

CREATORS OF **QUEEN OF THE SUN** & **THE REAL DIRT ON FARMER JOHN**



viral
promoters

patent
no. 5767

chemical
coating

SEED

THE UNTOLD STORY

Which future will you grow?

COLLECTIVE EYE FILMS PRESENTS SEED: THE UNTOLD STORY IN ASSOCIATION WITH SENECA FALLS PICTURE COMPANY
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY TAGGART SIEGEL ORIGINAL MUSIC BY GARTH STEVENSON BENJY WERTHEIMER GAEA OMIZA RIVER
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER PHIL FAIRCLOUGH MARC TURTLETAUB DIRECTED PRODUCED AND EDITED BY TAGGART SIEGEL JON BETZ

SEEDTHEMOVIE.COM



A Collective Eye Films Production

www.collectiveeye.org

Directed and Produced by Taggart Siegel & Jon Betz
In Association with Seneca Falls Picture Company
Executive Produced by Marisa Tomei, Marc Turtletaub,
Phil Fairclough
Runtime: 94 Minutes | HD, Color

Official Website: www.seedthemovie.com

Theatrical Distributor & Press

Collective Eye Films
seedproject@collectiveeye.org
press@collectiveeye.org
+1 503.232.5345

World Sales

Cargo Films & Releasing
David Piperni
dpiperni@cargofilm-releasing.com
+1 212.995.8139

AWARDS:

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD
Sheffield Doc/Fest
GREEN PLANET AWARD
Rhode Island FF
BEST DOCUMENTARY
Nashville Film Festival
BEST IN FESTIVAL
Princeton Environmental
AUDIENCE AWARD
American Conservation Festival

OFFICIAL SELECTION
IDFA - Best of Fests
BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY
UN Film Festival
ECOHERO AWARD
Portland EcoFilm Festival
AUDIENCE AWARD
Lunenburg Doc Fest
BEST FEATURE FILM
Tutti Nello Stesso Piatto

AUDIENCE AWARD
San Diego Film Festival
HONORABLE MENTION
Cine Eco Portugal
BEST ENVIRONMENTAL FILM
Et Cultura Festival
BEST DOCUMENTARY
Lunenburg Doc Fest



SYNOPSIS

Few things on Earth are as miraculous and vital as seeds. Worshipped and treasured since the dawn of humankind. SEED: The Untold Story follows passionate seed keepers protecting our 12,000 year-old food legacy. In the last century, 94% of our seed varieties have disappeared. As biotech chemical companies control the majority of our seeds, farmers, scientists, lawyers, and indigenous seed keepers fight a David and Goliath battle to defend the future of our food. In a harrowing and heartening story, these reluctant heroes rekindle a lost connection to our most treasured resource and revive a culture connected to seeds. SEED features Vandana Shiva, Dr. Jane Goodall, Andrew Kimbrell, Winona Laduke and Raj Patel.

LOGLINE

As many irreplaceable seeds near extinction, SEED reveals the harrowing and heartening story of passionate seed keepers as they wage a David and Goliath battle against chemical seed companies, defending a 12,000 year food legacy.

Theatrical Trailer | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b7fjRZQJXmc>



Stills for Press | <http://bit.ly/2aI7ukw>



Social Media



@seed_themovie



facebook.com/seedtheuntoldstory

FILM DIRECTORS



TAGGART SIEGEL | Director/Producer

Taggart Siegel has produced and directed Emmy-nominated, award-winning documentaries including *QUEEN OF THE SUN: What are the Bees Telling Us?* and *THE REAL DIRT ON FARMER JOHN* (ITVS, Independent Lens). These films received critical-acclaim during their theatrical release and garnered over 40 international awards. Siegel is a Fledgling Outreach and Engagement Lab Fellow and was selected to pitch at Britdoc's GOODPITCH for *SEED: The Untold Story*. His previous PBS films include: *SPLIT HORN*, (ITVS, Independent Lens), *BETWEEN TWO WORLDS*, *BLUE COLLAR AND BUDDHA* and *HEART BROKEN IN HALF*. Collectively, they capture the struggle of refugees and immigrants in America. He produced the National Geographic film *DISENCHANTED FOREST* about orangutans in Borneo and was the director of *SHADOW OF A PEPPER TREE*. Taggart is the founder and Executive Director of Collective Eye Films, a non-profit media production and distribution organization based in Portland, Oregon.



JON BETZ | Director/Producer

Jon Betz is an emmy-nominated, award-winning independent documentary filmmaker. He is the co-director and co-producer of *SEED: The Untold Story* and the producer and editor for *QUEEN OF THE SUN: What Are the Bees Telling Us?* (2010). *QUEEN OF THE SUN* was critically-acclaimed during its U.S. theatrical release and heralded by The New York Times as "Revelatory! A Critic's Pick" His previous film, *MEMORIZE YOU SAW IT* (2008) journals his experience as an aid worker living with former-child soldiers in Eastern Uganda. Betz is a Fledgling Outreach and Engagement and Lab Fellow, a Britdoc's GOODPITCH alumni and a graduate from Rhode Island School of Design. He is the director of Collective Eye Films, a non-profit media production and distribution organization based in Portland, Oregon.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS



MARISA TOMEI | EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Marisa Tomei is an Academy-Award winning American stage, film, and television actress and founder of Seneca Falls Picture Company. She came to prominence in 1992 with *MY COUSIN VINNY*, for which she won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress. She received Academy Award nominations for her performances in *IN THE BEDROOM* and *THE WRESTLER*. Tomei is actively dedicated to humanitarian causes including VDay, a global event to raise awareness about violence against women and girls. Tomei hosted "reclaim REAL food" to bring attention to the importance of labeling our food.



MARC TURTLETAUB | EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Marc Turteltaub has served as a producer on numerous independent films including the Academy Award-winning *LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE*. Recent releases include Sam Mendes' *AWAY WE GO*, starring Maya Rudolph and John Krasinski, Christine Jeffs' *SUNSHINE CLEANING* starring Amy Adams and Emily Blunt and John Crowley's *IS ANYBODY THERE?* starring Michael Caine. Turteltaub has also produced Liev Schrieber's *EVERYTHING IS ILLUMINATED*. Other producing credits include *JACK GOES BOATING*, *LAWS OF ATTRACTION*, *THE HONEYMOONERS*, and a documentary called *LUCKY* by Jeffrey Blitz.



PHIL FAIRCLOUGH | EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Phil Fairclough was intimately involved as executive producer and producer on several of Werner Herzog's documentaries including the acclaimed *GRIZZLY MAN*, the Oscar nominated *ENCOUNTERS AT THE END OF THE WORLD* and *CAVE OF FORGOTTEN DREAMS*.

Phil was a network executive at Discovery Channel, EVP of Development and Production for NHNZ. Before working at Discovery, Phil held senior positions at the BBC and ITV – and had extensive production experience in the UK, including the acclaimed BBC Natural History Unit where he was an executive producer and head of the commercial production unit.



DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

For years, we have passionately made films that reveal our deep connection to nature and our food. *The Real Dirt on Farmer John* (2005), tells the story of a maverick farmer who saves his family farm against all odds. *Queen of the Sun: What Are the Bees Telling Us?* (2010) investigates the mysterious colony collapse disorder ravaging honeybees around the world.

Our latest film, *SEED: The Untold Story* began with an article in *National Geographic* reported that up to 96% of the vegetable seeds available in 1903 have disappeared. Within moments we knew that was our next film. The speed and scope of this loss is staggering, and its implications for our future are stark. As the renowned naturalist and author Gary Paul Nabhan puts it, "Many of our seeds today are as endangered as a panda or polar bear." In an era of climate uncertainty, this dearth of diversity is a recipe for catastrophic crop failure and human suffering—not unlike The Great Famine of Ireland that saw the starvation of nearly a million people when their sole crop variety, a potato, was wiped out by blight. *SEED* explores a topic that is still largely unknown, yet it is increasingly urgent with climate change and the consolidation and control of the seed industry.

SEED completes a trilogy of films that uncovers the invisible connections between our food and the natural world. As we filmed seed savers, farmers, scientists and indigenous communities for *SEED*, we were struck by how little their voices are heard. *SEED* presents audiences with a hidden fabric of our food, the people that painstakingly and meticulously curate the diversity of our food. The film charts a David and Goliath battle as these marginalized people fight the large corporate power of chemical companies that now control the majority of our food.

ABOUT THE FILM

Few things on Earth are as miraculous and vital as seeds. Worshipped and treasured since the dawn of humankind, these subtle flecks of life are the source of all existence. Like tiny time capsules, they contain the songs, sustenance, memories, and medicines of entire cultures. They feed us, clothe us, and provide the raw materials for our everyday lives. In a very real sense, they are life itself.

Yet in our modern world, these precious gifts of nature are in grave danger. In less than a century of industrial agriculture, our once abundant seed diversity—painstakingly created by ancient farmers and gardeners over countless millennia—has been drastically winnowed down to a handful of mass-produced varieties. Under the spell of industrial “progress” and a lust for profit, our quaint family farmsteads have given way to mechanized agribusinesses sowing genetically identical crops on a monstrous scale. Recent news headlines suggest that Irish history may already be repeating in our globalized food system. Articles in the New York Times and other mainstream sources report the impending collapse of the world’s supplies of bananas, oranges, coffee and coconuts—all due to a shortsighted over-reliance on a single, fragile variety. Without seed diversity, crop diseases rise and empires fall.

More than a cautionary tale of “man against nature,” the remarkable story of seeds is an epic “good-versus-evil” saga playing out in our modern lives. For eons, cultures around the world have believed seeds to be our birthright: a covenant with the earth shared by all and passed down across generations. But today, our seeds are increasingly private property held in corporate hands. A cadre of ten agrichemical companies (including Syngenta, Bayer, and Monsanto) now controls more than two-thirds of the global seed market, reaping unprecedented profits. Genetically modified crops (GMOs) engineered in their sterile laboratories dominate farmers’ fields and dinner tables in the United States and countries around the world.

Farmers from Minnesota to Madhya Pradesh, India toil in economic thrall to the “Gene Giants,” paying hefty licensing fees to plant their patented crops. If they attempt to save their own seed at the end of a season, following a tradition practiced by humans for over 12,000 years, they face ruthless prosecution. (Suffering under this indentured servitude, over 250,000 farmers in India have committed suicide in the last 20 years.)

People everywhere are waking up to the vital importance of seeds for our future. In recent months, March Against Monsanto protests have rallied millions in more than 400 cities and 50 countries to the cause of seed freedom. Ballot initiatives to label genetically modified foods have been proposed in U.S. cities from California to Connecticut—a direct threat to the profits of the Gene Giants and their Big Food cronies. Seed libraries, community gardens, and a new generation of passionate young farmers are cropping up to shift the balance toward a more sustainable and sovereign seed paradigm. A David and Goliath battle is underway, and the stakes couldn't be higher.

The story of our seeds is a defining story of our time. Caught between the runaway juggernaut of industrial agriculture and the ecological, cultural, and spiritual destruction in its wake, seeds offer us a profound chance to restore mutual harmony between people and planet. They are the eternal promise of an abundant new world waiting to be born. But the time for this redemption is running out. In telling this story, we aim to bring into clear focus the beauty, hope, and magic that seeds represent for humanity at this critical juncture.



PRESS QUOTES

"The most essential, illuminating and enraging film since *Food, Inc.* "

-NYC Movie Guru

"This is a gorgeously made film, put together with as much care as it's subjects devote to saving the remaining varieties of seeds."

-L.A. Times

"A rare documentary from filmmakers who are not just capable but also in love with their craft. It's a wonder of photography, animation, and sound, and it's a testament to its editors that the many interviews with activists and scientists are compelling and informative, sometimes even poetic."

-Village Voice

"The frightening beauty of *Seed* is the clarity with which it defines the mission of seed-savers -- maintaining agricultural diversity for future generations, whatever the world they inherit; it's bluntly persuasive."

-Film Journal International

"A boldly creative and ethically robust documentary about protecting the food supply."

-Spirituality and Practice

"An eco-doc centered on the glories of diversity in the world's population of edible plants, *SEED: The Untold Story* contains just enough gourmet touches to draw foodies into the audience alongside the usual environmentalist crowd."

-Hollywood Reporter

"A superb documentary...visually stunning...A model of scientific insight, story-telling and cinematic panache that reminds us that the future of life under capitalism is guarded at best."

-rec.arts.movie.reviews

"A visual song. Betz and Siegel take things that most people see as mundane...and make them sensuous, dazzling and stunning. It's hard to make an imperfect thing that has come from the ground look as precious as the rarest of gems, but that's what this film does."

-Leah's Movie Low Down

"Pure art, glowing and smoldering with fecund life."

-Motif, Rhode Island Weekly

"A beautiful piece of art, careful, deeply colored, and poetic..."

-Hollywood Report Card

"A symphony of hope."

-Anchorage Press

"You owe it to yourself to see this film."

-Whole Life Times

"Chronicles the disappearance of something that's absolutely elemental to human existence...Portland filmmakers Jon Betz and Taggart Siegel deliver a wake-up call."

-Georgia Straight

"Offers wide appeal. These are darn sexy cucumbers and artichokes. The history of the world is formed by these humble tubers and corns..."

-Ink 9

"Ambitious...a triumph...enhanced by a diversity that mirrors the film's central message: that maintaining diversity in our seed stocks is crucial to our survival. This special film brings a revival of consciousness around seeds."

-DINA Magazine

"A call to action to tackle the increasingly worrying lack of diversity in our crops."

-Backseat Mafia

"This film stands out as one of the most important films to screen at this year's [Sheffield Documentary] Festival. The film is elegantly structured... a delicate balance between doom and gloom and hope for the future. With compelling storytelling and illuminating the passion and solid scientific evidence behind the argument presented in the film. Highly recommended."

-Kino-Eye

"A call to arms about the need for seed diversity... Takes audiences on a gorgeously filmed and creatively animated adventure...seen through the eyes of a colorful cast of characters."

-Sun Valley Mountain Express

"This film takes what might seem like mundane subject matter and turns it into a political and social issue chock-full of characters who could be pulled from a Robinson Crusoe adventure book...a film that offers exquisite surprises."

-Missoulian Independent

"A brilliantly filmed, scripted and directed documentary that we all should probably view. The frank testimonial approach used in this film tells a very compelling story..."

-Theater Bytes

A Collective Eye Films Production



Collective Eye Films

unearthing stories to make a difference

www.collectiveeye.org

Seed is supported by

