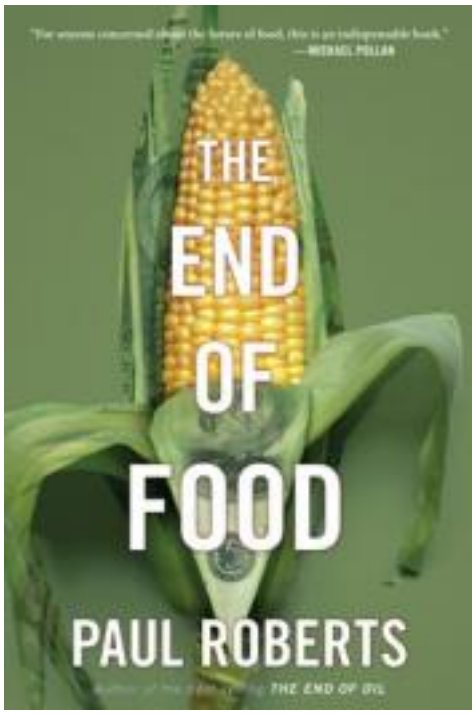
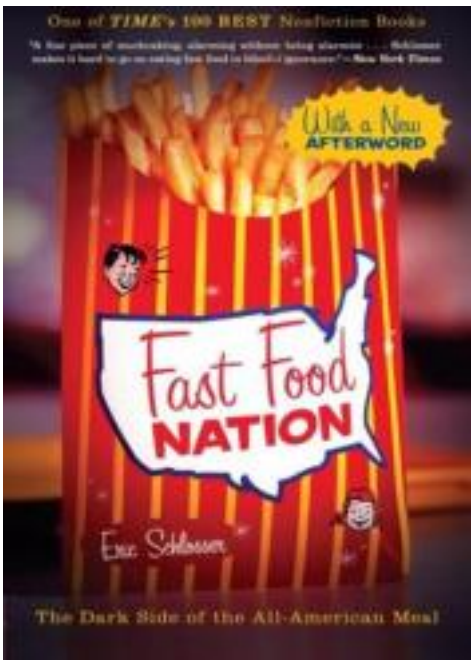
Agriculture & Food Industry

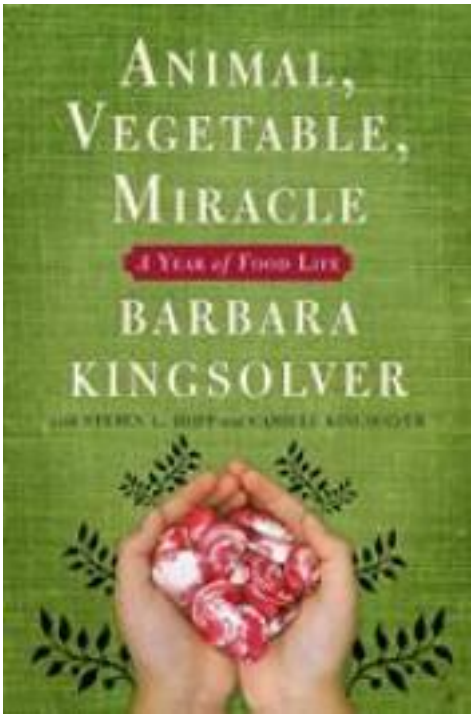
**All summaries from Amazon.com unless otherwise stated.*



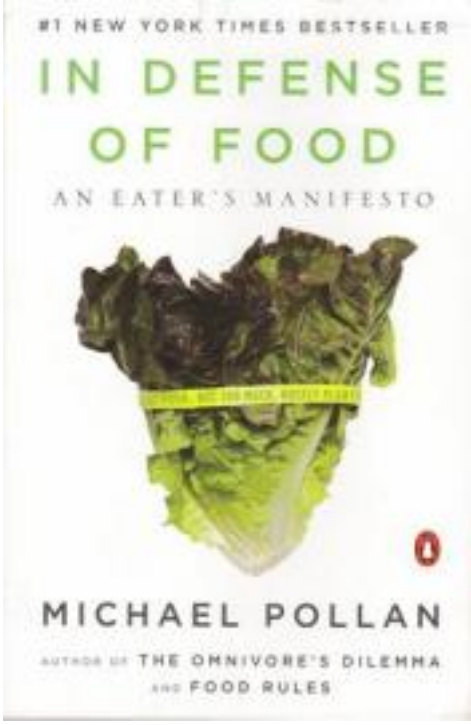
The End of Food by **Paul Roberts**
Salmonella-tainted tomatoes, riots, and skyrocketing prices are only the latest in a series of food-related crises that have illuminated the failures of the modern food system. In The End of Food, Paul Roberts investigates this system and presents a startling truth—how we make, market, and transport our food is no longer compatible with the billions of consumers the system was built to serve. The emergence of large-scale and efficient food production forever changed our relationship with food and ultimately left a vulnerable and paradoxical system in place. High-volume factory systems create new risks for food-borne illness; high-yield crops generate grain, produce, and meat of declining nutritional quality; and while nearly a billion people are overweight, roughly as many people are starving. In this vivid narrative, Roberts presents clear, stark visions of the future and helps us prepare to make the necessary decisions to survive the demise of food production as we know it.



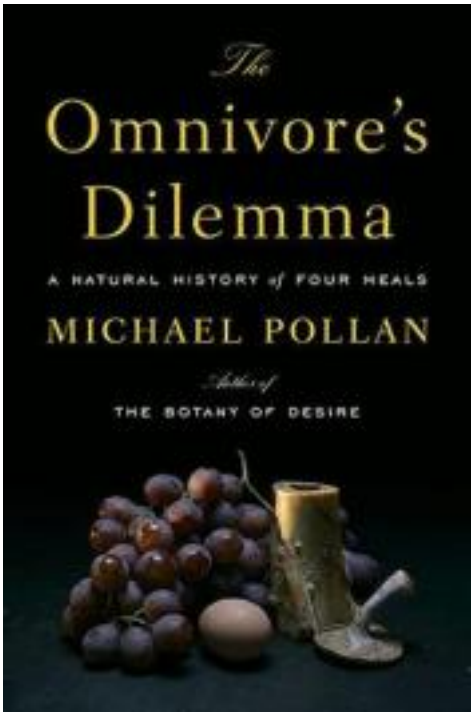
Fast Food Nation by **Eric Schlosser**
On any given day, one out of four Americans opts for a quick and cheap meal at a fast-food restaurant, without giving either its speed or its thriftiness a second thought. Fast food is so ubiquitous that it now seems as American, and harmless, as apple pie. But the industry's drive for consolidation, homogenization, and speed has radically transformed America's diet, landscape, economy, and workforce, often in insidiously destructive ways. Eric Schlosser, an award-winning journalist, opens his ambitious and ultimately devastating exposé with an introduction to the iconoclasts and high school dropouts, such as Harlan Sanders and the McDonald brothers, who first applied the principles of a factory assembly line to a commercial kitchen. Quickly, however, he moves behind the counter with the overworked and underpaid teenage workers, onto the factory farms where the potatoes and beef are grown, and into the slaughterhouses run by giant meatpacking corporations. Schlosser wants you to know why those French fries taste so good (with a visit to the world's largest flavor company) and "what really lurks between those sesame-seed buns."



Animal, Vegetable, Miracle by **Barbara Kingsolver**
Author Barbara Kingsolver and her family abandoned the industrial-food pipeline to live a rural life—vowing that, for one year, they'd only buy food raised in their own neighborhood, grow it themselves, or learn to live without it. Part memoir, part journalistic investigation, Animal, Vegetable, Miracle is an enthralling narrative that will open your eyes in a hundred new ways to an old truth: You are what you eat.



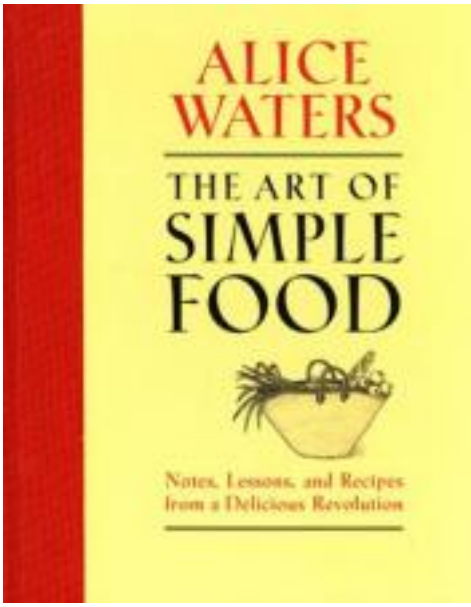
In Defense of Food by **Michael Pollan**
Food. There's plenty of it around, and we all love to eat it. So why should anyone need to defend it? Because in the so-called Western diet, food has been replaced by nutrients, and common sense by confusion--most of what we're consuming today is longer the product of nature but of food science. The result is what Michael Pollan calls the American Paradox: The more we worry about nutrition, the less healthy we see to become. With In Defense of Food, Pollan proposes a new (and very old) answer to the question of what we should eat that comes down to seven simple but liberating words: "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants." Pollan's bracing and eloquent manifesto shows us how we can start making thoughtful food choices that will enrich our lives, enlarge our sense of what it means to be healthy, and bring pleasure back to eating.



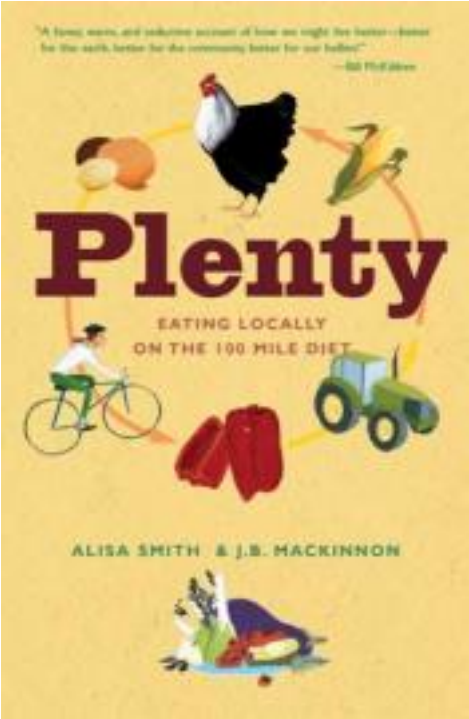
The Omnivore's Dilemma by **Michael Pollan**
Today, buffeted by one food fad after another, America is suffering from what can only be described as a national eating disorder. Will it be fast food tonight, or something organic? Or perhaps something we grew ourselves? The question of what to have for dinner has confronted us since man discovered fire. But as Michael Pollan explains in this revolutionary book, how we answer it now, as the dawn of the twenty-first century, may determine our survival

as a species. Packed with profound surprises, The Omnivore's Dilemma is changing the way Americans thing about the politics, perils, and pleasures of eating.

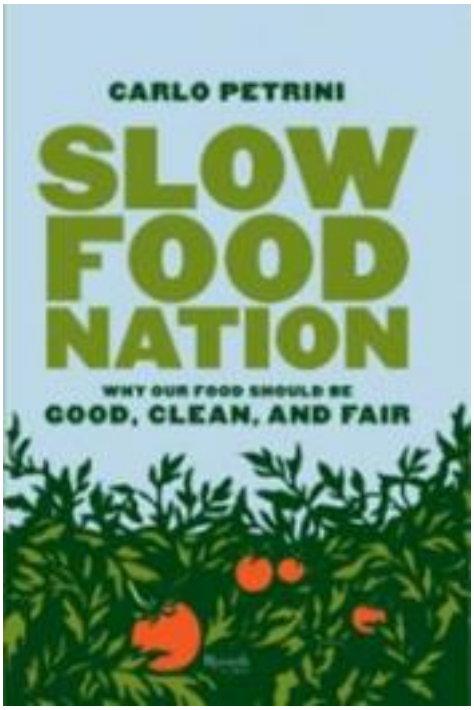
This Organic Life by **Joan Dye Gussow**
Joan Dye Gussow is an extraordinarily ordinary woman. She lives in a home not unlike the average home in a neighborhood that is, more or less, typically suburban. What sets her apart from the rest of us is that she thinks more deeply--and in more eloquent detail--about food. In sharing her ponderings, she sets a delightful example for those of us who seek the healthiest, most pleasurable lifestyle within an environment determined to propel us in the opposite direction. Joan is a suburbanite with a green thumb, with a feisty, defiant spirit and a relentlessly positive outlook.



The Art of Simple Food by **Alice Waters**
With an essential repertoire of timeless, approachable recipes chosen to enhance and showcase great ingredients, The Art of Simple Food is an indispensable resource for home cooks. Here you will find Alice’s philosophy on everything from stocking your kitchen, to mastering fundamentals and preparing delicious, seasonal inspired meals all year long. Always true to her philosophy that a perfect meal is one that’s balanced in texture, color, and flavor, Waters helps us embrace the seasons’ bounty and make the best choices when selecting ingredients. Fill your market basket with pristine produce, healthful grains, and responsibly raised meat, poultry, and seafood, then embark on a voyage of culinary rediscovery that reminds us that the most gratifying dish is often the least complex.

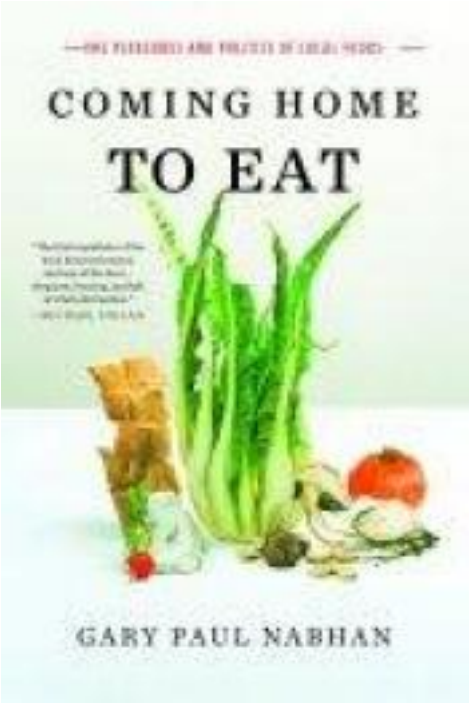


Plenty by **Alisa Smith and J.B. MacKinnon**
Like many great adventures, the 100-mile diet began with a memorable feast. Stranded in their off-the-grid summer cottage in the Canadian wilderness with unexpected guests, Alisa Smith and J.B. MacKinnon turned to the land around them. They caught a trout, picked mushrooms, and mulled apples from an abandoned orchard with rose hips in wine. The meal was truly satisfying; every ingredient had a story, a direct line they could trace from the soil to their forks. The experience raised a question: Was it possible to eat this way in their everyday lives? Back in the city, they began to research the origins of the items that stocked the shelves of their local supermarket. They were shocked to discover that a typical ingredient in a North American meal travels roughly the distance between Boulder, Colorado, and New York City before it reaches the plate. Like so many people, Smith and MacKinnon were trying to live more lightly on the planet; meanwhile, their “SUV diet” was producing greenhouse gases and smog at an unparalleled rate. So they decided on an experiment: For one year they would eat only food produced within 100 miles of their Vancouver home.

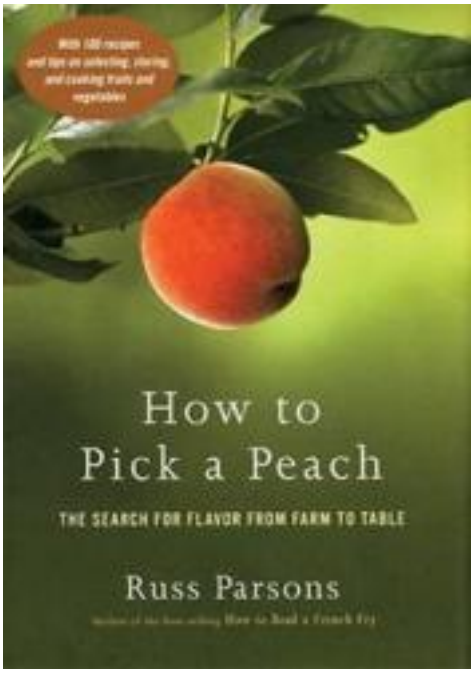


Slow Food Nation by **Carlo Petrini**
By now most of us are aware of the threats looming in the food world. The best-selling Fast Food Nation and other recent books have alerted us to such dangers as genetically modified organisms, food-borne diseases, and

industrial farming. Now it is time for answers, and Slow Food Nation steps up to the challenge. Here the charismatic leader of the Slow Food movement, Carlo Petrini, outlines many different routes by which we may take back control of our food. The three central principles of the Slow Food plan are these: food must be sustainably produced in ways that are sensitive to the environment, those who produce the food must be fairly treated, and the food must be healthful and delicious. In his travels around the world as ambassador for Slow Food, Petrini has witnessed firsthand the many ways that native peoples are feeding themselves without making use of the harmful methods of the industrial complex.

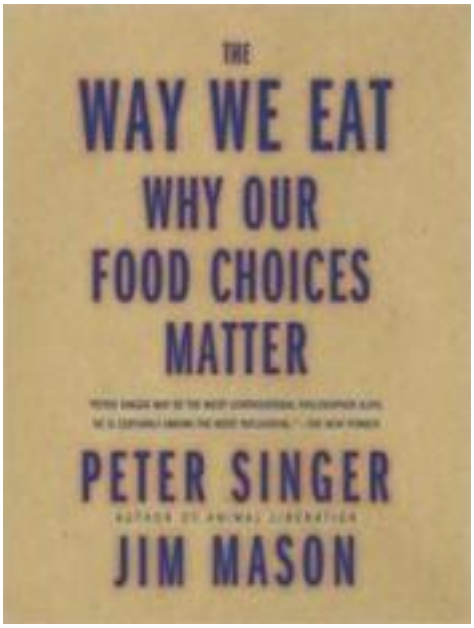


Coming Home to Eat by **Gary Paul Nabhan**
In the tradition of M. F. K. Fisher and Henry David Thoreau, Gary Paul Nabhan relates how his experience with food permeates his life as an avid gardener and forager, as an ethno-botanist and farmland conservation advocate, and as an activist devoted to recovering place-based heritage foods. Nabhan spent a year trying to eat only foods grown, fished, or gathered within 220 miles of his home—with surprising results.

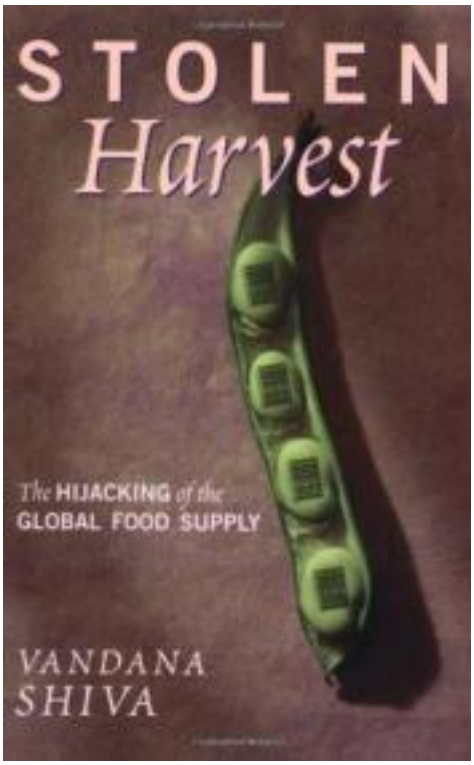


How to Pick a Peach by **Russ Parsons**
In How to Pick a Peach, Parsons takes on one of the hottest food topics today. Good cooking starts with the right ingredients, and nowhere is that more true than with produce. Should we refrigerate that peach? How do we cook that artichoke? And what are those different varieties of pears? Most of us aren't sure. Parsons helps the cook sort

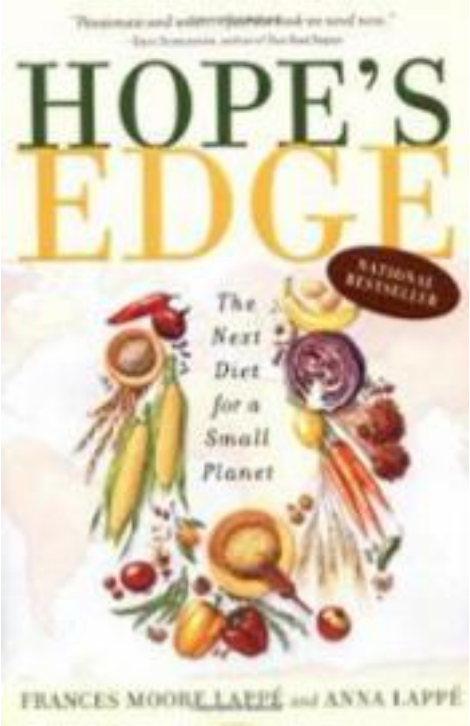
through the produce in the market by illuminating the issues surrounding it, revealing intriguing facts about vegetables and fruits in individual profiles about them, and providing instructions on how to choose, store, and prepare these items.



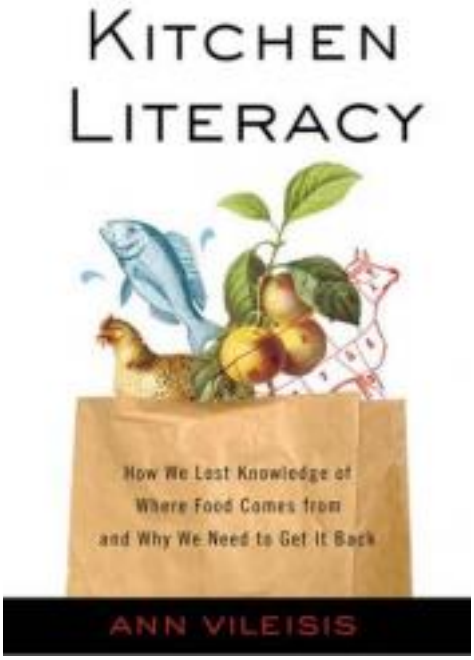
The Way We Eat by **Peter Singer**
In The Way We Eat, Singer and Mason examine the eating habits of three American families with very different diets. They track down the sources of each family's food to probe the ethical issues involved in its production and marketing. What kinds of meat are most humane to eat? Is "organic" always better? Wild fish or farmed? Recognizing that not all of us will become vegetarians, Singer and Mason offer ways to make the best food choices. As they point out: "You can be ethical without being fanatical."



Stolen Harvest by **Vandana Shiva**
In Stolen Harvest, Vandana Shiva charts the impacts of globalized, corporate agriculture on small farmers, the environment, and the quality of the food we eat. With chapters on genetically engineered seeds, patents on life, mad cows and sacred cows, and the debate on shrimp farming, this is an impassioned and inspiring book that will shape the debate about genetic engineering and commercial agriculture for years to come. *Summary from book jacket.*

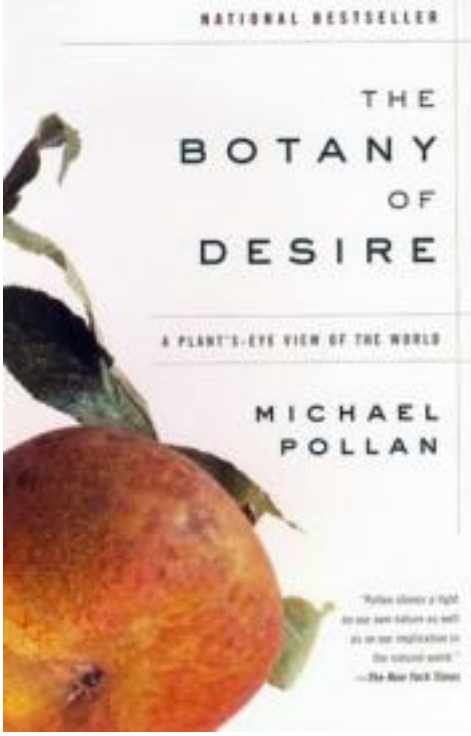


Hope's Edge by **Frances Moore Lappe & Anna Lappe**
Thirty years ago, Frances Moore Lappé started a revolution in the way Americans think about food and hunger. Now Frances and her daughter, Anna, pick up where Diet for a Small Planet left off. Together they set out on an around-the-world journey to explore the greatest challenges we face in the new millennium. Traveling to Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe, they discovered answers to one of the most urgent issues of our time: whether we can transcend the rampant consumerism and capitalism to find the paths that each of us can follow to heal our lives as well as the planet.



Kitchen Literacy by **Ann Vileisis**
Ask children where food comes from, and they'll probably answer: 'the supermarket'. Ask most adults, and their replies may not be much different. Where our foods are raised and what happens to them between farm and supermarket shelf have become mysteries. How did we become so disconnected from the sources of our breads, beef, cheeses, cereal, apples, and countless other foods that nourish us every day? Ann Vileisis' answer is a sensory-rich journey through the history of making dinner. "Kitchen Literacy" takes us from an eighteenth-century garden to today's sleek supermarket aisles, and eventually to farmer's markets that are now enjoying a resurgence.

Vileisis chronicles profound changes in how American cooks have considered their foods over two centuries and delivers a powerful statement: what we don't know could hurt us.



The Botany of Desire by **Michael Pollan**
Every schoolchild learns about the mutually beneficial dance of honeybees and flowers: The bee collects nectar and pollen to make honey and, in the process, spreads the flowers' genes far and wide. In The Botany of Desire, Michael Pollan ingeniously demonstrates how people and domesticated plants have formed a similarly reciprocal relationship. He masterfully links four fundamental human desires—sweetness, beauty, intoxication, and control—with the plants that satisfy them: the apple, the tulip, marijuana, and the potato. In telling the stories of four familiar species, Pollan illustrates how the plants have evolved to satisfy humankind's most basic yearnings. And just as we've benefited from these plants, we have also done well by them. So who is really domesticating whom?

Silent Spring by **Rachel Carson**
First published by Houghton Mifflin in 1962, Silent Spring alerted a large audience to the environmental and human dangers of indiscriminate use of pesticides, spurring revolutionary changes in the laws affecting our air, land, and water.

World Food Programme (WFP)
WFP is the food aid arm of the United Nations system. Food aid is one of the many instruments that can help to promote food security, which is defined as access of all people at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life. The policies governing the use of World Food Programme food aid must be oriented towards the objective of eradicating hunger and poverty. The ultimate objective of food aid should be the elimination of the need for food aid. *www.wfp.org*

Web Links

Laura Masterson, The 47th Avenue Farm

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