

CONTENTS

Introduction	xi
--------------	----

PART I

THE PRICE OF FOOD

I

The Three Gorges Dam	3
The Rise and Fall of Food Empires, Past, Present, and Future	7
Chapter One. Fairs: The Food Trade	13
The Desert Fathers	16
Work, Pray, Eat	18
The Agricultural Revolution of A.D. 900	20
Fayre Is Fair	22
The Pendulum Swings	28
The Pendulum Swings Back	32
Manure from the Bones	37
Chapter Two. Larders: What Do You Do with Ten Thousand Tons of Grain?	41
National Security and a War on Terror	43
Bread Alone	46

Not by Bread Alone: Oil and Fish	49
Hannibal Lectured	52
A Question of Logistics	57
Grounds for Exhaustion	59
How to Feed an Empire, Cheap	62
The Larder Is Empty	64
Chapter Three. Farms: Growing Food for Profit and Environmental Rapine	69
The Grapes of Wrath	72
God in the Cup	79
The Weak Heart of Today's Food Empire	86

PART II

THE PRICE RISES

91

An Experiment in Survival	93
Chicken Little or a Lot of Chicken?	97
Chapter Four. Water: Irrigation's Questionable Cure	101
Mesopotamia's Fix	104
In Praise of Grain	107
Oriental Despotism	110
Retreat of the Elephants	115
The Yellowing River	118
Water, Water Everywhere?	121
Chapter Five. Dirt: The Chemistry of Life	125
The Story of N	126
In Praise of Phytoplankton	129
Fecal Politics	131
War Empires	136
The Birds of Peru	141

Chapter Six. Ice: Preserve Us	145
How Food Rots and How to Slow It Down	146
It's a Jungle	150
The Industrial Garden State	152
Triumph of the Tomato	156
California Scheming	159
The Orange Juice Quandary	161

PART III

EMPTY POCKETS

165

Storm Clouds	167
Chapter Seven. Blood: The Conquest of Food	173
Rebellion in the Spice Islands	179
Chiapas	183
The Moral Economy of Food	187
The Climate Trigger	193
Chapter Eight. Money: Tea and Famine	197
A Foundation in Pirates	199
Victorian High Tea	203
Her Majesty's Drug Cartel	205
"In America, There Could Be No Famine . . ."	209
The Great Hunger	211
The Food Empires Ahead	214
Chapter Nine. Time: Fair, Organic, and Slow	219
The Meaning of Fairness	222
Greener Pastures	230
The Snail Triumphant	235

Conclusion: The New Gluttony and Tomorrow's Menu 243

Acknowledgments 255

Notes 257

Index 289