Greetings!

Work to change the food system here in the US began in the 1960s, most notably with a small circle of visionary hippie farmers moving to organic production, the Black Panthers developing the Free Breakfast for School Children programs and the United Farm Workers fighting for those toiling in the fields. By the 1980s a natural foods industry began to grow, as did the Chez Panisse-spawned farm to table concept along with the Slow Food Movement. All three of which provided a way for mainstream consumers and small farmers to align. The mid 1990s saw the rise of a second and larger wave of changemakers dedicated to fixing the broken food system. Within a decade this wave had grown quite large with a third surge of activists, rural and urban food producers, writers, nonprofits and a notable coalition of philanthropies focusing on the challenge. This expansion was punctuated by the 2008 Slow Food Nation event in San Francisco where 80,000 people gathered to celebrate a vision for a new way to feed the nation and world.

With each wave, new leaders have taken up the mantel and found a way to build more energy for change. Today we feature the first in a series of conversations with second, third and fourth-wave leaders who are now on the forefront of the more expansive organizing and advocacy needed to reshape food and farming in ways that support the future.

Navina Khanna, the director of the HEAL Food Alliance, is one such leader, with a creative and determined vision based on collaboration that reaches from coast to coast, north and south. We think you’ll be as inspired as we are by her journey and work.

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A Stunning New Film

This week, The Biggest Little Farm, a stunning new film hits theaters. We encourage you to see it. With amazing cinematography, inspired commentary and compelling human, animal and plant characters, the film tracks the difficult, but necessary task of creating a regenerative agriculture.

If you live in Los Angeles, this Friday night, May 10th, following a screening of the film, ROC’s own Michael R. Dimock will converse with the filmmaker, John Chester, at the Landmark Theater. Tickets are still available. Their conversation will be taped for podcast at a later date.

Brief Commentaries

Don’t miss Michael’s brief commentaries on healthy food and farming and the food movement.

If you are not into podcasts, blog versions of Michael’s briefs are available here.

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Thank you!

Patrick Sexton