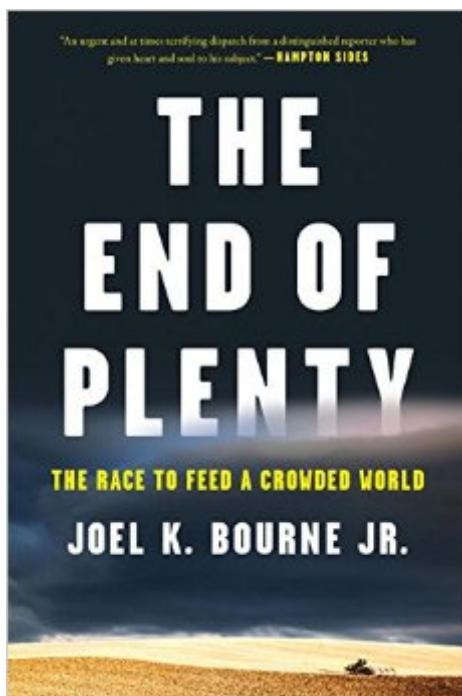


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The End Of Plenty: The Race To Feed A Crowded World



Synopsis

An urgent and at times terrifying dispatch from a distinguished reporter who has given heart and soul to his subject. • Hampton Sides When the demographer Robert Malthus (1766–1834) famously outlined the brutal relationship between food and population, he never imagined the success of modern scientific agriculture. In the mid-twentieth century, an unprecedented agricultural advancement known as the Green Revolution brought hybrid seeds, chemical fertilizers, and improved irrigation that drove the greatest population boom in history • but left ecological devastation in its wake. In *The End of Plenty*, award-winning environmental journalist Joel K. Bourne Jr. puts our race to feed the world in dramatic perspective. With a skyrocketing world population and tightening global grain supplies spurring riots and revolutions, humanity must produce as much food in the next four decades as it has since the beginning of civilization to avoid a Malthusian catastrophe. Yet climate change could render half our farmland useless by century's end. Writing with an agronomist's eye for practical solutions and a journalist's keen sense of character, detail, and the natural world, Bourne takes readers from his family farm to international agricultural hotspots to introduce the new generation of farmers and scientists engaged in the greatest challenge humanity has ever faced. He discovers young, corporate cowboys trying to revive Ukraine as Europe's breadbasket, a Canadian aquaculturist channeling ancient Chinese traditions, the visionary behind the world's largest organic sugar-cane plantation, and many other extraordinary individuals struggling to increase food supplies • quickly and sustainably • as droughts, floods, and heat waves hammer crops around the globe. Part history, part reportage and advocacy, *The End of Plenty* is a panoramic account of the future of food, and a clarion call for anyone concerned about our planet and its people. 14 photographs

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Nothing is more precious than balance, stability, and sustainability. Today, we're hanging by our fingernails to a skyrocket of intense insane change, and it's the only way of life we've ever known. Joel Bourne has spent his life riding the rocket. He grew up on a farm, and studied agronomy at college, but sharp changes were causing many farmers to go bankrupt. Taking over the family farm would have been extremely risky, so he became a writer for farm magazines. Later, he was hired by National Geographic, where he has spent most of his career. In 2008, he was assigned to cover the global food crisis, and this project hurled him into full awareness of the big picture. The Green Revolution caused food production to skyrocket, and world population doubled in just 40 years. Then, the revolution fizzled out, whilst population continued to soar. Demographers have told us to expect another two or three billion for dinner in 2050. Obviously, this had the makings of an excellent book, so Bourne sat down and wrote *The End of Plenty*. The subtitle of his book is "The Race to Feed a Crowded World," not "The Race to Tackle Overpopulation." A growing population thrills the greed community, and a diminishing herd does not. Overpopulation is a problem that can be solved, and will be, either by enlightened self-restraint, by compulsory restraint, or, most likely, by the vigorous housekeeping of Big Mama Nature. Feeding the current population is thrashing the planet, and feeding even more will worsen everything, but this is our primary objective. We are, after all, civilized people, and enlightened self-restraint is for primitive savages who live sustainably in roadless paradises. As incomes rise, the newly affluent are enjoying a more luxurious diet.

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