

alimentAR: a visual exploration of Argentina's alimentary system

This project aims to explore the dynamics of Argentina's alimentary system through a group of images that walk the line between documentary and authorial photography. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Argentina produces food for more than 400 million people in the world - almost ten times more than its population. At the same time, however, important institutions like the World Bank recognize that 35,4% of the Argentinian people is under the poverty line; a number that climbs to 52,6% if we only consider children. The question is: how is this possible? Experts belonging to the University of Buenos Aires, one of the main universities in the country, attribute this to the productive model the country has been developing for at least 25 years: our land produce food for animals in other parts of the world and not for its citizens. The symbol of this is soy: a legume that flourishes in almost all the cultivable land of Argentina, pushed by its genetically modified constitution and a disproportionated use of agrochemicals. Biodiversity is being lost in the hands of these 'green deserts' and the health consequences of this business model is already well documented (as in the work of the Argentinian photographer Pablo Piovano, The human cost of agrottoxins).

Hunger and agricultural richness coexist contradictorily with the rising movement of sustainable food defenders around the world. An increasing number of people in Argentina, mostly from the middle classes, demand a new model of consumption that could provide healthy and nutritive foods and be exploitation-free at the same time. While a part of the society (that in many cases comes from an agricultural background and had to leave their lands because of poverty) depends on soup kitchens to subsist, others are changing their eating habits for good.

I believe this subject is not enough explored; we mostly see the consequences of contamination or expulsions but hardly look at the causes of these issues. I hope this essay can shed light to the connections between these different aspects of the same reality and serve as backup for the ones trying to build a better reality.

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