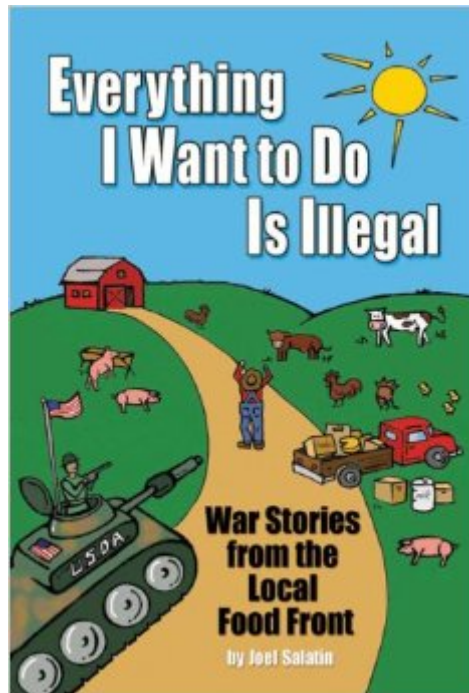


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Everything I Want To Do Is Illegal: War Stories From The Local Food Front



Synopsis

Drawing upon 40 years' experience as an ecological farmer and marketer, Joel Salatin explains with humor and passion why Americans do not have the freedom to choose the food they purchase and eat. From child labor regulations to food inspection, bureaucrats provide themselves sole discretion over what food is available in the local marketplace. Their system favors industrial, global corporate food systems and discourages community-based food commerce, resulting in homogenized selection, mediocre quality, and exposure to non-organic farming practices. Salatin's expert insight explains why local food is expensive and difficult to find and will illuminate for the reader a deeper understanding of the industrial food complex.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (105 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Author Joel Salatin is a "farmer." The word tends to conjure an image of the small farmer of yesteryear ... struggling, hapless, about to be made obsolete by today's industrialized, corporatized agribusiness. Forget that image. Salatin's business model is uniquely American: innovative, quality-driven, free-thinking, and customer-oriented. He has created a loyal local market for his high-quality poultry, beef, and pork, and he accepts no government monies or subsidies. As if that wasn't hard enough, Salatin has had to constantly swim against an overwhelming tide of flawed regulations that discriminate in favor of mega-operations. "Everything I Want to Do Is Illegal" tells all about that struggle, and so much more. Salatin asks (and answers) the questions, why are small farmers and local food artisans leaving their heritage behind to work in town? Why do we, as a society, have a larger segment of our population in prison (2.5 %) than working on farms (1.5%)?

Why is food quality at a low? And why are regulatory barriers keeping small producers out of the business of food production? And how did we - the constituency, the consumers, the all-powerful "demand" part of the supply-and-demand equation -- ever buy in to the notion that the institutionalization of our food supply is inexorable and must be suffered with stoic cynicism and resignation? And what is there to do about it? The answers to these questions matter, because the ultimate costs of these trends are huge, in terms of food quality, in terms of resource damage, and at many other levels. But the worst damage of all is the loss of whole communities and ways of life ... ways that have worked for centuries.

This book is definitely not for everyone. But, if you are outraged by our food system and the taxes you pay to agribiz for their crappy "food" that's killing us by slow degrees, and also enjoy a good rant by someone who knows whereof he speaks, you'll love it. For the record, I have been vegetarian for two decades, and that in no way diminishes my respect for Salatin or this book. Must we agree with everyone on everything in order to recognize truth when we see it? I stopped eating meat in 1989 when I learned about our factory farming system and didn't want to be part of it...but I have no problem whatsoever with folks who raise their own animals with love and respect and then eat them, or sell them to local friends. Seems natural enough to me, even if it's not my choice. But not to the government, and that's the point of this book. Its many examples of constant gov't intrusion into every part of the food chain lay clear who runs what and why we're in the sad shape we're in, ecologically and nutritionally. It all rings true, whether I agree with each of Salatin's political views or not. The pettiness of some of the reviews here on Am only shows why those trying to fight the moronic system aren't winning: they're too busy fighting each other! Divide and conquer? Why bother? Let us beat each other down! It's working, apparently. Put it this way: if every adult in America read this book and knew about how our food (specifically meat) system is run, there'd be overnight change. Must we agree with all of Salatin's views on everything to give him due credit for fighting his version of the good fight? We will all never agree on everything, nor need we.

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