

## Abstract

Food regime theory emerged in the 1980s as a tool to delineate the history of the modern food system. Scholars insist that we have arrived at the third and putative corporate food regime that is dominated by a select group of agribusiness corporations. The corporate food regime's ascent to dominance will be presented here as a product of the realization of neoliberal trade policies at the urging of the World Trade Organization. Initially promising development to fledgling countries, the WTO's forays into agriculture have amounted to nothing less than a catastrophe for the Global South. The hope that developing countries would be able to trade their way out of debt has long been abandoned, and the gap between the developed and developing world has only been further exacerbated as a result of trade liberalization. Worse yet, the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture was intentionally littered with loopholes that allow Northern countries to egregiously subsidize crops that are then exported off to Southern markets at artificially low prices, crippling local producers in the process. Through examining import and export flows in the Global South since the trade agreement, this cruel feature of the modern food system will become evident as will the subsequent jump in agribusiness' profits amid the direst of times for Southern farmers.

The role of the WTO cannot be overstated in its enabling of this corporate food regime. As the hopeless Doha Round loiters on without a clear resolution, the world has been left with a food system that has compromised the rights of millions of now landless farmers in the facetious name of development. Driven by the unifying desire to break free of this corporate food regime, the world has seen a swath of protests and movements in recent years to reclaim the food system. Those leading these movements face the unenviable task of squaring off against the immovable trans-national force that has become agribusiness. This is the same agribusiness that enjoys a surprisingly active role in the shaping of influential agricultural policy and were also partly responsible for designing the current food system to begin with. Most farmers have given up on the prospect of a new agreement being reached within the WTO, as they can no longer afford to wait. It remains to be seen whether the Global South's farmers will gain any lasting success from these local movements, or if the corporate food regime is here to stay.