

Sustainable Food Systems

Sustainable Food Systems

The Role of the City

Robert Biel



First published in 2016 by UCL Press University College London Gower Street London WC1E 6BT

Available to download free: www.ucl.ac.uk/ucl-press

Text © Robert Biel, 2016 Images © Robert Biel, 2016

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from The British Library.

This book is published under a Creative Common 4.0 International license (CC BY 4.0). This license allows you to share, copy, distribute and transmit the work; to adapt the work and to make commercial use of the work providing attribution is made to the authors (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work). Attribution should include the following information:

Robert Biel, Sustainable Food Systems.

London, UCL Press, 2016. http://dx.doi.org/10.14324/111.9781911307099

Further details about CC BY licenses are available at http://creativecommons.org/licenses/

ISBN: 978-1-911307-07-5 (Hbk.)

ISBN: 978-1-911307-08-2 (Pbk.)

ISBN: 978–1–911307–09–9 (PDF) ISBN: 978–1–911307–10–5 (epub)

ISBN: 978-1-911307-11-2 (mobi)

ISBN: 978-1-911307-29-7 (html) DOI:10.14324/111.9781911307099

Contents

List of figures	V
1. Introduction	1
2. Searching for a new model of food and farming	2
3. The mainstream farming paradigm – what went wrong	11
4. How systems change: crisis and rift	18
5. Embracing complexity: the earth system, land and soil	30
6. Dialectics of a (re)discovered sustainability	40
7. Political dimensions – agriculture and class struggle	48
8. Towards a new paradigm – practical guidelines	58
9. Regenerating the earth system, working with climate	66
10. Food, imperialism and dependency	74
11. Built systems, biomimicry and urban food-growing	90
12. Autonomy, radicalism and the commons	108
Bibliography	125
Index	143

List of figures

Figure 4.1	A succession of structural regimes in the			
	international political economy, punctuated			
	by phases of low order	25		
Figure 4.2	A succession of 'waves' in the capitalist political			
	economy of food, punctuated by phases of crisis	26		
Figure 4.3	Food price index $(2002-4=100)$	28		