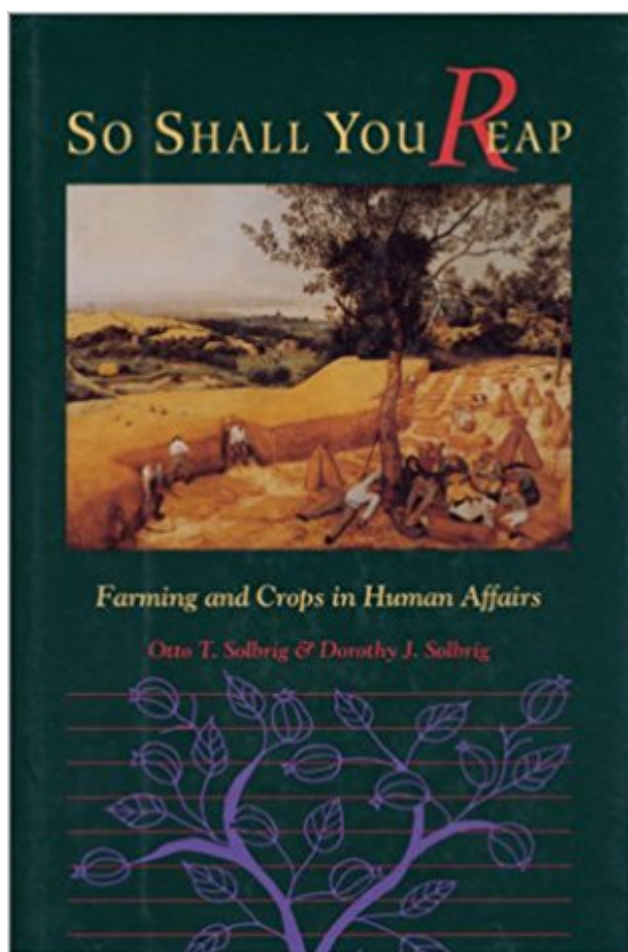




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So Shall You Reap: Farming And Crops In Human Affairs (A Shearwater Book)



Synopsis

So Shall You Reap is a broad-gauged exploration of the intersections of farming and history. Beginning with the prehistorical era, Otto and Dorothy Solbrig describe the evolution of farming. When and how did people learn to irrigate, to fertilize, to rotate their crops -- and why? Along with its fundamental importance to history, farming has radically altered the physical world. Natural landscapes have been completely transformed to provide room for growth on a large scale of a few species of plants and even fewer species of domesticated animals. Agriculture has altered the earth's biosphere and changed its geosphere: The soil has been modified, forests have been felled, swamps have been drained, rivers have been dammed and diverted. So Shall You Reap presents a fresh and informed perspective on how farming and the crops we grow have changed us and our environment. By understanding the nature of the origins and evolution of agriculture, we will be better prepared to anticipate what the future may hold in store, and what must be done to increase food production while minimizing environmental problems.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

How are we going to feed an ever increasing population without destroying the environment? Why did it take almost 3000 years for wheat and barley cultivation to spread from Asia Minor to Greece--a distance of just 200 miles? These are some of the questions addressed in this wide-angled, engrossing survey of the links among farming, food and history. The Solbrigs--he teaches biology at Harvard, she is librarian at Harvard's Biological Laboratories--emphasize the

interdependence of farming and the environment. Their study proceeds from early hunter-gatherers to the development of sedentary agriculture and explores the connections between sugarcane, slavery and exploitation; the spread of coffee, grapes, tobacco, cotton, rubber; and the advent of biotechnology. Full of intriguing facts, this work shows how modern, chemicalized, industrialized agriculture threatens biodiversity, destroys topsoil and forests, and contaminates the food chain. Illustrations not seen by PW. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

The Solbrigs (Otto is a Harvard University biology professor; Dorothy is a librarian in Harvard's Biological Laboratories) take readers on a fascinating journey through time to examine the history and evolution of agriculture and its influence on civilization. Starting with the prehistorical period, they cover the era of the hunter-gatherers, the domestication of plants, the rise of civilization, the spread of agriculture to European societies, the medieval period, the agricultural and industrial revolutions, and today's high-yield market-oriented agriculture. The Solbrigs relate details about the origins of crops and the contacts among societies that changed food consumption and cultivation practices, giving readers a global perspective on the role that each society played in bringing contemporary agriculture to the world community. The authors also discuss the problems faced by modern agriculture and offer some solutions for future sustainability. Recommended for general audiences and informed readers alike.- Irwin Weintraub, Rutgers Univ. Libs., Piscataway, N.J. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

The book looks like new. Almost no sketches and in a great conservation. I'd particularly buy from this one if I need more books in the future.

I usually don't like reading but I had to read this for a super tough class "Humanity in the Food Web" (3 profs taught a class of only 15!) for my undergrad in Food Science. The book is an excellent read on everything about food, domestication, agriculture, industrialization, and humanity. FOR THE FOODIES: While the book doesn't really get that much into the modern trend towards sustainability, organic/natural agriculture, etc., it does achieve its goal of putting whatever your opinions on modern food into proper PERSPECTIVE with regards to what the human race and nature have done.

The authors use an unusual path to approach the domestication of plants and animals. Mankind is the main actor in this historical play.

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