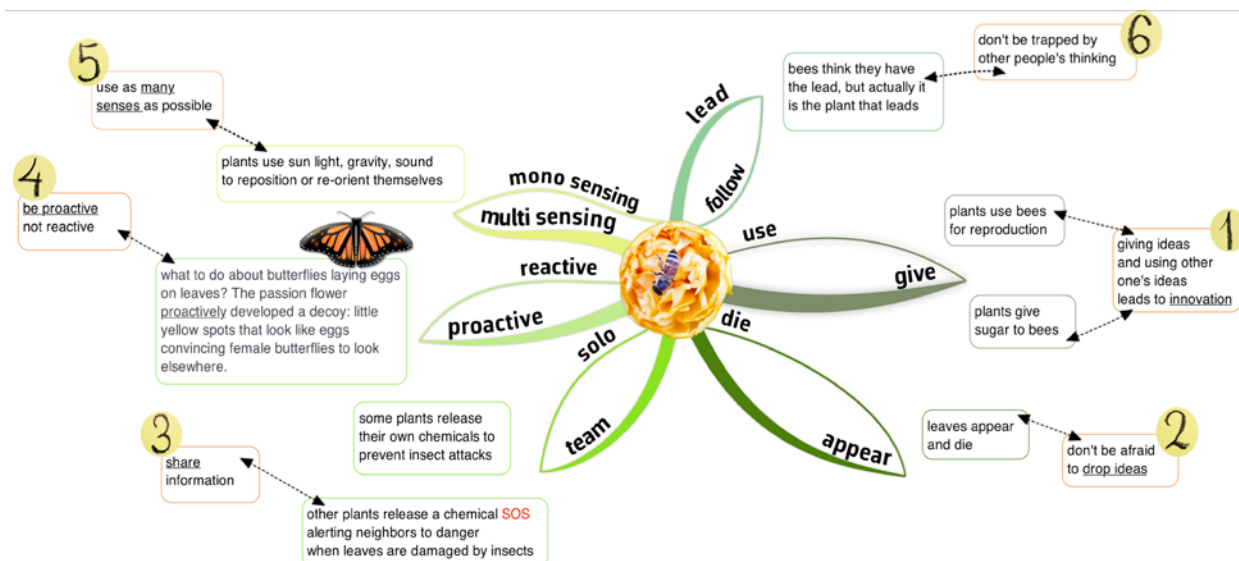


# Faith, Food and the Perennial Imagination



Bill Vitek, PhD

Director, New Perennials Project

&

Educational Affiliate, The Land Institute



# Religious Teachers Filippini

MORRISTOWN, NJ

*Go and Teach the Word of God*

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## Divine Mercy

Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

John 20: 19-21



... this is the time for mercy. It is the favorable time to heal wounds, a time not to be weary of meeting all those who are waiting to see and to touch with their hands the signs of the closeness of God, a time to offer







Our Lady of Mount Carmel School  
SCHENECTADY, N. Y.  
KINDERGARTEN 1962-63







# 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE GRADUATION



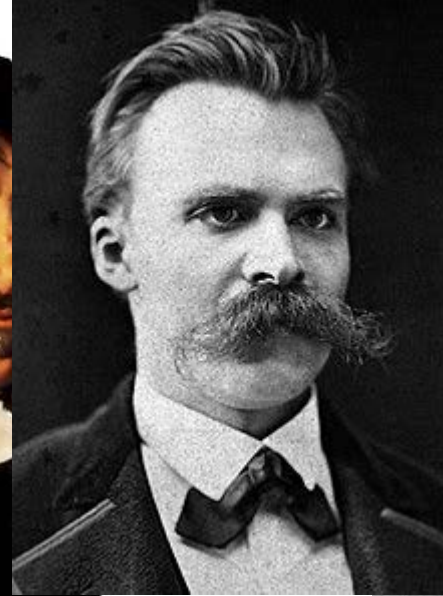
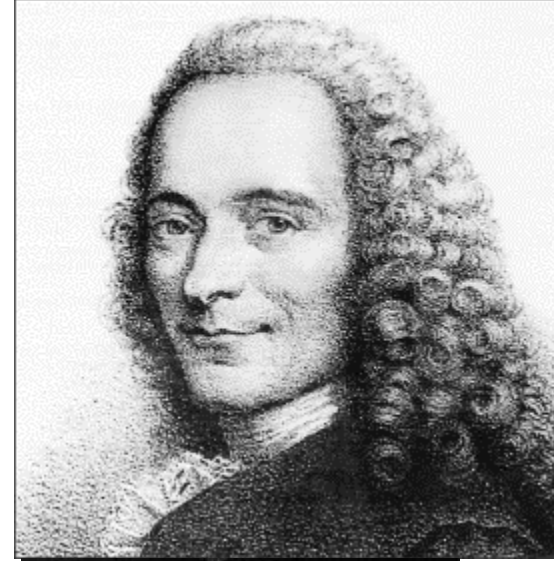
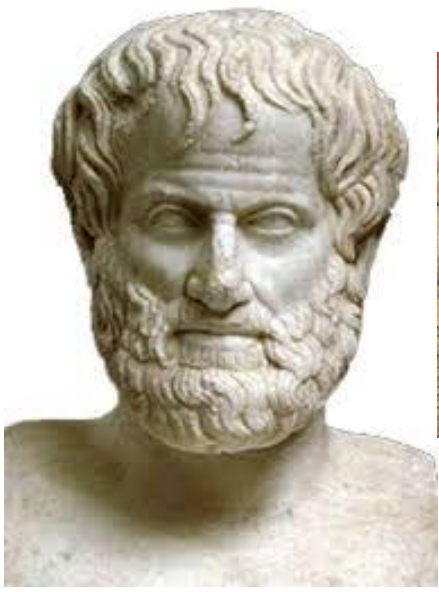
OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL  
MONDAY JUNE 21, 1971



The very best to you, Billy!  
Do page 38, 39, & 40 (just  
for practice.)

Love,  
Mrs. Kyle



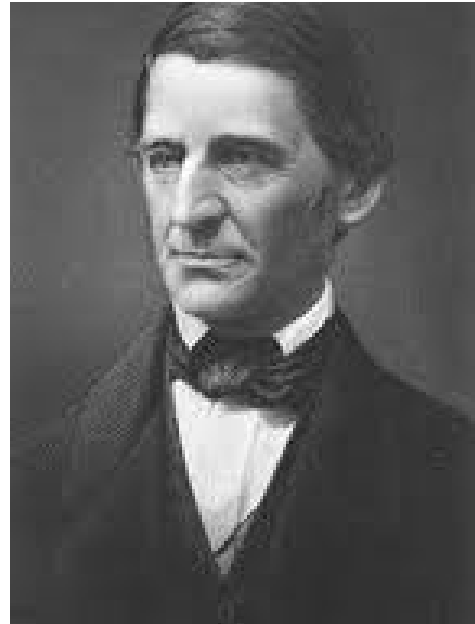






ईशवास्यमिदं सर्वं यद्विचिन्तायां जगत्ते तान् पश्यन्ते न मुंती प्रामादधः कस्यचिद्दने ॥ कु  
 र्वन्ते वेदकर्मोपशान्तिजीविषेकृतं समाः रावेत्पि नान्यथेतोस्ति न कर्मविष्यते नरे ॥ असृष्ट्याः नामैतं लो  
 काश्च न्येन तमसा व्यताः ॥ ता एव स्ते प्रियाभिगच्छन्ति ये के चात्महते जननाः ॥ अनेन जदेकं मनसो ज्ञवी  
 येनितं देवाश्चाप्नुवन् सर्वं मयी तद्वा बतोन्या नन्येति यत्तस्मिन् न योमातरि प्वाद्वाति ॥ तदेज्जित  
 नेज्जिते दरे तदेतिके च तदेतरस्य सर्वस्यात इत सर्वस्यास्य वा च्यतः ॥ यस्तु सर्वसिद्धिस्तान्मात्मन्येवा  
 नुपश्यति सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥ यस्मिन् सर्वे शिरोभूता न्मात्मेवाभ्युदिजानतः  
 तव कोहः कः शोकराकाशमनुपश्यतः ॥ स च र्थ्य गा च्छु क्तं मकायमब्रह्मामन्त्राविरच्य श्रुद्भनपाप  
 विहं क विमनीषी मशिभः स्वयेभ्यः प्रयातय्यतो यानव्यदधा च्छाश्वतीभ्यः समाभ्यः ॥ अन्धना  
 मः प्रविशानि मेघे विष्णुसतेत तोभ्य इव तं मोघमुविधाया च्यताः ॥ प्रमदन्तुर्विषया न्यस  
 इरविषया इति श्रुत्वा मधीशया येन स्तदि न च क्षिरे ॥ विष्णो वा विष्णो वा विष्णो च मस्तदेत  
 मयं सहस्रविषया मन्त्युतीर्त्वा विषया मत्तमद्भुते ॥ अन्धेतमः प्रविशति मेघसंभ्रतिमुपा

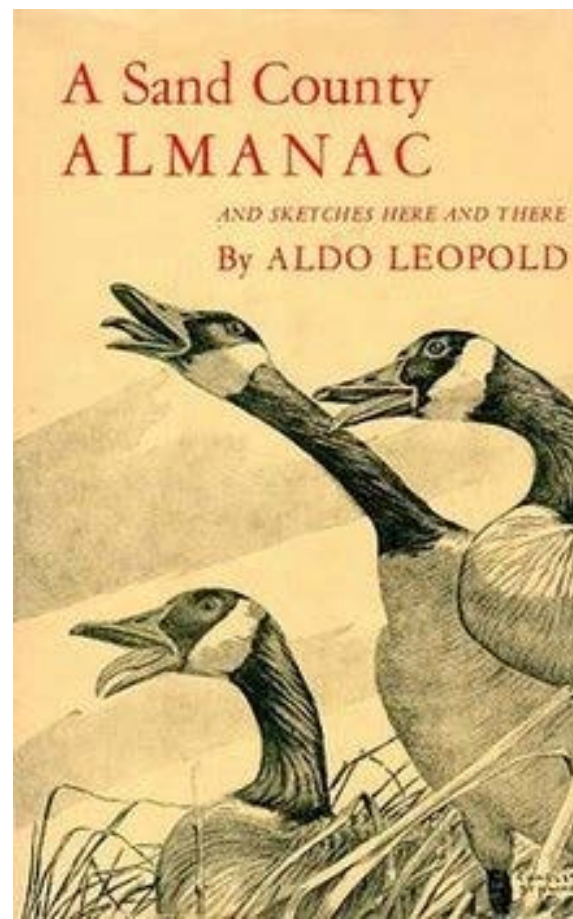




“Examine each question in terms of what is ethically and esthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.”

“If the land mechanism as a whole is good then every part is good, whether we understand it or not...To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering.”

<https://www.aldoleopold.org/teach-learn/green-fire-film/leopold-quotes/>



“I have purposely presented the land ethic as a product of social evolution because nothing so important as an ethic is ever ‘written’... It evolves in the minds of a thinking community.”

“All ethics so far evolved rest upon a single premise: that the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts. The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants and animals, or collectively the land.”

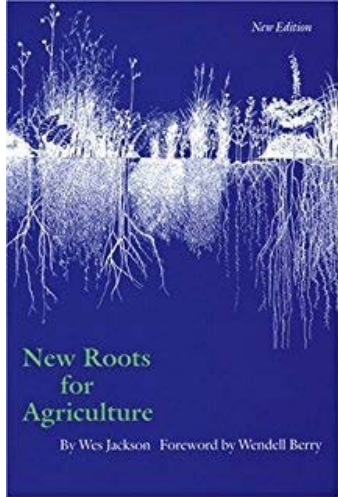
“There are two things that interest me: the relation of people to each other, and the relation of people to land.”



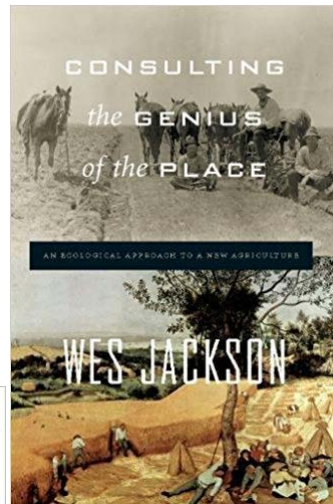
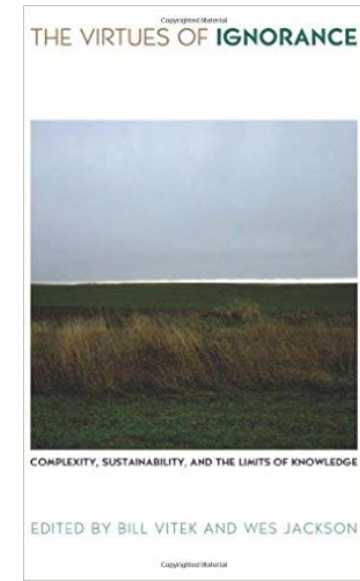
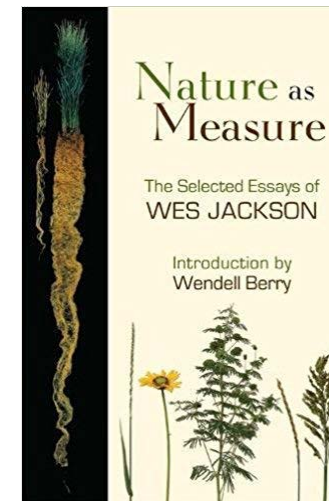
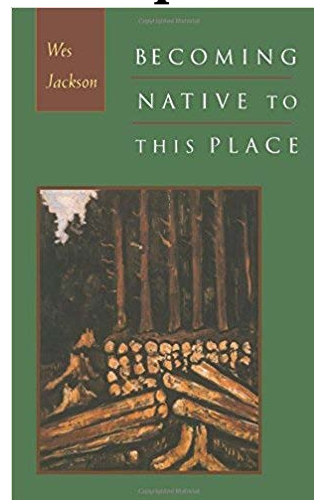
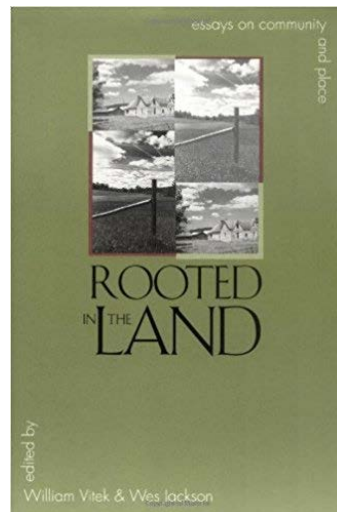
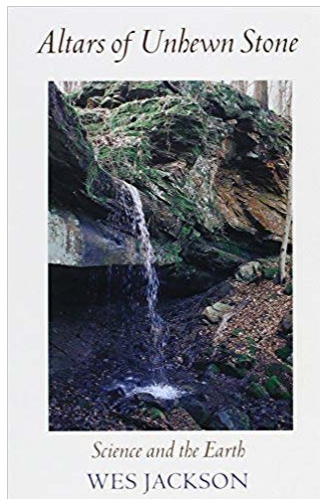




# Wes Jackson



- “The history of Earth-abuse through agriculture has been horrendous. Essentially, all of nature’s ecosystems are perennial polycultures. Agriculture reversed that. Consequently, soil erosion became a problem. The wilderness has to become a standard against which we judge our agricultural and cultural practices.”



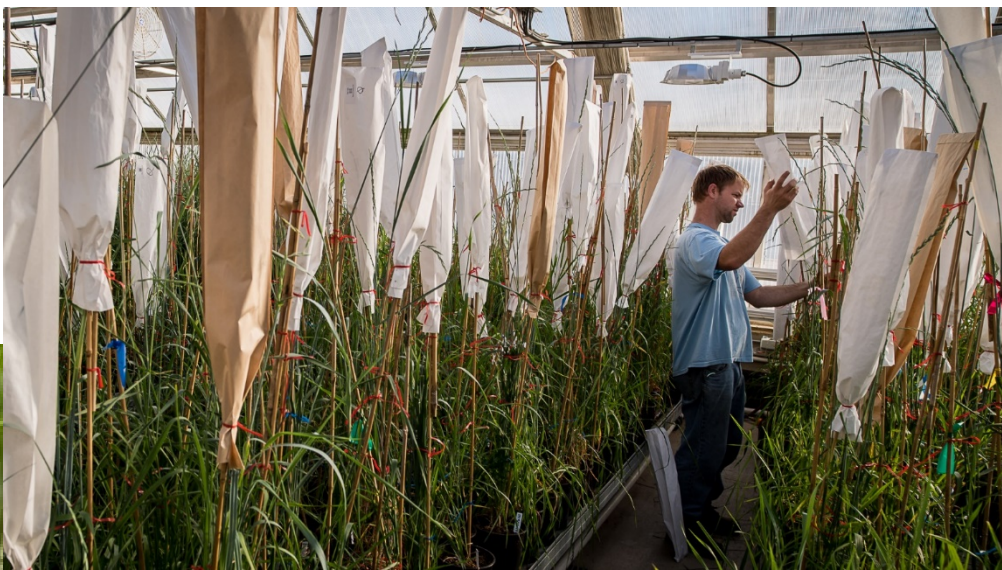
















# Natural Systems Agriculture

- **New perennial grain and seed crops**
  - Intermediate wheatgrass (Kernza™)
  - Wheat
  - Sunflowers
  - Sorghum
  - Rice
  - Legumes
- **Domestication of Wild Perennial Plants**
- **Perennialization of Existing Annual Plants**
- **Adapted to and grown in ecologically intensified polycultures—in mixtures**







# Kernza





**THE  
Nation.**

**“The Grain That Tastes Like Wheat,  
but Grows Like a Prairie Grass”**

**CIVIL EATS**

**“Superwheat Kernza Could Save  
Our Soil and Feed Us Well”**

**The Washington Post**



**“General Mills supporting  
production of perennial wheat”**

**“Perennial wheat is an ecologist’s dream.  
Soon it may be what’s for dinner”**





Saving the planet, one beer at a time.

# patagonia

## PROVISIONS®



THE  
PERENNIAL



### A Modern Farmer Conversation: **The Wisdom of Wes Jackson, Founder of The Land Institute**



West Coast beer drinkers took part in what historians may one day view as the moment modern civilization embarked down the path toward a future agricultural system fully aligned with the laws of nature.

REGENERATIONVERMONT.ORG



Res. Cent., S. Africa

Ag. U. Sweden (SLU)

Cornell U.

Charles Sturt, Australia

ICRISAT, Mali

Jimma U. Ethiopia

Kansas State U.

Lund U., Sweden

Makerere U. Uganda

Max Planck Inst., Germany

Michigan State U.

NARC, Nepal

NSW Dept. Primary Ind., Aust.

NW Ag. For. U., China

Lethbridge Res. Centre, Canada

U. Copenhagen, Denmark

U. Georgia

U. Illinois

U. Kansas

U. Manitoba, Canada

U. Minnesota

U. Reading, UK

U. De la Republica, Uruguay

Utah State U.

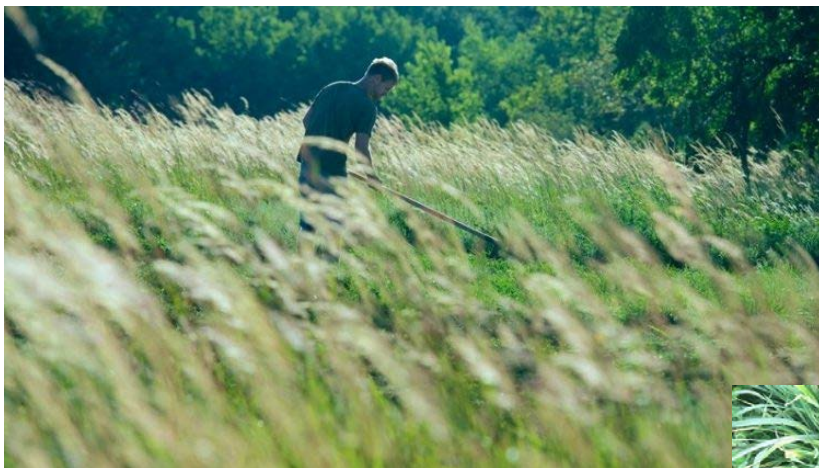
Texas A&M

Washington State U.

Yunnan U., China







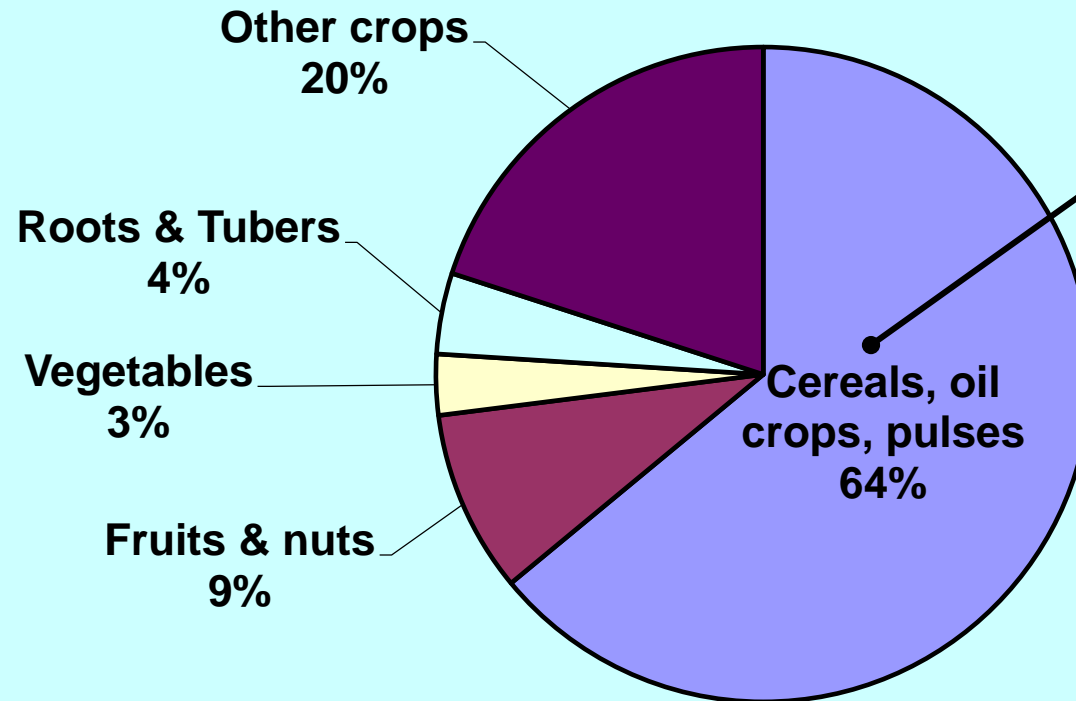
## 21. PERENNIAL RICE AS A CASE STUDY IN ASIA



Perennial Rice PR23 from Professor Fengyi Hu at YAAS Kunming in China is already under pre-release testing in Yunnan Province for release to farmers.



## Global Cropland Distribution



### The Problem of Agriculture:

- 70-80% of human caloric needs
- ~ 2/3rds of nitrogen inputs
- Large scale environmental problems (soil erosion, coastal Dead Zones, habitat destruction, greenhouse gases)

(FAO, 2001)



# The 10,000 year problem of agriculture







I hope this doesn't  
cause nitrate leaching

I hope this doesn't  
increase soil erosion

I hope weed populations  
don't explode





I hope this doesn't cause  
nitrate leaching

I hope this doesn't  
increase soil erosion

I hope weed populations  
don't explode

I hope soil organic  
matter doesn't  
plummet

I hope this doesn't  
boost greenhouse  
gases

I hope this doesn't lead  
to extreme fossil fuel  
dependency

I hope this won't  
set up a pesticide  
treadmill



**“I talk about an intensive tillage event as the combination of a tornado, a hurricane, an earthquake, a tsunami.” —Don Reicosky, retired Department of Agriculture soil scientist**

<https://www.thenation.com/article/the-grain-that-tastes-like-wheat-but-grows-like-a-prairie-grass/>









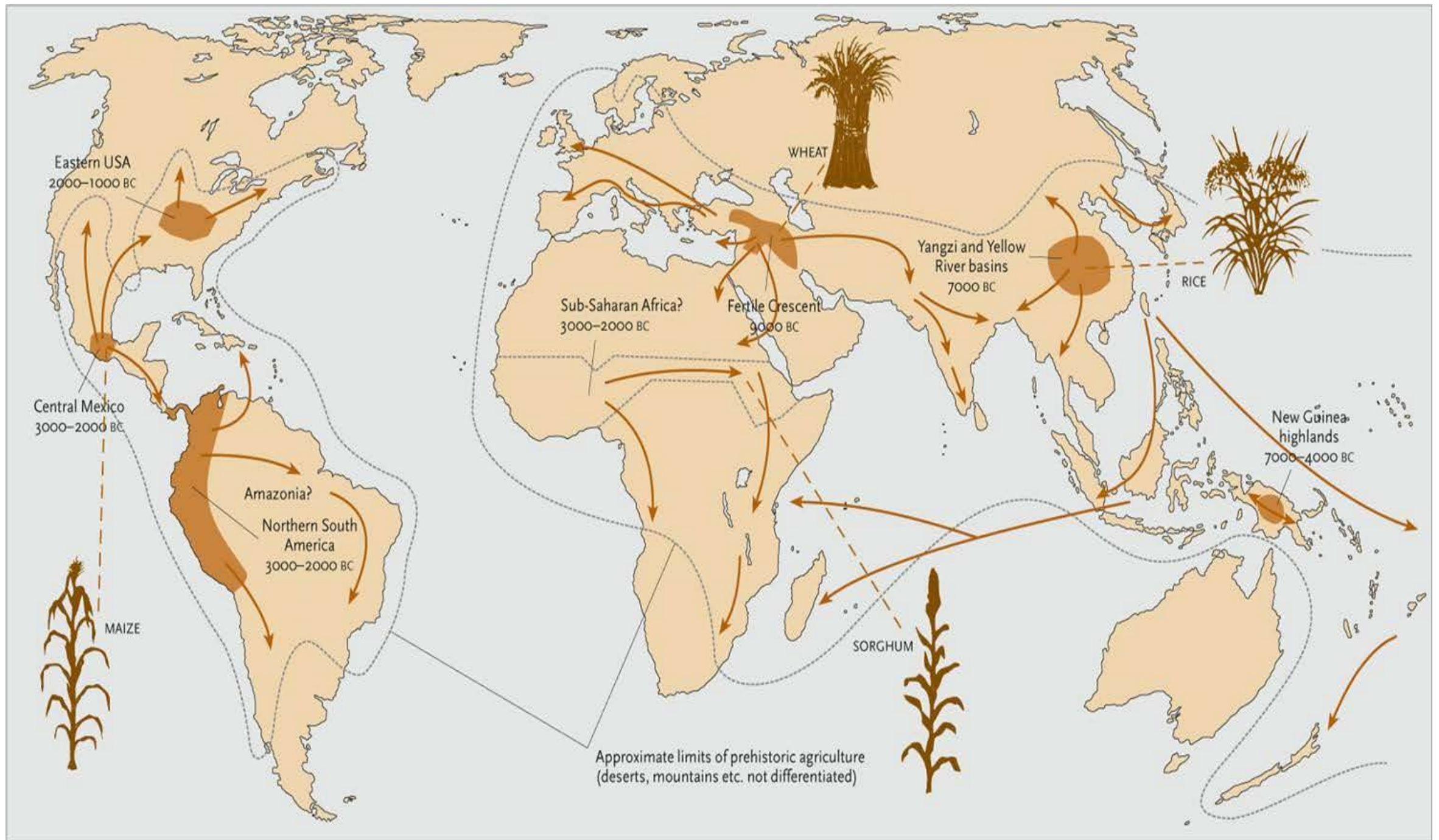








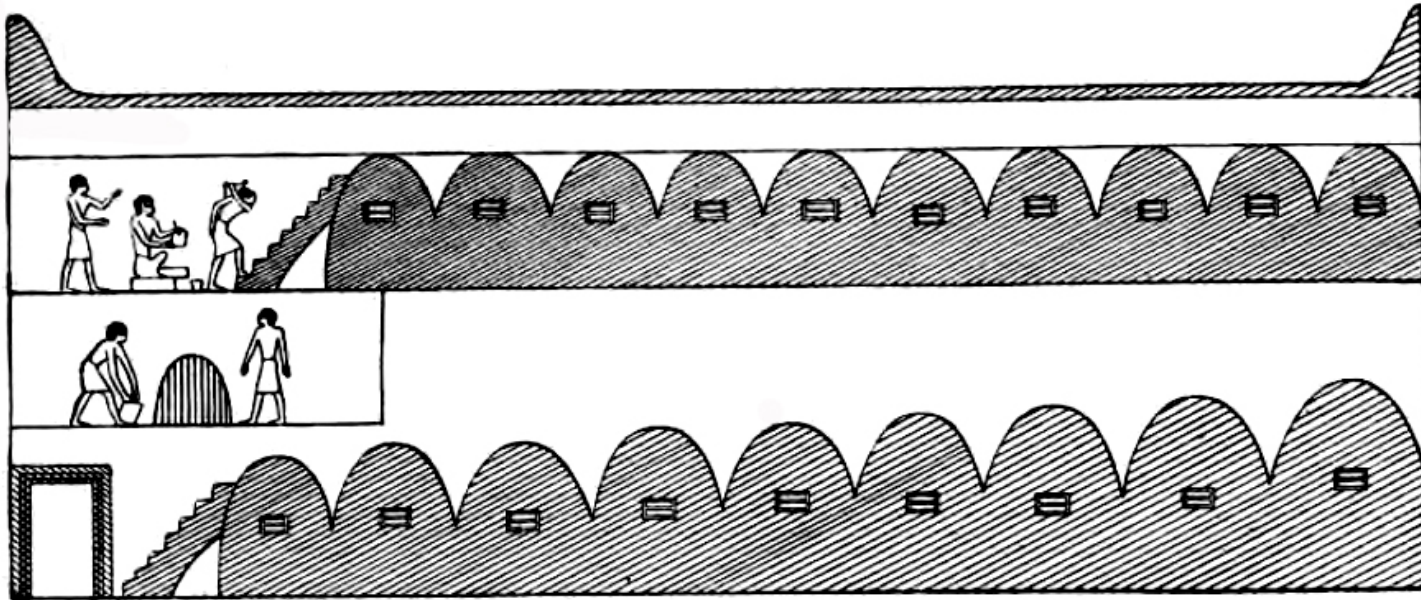






# Annual Cereal Grains were:

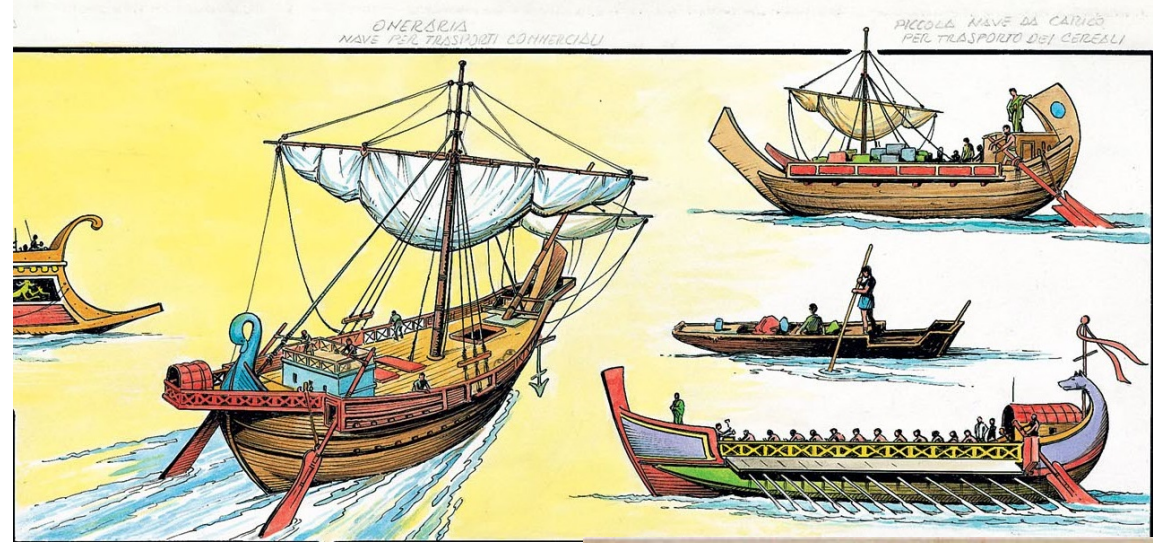
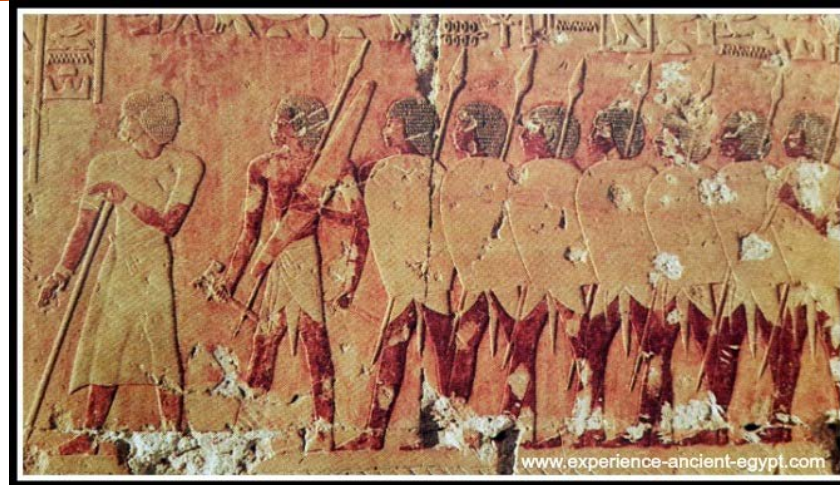
- Storable





# Annual Cereal Grains were:

- Transportable



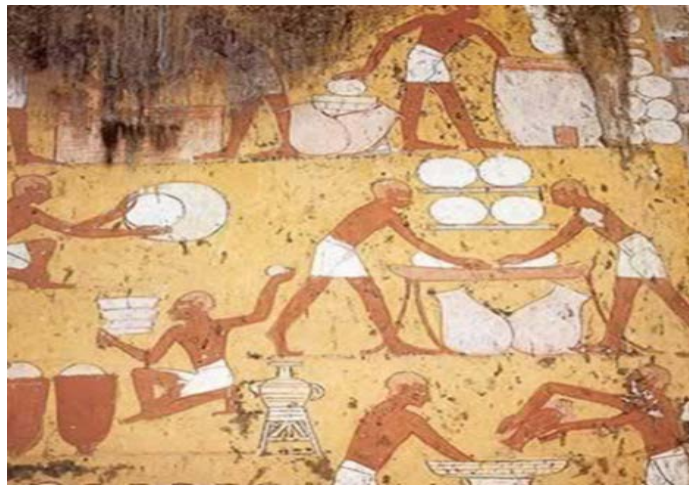
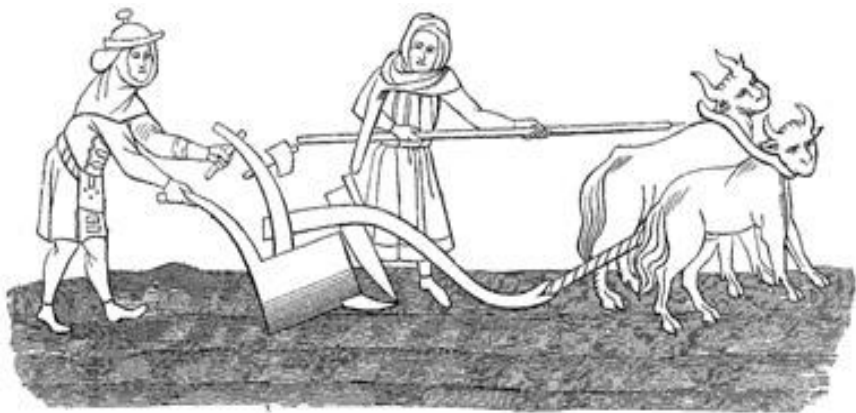


# Annual Cereal Grains were:

- Taxable









# The 5 E's of Surplus in Food and Thought

- **Extraction** of carbon from the five carbon pools (soils, forests, coal, oil, natural gas).
- **Eviction** of human, plant and animal communities as extraction leads to exhaustion, and surplus grows and expands.
- **Enslavement** of humans, plants (crops) and animals (livestock).
- **Extermination** of weeds, predators and humans who interfere with surplus-driven expansion.
- **Empires** of surplus, hierarchy, justification, superiority.



# A Species Out of Context

- Fire: 1,000,000 years ago
- Big Brain: 500,000 years ago
- Agriculture: 10-12,000 years ago
- Farmers divide the natural world into crop and weed, livestock and predator.
- Disturbance Agriculture represents one of the first systemic dualisms.
- Socio-Cultural systems give shape and justification to these arrangements.
- Success brought increases in population and the need to feed more people.
- Success brought a sense of pride and hubris.





# A Wounded World of Surplus

- **Climate Change: Agriculture is #2 cause**
- **Species Extinction: Agriculture is #1 or 2 cause**
- **Half of all the plants in the USA are classified as noxious weeds**
- **Backbreaking work for farmers and food producers**
- **Consumerism, debt, depression, exhaustion**
- **Acceptance of horrible treatment of people and animals**





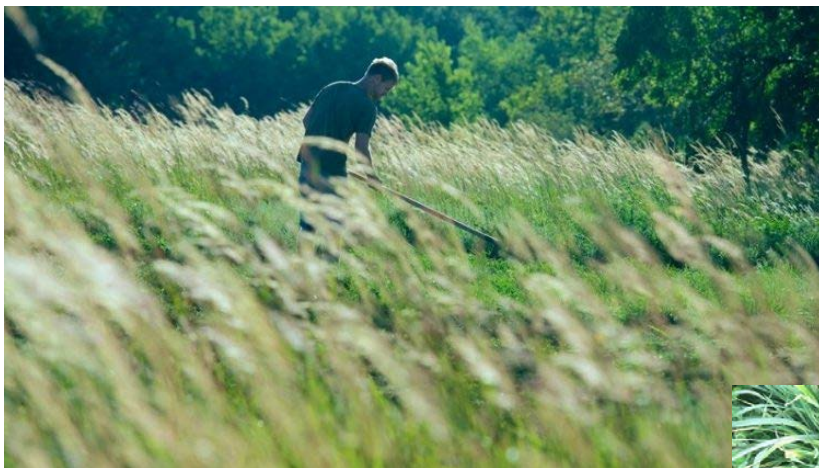




Almost three-fourths of all U.S. hired farm workers are immigrants. The U.S. food system—particularly fruit and vegetable production—depends on immigrants more than any other sector of the U.S. economy.







## 21. PERENNIAL RICE AS A CASE STUDY IN ASIA

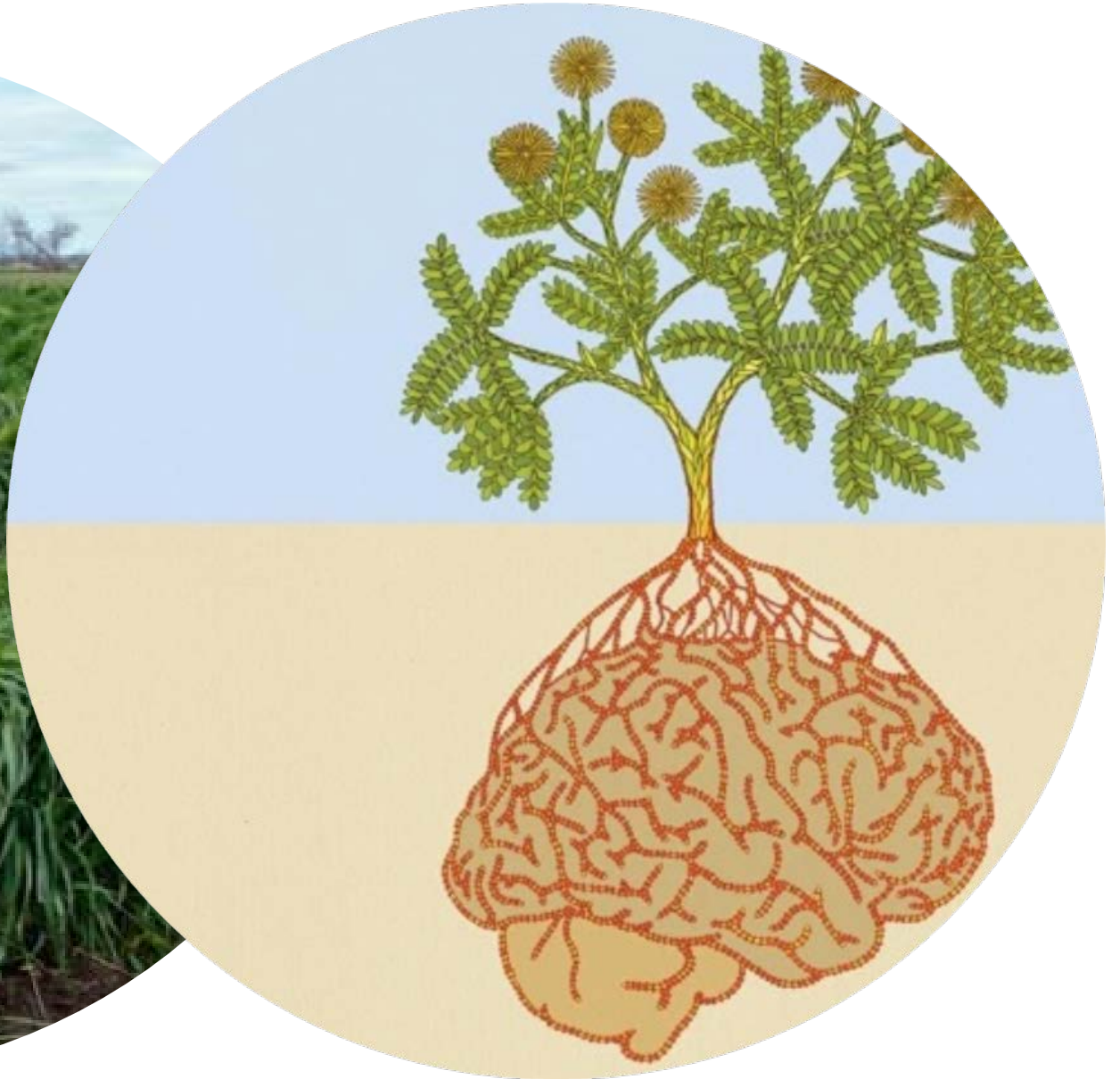


Perennial Rice PR23 from Professor Fengyi Hu at YAAS Kunming in China is already under pre-release testing in Yunnan Province for release to farmers.













Transforming Agriculture, Perennially



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Our Work

Perennial Crops

Kernza®

Silphium

The Global  
Inventory Project

Perennial Wheat

Perennial  
Legumes

Perennial  
Sorghum

Ecological  
Intensification

Ecosphere Studies



## Ecosphere Studies

Transforming Education, Perennially

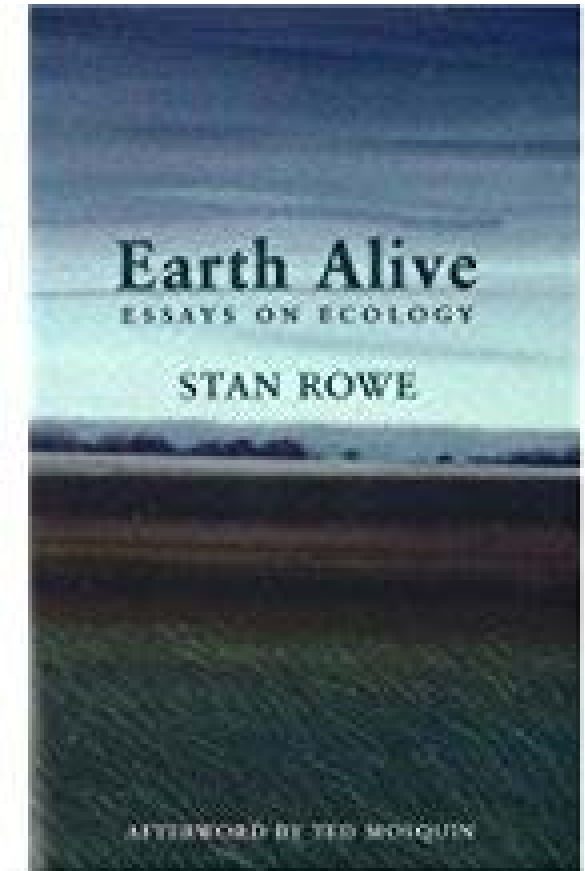


Natural Systems Agriculture aims to change the way we farm, moving away from an extractive relationship to the Earth toward perennial crops that hold soil and work with ecosystems. Ecosphere Studies aims to change the way we think about the world and our place in it, through educational and cultural projects with a



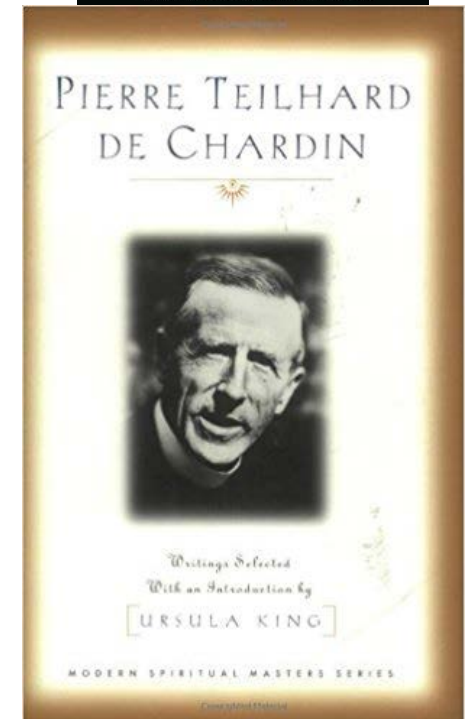
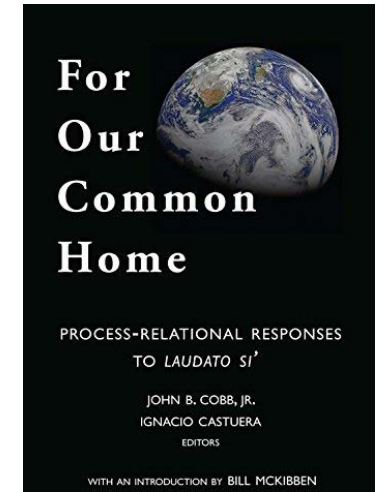
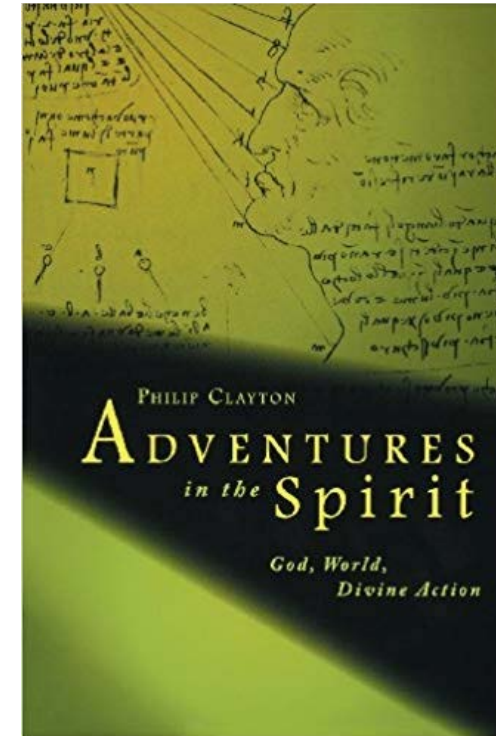
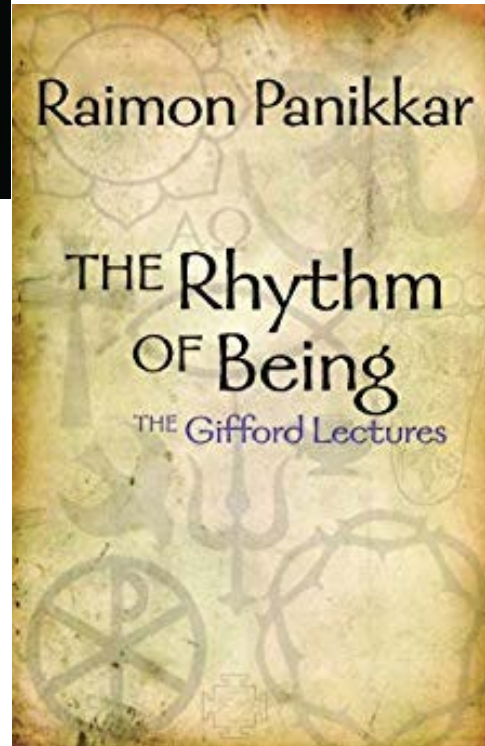
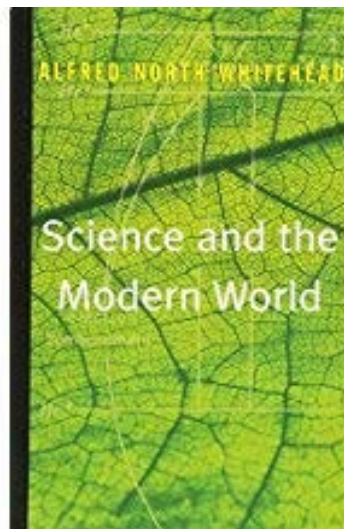
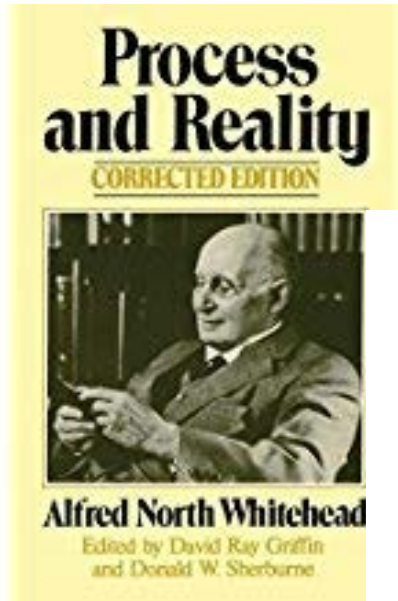
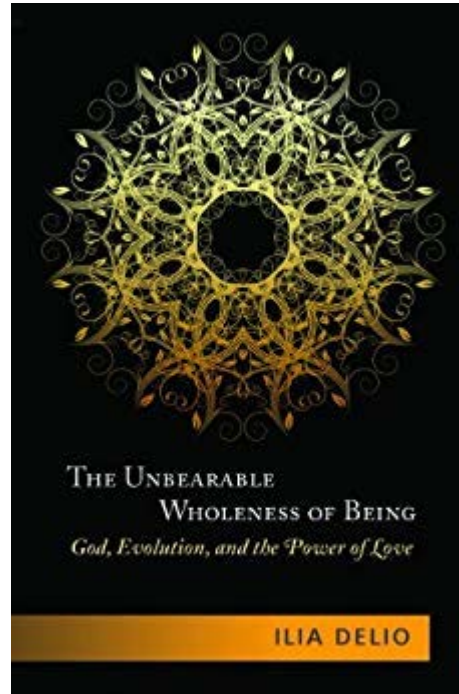
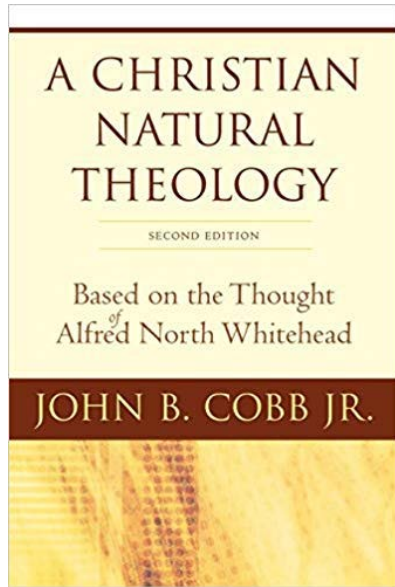
# Earth Alive!

- J. Stan Rowe, Canadian Ecologist
- Integration of atmosphere, lithosphere, hydrosphere, and biosphere = the *ecosphere*, the creative, living globe that is our home





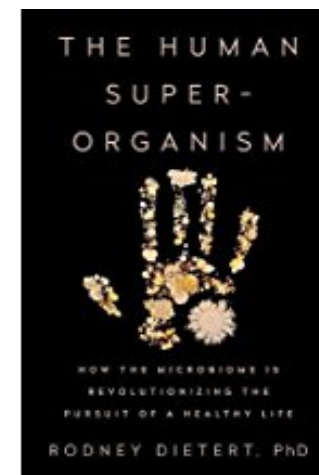
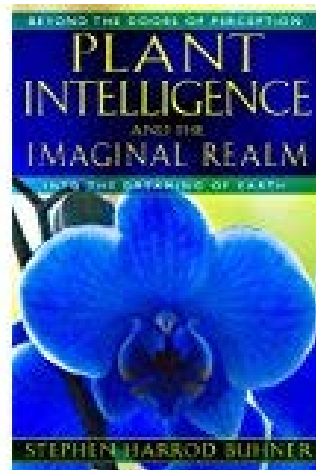
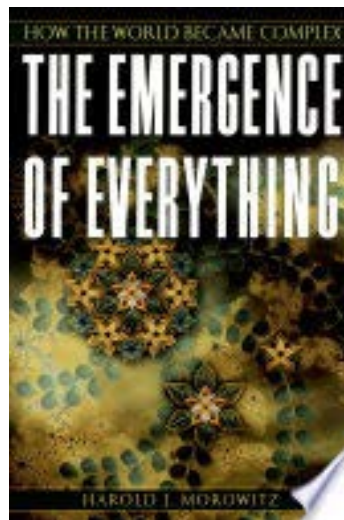
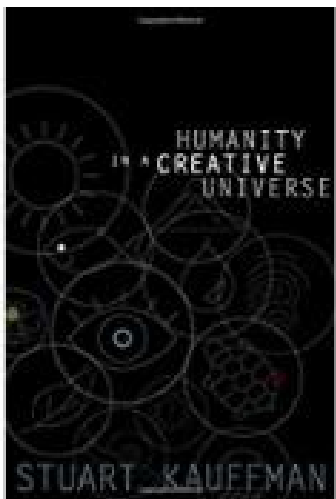
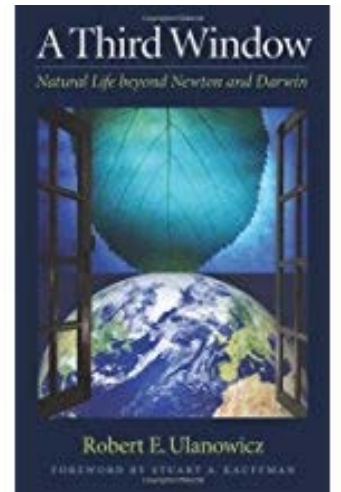
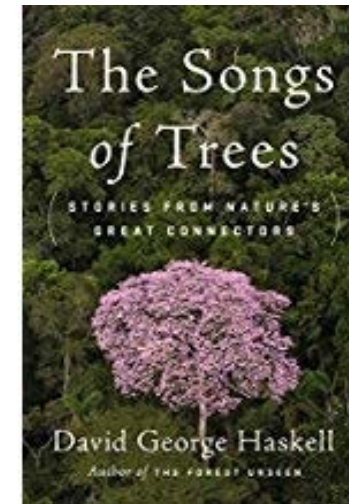
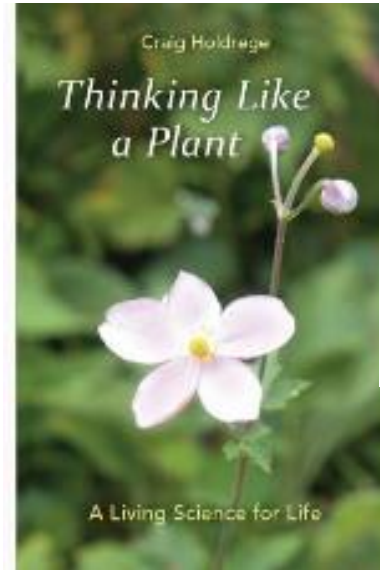
# Process-Relational Philosophy/Theology





# Process-Relational Science:

- Downward Causation
- Emergence
- Pre-adaptations
- Self-organizing criticality
- Quantum Biology
- Ignorance Epistemologies





[www.ecologicalcitizen.net](http://www.ecologicalcitizen.net)

LONG ARTICLE

# Transforming human life on our home planet, perennially

The development of agriculture is one of the key fault lines in human history, the starting point for the human project of dominating the planet. As the catastrophic consequences of that domination become undeniable, an ecospheric framework that recognizes the problem of agriculture should be at the centre of an analysis and critique of the ecological and social failures of the industrial worldview that shapes today's world. Ecosphere Studies, a new education programme being developed out of the perennial vision of The Land Institute, offers such a framework. By 'driving knowledge out of its categories' and adopting an 'ignorance-based worldview', scholars, teachers and activists can collaborate in experimental and experiential workshops that aim to create a perennial culture, challenging the short-term, unsustainable vision of the dominant culture, especially in affluent societies such as the US.

**Wes Jackson,  
Aubrey Streit  
Krug, Bill Vitek  
and Robert  
Jensen**

About the authors  
See following page.

Citation



Type here to search



1:09 PM  
4/9/2018

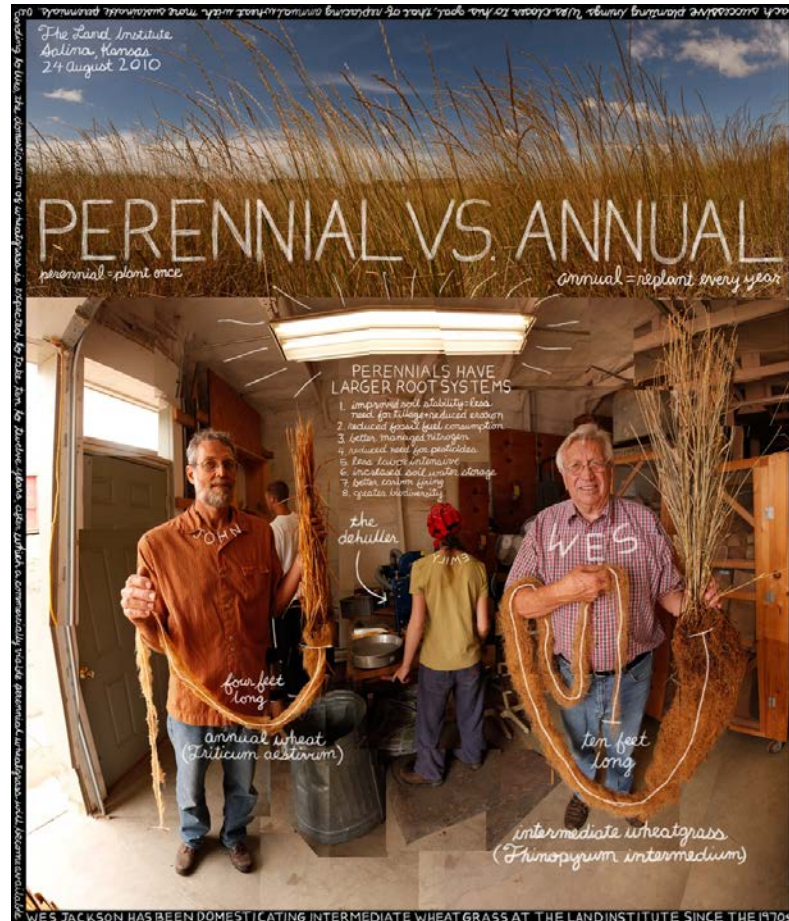






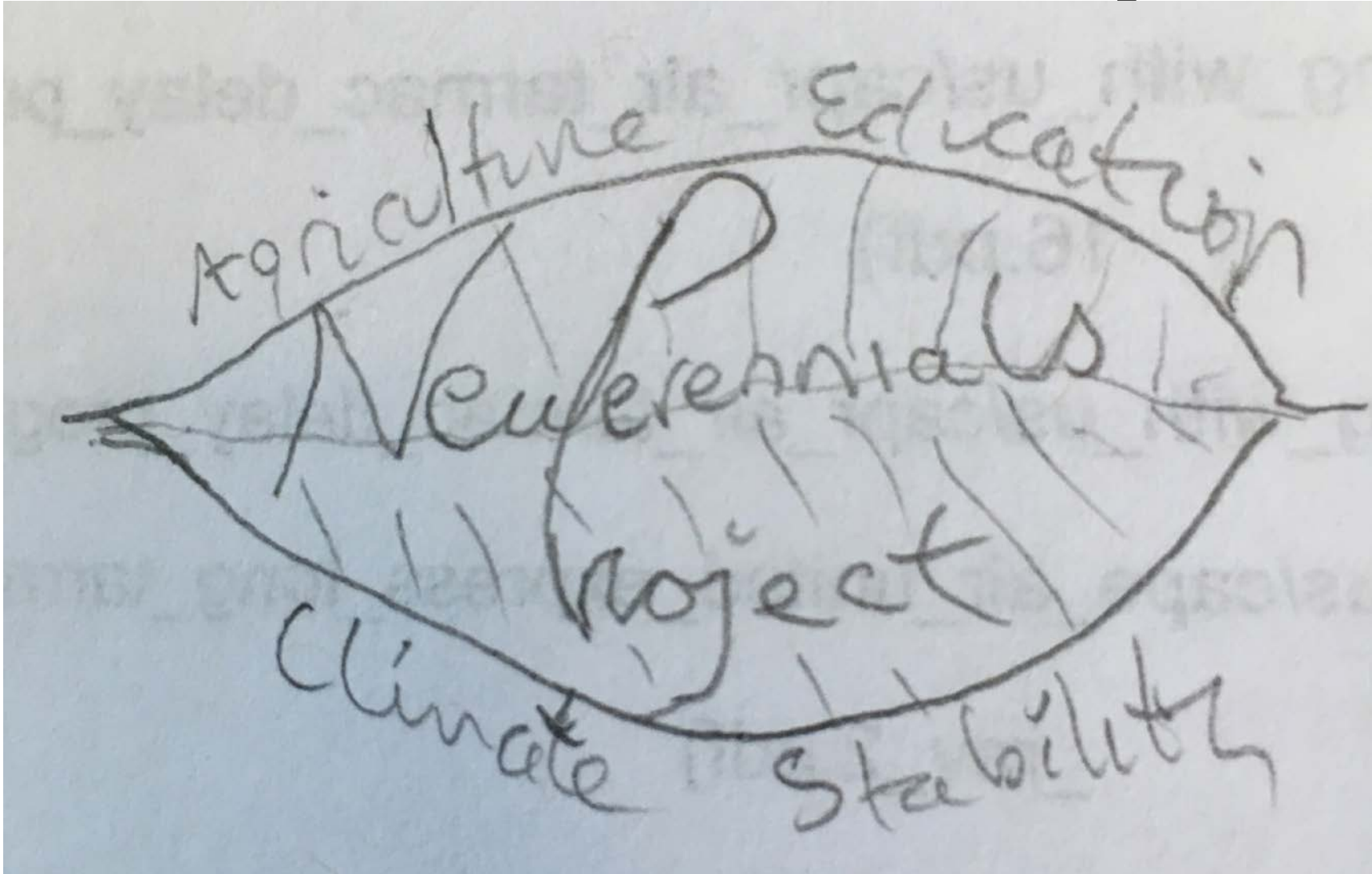


# What would a perennial education system look like?





# *The New Perennials Project*





# A Humble Invitation.....

- The New Perennials Project and The Land Institute are co-hosting a two-day gathering of Catholic women-religious community-leaders right here (we hope!) in the second or third week of February 2018 around the theme of “Food, Faith, and the Perennial Imagination”. We will have short presentations on the agricultural and educational work of The Land Institute, and relevant work in Abrahamic theology and Christian food/agriculture connections, alongside a wide and deep listening and discussion of how the challenges of modern life and modern faith can be informed by a perennial turn in farming and culture.
-



*To start that conversation, we ask:*

- With the possibility on the horizon of feeding the world's hungry without destroying soil and plant communities while poisoning waters, the atmosphere and our loved ones in the process, how might we apply perennial agricultural principles to other human endeavors such as education, spirituality, science and economics, social justice, and the creative and healing arts? What about: spirituality...
- How can secular and scientific traditions reconnect with and learn from communities of faith and indigenous wisdoms who possess long and powerful traditions that evoke a whole and good Earth in communion with the Creator?
- How will we re-member our broken communities, and re-root a faith beyond scientific reductionism and the lure of economic materialism?
- What's possible when we consider the multiple ways a perennial mind and heart can heal the Earth and our creaturely and spiritual family?



# Who should attend?

- *Members of missionary, educational, and monastic communities involved or interested in work around food and farming, healing the earth, and/or rebuilding communities and recovering our common home.*
- “The gravity of the ecological crisis demands that we all look to the common good, embarking on a path of dialogue which demands patience, self-discipline and generosity, always keeping in mind that “realities are greater than ideas”.



# Questions to Consider:

- How did the invention and practice of annual disturbance agriculture 12,000 years ago make us a “species out of context?”
- Can we link annual disturbance agriculture to the creation of surplus and the creation of state societies 3-5,000 years ago, with all of their hierarchies and systemic injustices?
- Can we think of other ways that “annual disturbance” thought and action have become the norm in contemporary society?





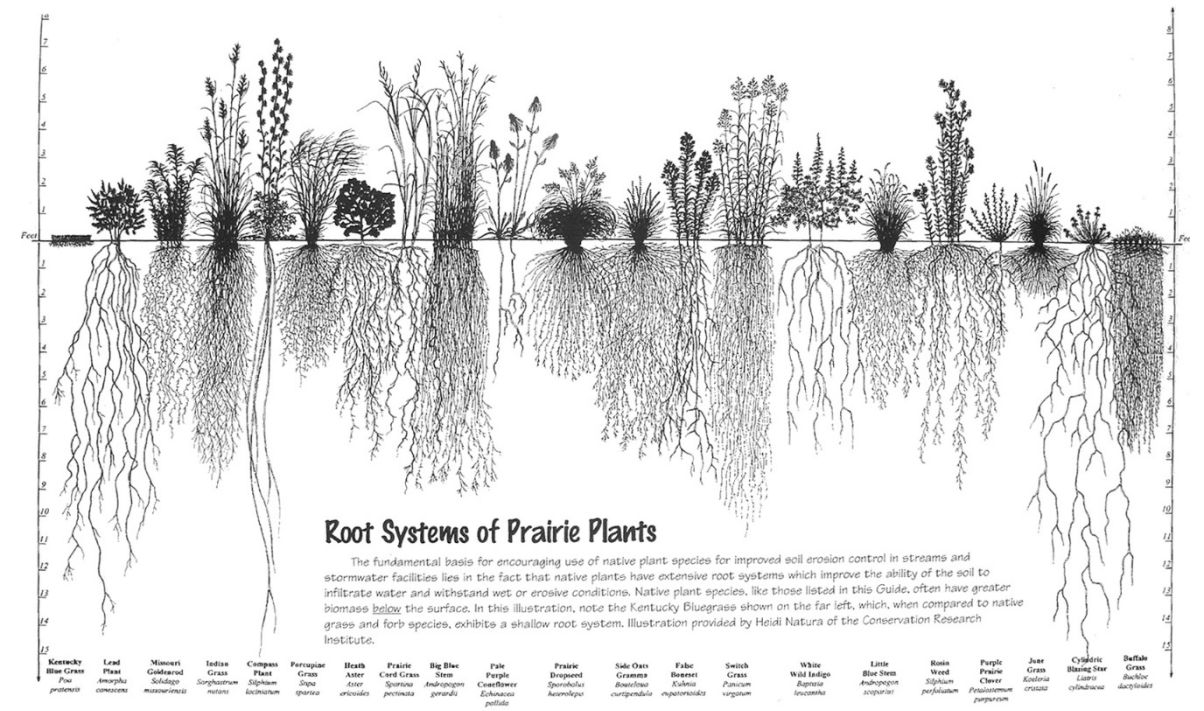
# Questions to Consider:

- How can we recover and reanimate traditions and practices of poly-perenniality in our contemporary food, faith and educational systems?
- How might Catholic women religious communities incorporate perennial agricultural plants as a food and as an educational resource, and create refuges for Christians and non-Christians alike to explore new (and ancient) ways of living and being with eyes, minds, hands and hearts at work and play in the living Ecosphere that, indeed, “is very good.”





Catholic women-religious communities have long traditions of faith, generosity, stability and adaptability (*stadaptibility*), the very qualities of perennial plants living in poly-cultural ecosystems!





**“Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change. .... A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal.”**



**“The gravity of the ecological crisis demands that we all look to the common good, embarking on a path of dialogue which demands patience, self-discipline and generosity, always keeping in mind that “realities are greater than ideas”.**





# Project Team



Photo by Scott Bontz in 2016 at Wauhob Prairie.

## Aubrey Streit Krug

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**Thank you!**