

CSUS 463

# Food Fight: The Politics of Food

Community Sustainability  
Department

**New Course: Fall 2014**

Who gets to decide  
what's on your plate?

Why are we fighting  
over food and  
agriculture so much  
these days?

Can social movements  
create sustainable food  
system change?

Can 'voting with your  
fork' bring about  
change?

What's the role of  
public policy in food  
system politics?

These and other questions pertaining to changes taking place in agriculture and food will be explored in this new class, "Food Fight: The Politics of Food."

This course will teach you what you need to know about why Americans are increasingly battling over food system issues – which includes conflicts over how we should produce, distribute, market, and consume food, as well as battles over fundamentals like 'who gets to eat'?

Food fights are all around us. Not those you might recall from your school cafeteria, but in the form of subtle, and not so subtle, efforts to control what ends up on your dinner plate. From the everyday cultural forces that shape what we 'desire' to entrenched battles over research priorities, trade and food policy, every aspect of food & agriculture development is a political project.

Food politics are at work when farmers dump their milk in the streets, children go hungry, teenage girls refuse to eat in order to control their bodies, or when citizens demand GMO labeling laws. It shapes both our public discourse and individual identities.

In this class, we'll learn how values, power and politics shape what and how Americans eat. We'll start with concepts you need to know like power and political activism and then move on to look at how we construct food as a certain type of condition or 'problem'. Then we'll consider the strategies frequently used by actors to influence our consumption habits, such as behavior change, political action, and public policy – asking how sustainable are these tactics and who wins and who loses when we adopt them.

Our primary goal is to identify and analyze the ways that politics - broadly defined as the power to influence - shapes our agrifood system.

**Class Meets:**

**Tuesday &  
Thursday  
10:20-11:40**

**Berkey 107**

**Prerequisites: CSUS 200 or SOC 100**

**For more information, contact course instructor,  
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