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The Emergent Agriculture: Farming, Sustainability and the Return of the Local Economy

Gary Kleppel

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Long embraced by corporations who are driven only by the desire for profit, industrial agriculture wastes precious resources and spews millions of tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere each year, exacerbating climate change and threatening the very earth and water on which we depend. However, this dominant system, from which Americans obtain most of their food, is being slowly supplanted by a new paradigm.

The Emergent Agriculture is a collection of fourteen thematic essays on sustainability viewed through the lens of farming. Arguing that industrial food production is incompatible with the realities of nature, science, and ethics, this lyrical narrative makes the case for a locally based food system which is:

- Stable in the face of economic uncertainty
- Resilient in the face of environmental variability
- Grounded in stewardship of the land, on attaching value to food and the craft involved in producing it, and on respecting the dignity of farmers, consumer,s and livestock

A revolution in food production is underway. Written from the vantage point of an ecologist who is also a farmer, *The Emergent Agriculture* is essential reading for anyone interested in food security and the potential for growing local economies. Food for thought about the future of food.

Gary Kleppel is a professor of biology at the SUNY Albany, where he focuses on sustainable agriculture, conservation-based grazing, and the ecology of human-dominated landscapes. He and his wife Pam are owners of Longfield Farm, where they produce grass-fed lamb, wool, free range chickens and eggs, and artisanal breads.

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