In recent years, there has been a growing concern about the corporate system that dominates the production and distribution of food throughout the world. Various factors are cited when discussing the destructive nature of the current system, including environmental degradation, financial volatility, and unjust social practices. Global leaders and institutions recognize and discuss these problems on a regular basis, but they frequently propose solutions that adhere to the same paradigms and global market fundamentalism that created the problems in the first place. The criticisms of these unsustainable food policies and practices have lead to the development of a dynamic global food movement, through which food justice advocates and activists seek to upend the current system in favor of more sustainable, socially just, and environmentally healthy alternatives.

The newest publication from the Institute of Food and Development Policy, Food Move-
Food Movements Unite! Strategies to Transform Our Food Systems (First Food Books, 2011) collects a variety of voices and opinions from farmers, workers, and consumers in diverse communities all over the world in an attempt to answer one question: “How can we unite to transform the global food system?” Contributors to the volume include activists and practitioners from organizations such as Via Campesina, the Slow Food Movement, and the World March of Women. The contributors lay out their strategies for new food production and distribution systems to key individuals like Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, and João Pedro Stédile of the Brazilian Landless Worker’s Movement. While the ideas and solutions that the writers suggest differ, they all envision uniting food movements around a broad platform committed to democracy, justice, sustainability, and food sovereignty for all people. Miriam Nobre, speaking on behalf of the World March of Women, believes that the road to renovating our food systems “begins with solidarity among [those] with different experiences and demands, continues through open debate, and culminates in action…against the commodification of everyday life.”

Philip McMichael, Professor of Sociology at Cornell University, says of this new volume:

Food Movements Unite! is a significant and timely collection of key voices from the swelling global movement for alternative agri-food systems. At a time of great social and ecological uncertainty the world needs the visions of those on the front lines of resisting an unsustainable agri-food regime through political advocacy, social organizing, and ecological adaptation to environmental and climatic changes. This volume offers a broad and unifying perspective on the conjunction of crises (inequality, food, energy, climate) and pathways toward just and sustainable ways of living with the earth, anchored in the principle of agricultural multifunctionality.

Food Movements Unite! is the thirty-first publication of Food First Books. Food First/Institute for Food and Development Policy was founded in 1975 by Frances Moore Lappé (author of Diet for a Small Planet) and Joseph Collins to educate Americans about the root causes of global hunger. Lappé and Collins have labeled Food First a people’s “think-and-do tank” that strives to link information to action. Its mission is to end the injustices that cause hunger and environmental destruction by informing the public, educating policymakers, and amplifying the voices of the social movements actively transforming our food systems. For more information about Food First’s publications or the global food system, visit their website: www.foodfirst.org.