



New Podcast Episodes:

Shedding Light on Slow Food's Past and Future and a Shining Example of How to Tax Big Food

Greetings!

Flipping the table was in Denver, July 18 – 20, for [Slow Food Nations](#), in order to converse with leaders from the organization hosting the event. The [Slow Food Movement](#) has been a major global force in growing public awareness of the need for food system change.



Founded and led by former Italian journalist, [Carlo Petrini](#), Slow Food was born in 1986 to protest McDonald's threat to Italian food producers. Petrini's call to protect food biodiversity and food cultures quickly caught on globally. By the mid 1990s, American foodies who travelled to Italy and experienced Slow Food events or restaurants touting movement values began to form Slow Food chapters in the US. [Slow Food USA](#), the affiliated nonprofit structure behind Slow Food Nations, became active in 1998. The US membership peaked in 2009, with 125,000 members in nearly 200 chapters.

Today, the Slow Food movement links one million people globally with its greatest momentum in Europe, Africa, Latin America and China. Recently, Slow Food has been calling for "joy and justice." This phrase connects its first principle, that food must bring pleasure, to the need to combat the nativism, racism and oppression that have become rampant globally. Its original slogan, "good, clean and fair," which names the core principles that should guide



food production, remains a defining meme for the movement's members. Slow Food is most well-known and respected for its biannual [Terra Madre](#) – Salone del Gusto event in Turin, Italy. Over four days, 5000 small producers from food communities around the world convene to share food, knowledge and hope with one another and with hundreds of chefs and thousands Slow Food members and allies from every continent. Tens of thousands of paying visitors from all over the world come at the same time to the giant tasting halls of [Salone del Gusto](#) to sample and buy high quality products.

Paolo Di Croce with John Kiwagalo, a Ugandan Slow Food leader.



Two California chefs came for the Chef's Summit. [Patrick Mulvaney](#) was also among the CA delegation. Here [Juan Barajas](#) (Woodland) and [Anthony Myint](#) (San Francisco) sharing a moment.



Our Denver trip generated five podcasts, with a 6th to drop a week from today in one of Michael's brief commentaries. Here is a breakdown of what we brought back. Episodes [#36](#) and [#37](#) are brief reports that will give you a feel for the event itself during its first two days. [Episode #38](#) is a deep conversation with the movement's new global leader, [Paolo Di Croce](#), who has been the primary organizer of international activity for 15 years. He has deep insight into the past and future and is an engaging evangelist for the movement. [Episode #40](#) is a conversation with two local leaders, Jennifer Breckner of Chicago and Marissa La Brecque (a ROC Fellow in 2007) of Petaluma. They bring to life the joys and frustrations of chapter leadership. Their enthusiasm is infectious and their perspectives on what Slow Food USA needs now are informative.

Finally, [episode #41](#) is not about Slow Food, but about the action of one of the Slow Food leaders who presented at Slow Food Nations. Slow Food has long supported and highlighted Native American projects that increase food sovereignty as a means to heal from the epidemic of diet-related diseases, revitalize native traditions and save endangered foods. [Denisa Livingston](#), a Diné leader from the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico and Arizona, shares an inspiring story. She and her nation are [the first people of the US to tax junk food](#), including sugary beverages. Many good things are happening as a result. This podcast should fill the hearts of those around the US fighting to tax sugary drinks. Native and African Americans were front and center at Slow Food Nations this year and their knowledge and words underlined Slow Food's commitment to spreading joy and justice.



[Denisa Livingston](#), a Diné leader from the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico and Arizona



Some Background on ROC's Link to Slow Food



Kids having fun at City Hall Victory Garden planting event in July 2008.



Then Mayor Gavin Newsom and Jennifer Siebel planting the City Hall Victory Garden with Alice Waters in July 2008, in preparation for the first Slow Food Nation event.

Before joining ROC in 2006, Michael Dimock had been a member of Slow Food for ten years. He founded one of the nation's most active and successful chapters, [Russian River](#), back in the late 1990s, was chair of Slow Food USA from 2002 to 2006 and served on the Slow Food International board from 2002 to 2007. With such a strong connection, ROC naturally became an ally. The ROC team wrote the USDA grant that launched the [Save the Gravenstein Apple Project](#) that has subsequently helped bring back Sonoma County's most [famous and distinctive apple](#). ROC played a significant role in the planning, promotion and implementation of the 2008 Slow Food Nation event in San Francisco, including development and delivery of the [Declaration of Healthy Food and Agriculture](#), the event's primary policy statement and the foundation of all ROC's subsequent policy work. Those few days in September 2008 put the food movement into the [front pages of the New York Times](#). As Naomi Starkman, founder of Civil Eats, confirmed in our [January 29th episode](#), the event generated millions of media impressions, which forever changed coverage of food system issues. It is Michael's link to Slow Food's history and values that moved Flipping the Table to travel to Denver to take the pulse of the Slow Food movement.

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Thank you!



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