

New food politics in the emergent global countryside

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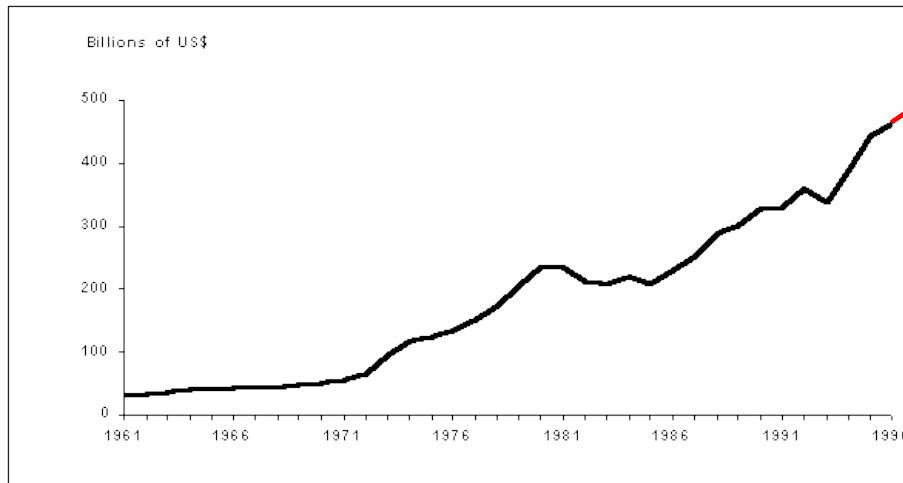
Outline

1. Agri-food globalization and food regime transition
2. The new food politics as grounded globalization
3. More-than-human globalization and food safety
4. Towards an assemblage approach

Value of global agri-food exports

2010 US\$1100 bn

2000 US\$558 bn



World exports of selected livestock produce as percentage of world consumption

	1964/66	1974/76	1984/86	1997/99
Bovine products	9.4%	10.3%	12.2%	16.4%
Pig meat	5.7%	6.0%	7.9%	9.6%
Poultry meat	4.0%	4.7%	6.3%	13.9%
All meat	7.4%	7.9%	9.4%	12.7%
Milk & dairy products	6.0%	7.6%	11.1%	12.8%

Source: Bruinsma (2003)

‘Food miles’ travelled by typical food products from source to place of consumption in London

Product	Source	Miles	Kilometres
Chicken	Thailand	6643	10689
Potatoes	Israel	2187	3519
Carrots	South Africa	5979	9620
Tomatoes	Saudi Arabia	3086	4936
Prawns	Indonesia	7278	11710
Lettuce	Spain	958	1541
Apples	USA	10133	16303
Peas	South Africa	5979	9620

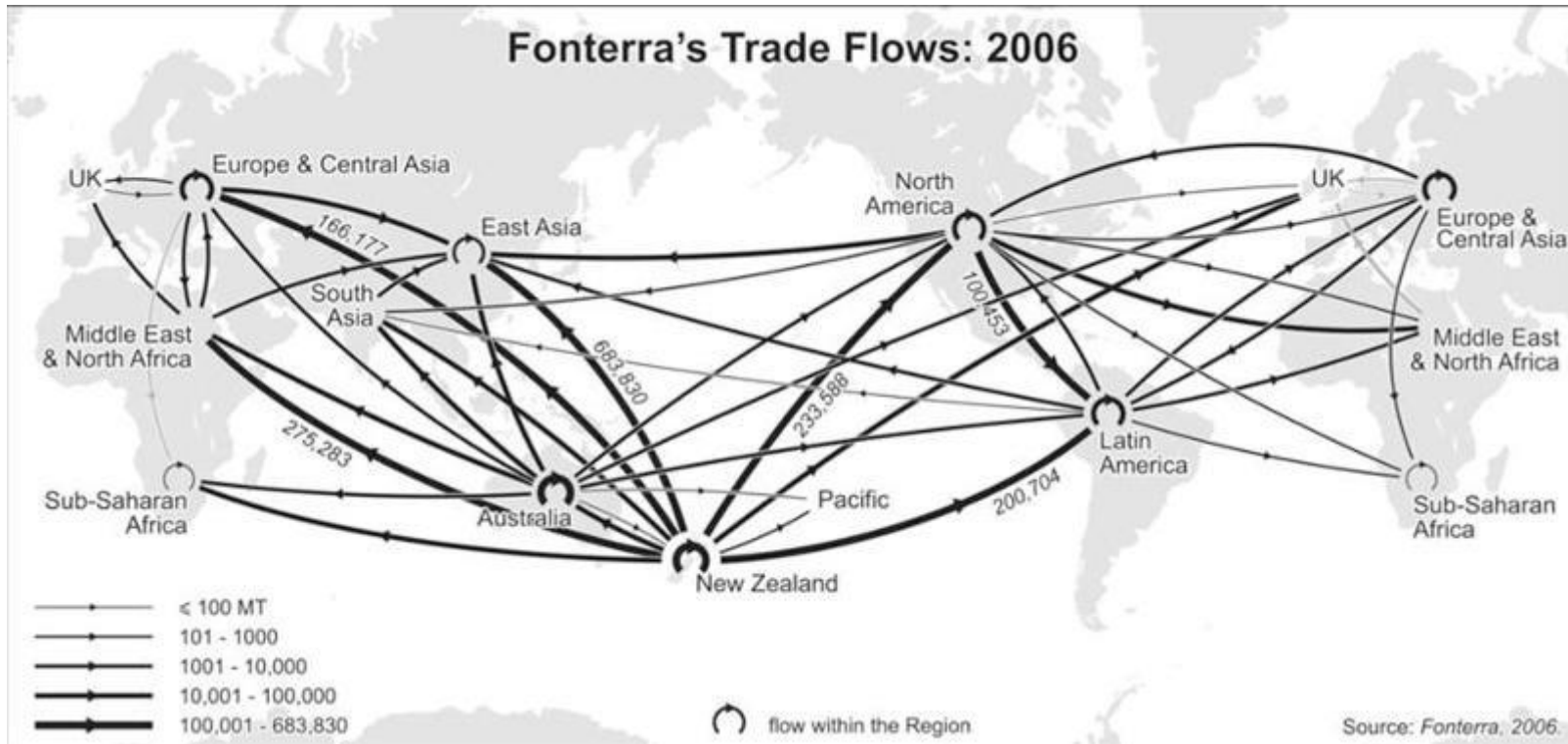
Source: Woods (2005) based on *The Guardian*, Food supplement, 10 May 2003

Trade in New Zealand dairy goods by Fonterra cooperative



Source: Gray and Le Heron (2010) in *New Zealand Geographer*

Trade in New Zealand dairy goods by Fonterra cooperative

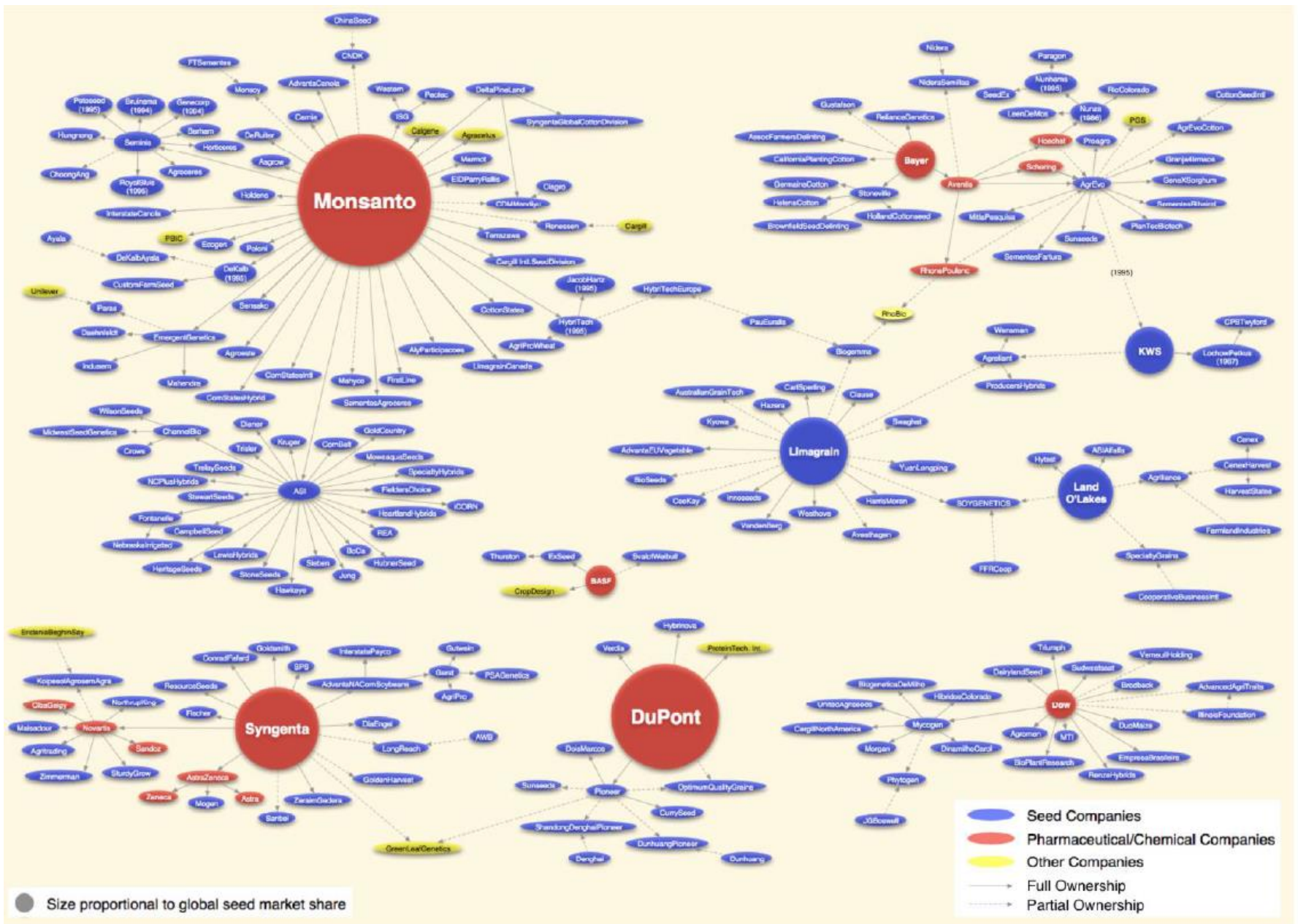


Source: Gray and Le Heron (2010) in *New Zealand Geographer*

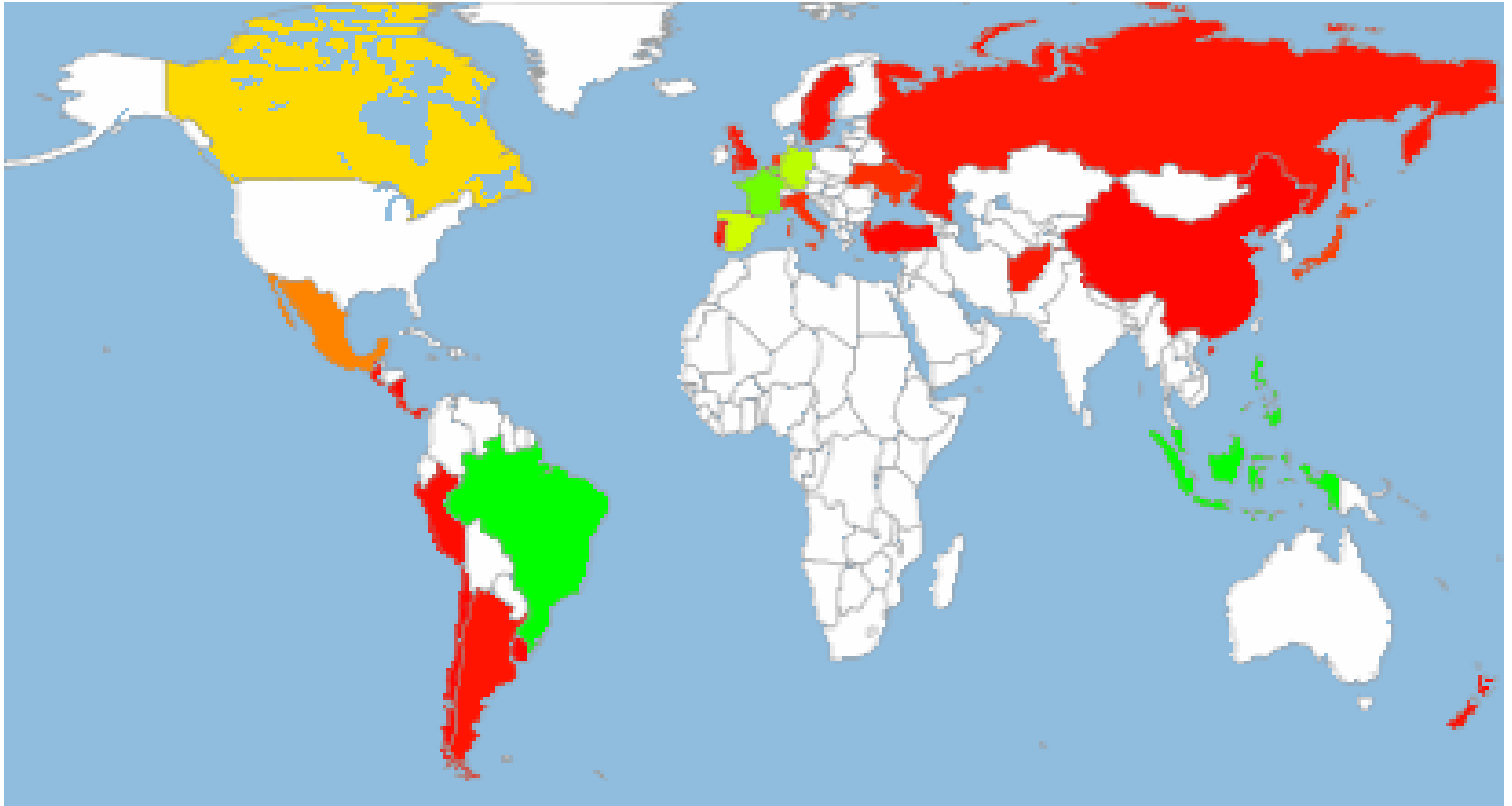
% of global sales of agricultural inputs controlled by major transnational corporations, 2004

	Agrochemicals	Seeds	Biotechnology
Monsanto	10%	12%	14%
Dupont/Pioneer	7%	10%	13%
Syngenta	18%	5%	7%
Bayer Crop Sciences	19%	2%	4%
BASF	13%	-	-
Dow Agrosiences	10%	-	3%
Limagrain	-	5%	-
Other	23%	66%	58%

Source: World Bank, *World Development Report 2008*



Structure of the global seed industry, 1996-2008, from Howard (2009)



Countries from which Cargill imports commodities into the USA

Source: www.importgenius.com



Countries without McDonalds' marked in blue



COUNTRY	STORES	EMPLOYEES
Argentina	44	9,028
Brazil	439	75,927
Canada	317	78,138
Chile	256	35,494
China**	290	83,575
Costa Rica	170	9,026
El Salvador	77	3,994

* Some employment numbers are as of last September

Source: Wal-Mart website

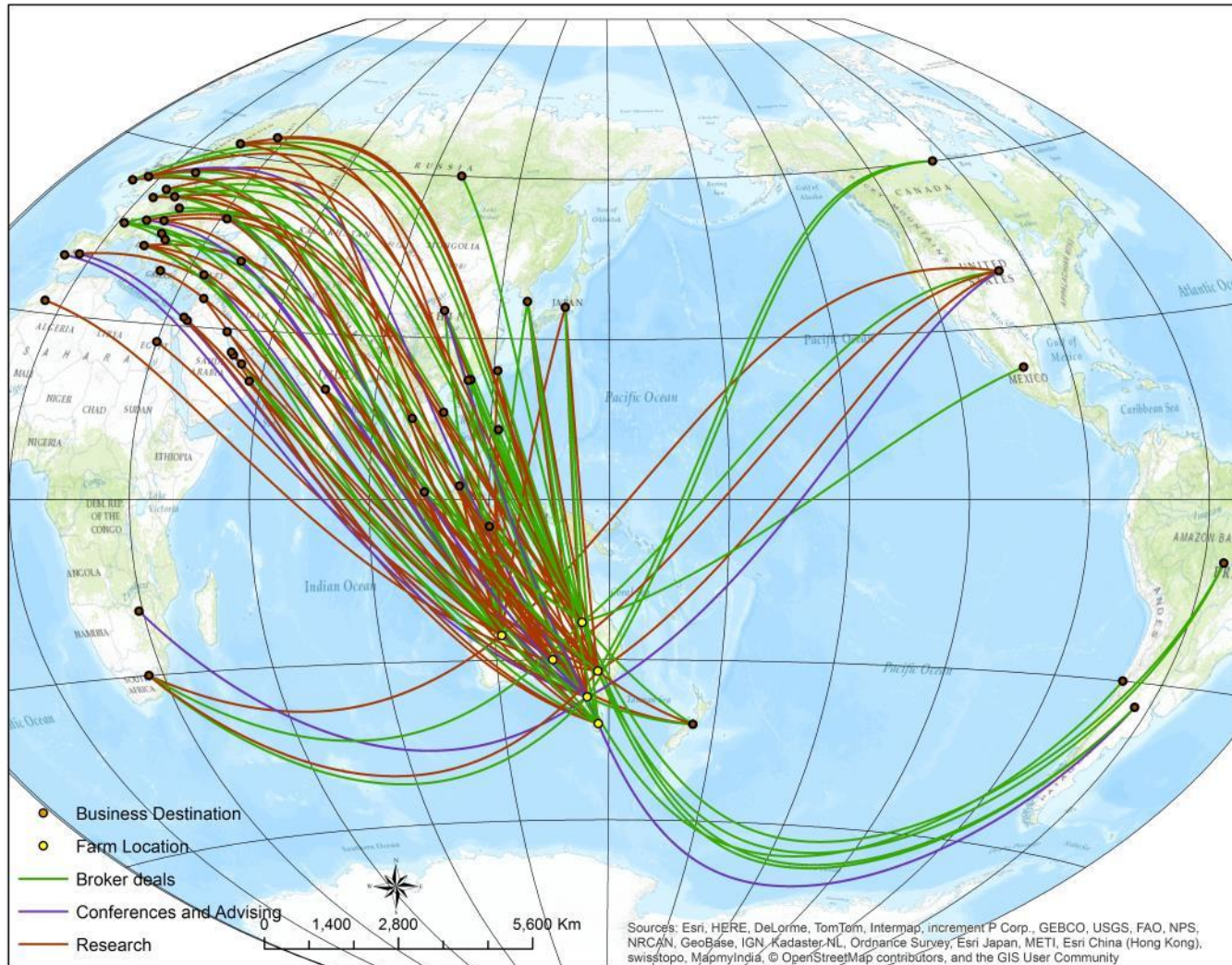
COUNTRY	STORES	EMPLOYEES
Guatemala	166	9,704
Honduras	53	2,564
India	2	544
Japan	371	25,139
Mexico	1,493	168,028
Nicaragua	1,864	1,864
United Kingdom	375	165,232

** Includes 104 Trust-Mart stores, in which Wal-Mart purchased a 35 percent stake, and 29,872 Trust-Mart employees.

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Location of Wal Mart owned supermarkets, May 2010

Transnational business travel by 20 Australian farmers



Source: Globally Engaged Farmers project, CI Lynda Cheshire, University of Queensland, funded by Australian Research Council. Map: Anthonia Onyehialam

Food Regimes

Agri-food globalization associated with a transition in food regimes

“a historically significant cluster of global-scale food relationships that contributed to stabilizing and underwriting a period of growth in global capitalism. A food regime comprised of a series of key relationships, often enshrined in rule-making and enforcing institutions (including imperial/national policy, trade policy, institutional forms of land-use/farming, company regulation, commodity complexes, labour relations, consumption relations in the industrial core).”

Campbell and Dixon (2009), in *Agriculture and Human Values*, p 263

Food Regimes

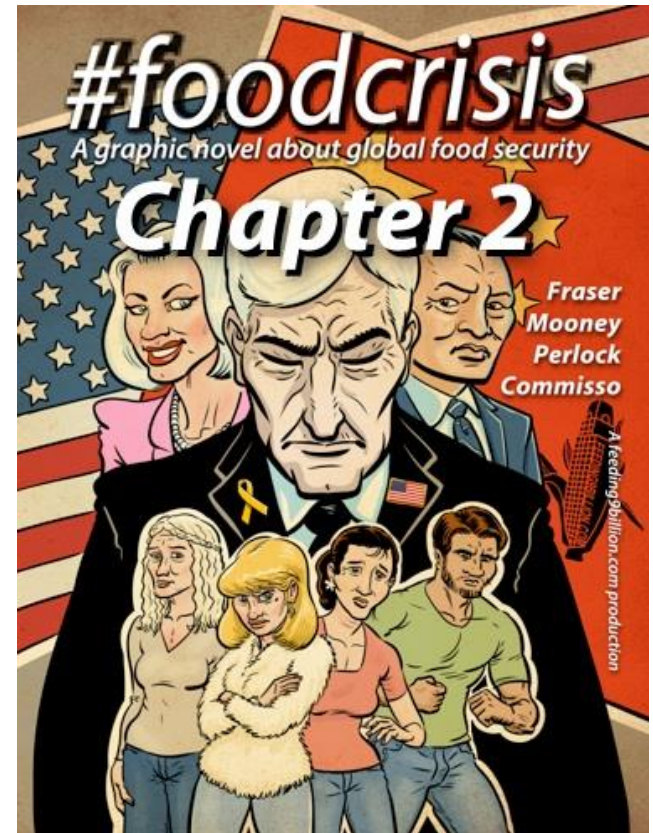
- ***First food regime*** (1870s-1930s) based on colonialism, imperial supply networks and nascent global free trade – collapses beneath concern for *national* food security
- ***Second food regime*** (1940s-1970s) based on nationally regulated and subsidised industrial production and regulated international trade – collapses under geopolitical and economic pressures
- ***Third food regime*** (1980s -) based on neoliberal principles, biotechnological innovation, and privatized and international food governance.

Food Regimes

- The transition from the second to third food regimes weakened the role of the nation state in food governance
- However – normative concepts of the third food regime overestimate the capacity to govern food problems at the global scale
- Food production and consumption is always grounded in particular places
- Globalization involves negotiation between local and non-local actors in particular places

Global Food Security

- Global food security as an expression of the *growth of global consciousness* – awareness of global hunger and interconnection of factors
- Global food security as an example of *globalization as discourse* – constructing something as global legitimises global networks and actions
- The discourse of global food security frames food security as a *global problem* requiring *global solutions*



<https://feedingninebillion.com/>

Global Food Security

Problem: Food production is insufficient to meet the demands of a growing world population

Solution: Scientific and technological advances can improve the efficiency of food production (including GM crops)

Problem: The supply of food between producers and consumers is restricted

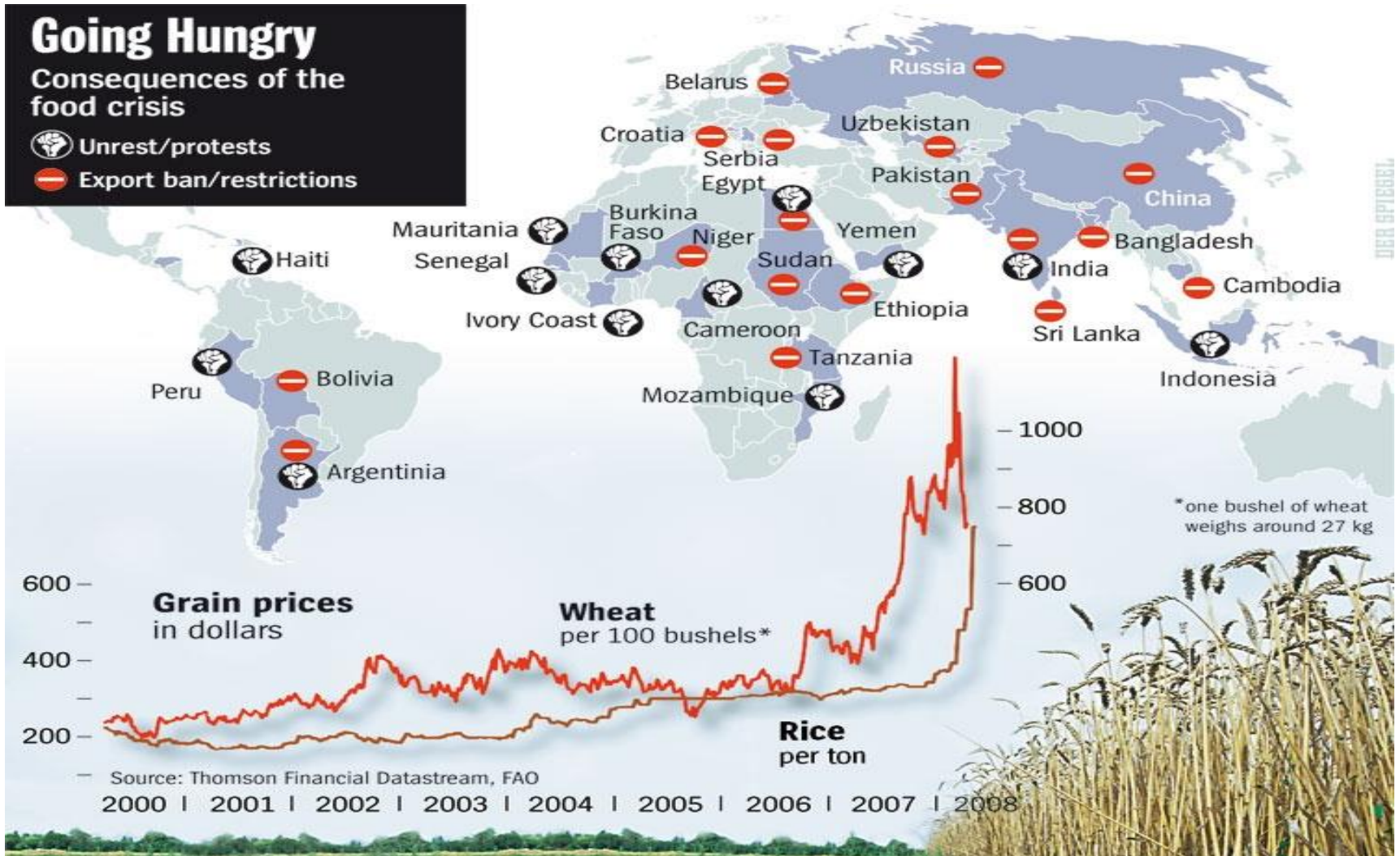
Solution: Global trade liberalization will unblock the supply of food

Problem: Regional food systems are vulnerable to extreme weather and other natural disasters

Solution: Global food systems are more resilient because they allow sourcing of food to be switched



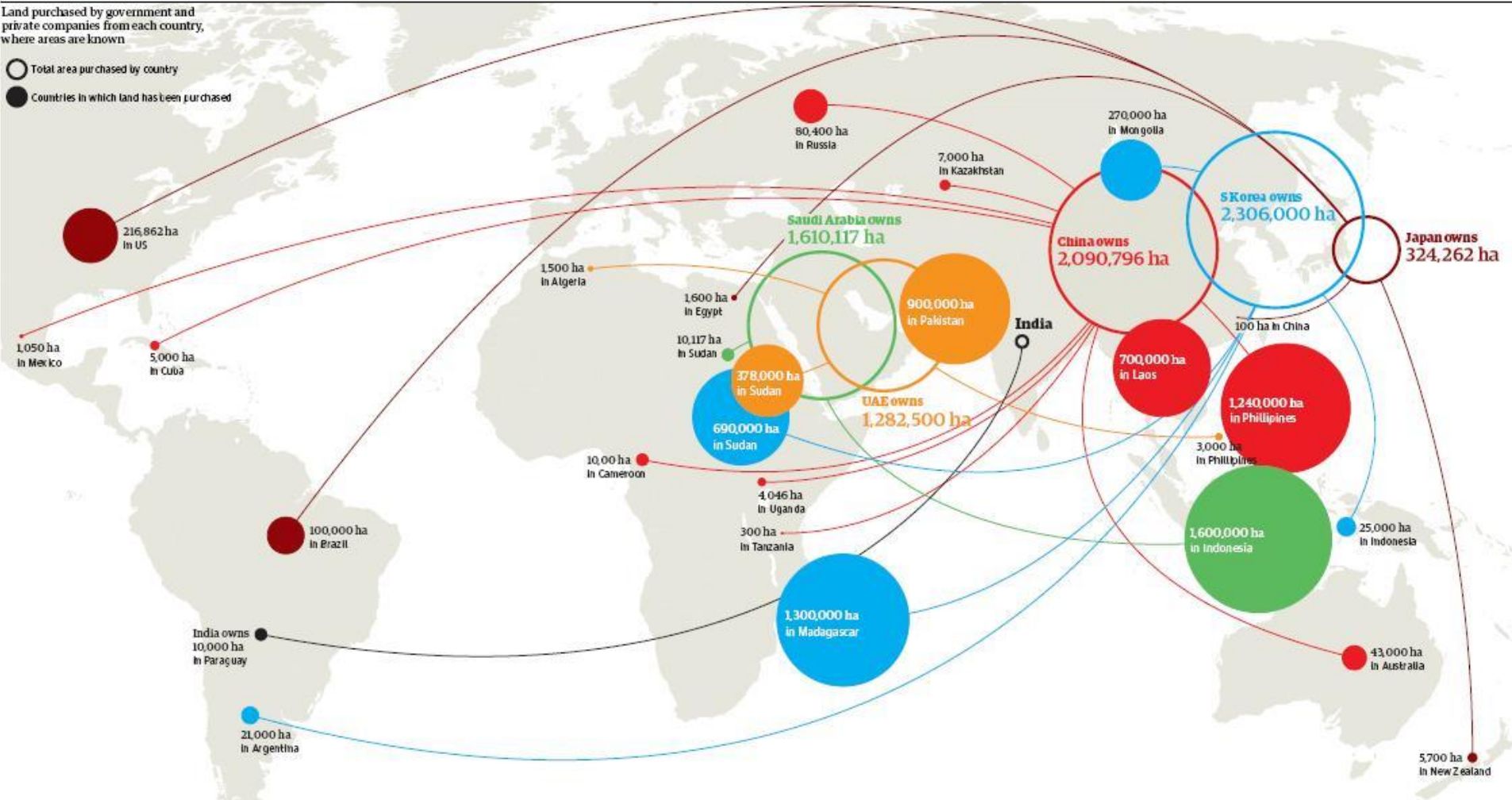
Nation states as unreliable actors....



World land grab

Land purchased by government and private companies from each country, where areas are known

- Total area purchased by country
- Countries in which land has been purchased



International land investments, 2008

From *The Guardian*, 24 November 2008

Russia bans agricultural imports from west in tit-for-tat sanctions move

Kremlin decree restricts EU and American products for up to one year, while acknowledging move may lead to food price rises

Jennifer Rankin

The Guardian, Wednesday 6 August 2014 17.36 BST

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Russia's sanctions threaten both EU farmers and policymakers

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Published: 19/08/2014 - 10:25 | Updated: 19/08/2014 - 14:29



Russia's ban on European food imports creates problems for Russian consumers and European farmers alike. [Shutterstock]

Russia's food import ban has become a big problem for Europe's farmers, and its central bank policymakers. From Polish apples to French pork and Greek peaches, exporters to Russia may either have to slash prices, or destroy their own produce.

As the European Union's second biggest apple producer, Poland has some 700,000 tonnes of the fruit it usually sells to Russia but can't, because Moscow has a food embargo on many EU and US goods as part of tit-for-tat sanctions related to the Ukraine crisis.

On 7 August, Russia banned all meat, fish, dairy, fruit and vegetable

More-than-human Globalization

- Globalization in the agri-food system involves the circulation of seed, plants, animals, technologies etc.
- The transposition and hybridization of seed and livestock enabled the global spread of European food and farming and the globalization of food production
- The global agri-food system involves the international transport of 44 million live cattle, sheep and pigs each year
- The global agri-food system both facilitates and is threatened by the global circulation of pests, parasites, bacteria and pathogens (for both animals and humans)

Food Safety

- The expansion of global food brands plays on a promise of safe, clean, familiar food.
- Quality assured by global standardization and private regulation



Food Safety

- But also exposed by inability to completely control unruly non-human actants and by complexities in global supply chains

McDonald's Japan to Post First Loss in 11 Years After Food Security Scare



By *Jerin Mathew*

October 7, 2014 09:58 BST



The screenshot shows the McDonald's Japan website with several promotional banners. The top banner features the McDonald's logo and a red banner that reads '1個買うと1枚無料券!' (Buy 1 item, get 1 free coupon!). Below this, there's a promotion for 'チキンマックナゲット 5ピース' (Chicken McNuggets 5 pieces) with a price tag of 8/26 or 9/1. Another banner shows a '月見バーガー' (Moon-view Burger) with a sesame seed bun. At the bottom, there are smaller banners for 'マックフロート' (McFlurry), '朝マック チキンエッグマフィン' (Morning Mac Chicken Egg Muffin), and '今週もおトクなクーポン配信中!' (This week, we are distributing coupons!).

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/mcdonalds-japan-post-first-loss-11-years-after-food-security-scare-1468825>

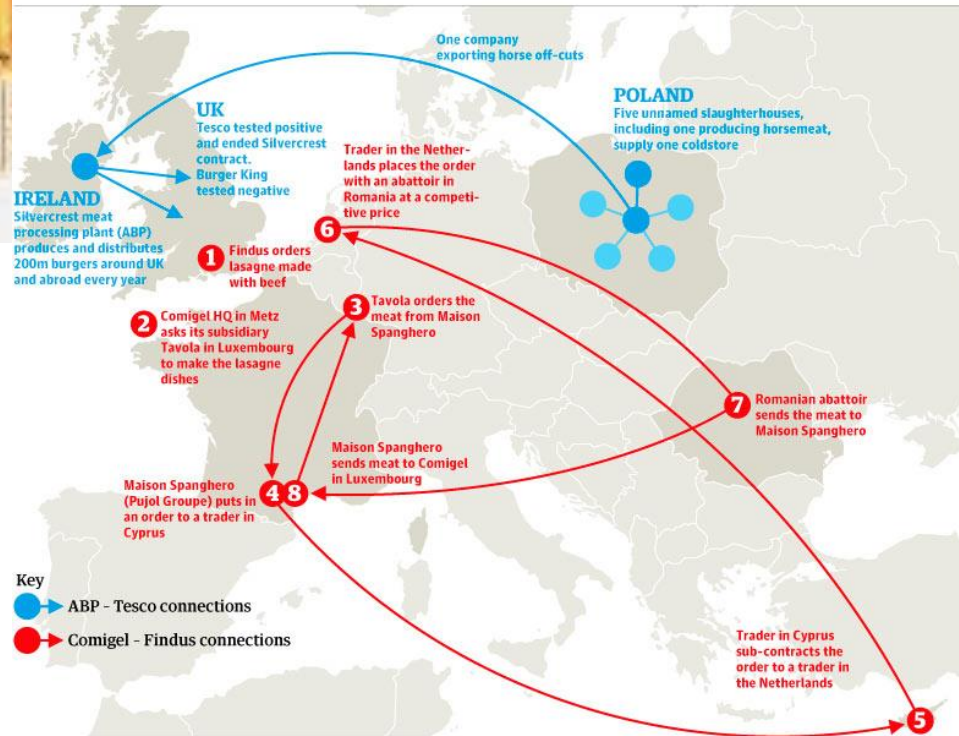
So hungry you could eat a horse?

Tesco got it covered.



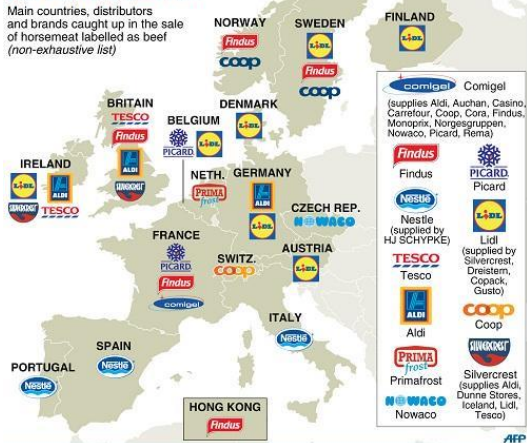
European horsemeat passed as beef 'scandal', 2012

Britain's horsemeat The ABP and Comigel connections



Horsemeat scandal

Main countries, distributors and brands caught up in the sale of horsemeat labelled as beef (non-exhaustive list)





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Little Donkey Farm, Beijing



More-than-human Globalization

“Having already come to dominate livestock production in much of the industrial north, factory farming has also begun growing quickly in significant parts of Asia (namely China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam) and Latin America (especially Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico), with China now the world’s largest volume producer of animals and home to half the world’s pigs.”

Weis (2007) *The Global Food Economy*, p 20

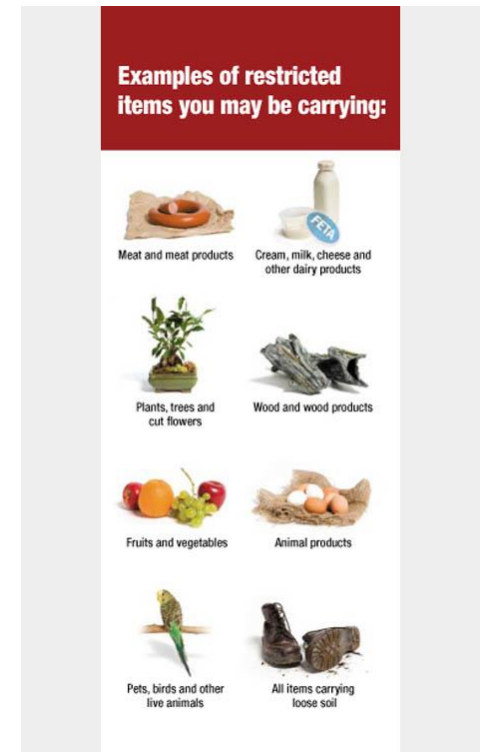
More-than-human Globalization

- Globalization and concentration of production contributing to the risk of animal and human pandemics:

“A crucial requirement of the modern chicken industry, for example, is ‘production density,’ the compact location of broiler farms around a large processing plant. As a result, there are now regions in North America, Brazil, western Europe and South Asia with chicken populations in the hundreds of millions – in western Arkansas and northern Georgia, for example, more than 1 billion chickens are slaughtered annually. Similarly, the raising of swine is increasingly centralized in huge operations, often adjacent to poultry farms and migratory bird habitats. The superurbanization of the human population, in other words, has been paralleled by an equally dense urbanization of its meat supply ... Might not one of these artificial Guangdongs be a pandemic crucible as well? Could production density become a synonym for viral density?” (Davis, 2005, *The Monster at Our Door*, p 84).

More-than-human Globalization

- Paradox of globalization in the agri-food system
- Erasure of borders to allow the free flow of commodities accompanied by erection of new biosecurity controls
- Biosecurity can trump free trade (e.g. bans on export of British beef after BSE crisis)
- Biosecurity concerns used as an argument against free trade



Towards an Assemblage Approach

- Complexity of food politics in a globalized era
- International food governance and private regulation challenged by local resistance and compromised by the unruliness of non-human actants
- Understanding how globalization is reproduced through the hybrid engagement of local and non-local, human and non-human actants
- Understanding how agri-food globalization is grounded in particular places and especially rural places in the emergent global countryside

Towards an Assemblage Approach

- Assemblage theory fashionable in human geography, but in different variants
- Assemblage as a methodology, derived from Deleuze & Guattari, De Landa and actor-network theory
- Following De Landa's (2006) model:
 - Comprised by human & non-human and material & expressive components
 - Defined by exterior relations
 - Given shape by territorialization
 - Made legible by coding

Towards an Assemblage Approach

- Assemblages are dynamic and constantly changing
“this can only ever be a provisional process: relations may change, new elements may enter, alliances may be broken, new conjunctions may be fostered” (Anderson and McFarlane, 2011, in *Area*, p 126)
- Assemblages are open to the defection of components
“a component part of an assemblage may be detached from it and plugged into a different assemblage in which its interactions are different” (De Landa, *A New Philosophy of Society*, p 10)

Towards an Assemblage Approach

- Agri-food networks, TNCs etc as trans-local assemblages
 - Material components: Food commodities, inputs, capital, technologies, transport, packaging, waste, buildings etc
 - Expressive components: Taste, colour, smell, symbolic meaning
 - Coding: Advertising, marketing, corporate branding, health claims, anti-corporate messages
 - Exterior relations: Production, consumption, trading, politics
 - Territorialization: Corporate structures, geographical locations and relations of production and consumption

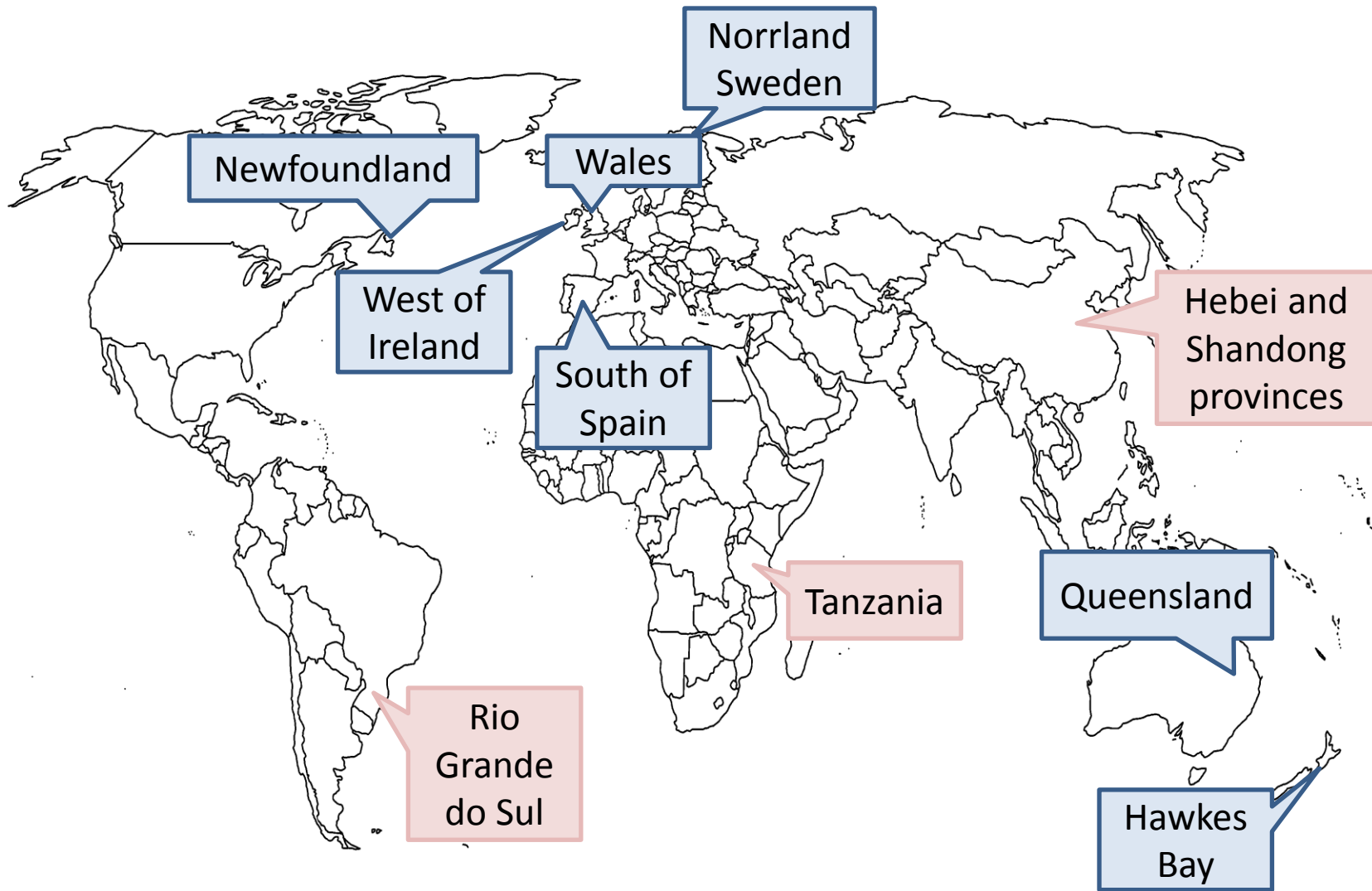
Towards an Assemblage Approach

- Interaction with rural and urban places as assemblages:
 - Globalization reconfigures the exterior relations of place-assemblages
 - Enrolment of components produced in place into trans-local networks coded as commodities
 - Substitution of endogenous components in place by new external materials
 - New patterns of territorialization create vulnerabilities to distant events
 - Micro-politics of agri-food globalization



Towards an Assemblage Approach

- Agri-food globalization involves the continual production and reproduction of assemblages with components introduced and removed, meanings re-coded, and territorialities reconfigured
- Global agri-food assemblages are dynamic and unstable and vulnerable to the capture of components by alternative assemblages
- Rural places as assemblages are changed by their interaction with global agri-food assemblages
- Agri-food globalization has a direct impact on the economic and social structures, environment and landscapes of rural localities ('the emergent global countryside')



GLOBAL-RURAL project

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