provide a mutual boon to one another in their descriptions of the industry and government processes of regulation and scientific assessment. Analysis revealed that the Canadian state's overall supportive stance toward agricultural biotechnology is utilized within pro-biotech publicity discourse; language use by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) also includes phrases that mirror that of the CBI. For instance, while the CBI (n.d.) notes that "Beer, wine, bread and cheese were the original biotech foods" (p. 3), the CFIA (2007) similarly states "Biotechnology has long been used to make everyday

[10] In addition to genetic modification, the types of technologies used to develop other PNTs include: chemical mutagenesis of plant seeds, like sunflowers; high pressure processing for egg salads, dips, and spreads; and adding phytosterols to juices and yogurts (Health Canada, 2015).
[11] For further details see CFIA Directive 94-08 (Dir 94-08) Assessment Criteria for Determining Environmental Safety of Plants With Novel Traits (2016), http://www.inspection.gc.ca/plants/plants-with-novel-traits/applicants/directive-94-08/eng/1304475469806/1304475550733

products (e.g. the use of micro-organisms, such as bacteria or fungi, to manufacture cheese, wine, and antibiotics)" (p. 6). These statements showcase mutual efforts by government and industry to historicize and normalize the use of biotechnology applications in food and agriculture.

The CBI's (2011b) four-page factsheet "Understanding Canadian Biotech Regulations" includes several excerpts which illustrate how Canada's positive stance toward biotechnology is integrated into their publicity materials. One of the opening paragraphs reads:

> The Canadian plant biotechnology industry is regulated by our federal government. Our stringent regulatory system, with its checks and balances, ensures that all products of biotechnology are safe for people, animals, plants and our environment before they are made available to the consumer. This includes an extensive safety review by both the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Health Canada. (CBI, 2011b, p. 1)

These statements capture the CBI's efforts to intertwine industry actors with Canada's regulatory system and government organizations. By emphasizing adjectives like "stringent" and "extensive", the CBI points to their overall agreement with, and adherence to, the current Canadian system of agri-biotech regulation. Also, the use of the possessive adjective "our" is a subtle but important textual attribute which couples industry and government actors. By referring to "our current regulatory system" the CBI is able to clearly assert their support for 'stringent' regulations that are designed to ensure the safety of their products. Another excerpt that integrates the actions and commitments of government and industry, states:

> Beyond government regulations, the plant science industry develops training and educational materials such as the CropLife Canada Compliance Management for Confined Field Trials Program which has trained over 300 Canadian researchers on how to properly conduct research trials. (CBI, 2011b, p. 4)

Here, the CBI outlines how pro-biotech trade associations like CropLife take part in training and education activities that act as a complement to government regulations. In addition to the coupling of industry and state responsibilities, this document explains how Canada's regulatory system is in line with the international community:

> Canada's regulatory guidelines are based on scientific principles and were developed in conjunction with experts in the global scientific community including the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). (CBI, 2011b, p.1)

The CBI references Canada's commitments to scientific principles, experts, and the international community to defend Canada's regulatory system, and by extension, defend the level of assessment their products receive. This quote points to the global scale of agri-biotech discourse, and the role of international organizations. The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has a history of involvement in researching the importance of agricultural biotechnology (Phillips & Ilcan, 2007), and is shown pushing for expert and scientific knowledges in the governance of agriculture on a global scale (Ilcan & Phillips, 2003; Phillips & Ilcan, 2007). Claiming Canada's science-based regulations are consistent with "experts in the global scientific community" offers a wider network of supportive stances to substantiate industry practices. The CBI is defending the agri-biotech industry in Canada by arguing that the FAO and WHO influenced the development of Canadian regulations. In this sense, the CBI is projecting the biotech industry as a positive contribution to agriculture, operating in a system supported by Canadian and international decision makers. Overall, instrumental and structural power relations, such as support for the agri-biotech industry by the Canadian state and international organizations, appear to shore up pro-biotech publicity discourse.

Anti-biotech campaigns react to Canada's regulations and positive stance

The strong commitment to biotechnology by the Canadian state, including its product-focused regulatory structure, appears to impact anti-biotech campaigns in two ways: (1) anti-biotech discourse includes criticisms of certain government decisions and actions in response to the non-neutral position of the Canadian state, and (2) Canada's product-focused regulatory structure works to, for better or worse, prefigure CBAN's campaign directions to the targeting of specific GM products.

Although it may be unsurprising (if not expected) that CBAN's campaign materials include criticisms of government decisions/regulations, it is useful to include examples of this language use to illustrate how CBAN's positionality toward the Canadian government gets reflected in discourse. Two brochures against the introduction of GM salmon include the following statements:

> We call upon the Federal government to stop any current safety assessments of GE fish until the completion of a full, transparent, open and accessible public consultation on the social, ecological, human health, and market implications of introducing GE fish has been completed and its findings have been debated in Parliament. (CBAN, 2011)

> In late 2013, Environment Canada announced its decision to allow production of the GM fish and fish eggs in Canada. This is the first government approval for this GM fish anywhere in the world. (CBAN, 2014b)

These statements target the Canadian government's avoidance of "open and accessible public consultations", and highlight Canada's supportive (or at least permissive) stance toward GMOs, specifically GM fish. The contrast between CBAN's statements and the CBI's depiction of industry and government as allies illustrates the imbalanced standing of these opposing organizations, and its impact on their associated discursive strategies. The CBI is able to capitalize on the non-neutral position of the Canadian state while CBAN wages criticisms against both.

Of the materials analyzed from CBAN, a consistent theme was to focus on the opposition to specific GM products. Canada's GMO regulations are product-based, meaning that assessment is based on a product's novelty and not the processes of modification (CFIA, 2007). This means that each new GM crop is assessed for health and environmental impacts before it is commercially grown, inevitably leading to protest from those opposing the new GM product. Recent campaigns (2013-2014) have specifically focused on GM alfalfa, apples, fish, and sweet corn, among others.

As mentioned, targeted campaigns have achieved considerable success in Canada; rBGH in 1994 (Sharratt, 2001b), Roundup Ready wheat in 2004 (Eaton, 2009), and GM alfalfa in 2013-14[12]. These victories should be considered important successes, especially due to the prominence of these products in Canada[13]. The potential drawback from targeted campaigns is whether the specificity of anti-biotech campaign materials will inadvertently validate the overall biotech system, or at a minimum, do little to oppose it. As Jasanoff (2005) explains, "deeper theoretical perspectives on what is at stake in the politics of biotechnology—more specifically, what is new and debatable about the politics of engineering life—tend to get lost in the noise about the individual application" (p. 185). While anti-biotech campaigns usefully target each GM product that is developed in, and assessed by, Canada's regulatory system, the more general critiques of agricultural biotechnology advanced by CBAN risk being buried within these targeted, product-focused materials.

Campaign discourses vying for an alternative regulatory system and explicit recognition of the potential long term, systemic impacts of GMOs, such as the increased privatization and commodification of plant breeding, are only briefly covered in the focused campaigns against, for example, GM corn. Within their campaign materials opposing Monsanto's "SmartStax" GM corn which "stacks" together multiple traits in a single GM product, CBAN critiques Health Canada for waiving the need for safety assessment (because the product combines only traits that have been previously assessed). CBAN highlights the ways SmartStax technology contributes to Monsanto's increasing control over the seed market; and also advocates for a moratorium on new crop/food approvals and "a comprehensive reform of the entire regulatory system in Canada" (CBAN, 2009; 2010). Here, key positions against the systemic impacts of GMOs and the need

[12] GM alfalfa has recently been released in Eastern Canada, and campaigns continue to efforts to prevent contamination and further release.

[13] For example, spring wheat, which would have been replaced by Roundup Ready wheat, is Canada's largest crop in terms of total production tonnage, reaching an estimated 20 million tonnes of production in 2014, and is the second largest crop in terms of area seeded, at 7 Million hectares (Statistics Canada, 2014).

for a broader alternative regulatory framework are relatively buried within the individualized campaign against GM corn.

Importantly, CBAN has also released broader, more extensive critiques of national and global issues regarding GMOs. A yearlong campaign called "GMO Inquiry 2015" includes six reports totalling 239 pages of research that provides an evaluation of the first 20 years of GM technology (gmoinquiry.ca). The broader, systemic critiques that may get overshadowed in individual campaigns are explored in depth in these reports, including evaluations of the impacts GMOs have on consumers, farmers, and the environment. Future research on the overall reach of these longer, more extensive reports is needed for revealing their potential impact in comparison to the more product-focused campaigns. The next section exposes further nuances within these discursive battles, including how the framing of GMOs intersects with embedded norms and values.

Framing GMOs: Another pro-biotech boon and anti-biotech battle

Discursive power is about the potency of the frames actors use to couch their preferences, which are deployed as a strategy to influence policy (Sell, 2009). Corporate actors, according to Clapp and Fuchs (2009), often play a role in framing certain problems in public discourse, which can indirectly influence the options being considered to address them. Analysis of frames/framing dates back (at least) to Goffman's (1974) work, and plays an important role here in the examination of pro- and anti-biotech publicity/campaign materials. As Entman (1993) explains, "the frame determines whether most people notice and how they understand and remember a problem, as well as how they evaluate and choose to act upon it" (p. 54). Of concern here is how agricultural biotechnology is being framed in pro-biotech publicity materials, as well as how problems (such as food insecurity) are assigned into categories by associating them with particular norms and values (see Kooiman, 2002 as cited by Clapp & Fuchs, 2009). Global problems such as world hunger and environmental degradation are defined by pro-biotech actors as problems of efficiency and production capacity, solvable through technological innovation and scientific expertise (see Borlaug, 2004). This framing is understood here as an example of discursive power.

It is also useful to consider the conditions that contribute to the potency of these frames, including the historically and culturally developed norms and values embedded in these frames. Viewed as a form of constitutive power, these conditions set the stage for framing by privileging particular forms of knowledge, and particular means for producing "truth". Normative assumptions developed over time through historical and cultural interactions comprise the background conditions for agency, outlining which actions and ideas are rational, logical, and defensible (see Andrée, 2005; Digeser, 1992; Moore, Kleinman, Hess, & Frickel, 2011). In this study, technological progressivism and scientism are two powerful forces that enable the capacity/agency to frame certain problems as solvable through agricultural biotechnology. In the sections below, I set forth two arguments: (1) the potency of pro-biotech frames are constituted

and sustained by long-standing values and norms, and (2) anti-biotech campaigns have the challenge of finding ways to counter these dominant frames.

Pro-biotech frames: Technological progressivism and scientism

According to Entman (1993), framing is about selecting particular aspects of a "perceived reality" and making them stand out in order to promote a particular view of a problem (p. 52). The CBI's publicity materials frame agricultural biotechnology as a solution to global problems, particularly regarding food security and the environment. A factsheet by the CBI (2011d, p. 1) entitled "Protecting Our Planet" states:

> Modern plant biotechnology products help our farmers produce a safe, healthy and abundant food supply, while reducing agriculture's environmental footprint. This technology allows farmers to produce more food on the same amount of land, reducing the need to expand land for crop production.

Biotechnology is also positioned as a solution to drought in Africa:

> Sharing technology around the world – Canadian biotech company, Performance Plants Inc has signed an agreement to share its drought-fighting seed technology with Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International (CBI, 2011a, p. 4).

The above quote is from a booklet called *Biotech Basics* which outlines the importance of growing more food per acre under subheadings like "Feeding a hungry world" and "Doubling food production for the planet by 2030" (CBI, n.d, p. 6–7). Overall, these pro-biotech publicity materials illustrate the CBI's discursive efforts to articulate how agricultural biotechnology can help feed a starving and growing population, all while "helping improve the health of the Earth and the people who call it home" (CBI, 2010).

What makes assertions about feeding a hungry world with GMOs problematic is the political-economic value embedded in making this assertion, and the ways in which this limited approach to solving global poverty and hunger focuses on a small set of technologies instead of the agricultural knowledge of farmers, for example (Chopra, 2015). Furthermore, such narrow approaches downplay the risks and potential disadvantages associated with pursuing these technological solutions (Glover, 2010). Kleinman and Kinchy's (2003) discussion of *technological progressivism* illustrates the impacts of depending on (bio)technical solutions, and the danger of understanding technological progress as an end instead of a means. Such discourses are deployed to influence public opinion regarding the necessity of agricultural biotechnology, and take advantage of the constitutive power of historically formed normative assumptions about the value and importance of technological progress.

The assumption that progress is an essential part of modernity dates back to the Enlightenment (Kleinman & Kinchy, 2003; Kneen, 2013). This is a common theme among the pro-biotech materials analyzed, and has been identified before. In outlining technological determinism as a discursive element in Monsanto's promotional campaign, Kleinman and Kloppenburg (1991) argue "this view implies that technology has a logic of its own that directs it along a single inevitable trajectory" (p. 432). With regards to CBI's fact sheet "Protecting Our Planet", the coupling of technological improvement with the environment is important because it positions environmental sustainability as achievable through technical means, supporting the *single inevitable trajectory* of bio-technical environmental solutions. The issue here is the promotion of technological progress, specifically in the area of biotechnology, to combat global social problems like climate change and food insecurity. These complex problems are narrowly defined by technical solutions[14], marginalizing non-technical solutions that are not tied to political-economic interests.

In addition to themes reflecting technological progressivism, the CBI also actively invokes frames that seek to strengthen and legitimize their position on agricultural biotechnology by aligning it with trusted, authoritative sources. In a recipe book by the CBI (2011e) entitled "Good Ideas are Growing", nutritionists and registered dietitians are quoted in support of the consumption of canola, corn, legumes, soybeans, and wheat—most of which are available as GMOs. Adherence to expert opinion points to the strategy of downplaying dissenting opinions by maintaining the divide between public perceptions of GM crops, and the allegedly objective opinions of "experts" (Stirling, 2012). Importantly, some of the CBI's most pervasive references to experts and procedures that legitimize agricultural biotechnology had to do with the adherence to scientific principles[15]. Statements wherein science is given implicit importance and credibility include:

> Through plant science innovations, including biotechnology, Canadian farmers are ensuring high productivity rates and increased food quality (CBI, 2011c).

Furthermore, the mandate listed on most of the CBI's publicity materials includes the phrase:

> The Council for Biotechnology Information is a non-profit association whose mandate is to communicate science-based information about the benefits and safety of agricultural and food biotechnology (see CBI, 2011d, p. 4).

[14] Problem solving through technological progressivism can also have unintended consequences—the Green Revolution provides a fitting example, significant production increases were achieved alongside "unintended environmental, social, and institutional consequences" (Pingali, 2012, p. 12302).

[15] CBI's (2010) children's activity booklet "Look closer at biotechnology" was analyzed for numerical indications of word repetition—directed toward children, this booklet offers a brief (2,583 words), clear, and simple discussion of biotechnology. Interestingly, the word "scientist(s)" appeared 25 times, making it the third most common word in the document (discounting grammatically necessary words such as prepositions and articles). The word occurring most frequently was "biotechnology" (64 times), and the second most common was "grow" (26 times).

These statements position science-based information as authoritative, necessary, and unquestioned. Andrée (2005), drawing from Foucault, explains how scientific discourse exhibits a normalizing power in politics, marginalizing actors without the requisite expertise and limiting avenues of resistance. The CBI uses the concept of "science-based information" to validate their position. Implicitly, such statements work to disqualify and "minorize" other forms of knowledge that are not defined as science-based (see Foucault, 2003). By using scientific knowledge as a defence for GM technology, the CBI is essentially placing science-based information above other sources, such as social and ethical considerations. This use of "science" as a defence for agricultural biotechnology is a persistent theme in pro-biotech publicity materials.

To be clear, it is not the discipline of science that needs critiquing here, nor should these arguments be viewed as an opposition to science, and scientific reasoning. Of particular concern here is the use (or misuse) of "science", or more accurately, conventional scientific discourse, for a particular purpose. As Wickson and Wynne (2012) point out, when science is used for policy development in contested areas like GMOs, it can be used to close down policy debate to a limited number of experts instead of providing a range of options to democratically accountable policy makers. This is a key problem regarding the regulation and governance of GMOs, as scientific assessments are an invaluable aspect in decision-making on these technologies, but scientific discourse can also be mobilized to overshadow other forms of knowledge. As Bronson (2014) illustrates, the courtroom dialogue in *Schmeiser v. Monsanto* clearly showed a privileging of scientific expertise as a more credible source of knowledge.

Of particular interest to this study is what constitutes the "internal regime of power" of scientific statements; what forces (social, economic, cultural, etc.) are behind the production of "truth" (see Foucault, 1984). More to the point, Stirling (2012) explains that "if one believes that science discovers facts and that facts determine technology, then there is little latitude for meaningful social engagement on the direction of technology change" (p. 3). As such, strategies that privilege scientific knowledge for the purpose of marginalizing other perspectives need to be identified. Notions of 'scientific expertise' and 'science-based information' are understood here as the products of constitutive power; these embedded normative assumptions produce accepted "truths" that actors like the CBI can draw on to shore up their discursive power.

The notion of "scientism" is useful here for capturing this strategy of mobilizing scientific discourse; according to Kleinman and Kinchy (2003) "scientism is the notion that values should not be allowed to mix with facts, and, further, should not be considered in decisions about science and technology" (p. 379). Within the materials analyzed for this article, terms such as "scientific" and "science-based" are used by different actors to validate arguments, and depend on pre-conceived understandings of what makes information reliable. Here, the CBI deploys discursive power by calling upon the defense of "science"; these messages are fortified by the constitutive power of scientific discourse, which occupies a privileged position in the production of "truth" and makes claims regarding the science-based regulation of GMOs more

salient. As Irwin and Wynne (1996) explain, "to accept science as a key resource in public issues is radically different from accepting its automatic authority in framing what the issues are" (p. 8-9). This use of science, or more accurately the normative weight of science, results in the displacement and/or demotion of other forms of knowledge in contexts such as policy making.

Anti-biotech's response to established normative assumptions

Pro-biotech materials from the CBI utilize frames about helping the environment and a hungry planet, which are bolstered by a history of technological progressivism and scientism. The discursive response of anti-biotech campaigns is, by necessity, an uphill battle wherein organizations like CBAN find themselves navigating (and at times fighting against) pre-established normative assumptions about what the food and agricultural system should look like. That is, CBAN is (unsurprisingly) not in opposition to environmental and humanitarian efforts or scientific and technological developments. Therefore, creating an anti-biotech campaign response to pro-biotech claims about feeding the world and saving the environment poses a unique challenge: with decidedly less resources than the CBI, CBAN's role includes dispelling these claims that are upheld by longstanding norms regarding technology and science.

Though not a Canadian crop, CBAN's extensive critique of GM "Golden Rice" provides a strong and useful illustration of its opposition to pro-biotech frames that promote the humanitarian value of GMOs. In a 2014 factsheet, CBAN effectively challenges aspects of biotechnology linked to humanitarianism in regards to Golden Rice, the GM rice with added beta-carotene[16] to address vitamin A deficiency (CBAN, 2014a). CBAN exposes several drawbacks to the long awaited promises of Golden Rice, including financial costs, inadequate testing, environmental risks, as well as the general notion that Golden Rice is prescriptive to an isolated issue within the larger problems of hunger and malnutrition (CBAN, 2014a). This eight page factsheet represents the complex critical research and campaign efforts needed for building an opposition to frames that are latched on to issues like global hunger.

Another example wherein CBAN unravels the pro-biotech claims to humanitarianism is the sixth report in GMO Inquiry 2015, "Do we need GM crops to feed the world?" (CBAN, 2015a). In this 24-page report, the "feed the world" rhetoric is criticized, explaining that GM crops fail to account for a range of social, economic, and environmental issues related to global hunger (CBAN, 2015a). CBAN appears well equipped to challenge pro-biotech frames that offer simple solutions to complex global social and environmental problems, though deconstructing and refuting the minutia of these claims also appears to be a fairly elaborate and research intensive task.

CBAN's campaign materials also include arguments that push back against the normative assumptions of conventional scientific reasoning and the inevitability of technological progress. Importantly, CBAN does not formulate arguments that are outright against scientific knowledge and technological development. Whether or not this reflects the prevailing influence of scientism

[16] The rice is engineered to produce beta-carotene which is then converted to vitamin A in the body.

and technological progressivism, it is useful to point out that a more appropriate assessment of CBAN's position is one that endorses a complexity approach to science and a precautionary approach to technology.

CBAN problematizes the narrow approach to science utilized by pro-biotech industry and government actors. For example, in a flyer opposing GM salmon, CBAN (2011) writes:

> The FDA released two documents that summarize the data presented by AquaBounty as well as the FDA's own analysis of the company's science. But the data was widely criticized as woefully inadequate, shoddy science. In public meetings, the FDA's own committee members voiced serious concerns about the risks and the quality of the data.

This quote targets the quality and adequacy of AquaBounty's scientific research. Additionally, CBAN (2015b) critiques Canada's regulations for not considering social and economic impacts, stating

> GM foods and crops are regulated based on a very narrow set of considerations. The government limits risk assessment to (some) safety questions and does not consider 'non-scientific' concerns such as economic impacts. (p. 2)

CBAN's (2015b) critique of Canada's regulatory focus also includes a statement on treating technological development as inevitable:

> In Canada, the question of the social worth of individual GMOs is not determined through regulation but is left for the market to decide. The federal government has already decided that the new technology and the growth of the biotechnology sector serve the public good. (p. 4)

The above three quotes offer an illustration of CBAN's treatment of science and technology. Overall, this treatment reflects CBAN's mission, which is to promote "food sovereignty and democratic decision-making on science and technology issues". Though not explicit in their materials, these positions can also be viewed as depicting the anti-biotech campaign's alignment with complexity science.

As the remaining uncertainties regarding GMOs work to erode levels of trust and credibility in reductionist approaches to scientific assessment, complexity science is increasingly being looked to for alternatives. Complex problems with unsolvable uncertainties necessitate discussions of choice, priorities, and interests (Gibson, 2005); this means moving from reductionist scientific approaches, to more complexity oriented approaches (see Stirling, 2010). Wickson and Wynne (2012) point to this phenomenon in the European context, wherein scientific risk assessments have faced considerable criticism for their failure to recognize the

ways in which values are embedded and intertwined in the conducting and interpreting of these assessments. Though such criticisms are not absent in Canada (see Clark, 2004), the policy and regulatory debates and changes in Europe are useful indications for what a Canadian system based on precaution and complexity science may look like. This is due, in part, to the strong anti-GM sentiments commonly attached to European consumers and institutions (see Moses & Fischer, 2013). What is needed, as Stirling (2012) suggests, is "greater public engagement [that] offers an opportunity to be more rigorous about the uncertainties in bioscience innovation and more accountable about the exercise of power" (p. 1). Future anti-biotech campaigns may benefit from the continued pursuit of this wider lens, elaborating on critiques regarding the necessity of progress and finding new ways of highlighting the value of diverse, non-scientific perspectives (see Stirling, 2009).

Conclusion

This study examines the state of agri-biotech discourse in Canada, including how the industry frames GMOs, the potency of these frames, and the responses of anti-biotech groups. "GMO doublespeak" is about powerful actors' strategic use of language in efforts to influence the meaning and reception of certain ideas, words, and discourses—this term is used in this article to draw attention to the political language games that play an important role in debates over agricultural biotechnology. Analysis of publicity and campaign materials reveals important power relations regarding efforts to inform public opinion on the topic of GMOs, including the influence of embedded normative assumptions.

First, I have argued that the Canadian state's overall positive position toward agricultural biotechnology provides added leverage to pro-biotech publicity materials, while Canada's regulatory laws and favourable stance on GMOs predisposes anti-biotech campaigns to engaging in certain forms of critique. This illustrates the interplay between GMO discourse and the instrumental and structural power of the Canadian state. Second, I argue dominant pro-biotech frames receive a boost in potency because they are attached to popular values and constructed within historical, cultural, and normative understandings of "truth" production which increase their resonance—whereas anti-biotech campaigns dedicate resources to deconstructing and dismantling these frames. This section demonstrates how discursive strategies are supported by the underlying effects of constitutive power; dominant normative discourses act as a force beyond the direct capacity/agency of the CBI and CBAN. Put briefly, the CBI's discourse fits more readily within the status quo which may improve its overall resonance with the general public. Incorporating constitutive power into this analysis helped to highlight aspects of agri-biotech power relations that are not currently emphasized in the literature.

How might the anti-biotech campaigns of organizations like CBAN best proceed over the next two decades? Is it potentially more effective to withdraw from larger, more incisive and systemic critiques of the current agri-biotech system of production, assessment, and regulation?

Protests against GM wheat, for example, owe their success (in part) to the coalition of key supporters that adopted less radical perspectives regarding economic concerns and potential market impacts (Magnan, 2007). Such perspectives can be viewed as less radical because they pose little to no challenge to the overarching system of agricultural production—advocates for more radical change typically identify fundamental, far-reaching concerns of a systemic nature. Campaigns against rBGH had a similar experience with support from the Dairy Farmers of Canada (Andrée, 2011). Thus, the potential value of a more inclusive, and less radical, approach should not be discounted. At the same time, caution can be gleaned from Dauvergne and LeBaron (2014) who asked: "where are the radicals?" in their book on the corporatization of activism, which also states:

> Rarely now do "career" activists call for a new international economic order, or a world government, or an end to multinational corporations. Only a select few on the fringes, in the words of Greenpeace cofounder Bob Hunter, still struggle to "mindbomb" the world to form a new "global consciousness".

Working within, rather than against, dominant discourses may prove successful, or it may foster a climate of not-so-radical activism. While GMO protests have been successful in Canada on numerous occasions, such as the resistance to rBGH in 1994 and GM wheat in the early 2000s, it may be important for future research to investigate the reasons for why a wider shift away from agricultural biotechnology still seems like a distant goal. The broader, more systemic critiques found in materials like GMO Inquiry 2015 may represent a critical step towards counter-discourses that stimulate a new direction for Canadian agriculture and agri-food policy.

A fuller engagement with the many forms of power relations—particularly regarding dominant norms and discourses—is needed to help make room for a more open-ended inclusion of public perspectives around topics of scientific and technological development. In Kleinman and Kloppenburg's (1991) view, "critics are fighting against a deeply established set of meanings"; we need to broaden the debate beyond technical discussions among experts, towards a "consideration of equity in the social distribution of benefits from new biotechnology products" (p. 445). There is a need to push towards a more open approach to evaluating these technologies, one that adopts a plural understanding of progress in order to consider a wide range of alternatives (see O'Brien, 2000; Stirling, 2009; 2012). Future research projects— and future campaigns—have the difficult task of converting deconstructed dominant norms and complexity approaches to science into digestible public discourse that can be widely disseminated and widely understood.

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank the reviewers who provided many useful comments and suggestions. And, I would also like to thank my PhD thesis committee: Jennifer Clapp, Bob Gibson, Suzan Ilcan, Andrea Collins, and André Magnan, for their comments and direction on previous drafts. Any arguments in or shortfalls of this article remain my responsibility.

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Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 139–159 May 2017

Canadian Food Studies La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation

Original Research Article

Student food insecurity at the University of Manitoba

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Abstract

While rates of food insecurity among various sectors of the Canadian population are well documented, food insecurity among post-secondary students, as a particularly vulnerable population, has emerged in recent years as an area of research. Based on a survey of 548 students in the 2015/16 school year, this exploratory study examines the extent of food insecurity among undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Manitoba. Our study revealed that 35.3 percent of survey respondents faced food insecurity according to a 6-item survey. Of these students, 23.5 percent experienced moderate food insecurity, while 11.8 percent were deemed to be severely food insecure. Using chi-square tests and regression analysis, we compare these rates with various demographic indicators to assess which students appear to be at greater risk of food insecurity, factors contributing to food insecurity, and its effect on their student experience, their health, and their lives in general. In contemplating funding for post-secondary institutions and increases in tuition fees, provincial governments need to consider how this will affect student food insecurity.

Keywords: food insecurity; food security; university students; Manitoba; Canada; student debt; student health; survey

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DOI: 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v4i1.204
ISSN: 2292-3071

Introduction

> Life as a student should not be this hard, education should not be this hard to obtain[1]

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, food security is defined as "when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (FAO, 2006). Alternatively, food insecurity at the household level is experienced when people are economically unable to purchase sufficient quantities of food or balanced meals that they need (Davis & Tarasuk, 1994; Tarasuk, Mitchell, and Dachner, 2014). The nature and prevalence of food insecurity is a growing concern in Canada and other affluent nations. The 2012 UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Mission to Canada helped shed light on various dimensions of the growing problem of food insecurity in the country (De Schutter, 2012). While evidence has suggested high and increasing rates of food insecurity among certain populations of university students (such as campus food bank users or students receiving financial aid) (Abbott, Abbott, Aird, Weyman, Lethbridge, & Lei, 2014; Farahbakhsh, Ball, Farmer, Maximova, Hanbazaza, & Willows, 2015; Meldrum and Willows, 2006; Nugent, 2011; Willows & Au, 2006), quantitative investigation of food insecurity among post-secondary students in Canada has more recently emerged. Numerous factors contribute to student food insecurity, but most notable are the increasing financial burdens faced by post-secondary students (Farahbakhsh et. al., 2015; Nugent, 2011; Cummings, 2015; Silverthorn, 2016).

This exploratory article contributes to the emerging research on food insecurity at Canadian post-secondary institutions by examining the extent of, and factors related to, food insecurity affecting a population of students at the University of Manitoba. To set the context, we begin by presenting some general data on, and contributing factors of, food insecurity within the general population in Canada and Manitoba. This is followed by a brief exploration of studies that have examined food insecurity at Canadian campuses.

Context

Food insecurity in Canada and Manitoba

According to national surveys, rates of food insecurity in Canada are rising. As of 2014, 12 percent of Canadians are affected, which is an increase from 7.7 percent in 2007/08 (Tarasuk, Mitchell, & Dachner, 2014). Within the young adult population, or those 20-34 years old, the rate of food insecurity was 11.6 percent as of 2012/13 (Statistics Canada, 2013).

[1] Excerpt from student participants' comments submitted as part of the food security survey

In Canada, low income is the most reliable predictor of food insecurity (Tarasuk, Mitchell & Dachner, 2014). Over one million Canadians receive social assistance, not including the 780,000 individuals on disability. Of these Canadian whose primary source of income is social assistance, 60.9 percent are food insecure; for those receiving employment insurance or workers compensation, their rates are 35.6 percent (Tarasuk, Mitchell & Dachner, 2014). Rates of food insecurity and food bank use are disproportionately higher among certain populations, including single-parent families headed by women, and households with children under the age of 18 (Tarasuk, Mitchell, & Dachner, 2014). Indigenous Canadians are also over-represented, with rates of food insecurity among non-reserve Aboriginal populations of 25.7 percent in 2014 (Tarasuk, Mitchell, & Dachner, 2014). This statistic is likely significantly lower than rates of food insecurity on First Nations Reserves and in Northern Indigenous communities, which are monitored differently through other measures of Indigenous food insecurity in Canada (Huet, Rosol, & Egeland, 2012; FNIGC, 2012; Egeland Pacey, Cao, & Sobol, 2010).

In Manitoba, current statistics regarding food insecurity are lacking due to the province's omission of measures of food security in the 2014 Canadian Community Health Survey. However, in 2012 provincial household food insecurity affected 12.1 percent of Manitobans, up from 10 percent in 2010, but down from 12.4 percent in 2007 (Tarasuk, Mitchell, & Dachner, 2014). Much like the rest of the country, low income has been identified as the primary reason for food insecurity in Manitoba (Wiebe & Distasio, 2016). In 2015, Manitoba had the highest national rates of food bank use, distributing emergency relief to 63,791 individuals, which represents a 58 percent increase compared to 2008/09 (Pegg, 2008). Almost 5 percent (4.93 percent) of Manitobans resorted to food banks, in comparison to the 2.83 percent national average (McCracken, 2016). It is important to note, however, that this is an under-representation of food insecurity, as studies show that only one-third of food insecure Canadians seek food bank services (Farahbakhsh, 2015).

Food insecurity at Canadian universities

The prevalence and severity of food insecurity among university students across Canada is beginning to receive attention. Recently, researchers initiated a number of studies on several campuses, to assess the prevalence of food insecurity among various university student populations. Selected questions from the Household Food Security Status Module (HFSSM) of the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) were the primary tool used in these studies for assessing rates of food insecurity. The results of these studies, aggregated by a national organization called Meal Exchange[2], show that the average rate of food insecurity among

[2] The results of five studies conducted in 2015/16 by independent researchers at five Canadian post-secondary institutions were aggregated by Meal Exchange in the report *Hungry for Knowledge: Assessing the prevalence of student food insecurity on five Canadian campuses*. See http://www.mealexchange.com/ for information on Meal Exchange.

students at five major Canadian Universities is 39.2 percent. The results of Meal Exchange's report are summarized below (Table 1).

Table 1: Rates of student food insecurity at 5 major Canadian universities

Institution	Percent of students moderately food insecure	Percent of students severely food insecure	Percent of students who are food insecure
Dalhousie University	36.9	9.1	46
Lakehead University	31.2	14.7	45.9
Ryerson University	30.9	8	38.9
Brock University	29.2	7.3	36.5
University of Calgary	25.7	4.3	30

Adapted from Silverthorn, 2016

Preliminary results from unpublished studies from two additional Canadian universities show that 38.1 percent of students at the University of Acadia and 28.6 percent of students at the University of Saskatchewan were food insecure (Frank, Engler-Stringer, Power, & Pulsifer, 2015). Methodologies used in these two studies are closely comparable to the Canadian Community Health Survey, and therefore less comparable to the surveys tailored specifically to post-secondary students, employed at the University of Manitoba, and the five institutions listed above where some CCHS questions were used, but in a slightly modified form.

Prior to the studies undertaken by Frank et. al. (2015) and Silverthorn (2016), food security in Canadian post-secondary students was assessed mainly through food bank use. Since the 1990s, the number of food banks on university campuses has continued to rise; for example, as of 2011 there were over 70 food banks located on university campuses, up from 56 in 2006 (Gordon, 2011). In recent years, the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, the University of Ottawa and Ryerson University have all cited increases in campus food bank use (Nugent, 2011; CBC News, 2012).[3]

The effects of food insecurity are far reaching. Food insecurity among post-secondary students in Canada has been linked to higher levels of stress and increased rates of depression and mental disorders (Stuff, Casey, Szeto, Gossett, Robbins, Simpson, Connell, & Bogle, 2004). Among students surveyed at five Canadian universities in 2016, physical and mental health were identified as the primary factors negatively affected by students' experiences with food insecurity (Silverthorn, 2016). Additionally, students identified (in descending order) that their social life, grades, class participation, and extra-curricular activities were the next most negatively affected factors of their personal and academic lives (Silverthorn, 2016). Among

[3] Similar trends of food insecurity have been recorded on university campuses internationally. Rates of 39% to 59% of student populations have been identified as food insecure at post-secondary institutions in the United States, and Australia (Chaparro et. al., 2009; Hughes et. al., 2011; Patton-Lopez et al., 2014, Gorman, 2014).

elementary students, food insecurity has been associated with lower math and reading scores, in addition to decreased memory (Cady, 2014). Among adult populations, food security can have negative effects on individuals' sense of community and belonging (Willows, Veugelers, Raine, & Kuhle, 2011).

In addition to scoring lower in measures of mental health, food insecure individuals in Canada specifically have been cited as exhibiting nutritional inadequacies, including deficiencies in protein, vitamin A, B-6, and B-12, thiamin, riboflavin, folate, phosphorous, and zinc (Kirkpatrick & Tarasuk, 2008). Likely as a result of these deficiencies, and additional negative health repercussions, food insecurity in Canada has been associated with higher use of public health care services, including inpatient hospital care, emergency medical services, and prescription drug use. Rates of public health care usage among food insecure households are double, compared with food secure households (32 percent vs 16 percent), indicating a disproportionate burden on the Canadian healthcare systems (Tarasuk, Cheng, de Oliveira, Dachner, Gundersen, & Kurdyak, 2015).

Methods

Participants

The University of Manitoba is the largest post-secondary institution in the province of Manitoba, and is located in the capital city, Winnipeg. In 2016 when the study was conducted, total enrollment was 28,804, with 3,654 graduate level students, or 13 percent. Of the total student population, 54 percent was female, and 46 percent was male (University of Manitoba, 2016). To engage student participants, the survey used census-style sampling and was sent out to all undergraduate and graduate students through e-mails from the University of Manitoba Student Union, various individual student groups including the Graduate Student Association, and sustainable food initiatives on campus.

Data collection

The online survey was conducted in January and February 2016, and administered by Survey Monkey. The survey was open to all students over the age of 18. The study was approved by the University of Manitoba Research Ethics Board, and participants provided consent through the survey interface. The survey included 33 questions, and rates of student food insecurity were assessed using six questions designed for Canadian post-secondary student populations (Silverthorn, 2016). These questions are listed in Table 2. The survey also included two questions that directly asked students to rate their own food insecurity.

Other questions regarding specific demographic populations were modeled on unpublished surveys administered at Acadia University and the University of Saskatchewan. These demographic questions asked students to identify their student status, sex, age, living arrangement, primary source of income, aboriginal and immigration status, marital status, and whether or not they payed rent, or had children or dependents. Two questions about self-identified mental and physical health were asked, based on the Canadian Community Health Survey. Questions pertaining to students' experiences with, and coping mechanisms for food insecurity were adapted from questionnaires administered at several other Canadian post-secondary institutions[4] (Silverthorn, 2016). These questions are identified in Table 3. The survey included two questions asking students to identify what factors contribute most to their food insecurity, and the primary areas of their lives affected by their food insecurity. These questions, and the selection of responses provided to the survey participants, are identified in Table 4. Finally, the survey included an open-ended question that allowed students to provide additional comments pertaining to their experiences with food insecurity. The response rate, based on the University of Manitoba's student population of 28, 809, was 1.9 percent, or 548 students. Rates of student food insecurity were assessed using the six questions listed in Table 2.

Table 2: Questions used to assess moderate and severe food insecurity

1. I/we worried whether my/our food would run out before I got money to buy more.
2. The food that I bought just didn't last, and I didn't have money to buy more.
3. I/we couldn't afford to eat meals with a variety of foods, or a number of different kinds of foods, according to what I/we prefer.
4. I had to sacrifice buying healthy (nutritious or diversified) foods in order to afford enough food.
5. I/ we skipped meals because there wasn't enough money to buy food
6. I/we did not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food

Table 3: Questions used to assess students' coping mechanisms against food insecurity

I/we went to a food bank, hunger relief or soup kitchen service (such as Winnipeg Harvest, Siloam Mission, Lighthouse Mission, Agape Table[5]*, etc.) because I did not have the money to buy enough food.* Was this often true, sometimes true, or never true in the past 12 months?
I thought about going to a food bank or hunger relief program but was too embarrassed to actually go. Was this often true, sometimes true, or never true in the past 12 months?
I had to engage in unconventional ways of obtaining my food such as "dumpster diving" or stealing in order to have enough to eat. Was this often true, sometimes true, or never true in the past 12 months?
If employed, how has working affected your studies?

[4] Drafts of surveys administered by researchers from these institutions were shared through private correspondence from the researchers themselves.
[5] These are examples of well-known hunger relief programs and food banks in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Table 4: Questions assessing students' experiences with food insecurity

1. If you have experienced periods of food insecurity, what do you believe contributes to your food insecurity? Select all that apply.	• I have not experienced food insecurity in the last 12 months • Tuition fees • Housing costs • Transportation expenses • Physical accessibility to food • Cost of food • Inadequate income supports (student loans & grants) • Limited time to prepare food • Limited knowledge and skills to prepare food • Limited facilities and equipment to prepare food • Other
2. If you identified as being food insecure, what areas of your life have been negatively impacted as a result of your food insecurity? Select all that apply.	• I have not experienced food insecurity in thee last 12 months • Physical health • Mental health • Social life • Parenting responsibilities • Grades • Class participation • Extra-curricular activities • Other

Data analysis

Based on the methodology used in similar studies of student food insecurity (Silverthorn, 2016), we categorized respondents into three categories of food insecurity depending on their answers to the six questions in Table 2. Students who responded positively ("often" or "sometimes true") to 0-1 of the six questions were assessed to be food secure, whereas students who responded positively to 2-4 of the questions were assessed as moderately food insecure, and students who responded positively to 5-6 questions were categorized as severely food insecure.

Descriptive and univariate analyses were applied to the survey data. Chi-square tests of statistical significance were used in order to assess which demographic groups were at greater risk of food insecurity, and univariate regressions were employed to assess the odd ratios of these demographic populations experiencing food insecurity. The statistical tests were conducted based on moderate, severe and overall rates of food insecurity. The total number of food insecure students within each population was calculated based on the total number of students assessed to be either moderately or severely food insecure. The data was analyzed using SPSS software, and the findings of these analyses, as well as discussion of results are summarized below.

Findings

As represented in Table 3, the majority of 548 students who completed the survey were female, younger than 25, and studying at the undergraduate level. The majority of students were also single, and lived without any children or dependents. Among respondents, just over two-thirds identified as having fair to poor mental health, with 24.3 percent reporting fair to poor physical health. Within this category, 19.9 percent reported having fair physical health, and 4.4 percent assessed their physical health as poor. Mental health was reported to be fair by 23.5 percent of students, while 12.3 percent assessed their mental health as poor. The majority of students were employed, and cited employment or loans as their primary source of income. Just under half of students reported living alone or with a roommate or spouse, while just over half pay rent, mortgage, or residence fees for their accommodation.

This study found that 35.3 percent of the students surveyed were food insecure. Of these students, 23.5 percent faced moderate food insecurity, while 11.8 percent experienced severe food insecurity. The proportion of students assessed to be food insecure based on this study's methodology was considerably higher than the number of students who self-identified as food insecure, based on the provided FAO definition of the term provided to them (13.2 percent of survey respondents).

Among those who participated in the survey, several demographic groups were found to be more food insecure than others. Almost three-quarters of Indigenous students were assessed to be food insecure. As represented in Table 4, 42.1 percent of Indigenous students experienced moderate food insecurity, and almost a third were severely food insecure. Of the total number of students found to be food insecure, Indigenous students are between five and ten times more likely to report food insecurity than non-Indigenous students. Almost one-third of newcomers to Canada and exchange students were food insecure, and of these, over one-quarter were severely food insecure.

Students' primary source of income was also relevant to students' experiences with food insecurity. Severely food insecure students were almost five times more likely to be on student or bank loans. Almost 60 percent of these students were food insecure. Comparably, 34.3 percent of students who were employed, and 30 percent of students whose income came from scholarships, grants, or parents were found to be food insecure.

Students who experienced food insecurity were significantly more likely to experience poor to fair mental and physical health than those who were food secure. Among students with self-identified fair to poor mental health, almost half faced food insecurity (48.5 percent), while among students with fair to poor physical health, 53.9 percent were food insecure.

Slightly more than one-fifth of students identified financial barriers that affected their access to food. For example, they experienced periods when buying enough food was sacrificed to pay for tuition or textbooks, or because there was no longer enough money.

Table 3: Socio-demographic characteristics of study participants

Total survey population N = 548		**N**	**percent**
Sex[a]	Male	123	27.6
	Female	323	72.4
Age[b]	17-24	357	77.6
	over 24	103	22.4
Student Status[b]	Undergraduate	396	86
	Graduate	64	14
	Part-time	48	10.4
	Full-time	412	89.6
Mental Health[c]	Good-Excellent	304	64.3
	Poor-Fair	169	35.7
Physical Health[c]	Good-Excellent	358	75.7
	Poor-Fair	115	24.3
Identity[d]	Indigenous Canadian	19	4.7
	Newcomer to Canada or Exchange Student	51	12.5
	Non-Indigenous Manitoban, or student from another province	338	82.8
Marital Status[e]	Single	372	81.2
	Married, Common Law, Widowed, Divorced or Separated, Other	86	18.8
Children or Dependents[f]	Has children or dependents	26	5.7
	Does not have children or dependents	430	94.3
Employment Status[b]	Employed	322	70
	Not employed	138	30
Effects of Employment on Studies[g]	Negatively	164	49.8
	Not at all	115	35
	Positively	50	15.2
Primary Source of Income[f]	Provincial/federal or bank loans	59	13
	Scholarships/Grants, Savings or RESPs, Parents or Guardians, do not have an income, "other"	193	42.3
	Employed full or part-time	204	44.7
Payment on Residence[h]	Do pay rental fees, mortgage, residence fees for accommodation	249	54.5
	Do not pay fees for accommodation	208	45.5
Nature of Residence[h]	Alone or with a roommate	140	30.6
	With spouse/ common law partner, with or without children	62	13.6
	In campus residence, with or without access to kitchen	19	4.2
	With parents/ guardians, or extended family	236	51.6

[a]N=446, [b]N = 460, [c]N = 473, [d]N = 408, [e]N = 458, [f]N = 456, [g]N = 329, [h]N = 457

Table 4: Frequency of study participants with various levels of food insecurity, compared with demographic characteristics

FI = food insecurity N=248		**Moderate FI**		**Severe FI**		**Mod + Sev FI**	
		percent	OR	percent	OR	percent	OR
Total [a]		**23.5**		**11.8**		**35.3**	
Sex[a]	**Female**	25.7	1.4	10.2	-	35.9	1.2
	[b]Male	19.5	-	12.2	1.1	31.7	-
Age[b]	17-24	23.2	-	9.8	-	33.1	-
	25-60+	25.2	1.2	15.5	1.8	40.8	1.4
Student Status[b]	Undergraduate*	23.7	1.0	11.4	1.3	35.1	1.1
	Graduate	23.4	-	9.4	-	32.8	-
	Part-time*	25	1.1	12.5	1.2	37.5	1.1
	Full-time	23.5	-	10.9	-	34.5	-
Identity[d]	Non-Indigenous Manitoban, or student from another province*	21.9	-	8	-	29.9	-
	[a]**Newcomer to Canada or Exchange Student**	31.4	2.4	27.5	5.9	58.8	3.4
	[a]**Indigenous Canadian**	42.1	5.1	31.6	10.	73.7	6.6
Marital Status[e]	Single*	22.6	-	11.8	1.2	34.4	-
	Married, Common Law, Widowed, Divorced or Separated, Other	25.4	1.1	10.4	-	35.8	1.1
Children or Dependents[f]	None*	23.3	-	10.9	-	34.2	-
	[b]Has children or dependents	34.6	2	15.4	1.9	50	1.9
Mental Health[c]	Good-Excellent*	19.7	-	7.9	-	27.6	-
	[a]**Poor-Fair**	30.8	2.2	17.8	3.2	48.5	2.9
Physical Health[c]	Good-Excellent*	21.2	-	7.8	-	29.1	-
	[a]**Poor-Fair**	31.3	2.3	22.6	4.5	53.9	2.5
Employment status[b]	Employed*	25.5	1.5	11.5	1.3	37	1.1
	Not employed	19.6	1.3	10.1	-	29.7	-
Primary Source of Income[f]	Scholarships/Grants, Savings or RESPs, Parents or Guardians, do not have an income, "other"*	21.2	-	7.8	-	29	-
	Employed full or part-time	24	1.2	10.8	1.5	34.8	1.3
	[a]**Provincial/federal or bank loans**	32.2	2.4	23.7	4.9	55.9	3.1
Payment on Residence[h]	Do not pay fees for accommodation*	15.9	-	2.4	-	18.3	-
	[a]**Does pay rental fees, mortgage, residence fees for accommodation**	30.5	3.1	18.5	12.3	49.0	4.3
Nature of Residence[h]	With parents/ guardians, extended family*	18.2	-	5.1	-	23.3	-
	[a]**Alone, with a roommate or in precarious arrangements**	31.4	3	24.3	8.3	55.7	4.1
	With a spouse/common law, with children	29.1	1.8	4.8	1.1	33.9	1.7
	Residence with or without kitchen access	21.1	1.3	10.5	2.3	31.6	1.5

[a]N=446, [b]N = 460, [c]N = 473, [d]N = 408, [e]N = 458, [f]N = 456, [g]N = 329, [h]N = 457
(* = reference category, **Bolded** = statistical significance at P > .05)

Figure 1: Contributors to food insecurity

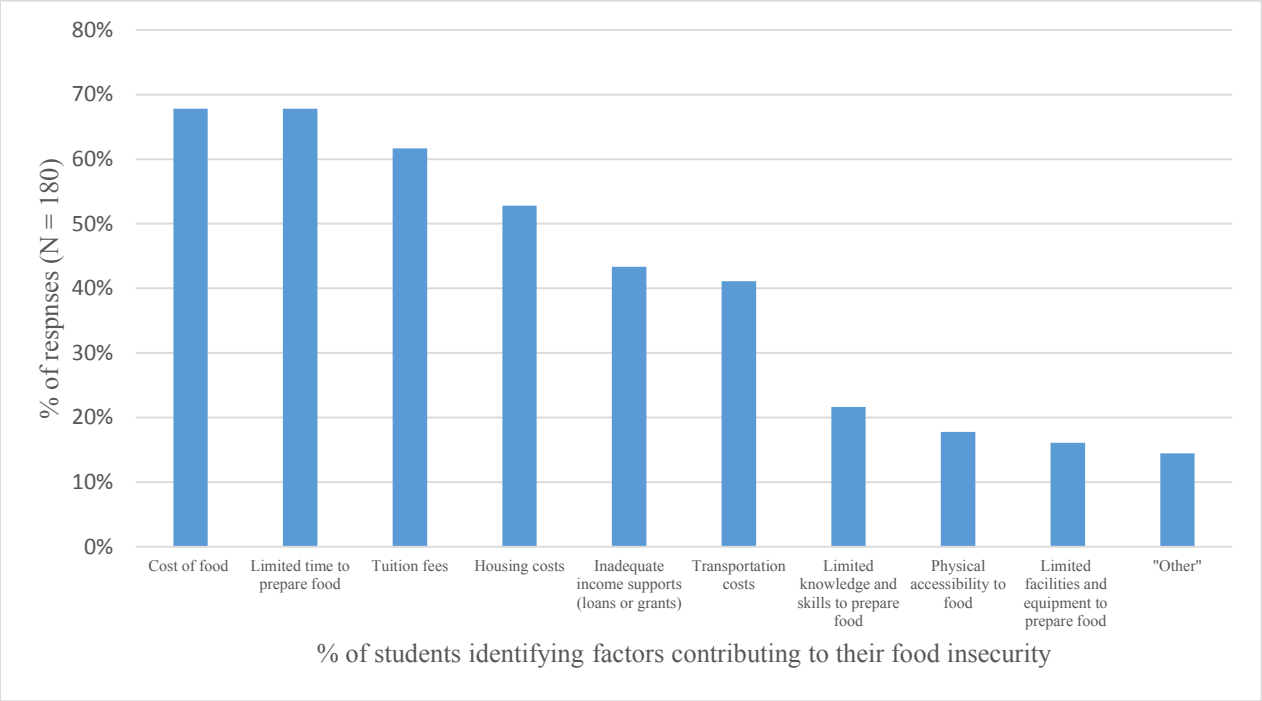


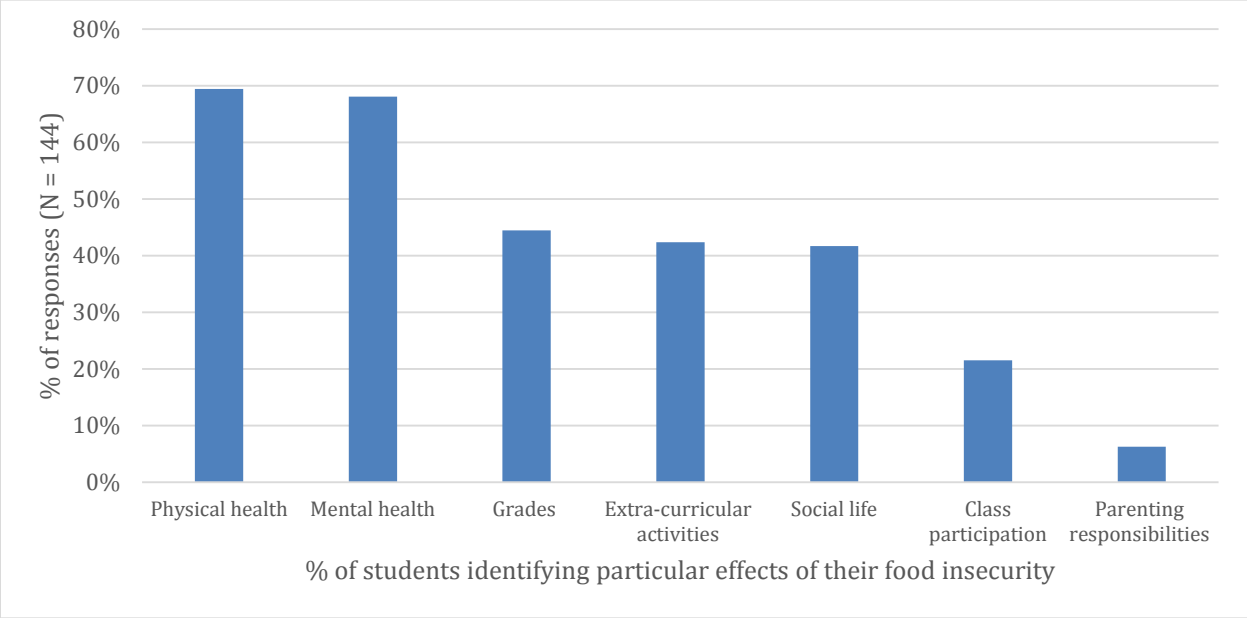
Figure 1 shows the major contributing factors to food insecurity identified by survey participants in their responses to question A (identified in Table 4), based on the selection of answers provided to them. High cost of food was identified by one-fifth of all respondents, and 70% of respondents who identified as food-insecure, as the primary barrier affecting their access to food. In the written responses to the survey, students identified that they experienced periods when buying enough food was sacrificed to pay for tuition or textbooks, or because there was no longer enough money. Limited time was the second most cited factor. Apart from these, financial barriers such as tuition fees, housing costs, and inadequate financial support in the form of loans or grants were also significant. These responses correlate with the univariate findings that identify higher rates of food insecurity among students who live independently, and therefore bear a larger proportion of their own food and residence costs.

Both mental and physical health were found to be the most significant areas of life most impacted by food insecurity (Figure 2). Almost two-thirds cited grades as being negatively affected. This was followed closely by students' extracurricular activities, and social lives. In response to increased financial burdens, students use a variety of coping mechanisms to sustain themselves. In answering the open-ended question located at the end of the survey, several students remarked on their need to work in addition to taking classes in order to meet their financial obligations. One student in this survey stated, "It's sad that I cannot feed myself after work[ing] 40 hours a week." Another student remarked on the effects that additional work has on their studies, stating that "something has to take a back seat and for me that is school so I have enough money to live comfortably." Another responded that "If I have to work more, then I take

less courses, it's that simple in my opinion." One student commented on the time constraints caused by their multiple commitments, "studying really limits the time I have to buy groceries and cook, as well as exercise and my social life." The same student also reflected on the difficulties this creates in finding the time to prepare meals, "I enjoy cooking but most days I rely on frozen dinners and quick fixes because I don't have the time to cook things, and am very stressed."

Some students engaged in unconventional coping mechanisms, such as food bank use and stealing. Questions pertaining to coping mechanisms are described in Table 3. Despite the 11.9 percent of severely food insecure students, in total less than 4 percent of the population of respondents, and less than 10 percent of students who were food insecure identified as having used a food bank or hunger relief program in order to have enough to eat. Additionally, less than 4 percent of students identified as having to engage in unconventional coping mechanisms, such as "dumpster diving" or stealing. One student shared that they relied on credit cards in order to purchase food in times when they lacked cash, but added, "We don't want to go into a lot of debt, but we want our child to be healthy and we hope this is only temporary."

Figure 2: Areas of life negatively affected by food insecurity



Discussion

Food insecurity is a reality for more than one-third of students surveyed at the University of Manitoba. Almost one-quarter of them experience moderate food insecurity, while more than one in ten surveyed were severely food insecure.

In comparison with other Canadian post-secondary institutions where 39.4 percent of students experience food insecurity (Silverthorn, 2016), rates at the University of Manitoba were slightly lower. However, while the University of Manitoba has the lowest number of moderately food insecure students, at 11.8 percent it has the second highest rate of severely food insecure students, next to Lakehead University in Northern Ontario. Several factors could explain why the overall rate of food insecurity among students at the University of Manitoba might be comparatively lower than other provinces such Nova Scotia and Ontario.

Manitoba boasts relatively low costs of housing and tuition, as well as different student demographics. While transportation and food costs remain slightly above national averages, average housing costs in Manitoba are slightly lower than provinces such as Saskatchewan and Alberta. The cost of shelter was most recently assessed at $14,481 per year in Manitoba, significantly lower than the $17,160 national average, and when compared to provinces such as British Columbia, Ontario, and Alberta which average $18,497, $19,409, and $20,676 respectively (Statistics Canada, 2016a). On a national scale, post-secondary tuition fees in Manitoba are also comparatively low. In relation to the $6,373 national yearly average paid by domestic students across the country, students in Manitoba paid an average of $4,058 in the 2016/17 academic year (Statistics Canada, 2016b). Largely due to the 2011 provincial legislation tying tuition fees to inflation, Manitoban students pay the third lowest tuition fees in the country, after Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador (Statistics Canada, 2016b).

Financial factors

Low income and financial obligations (tuition fees and loans) contributed significantly to the food insecurity of participants, despite Manitoba's low tuition and housing costs. Many rely on student loans. Although Manitoba students work fewer hours to cover the cost of a year's tuition fees (366 hours of work at minimum wage are required to pay for the cost of tuition, compared to the national average of 570 hours), this figure still marks a 100 percent increase compared to 1975 (Moore, 2014). Studies of Canadian university student populations, and specifically campus food bank users, cite lack of financial resources, food costs, transportation costs, and high cost of living as primary causes of food bank use (Nugent, 2011; Stewin, 2013; Frank et. al., 2015; Meldrum & Willows, 2006; House, Su, & Levy-Milne, 2016; Silverthorn, 2016). According to Meal Exchange's Hungry for Knowledge report (2016), students ranked food and housing costs to be the largest contributors to food insecurity, followed by inadequate income supports in the form of student loans and grants, and limited facilities to prepare food (Silverthorn, 2016).

Since the 1990s, tuition has tripled in Canada, and by 2011 total payments owed by students in loans to the federal government reached $15 billion (Burley & Awad, 2015). In 2014, average student debt in Canada was $28,295 (Burley & Awad, 2015). In Ontario, students under the loan program have been reported to have annual shortfalls of $1,232 for women, and $1,712 for men (Crisp, 2015). High food bank usage has also been recorded among international

students across Canada, who pay significantly higher tuition fees (Farahbakhsh et. al, 2015; Stewin, 2013).

Among those students who were employed, the stresses of working were identified by half of survey participants, who reported that their employment had negative effects on their studies. This statistic compares with other studies that have found that the need to work in addition to attending classes negatively affects students' academic performance (Prairie Research Associates, 2011; Motte & Schwartz, 2009). Today, the effects of balancing work and school are affecting a larger proportion of post-secondary students. Whereas one in four students worked while attending University 35 years ago, in 2010 the proportion is just under one in two (Marshall, 2010).

Living at home with parents or guardians was protective against food insecurity, likely due to having family or others in the household pay all or most food and housing costs. One student commented, "If I was not living at home and was on my own for all expenses I would think it would be almost impossible to be food secure." Winnipeg has one of the highest proportion of young adults staying at home in the country (43.3 percent), behind Toronto and Vancouver (Statistics Canada, 2015b). Given that the majority of respondents were 20-29 years of age or younger, the University of Manitoba's rates of food security may be buffered by a tendency among students to live at home longer.

Indigenous, newcomer and exchange students

Certain groups of students appeared to be more vulnerable to food insecurity. Indigenous students were significantly more likely to experience food insecurity than those who are non-Indigenous. The Canadian Community Health Survey administered in 2014 assesses food insecurity among off-reserve aboriginal populations at 25.7 percent, however, alternative measures of Indigenous food insecurity in Canada record rates significantly higher. Indigenous Canadians are more vulnerable to risk factors for food insecurity such as extreme poverty, single-motherhood, living in rental accommodation, and increased rates of dependence on social services (Willows, Veugelers, & Kuhle, 2009).

Newcomer and exchange students were also significantly more likely to experience food insecurity compared to other non-Indigenous students. Other campus food security studies have attributed high international student fees and a lack of culturally appropriate food options as contributing factors (Stewin, 2013). International students studying at many Canadian universities are required to pay significantly higher fees than Canadian citizens and Permanent Residents. For example, in the 2015/16 school year at the University of Manitoba, international students paid $2,228 more annually than domestic students for one 6-credit hour or full-year science course, and international students in the law program pay just under 2.5 times the domestic rate (University of Manitoba, 2016). In the comment section of our survey, one student suggested that support be provided to international students by "reduc[ing] tuition fees for international students so we can live a better, healthier life. Physiological needs are important.

Perhaps the school can donate food items on monthly basis to needy international students." One Newcomer who acknowledged they had been in Canada for 14 months claimed they had never experienced food insecurity, however, they stated "I can't afford to buy extra food or stuff I want to taste with the money I get from [my] part-time job…I can only afford to buy the necessary food which satisfies me."

Effects on health

Study participants who experienced food insecurity stated that deterioration of mental and physical health were among the aspects of their lives most affected. This is consistent with observations from the general population, where chronic disease and mental disorders have been associated with food insecurity (Stuff et. al., 2004; Willows et. al., 2011, Tarasuk et. al., 2013). Regarding mental health, a 2013 study of the general Canadian population found that among severely food insecure individuals, 47.1 percent of women and 23.4 percent of men cited anxiety or mood disorders (Tarasuk et. al., 2013). One student from this study wrote that, "not having enough to eat has definitely affected my concentration in class." Another commented that not having enough time to provide for their food needs "is having a big impact on my health, and my mental health. I have found myself in many periods of depression throughout my time in University."

Students' experiences with food insecurity can also constrain young peoples' opportunities to engage in individual or collective non-academic, social outlets. According to our survey, students' experiences with food insecurity negatively affected both grades and extra-curricular activities, where the stress of succeeding in school affected students' participation in physical extra-curricular activities and their mental health. Therefore, food insecurity could impact students' overall mental and physical health by affecting students' lives in a variety of ways, such as nutritional and caloric deficiencies or negative influences on students' grades and concentration, while at the same time restricting students' opportunities and for extra-curricular activities and participation in social outlets.

Limitations of study

The first limitation of our study is the relatively small sample size. While there were several statistically significant observations made based on the population of survey respondents, the findings may not reflect the realities of all students at the University of Manitoba. Secondly, due to the use of a specific survey tailored to post-secondary students, comparisons made to rates of food insecurity among the general population, calculated through specific questions used in the Canadian Community Health Survey, should be made with caution. Lastly, alternative factors may have affected the accuracy of the survey results. These factors could include poor food skills, and, unwillingness or disinterest in eating diverse and healthy foods. The limitations identified by this exploratory study suggest that more work needs to be done in order to

quantitatively and qualitatively capture the extent of food security on university campuses, as well as to ensure that further research can be equipped with the appropriate tools necessary to comprehensively define and investigate the relatively new concept of food insecurity.

Conclusion

This study contributes a uniquely Manitoban perspective to the emerging area of research on post-secondary student food insecurity, reinforces the need to assess the barriers faced by students, and addresses the implications for students' health and wellbeing. The respondents reported high rates of food insecurity that appear to be having a negative impact on their overall health, and in some cases, their academic performance. This exploratory study highlights the need to conduct further research into the prevalence, nature, causes, and effects of food insecurity at the University of Manitoba. It also delineates the need for a standardized assessment method for all Canadian universities to allow for ongoing surveillance and comparison.

Student food insecurity has implications for the future of the Manitoba and Canadian work force, as well as public health care expenditure. The main predetermining factor in food insecurity is inadequate finances due to housing, transport, food, and tuition costs. This disproportionately affects certain groups, such as newcomer and Indigenous students, who experience significantly higher rates of food insecurity. It is up to university administrators, student services, and provincial policy-makers to take action to ensure affected students have the financial and other resources necessary to succeed in their studies.

The federal Liberal government's focus on post-secondary student issues was reflected in their 2016 budget through increased grant funding as an alternative to loans. However, these policies currently only impact undergraduate students; policies to benefit graduate students are yet unknown (Snider, 2016). As of now, Manitoba post-secondary students pay comparatively low prices for tuition and living expenses. However, in 2015/16 tuition rates did rise in Manitoba by 1.9 percent, compared to 0 percent in provinces like Newfoundland, Alberta, and New Brunswick where fees were frozen (Statistics Canada 2016b). Media reports indicate that the newly elected Conservative provincial government is considering removing the cap on tuition fees for post-secondary institutions (Martin 2016). Should this occur, student food insecurity could rise, unless loans and other financial aid to students were increased and made more available.

Acknowledgement: This research was made possible with funding from the Canada Research Chairs program. Our thanks to the University of Manitoba's Office of Sustainability, University of Manitoba Student's Union, and the University of Manitoba's Graduate Student's Association for their assistance in making the survey possible. We also are grateful to the students who took the time to complete the survey.

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Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 160–163 May 2017

Canadian Food Studies La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation

Event Review

Alternative food networks in Québec

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In this review, we provide a synopsis of a two-day conference, *Réseaux alimentaires alternatifs au Québec: Perspectives comparatives,* held in Montréal on May 12 and 13, 2016, during the 84th Congress of ACFAS (Association canadienne-française pour l'avancement des sciences). The event was organized by Patrick Mundler and Manon Boulianne, both from Université Laval.

The theme of the conference was deliberately set in a relatively open fashion, around the idea of "alternative food systems". In the call for contributions, these were loosely defined as productive or marketing initiatives that stand in contrast to those associated with the industrialized food system, such as short food supply chains, urban gardening and farming, or local food labeling. They would include initiatives that aspire to reconnect producers and consumers, contribute to a more equitable distribution of added value in specific food chains, or revitalize local economies.

The conference's aim was to bring together students, faculty and other actors involved in alternative food systems initiatives and research in Québec, to engage in conversation about current actors, actions, locations, and new directions. We sought a comparative, international perspective, and received contributions from both Québec and France. Originally planned to be held on one day, the conference was extended to two days.

Overall, 17 papers were presented in six sessions. In *Food governance and territories*, Claudia Atomei, Valérie Fortin, Karim Hammouda, and Jules Laurent-Allard, all graduate students from the University of Montréal Planning School, shared lessons learned from a comparative analysis of five food policy councils (Toronto, Vancouver, Belo Horizonte, Portland, and London). Its origin was a 2015 public consultation held by the City of Montréal

DOI: 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v4i1.217
ISSN: 2292-3071

around the possible creation of new structures of food governance for the metropolitan region. Issues of scale, political autonomy, and normativity where discussed. In the same session, Camille Billion, a doctoral student at AgroParisTech, presented the results of her comparative work on food governance initiatives from three cities: Nantes, Lyon, and Figeac. She emphasized the role that distributors and retailers can play in the development of territorial food governance systems.

The second session was entitled *Le terroir au Québec: définitions et appropriations*. Nathalie Lachance, a doctoral student in sociology at UQAM, explained the story of *terroir* in Quebec, mostly through the evolution of the *Loi sur les Appellations réservées et les termes valorisants*, from 1996 to the present. Stéphane Castonguay and Charles Audet, professor and graduate student from the Centre interuniversitaire d'études québécoises de l'Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (UQTR), provided examples of terroir products of farmers and other actors in various sectors of the agro-food system. Both highlighted the cultural politics of heritage. Next, Michel Morisset, professor at the Department of Agroeconomy & Consumption Studies at Laval University, used a diachronic approach to explore socio-cultural identities of Quebec's cuisine and gastronomy in tourist guides from 1970 to 2010. Interestingly, the discourse in American and French tourist guides evolved during this period, while documenting earlier visions of Québec cuisine and gastronomy. Each side insisted on capturing the heritage of historical proximity to France and the United States.

Innovations, action collective et dynamiques sociales was the topic of the next session. Ludovic Vaillant (Cerema), Amélie Gonçalves (University of Toulouse / INRA UMR AGIR), Corinne Blanquart and Gwenaëlle Raton (IFSTTAR-SPLOTT) shared the results of a qualitative study based on interviews with food producers, distributors, transport operators, and large food chain retailers in the region of Nord-Pas-de-Calais. Their research revealed that for different reasons related to socio-territorial contexts, logistical aspects of farm produce marketing, such as transportation, are often overlooked by individual farmers, who could benefit from acting more collaboratively. Possible innovations were contemplated. Farmers' motivations and attitudes, as well as the viability of collective initiatives of Québec farmers to develop short food supply chains, was the subject of a presentation by Sophie Laughrea (Research Assistant, M.Sc.), Patrick Mundler and Annie Royer, both professors at the Department of Agroeconomy & Consumption Studies, at Laval University. Empirical data showed that farmers will maintain their engagement under certain conditions, and will change according to the reasons (affective, normative, or instrumental) that motivate them to adhere to the project. Further, Gabriel Montrieux, a doctoral student at University of Lyon 2, reflected on how members of AMAP (Association pour le maintien d'une agriculture paysanne) schemes envision these initiatives. He identified different degrees of involvement and political stances, explained in relation to lifestyles and lifepaths. Claudia Laviolette (a doctoral student) and Manon Boulianne, professor at the Department of Anthropology at Laval University, concluded with an overview of contemporary alternative food marketing initiatives in Perth, Australia. The Australian political environment, as well as local, regional, and national food cultures, were considered obstacles to

further development of existing initiatives. Overall, this session pointed to historical, contextual, and individual drives and challenges of food collective action and initiatives.

At the end of Thursday afternoon, Jean-Baptiste Traversac, from the Institut national de la recherche agronomique (INRA), reviewed the recent evolution of territorial dynamics and regulations around food in France and, more generally, in Europe. He noted that conflicts emerge from discrepancies between territorial development policies and planning, privileging either large-scale agriculture or small-scale agriculture and peasant farms.

Friday started with a session entitled *Les produits de qualité spécifique au Québec: émergence et enjeux de reconnaissance*. Issues related to the creation of Protected Geographical Indications (GPI) were center stage. Three case studies were discussed. Anaïs Detolle, a doctoral student in Anthropology at Concordia University, commented on the process that led to the 2015 certification of Québec ice cider, and the sociopolitical roles of the actors involved in the process. Sabrina Doyon, professor in Anthropology (Laval University), used a political ecology approach to the case of the St-Lawrence eel and Atlantic sturgeon, two forgotten species that were recently rediscovered and which are candidates for the attribution of a GPI. Stéphanie Dubé (a Masters student), Mario Handfield, and Marie-José Fortin (professors, Département Sociétés, Territoires et Développement at Université du Québec à Rimouski) focused on the strategies of cheese entrepreneurs to create quality products without resorting to GPIs. The political aspects of food and specialty food production stood out strongly, once again.

The next session, *Acteurs des systèmes alimentaires alternatifs: perspectives urbaines* took us to the heart of Montréal. Béatrice Lefebvre, a doctoral student in sociology at UQAM, noted that food processing initiatives linking directly to food security have been ignored in the scientific literature, compared to food distribution schemes and urban agriculture. She underscored the importance of including collective kitchens in alternative food system planning. Alexandre Maltais, a PhD student at the Centre Urbanisation Culture Société, INRS, focused on small retail stores and their actual and potential contribution to alternative food distribution. He described interviews with food shops and restaurants owners from two inner-city districts of Montréal, showing how they were instrumental for networks of producers, activists, and consumers. Hugo Martorell, a Masters student in Urban Food Governance at Concordia University, along with David Marshall and Marie-Eve Voghel-Robert, from Revitalisation St-Pierre, drew a picture of Montréal's ongoing alternative food provisioning initiatives.

The final session was *Les systèmes alimentaires territorialisés en actes*. Éliane Brisebois (Masters student, Environmental Studies), René Audet and Sylvain Lefebvre (professors at the Department of Strategy, Social & Environmental Responsibility, UQAM) further broadened the description of the alternative food system in Montréal. They considered different functions (production, provision, food waste recovering, etc.), and types of initiatives (brokerage, food sharing, gleaning, etc.). Geneviève Parent (Law professor, Chaire de recherche en droit sur la diversité et la sécurité alimentaires, Université Laval) and Jean-Louis Rastoin (Montpellier SupAgro & Chaire UNESCO Alimentations du monde), with the collaboration of Marlen León (University of Costa Rica) and Henri Rouillé D'Orfeuil (Resolis, Paris), discussed the concept of

Territorialized Food Systems and introduced their research project "100 initiatives d'alimentation responsable en France, au Québec et au Costa Rica".

The last event of the day was a roundtable that involved Elisabeth Sénéchal, from MAPAQ (Ministère de l'agriculture, des pêcheries et de l'alimentation du Québec), Ghalia Chahine (Concertation Montréal and Système alimentaire montréalais), and Gaëlle Zwicky (Équiterre). Each presenter identified issues and challenges faced by their organization on the road to implementing alternative food systems.

Clearly interdisciplinary, and involving participants from various regions of Québec and France, we felt that this conference reached its goal of sharing methods, ideas, and knowledge. Faculty, students, and organizations—all interested in the transition to territorialized and sustainable food systems—were engaged in exploring and debating new issues and cases.

Most of the presentations can be found at https://www.mangerlocalQuébec.info/en-savoir-plus. Two of the studies, by Sabrina Doyon and Alexandre Maltais, are published in this issue of the journal.

Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 164–166 May 2017

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Book Review

Speaking in Cod Tongues

Lenore Newman
University of Regina Press, 2017: 275 pages

Review by Ellen Desjardins

This work is book-ended with banquets: in the first and final chapters we are treated to an historic description of the grand meals that accompanied the final negotiations of Canadian Confederation in Halifax, Nova Scotia—a most appropriate way to reimagine Canada's birth 100 years ago. It lends a fascinating social dimension to the politics and place of that event, showing how food served to "break the ice" and to whip up "eloquent, champagne-fueled" speeches among the founding fathers. It also showcases a smorgasbord of status food locally available at that time, dominated by seafood and both wild and domestic meat and poultry.

Newman is a geographer, and she builds her Canadian culinary journey around the notion of *sitopia,* or food place. Sitopias, she says, "have a wide reach, and beneath this practical surface food exhibits a deep cultural complexity" (p.20). This is in fact how she frames her material throughout: the practical surface takes the form of the myriad of restaurants, markets and street vendors across Canada that served up her subject matter—complemented by the complex stories that reveal how these foods became locally typical. It is a mélange, as she says, of the geographical and the cultural. The result is a kaleidoscopic parade of foods-in-place that help us explore the question, "what is Canadian cuisine?" (hint: it's more than maple syrup and poutine), but also "how did cuisine in Canada come about?" and "how is Canadian cuisine continuing to change in the modern world?".

Newman is up front about the scope of her work, stressing that this book is about *cuisine*, not sustenance. In a chapter devoted to the concept of cuisine, Newman makes the argument that restaurants and other public food places, distinct from the home kitchen, are the main locales where food identities are forged, where active intersection of food cultures occurs, and where personal "place" is made significant and memorable through eating together, travelling, relaxing,

DOI: 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v4i1.223
ISSN: 2292-3071

or working. More than tradition, cuisine is—as Newman points out—more like a *language "*that exposes the soul of a place" (p. 229). Hence, "cod tongues": food speaks, and people speak through food. This brings in the possibility of the on-going global influence from which various food cultures are selectively incorporated into existing ones, all becoming part of Canadian cuisine. In this manner, cuisine creates place as much as place creates cuisine.

This book is more than the discoveries and tastes emerging from a personal, 40,000 km journey across the country. Newman introduces and explores food-related concepts destined to join the lexicon of food writers and researchers, such as "Canadian creole", meaning food that has gone beyond "fusion" and has entered the mainstream. Human geographical concepts like Lefebvre's *rhythmanalysis* become meaningful when applied to seasonal eating. Similarly, Bourdieu's *habitus*, Tuan's *topophilia,* Soya's *sociospatial dialectic*, Cook & Crang's *geographical knowledges*, and Appadurai's argument against authenticity…. these all come alive in the context of place-based food culture. In the spirit of place-over-time, Newman offers a final insightful chapter on "an uncertain future", in which she expounds on key foods or crops (like salmon, cod, maple syrup, etc.) that are at risk due to climate change.

Newman's captivating, colourful writing style is what makes this book so much fun to read. In an idiosyncratic way, she introduces us to her favourite (and newly-discovered) food places, and invites us to learn why they matter so much. It is not a compendium of Canadian foods, nor is it a travel guide for newcomers to various parts of the country, although it could serve those purposes. More intriguingly, if you can visualize pemmican as a "early protein bar" (p. 42), or imagine why you could find the Newfoundland dish "Jigg's dinner" (a pudding of salt beef, potato, turnip, carrot, cabbage, and split peas) in Fort McMurray, Alberta (p.163), then you are filling in the blanks of Canadian cuisine.

A culinary journey cannot be exhaustive, and it is unfair to critique it for overlooking certain places. However, Newman must have crossed the 650 kilometers of Saskatchewan's width either in the dark or by air, because food places in this province are absent in her book. While an entire page is devoted to exciting sitopias in the tiny Maritime island of Fogo, the only reference to Saskatchewan is the existence of a city named after the Saskatoon berry. Newman does engage the very relevant question of "what is a region?", insisting that regions are not defined by boundaries, but are "spaces of conversation where culture and nature interact…" (p. 116). In that line of thinking, Saskatchewan is subsumed mutely into The Prairies, without a chance to voice its historical status as "breadbasket of the world", never mind the countless public spaces—rural and urban—where people blend their culinary experiences. It does beg the questions of inclusivity and elitism in assembling a language of Canadian cuisine; but Newman freely admits to other limitations as well: a broader exploration of food places in the vast Canadian North was understandably beyond the scope of this volume, as is a "full account of Canada's varied Indigenous cuisines" (p.15).

What stands out about *Speaking in Cod Tongues*, overall, is the immense amount of research that has poured into it, making it a rich source of information for anyone interested in food, including itinerant foodies or students of food culture. This is a considerable feat, given

that many authors have written about various aspects of Canadian cuisines and food history—many of which Newman cites throughout. Hopefully it will inspire more such research, as the growing cultural, religious and ethnic mix of Canada's population continues to be reflected in its cuisines.

Ellen Desjardins has a PhD in human geography, obtained after her career as a community nutritionist in Ontario. Her research has included cultural, socio-political, geographical, and agricultural aspects of food and the food system as they are linked with human behaviour.

Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 167–169 May 2017

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Critique de livre

Nourrir la machine humaine. Nutrition et alimentation au Québec, 1860-1945

Caroline Durand
McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015, 302 pages

Résumé rédigé par Manon Boulianne, Département d'anthropologie, Université Laval

Il est toujours fascinant de prendre connaissance des contextes d'émergence des discours qui cherchent à transformer les normes et les pratiques sociales, ainsi que des véhicules utilisés pour en assurer la diffusion et tenter d'obtenir l'adhésion des publics concernés. Dans cet ouvrage, Caroline Durand relève les manières dont les injonctions des experts en alimentation ont graduellement pénétré les foyers québécois francophones, en ville comme dans les campagnes. Il s'agit de mettre à jour les moyens pris pour transformer les subjectivités de manière à ce que les citoyens adhèrent aux idées véhiculées, un projet qui relève de la gouvernementalité, c'est-à-dire des « techniques et procédures destinées à diriger la conduite des hommes », selon Foucault (cité dans Durand 2015 : 9). L'auteure ne s'en tient cependant pas seulement aux discours, dans cet ouvrage, ce qui ajoute à son intérêt ; elle décrit aussi les changements qui ont marqué les pratiques alimentaires des Canadiens français pendant près de cent ans. Pour ce faire, elle se base notamment sur des portraits de plusieurs groupes ou familles rurales et urbaines trouvés dans la littérature québécoise, celle du terroir, en l'occurrence. Elle présente aussi des données statistiques publiées par le gouvernement canadien et cite des monographies issues de l'anthropologie, de la sociologie et de l'histoire orale.

Comme elle le fait remarquer d'entrée de jeu, c'est dans le contexte du développement de la science moderne que les discours experts présentés et analysés dans cet ouvrage se sont multipliés et diffusés, prenant appui sur la théorie du choix rationnel et sur la philosophie politique libérale, selon laquelle les êtres humains sont des individus libres et des sujets de droit. C'est bien pour cette raison, d'ailleurs, qu'ils sont emblématiques de la modernité issue de la révolution industrielle, laquelle fait naître la métaphore du corps machine, une machine qui a

DOI: 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v4i1.214
ISSN: 2292-3071

besoin d'énergie et de lubrifiant pour remplir adéquatement ses fonctions productives. Pour C. Durand, c'est donc aussi dans le cadre du développement d'une économie de marché capitaliste que les discours sur la saine alimentation se diffusent au Québec. Le but est double : s'assurer que les femmes mettent au monde des enfants en santé et maintenir la main-d'œuvre en état de travailler et de donner son plein potentiel.

Adoptant une structure chronologique, l'ouvrage est divisé en deux parties (1860-1918 ; 1919-1945). Dans chacune d'elles, l'auteure aborde trois éléments centraux : 1) les pratiques de consommation des familles où le père est « cultivateur » ou ouvrier, ainsi que leurs transformations ; 2) les évolutions de la science de la nutrition et de son enseignement ; 3) les conseils, prescriptions et injonctions adressés aux publics mentionnés ci-devant, afin de favoriser chez eux l'adoption de saines habitudes alimentaires. Sur le plan des pratiques, le constat général est celui d'une diversification toujours accrue de la nourriture consommée. L'auteure insiste sur le fait que les pratiques alimentaires diffèrent entre milieu urbain et rural, mais aussi selon les régions et les classes sociales. Par ailleurs, en sélectionnant, pour chaque époque, des acteurs et événements précis afin d'illustrer son propos, C. Durand identifie les moyens et messages mobilisés par différents secteurs de la société québécoise pour éduquer la population. Fonctionnaires fédéraux, provinciaux et municipaux, médecins et infirmières, enseignantes, entreprises privées de l'agroalimentaire et du monde des assurances sont les principaux acteurs ayant pris part à la diffusion des savoirs scientifiques en nutrition, au Québec, depuis le milieu du 19^{e} siècle. Règlements ayant trait à l'industrie et au commerce, campagnes d'hygiène, brochures, manuels scolaires, livres de recettes, encarts publicitaires publiés dans des quotidiens et des magazines, constituent les supports de leurs enseignements et la matière première analysée par l'auteure dans le cadre de ses recherches.

C. Durand constate que les prescriptions martelées aux classes ouvrière et paysanne, pendant la période couverte par son étude, n'ont pas modelé leurs pratiques alimentaires ; les efforts déployés pour les convaincre de démontrer un contrôle de soi digne d'un individu moderne et responsable ont débouché sur des résultats modérés. C'est que l'approvisionnement et la consommation de nourriture dépendent d'un ensemble de facteurs qui relèvent, pour une part, des connaissances nutritionnelles, mais qui renvoient également à des routines, des aspirations, des goûts précis. Elles sont aussi conditionnées par les multiples contraintes qui sont le lot des mangeuses et des mangeurs, remarque l'auteure. À cette enseigne, il ne s'agit pas de « savoir » pour agir comme il se doit.

L'ouvrage fait bien ressortir la spécificité du cas québécois, en tenant compte de la question identitaire nationale et de ses effets sur les discours et les pratiques alimentaires. Par exemple, dans le contexte de la doctrine agriculturaliste, au début du 20^{e} siècle, la nourriture industrielle, associée au mode de vie urbain, est démonisée par les médecins, le Ministère de l'Agriculture et les Cercles des fermières. Un autre point fort de ce livre est qu'il montre bien que les principales personnes visées par les discours analysés sont les femmes, ou plutôt les mères, parce qu'elles sont les premières responsables des achats alimentaires et de la préparation des repas. Dans ce domaine (ce qui n'était pas le cas en politique), on leur reconnait déjà, au

milieu du 19e siècle, une capacité d'agir sur des bases rationnelles, mais sans remettre en question leur rôle « traditionnel » au sein de la famille et de la nation canadienne-française. Enfin, C. Durand prend résolument le contre-pied des approches qui tendent à idéaliser les repas familiaux d'antan.

Il faut se réjouir de la parution de ce livre bien documenté, qui aborde la nutrition et l'alimentation d'un point de vue non seulement historique, mais également critique, en examinant leurs dimensions politique, idéologique et économique et en replaçant leur évolution dans un contexte sociétal incluant les identités nationales, le pouvoir religieux, les conflits armés mondiaux et les rapports sociaux de sexe. Ce livre intéressera toute personne qui désire comprendre les transformations de l'alimentation comme pratique et discours. Étudiants et chercheurs de différents domaines des sciences sociales y trouveront leur compte, tout comme un public élargi, mais avisé.

Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 170–172 May 2017

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Book Review

Food and Society: 2nd Edition

Amy E. Guptill, Denise A. Copelton, and Betsy Lucal
Polity Press, 2017, 250 pages

Review by Phoebe Stephens (University of Waterloo)

The breadth and diversity of food studies rules out the possibility of any one text adequately addressing all topics, but for those new to the field, a general overview of key themes is still required. This is the purpose of the second edition of *Food & Society,* the authors of which hail from the sociology departments of the State University of New York and Indiana University South Bend. This updated text is intended as an introduction to the study of food for undergraduate students, and places greater emphasis on the role of labour in the food system than does the first edition. Engagingly written, it draws from disciplines like anthropology, sociology, geography, political economy, and history to illuminate the often surprising interconnections and deep significance of food and food production in daily lives. Certainly, no topic is explored in considerable depth, necessitating broad strokes and oversimplification, but that is to be expected from an introductory text.

Food & Society is a well-designed pedagogical tool that should appeal to different learning styles. Each chapter opens with a case study, a powerful device for piquing the reader's interest while also setting the scene for more theoretical exploration of core themes as the chapter progresses. The "Further Readings" sections ease the way to deeper, independent study of the topic of focus and the "Further Exploration" section that closes each chapter encourages participatory learning through suggested in-class activities, discussion topics and online multimedia resources.

DOI: 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v4i1.215
ISSN: 2292-3071

The book opens by introducing "foodways" and the "food system" as conceptual anchors for the study of food. These concepts are woven into the chapters that follow helping to bring cohesion to wide ranging topics. The introductory chapter also puts forward three basic principles that frame the authors' understanding of food studies: (1) food is both rich and symbolic; (2) people's experiences are both individual and social; and (3) foodways and food systems both reflect and shape social inequality. These principles highlight the inherent paradoxes and complexities involved in food studies. This helps to familiarize undergraduates to the ambiguities involved in interdisciplinary study more generally. In the world of complex socio-ecological systems like the food system there are very few straightforward answers, and change is to be embraced as a constant. These points are reinforced throughout the text as they are central to effectively navigating the field of food studies.

Though each chapter can be read in isolation, Guptil et al. have clearly made the effort to structure the text in such a way that the knowledge gained in earlier chapters logically feeds into the broadening scope of latter ones. The topic of the first chapter, "Food and Identity", is well chosen, as readers can relate to the concept of how food helps to reinforce their particular identity and position in society. The chapter begins with a tale of Vegemite® and the unfriendly reception this Australian favourite received in the U.S.—to illustrate how foodways are as much shaped by culture as personal taste. While the connection between food and culture is easily observable in society, the chapter ends by exploring the less overt but equally influential role that symbolic meanings of food play. The authors maintain that social class shapes not only the nutritional quality and quantity of food available, but also taste, revealing the hidden forces at play in shaping foodways and the food system more generally.

The symbolic nature of food in defining social status and identity is further explored in the following chapters, including the ways in which the phenomenon of food as spectacle is a product of distinct features of contemporary social life and the role of marketing in influencing food choices. Of course, the factors that determine foodways are also rooted in larger political and economic structures. Chapters seven through nine delve into the power dynamics that influence how food fits into daily life. This culminates in a discussion about how unequal trade patterns originally established under colonialism persisted through the development era and into today's globalized world. The case of Ghana's fraught relationship with cocoa production serves as a powerful example of the entrenched, unequal dynamics involved in the global food trade.

When it comes to inequality in the food system, focusing on issues like famine, food access, and food distribution, at this stage the reader is well prepared to understand the political nature of food. Persistent inequalities are exposed as the real drivers behind food crises, an issue that is apt to fill readers with a sense of injustice and motivate them to make change. In this sense, the final chapter on alternate food movements is ideally positioned to empower readers. The parting chapter presents the notion of food democracy and its potential impacts, thus emphasizing the importance of individual agency in encouraging societal change. Here, the tension between the individual and society that is apparent throughout the whole text is addressed.

Food & Society has the unenviable task of choosing which topics are worthy of focus to provide for a satisfactory introduction to and overview of food studies. Despite this challenge, the book is remarkably well designed to reach and inspire its audience.

Phoebe Stephens is a PhD Candidate in Social and Ecological Sustainability at the University of Waterloo. Her research explores the connections between financialization and sustainability in the food system.

Canadian Food Studies

La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation

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Thunder Bay (ON) P7B 5E1

ISSN: 2292-3071

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