

## Religion and Sustainable Agriculture: World Spiritual Traditions and Food Ethics

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This commodious study of the relationship between spirituality and agriculture calls into question prevailing practices of modern industrialism.

*Religion and Sustainable Agriculture* includes fifteen selections from leading scholars in the areas of religion, anthropology, environmental science, and sustainability, among other fields. The ethical tenets of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and a number of indigenous spiritual traditions come into sharp focus, specifically in the ways belief systems inform husbandry and respective land ethics.

The book's broad, multidisciplinary approach delves into the religious and moral beliefs underlying food production in locales as various as the Amazon and the Himalayas. Critical explorations of concepts and practices like "permaculture" and "biochar" put the book at the forefront of ecological thought, connecting modern back-to-earth political movements with age-old cultural precedents.

The book is thinner in assessing urban ecosystems and the reality of modern cities. Furthermore, the authors all have a tendency to glorify local rusticisms at the expense of complex macroeconomics. For instance, Frederique Apffel-Marglin discusses the struggle for indigenous rights—and by extension, food sovereignty—in the Peruvian jungle in the 1970s and '80s but doesn't address the hard leftist economic policies that crippled Peru's economy in the same time period.

Even if one-sided politically, *Religion and Sustainable Agriculture* still succeeds as an enlightening treatise on ethical agriculture. As Pramod Parajuli eloquently argues in the book's conclusion, blending spirituality back into food production will enable greater community and environmental health around the globe.

SCOTT NEUFFER (Winter 2017)

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