

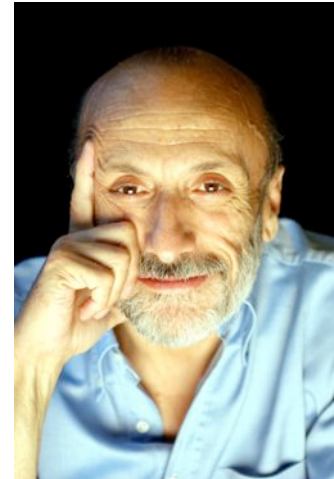
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**TRANSCRIPT**

[Petrini]: It is a great honour and pleasure to be here in this wonderful country. And the main reason why I'm here is to present a new political subject. It is called Terra Madre. Terra Madre is a wonderful network made up of farmers, fishermen, nomads, chefs, young and old people, academics and students at universities, and filmmakers, who really care about a new food culture and safeguarding the environment.

Terra Madre is really deep-rooted in 150 countries all over the world. More than 4000 communities are working to achieve its goals, and since 2004 we have been organising a great meeting which takes place every two years (in Turin, Italy). This is a meeting based on brotherhood, so that people can meet and exchange ideas. In between we work hard to build this network. And we want farmers to meet consumers by organising local Terra Madre events. When I leave Australia tomorrow I will be in Japan where the first 'Terra Madre Japan' is to take place, at which there will be 2000 farmers and fishermen. These are really the people who can help us in this moment of crisis. They are humble people. The word 'humble' derives from a Latin and an old Italian word for 'humus' – 'of the earth' – and we want to support and be close to them.

[Terra Madre film shown <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ys4bLLiZ0TY>]

It was important for you to see these faces (of Terra Madre) because these faces talk by themselves, with their emotions, and through their diversity. It is so important to understand the value of diversity. Diversity is the greatest creative force. This stems passionately from the natural world. But if we destroy the planet's biodiversity we destroy our health.



Now we are experiencing really an incredible and extraordinary paradox. If I use the rules of grammar as an example, the original sequence, which was *subject, verb, object*, has been reversed. Let's try to think about it. We people are the *subject* and we eat food, the *object*. The paradox that we are experiencing now is that food is eating us. Think carefully about it. Food is eating us. Let's try to explain and understand this paradox.

Food production nowadays is principally responsible for the planet's destruction. People think its cause is industry and cars, but 70 per cent of the main cause is the massive production of food. We are losing soil fertility. More than 150 years of chemical use in our land is really transforming it. In the past 10 years in Europe more chemicals have been used than in the total of the previous 140 years. The land is tired, exhausted. Second problem: intensive production 'steals' a lot of water. And water will be the great problem in the future. The main reason for conflicts and wars will be water. Now, in many countries, water is the main cause of wars, rather than oil. And we waste a lot of water. More than 70pc of water is used in agriculture. Think of intensive cattle-raising, something that happens in Europe and in America; and in Italy we produce prosciutto, or ham, so the intensive production of pigs pollutes soil in the first and second level, so it is a great destruction. Third problem, we are losing biodiversity. In the past 100 years we have lost 80pc of the world's biodiversity. So we had this wonderful heritage built up over thousands of years and in 100 years we have destroyed it. Every day we lose five to six species of fruit and vegetables. In Italy, where I come from, we have lost three breeds of milking cow, four breeds of sheep, and two breeds of donkey. The only breed of donkey which keeps on surviving is the one walking on two legs – that one never goes on to extinction. And why are we losing this biodiversity? Because we must produce food in a more intense way, and so the strongest breeds win and survive. The most resistant win. And in this way we lose much of our biodiversity.

In the past, farmers had a wide range of fruits of different species and qualities ripening at different times, and with this system seasons became longer. But if you just want to keep the strongest species or strongest breed then seasons will become shorter. Big food producers and industry actually don't care about this. The important thing for them is to produce more and more.

For example, near Naples in Italy, in the Sorrento peninsula, there was a milk cow called the *agerolese* walking the mountains – in Italian these are called Lattari, or 'the milk mountains' – and this cow produced 12 litres of milk every day. Industry did not want to pay so much to local dairy farmers for this milk. So what did farmers do? Search for another breed which could produce even more milk – the Dutch friesian, which produces 40 litres of milk per day. It is really a milk machine! But the previous breed actually produced milk that was made into a fine kind of cheese. This cheese was part of the local history, dating back to the 1500s. It was *provolone del monaco*. It was consumed everywhere in Naples; everyone was eating this *provolone del monaco*. But it is impossible to make *provolone del monaco* from the friesian breed because it does not produce enough butterfat. So in this case we have not only lost the *agerolese* breed of cows, but also one cheese. This is a loss of biodiversity. Just have a look around and you will realise that it works this way: the (modern) rule is always to produce more. (Industry) is saying that we have to solve the problem of hunger.

Figures from the Food and Agriculture Organisation show that we produce food for 12 billion people. There are 6.3 billion of us on the face of the earth. One billion suffer from malnutrition and hunger, and so more than half of the food we produce is thrown away. It is



crazy, just crazy. In the United States, every day, 20,000 tonnes of food is wasted. In Italy it amounts to 4000 tonnes every day. In Europe it is 50,000 tonnes every day. I do not know the figures for Australia, but I am sure you are wasting a lot of food every day. You also have to transport food from one side of the country to the other. And so to make pizza it will take tomatoes from China. When it's time, peaches come from California. All this food travelling for long distances is producing a lot of carbon dioxide. It's crazy.

Recently, I was going back home to Piedmont and I stopped in a small *osteria*. There is a traditional dish served in this *osteria* called *pepperonata*. I tasted this and there was no taste. So I called over the owner and asked where the peppers came from. He said they came from The Netherlands, grown with hydroculture so you can fit 30 in one box, not more nor less, so they are perfect for the box! He said: 'They last longer than ours and they are also cheaper than ours.' 'Right,' I said, 'well, they're not good.' The man said that in this region they had wonderful peppers, the square pepper from Piedmont, with nice flesh and a good flavour. Farmers were no longer growing this pepper because the Dutch peppers were cheaper. So I asked, 'What do farmers grow now in the greenhouses where they used to grow *pepperoni*?' I was told farmers actually grow tulips there. So we take peppers from The Netherlands to Piedmont and then we send tulips back to Amsterdam! And it's happening here too.

Here you make food travel very long distances. Here you have this crazy logic of making food travel all the way around. We're losing farmers' knowledge. We don't give value to food. And small farmers are disappearing. They are not allowed to 'live'. So big industry and big distribution are those that really rule here. They don't really care about these small producers, those who really preserve and safeguard the land. This type of food production kills the environment, kills farmers, and that is why food is eating us. Because if food production kills the environment, what are we?

We are the environment. Sometimes we feel that we are superior, but after some years we actually go back to earth, all of us, so we *are* the environment. If we are so stupid as to destroy the environment we are destroying ourselves as well. That is why it is very important to reform and build a new paradigm of food. This is the great challenge of the future: a new food policy to safeguard the planet. And it is one that we want to achieve with Terra Madre. This is the kind of commitment that we want. But farmers alone cannot do it. If there isn't a great movement and the support of consumers then farmers are doomed to disappear.

In the 1950s, in Italy, 50pc of the population were farmers. In the United States it was 40pc. Nowadays farmers in Italy amount to less than 4pc of the population and in the United States just 1pc. They don't have any strength anymore. Without a new alliance between producers and consumers we won't be able to win this fight. So, the first role is to change this consumption logic.

I don't like to use the word consumers. We must become 'co-producers'. We are strong and we can bring change and if we all gather and collaborate we can really make this change. We can support farmers' markets. We can defend food and build school gardens. We can create and support communities and work with them. Ask for more information so that we can learn where food comes from and how it is made. This way we'll be able to give value back to food.



Because this is the real problem: everything has become a commodity. There is no longer value, but food is value. Food is so important. We live because we eat. When I was a child at my grandfather's house, if a piece of bread fell on the floor we used to pick it up and kiss it. At that time food had a value. But now food has only a price. And for this price we are destroying everything. We must give value back to food and always think that what we eat becomes ourselves. What we give to feed our children becomes part of our children. And probably you might be criticised by people who think you are well off and that you have money and that you might want to spend more money to buy food. Well, don't listen to them.

Consider that in the 1970s the average European family spent 32pc of their income to buy food. Now they spend less than 12pc on food. Just think. People actually spend 12pc of their income on mobile phones. Well, let's make not so many telephone calls and, please, pay more for the farmers' work and the products that they produce. Because when I eat a piece of ham, after a while it turns to Carlo Petrini. So we need to change the paradigm. Give back value to food. That is why this movement and this fight are so important. That is why it is so important to change gastronomy.

If you switch on the television at any time anywhere in the world you will see someone cooking – be it in Italy, Australia, Africa, France, Austria. Millions of recipes! And recipe books! And magazines, journals! Photographs from above, looking down, as if food were a corpse. And this is a paradox. We have never talked about food so much before and now food is eating us. Yes, recipes and this type of approach are part of gastronomy. It is important. But it is not enough. And it is not something that is said only by Carlo Petrini. Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, one of the fathers of modern gastronomy, said in 1825 that gastronomy is also agriculture and technique, physics and chemistry, anthropology, economics, and political economics. And now we must say that it is also ecology. We need to have a holistic vision of gastronomy. After all, the main deed which gives us life is eating. And in this way, thanks to this act, we give energy to our body every day. That is why it is important to give value back to food.

Wendell Berry, a great writer and poet, is absolutely right when he says that 'eating is the first agricultural act'. But eating is also an act of love, an act to share with other people. It is an act which gives us pleasure. Just think of when we were born. It is very important to understand the relationship between love and pleasure. At birth we leave our mother's womb and we can't yet see with our eyes. We don't hear anything. The first thing that we do is search out our mother's breast. This is our first act. And our mother gives milk to us, her child, and that is the first act of love. But we, the child, suckling the mother's nipples, give her pleasure. So, shame on all those who want to destroy food culture. Shame on all those who want to destroy our cultural passion and our love for food. Shame on all those who think only of business; those who think only of exports to make money. They don't really care about our health, our main need. We need to react. And we must release gastronomy from its frivolous dimension. If we exaggerate with all these recipes without thinking and speaking about all of these other issues, all of this information about food risks becoming a type of food pornography. Instead, if we adopt a more holistic approach to food culture, we can really be the protagonist of change. This is a wonderful moment in history. It is hugely important.



The three crises – of finance, environment and energy – should make us think. What is more important? Money or happiness? What is more important, becoming richer and richer and then not being happy? I know a chef who lives in the mountains who cooks in a wonderful way. She keeps her restaurant open only for lunch and all the journalists went there and asked why she didn't keep it open for dinner in the evening, because in this way more customers would come and she would earn more money. And she replied: 'Because I don't want to be the richest in the graveyard'. And I think, according to the philosophy that is ruling now, we want to be the richest in the graveyard. But when we leave this world we will not have pockets into which we can put our money. Instead, we will be remembered for our acts of love. We will be remembered because we leave fond memories, not for the money we earned.

It is absolutely important that we 'de-industrialise' food, and eradicate this logic of massive production, and to go back to a local economy. With a local economy we can really become the protagonists. With local production, eating local food, and by helping each other – producers and co-producers – we will be able to rebuild that which we have destroyed. In this way we can also rebuild biodiversity, and we'll be remembered because we will have handed over to the next generation this heritage, not because we have destroyed it. If we do not it will be an act of great injustice, because we will not have left future generations the great heritage, the great richness, that we found when we ourselves were born to the world.

Today our approach is not just. We need to change it. We need to consider that it is also a great adventure to go back to a local economy, to have the opportunity to speak to farmers and ask how they produce food, to see kids in school gardens sowing seeds and using compost and watching plants grow to yield food. With these things we can build a new humanism. We need to build a new humanism. And it will start from the land. It will start from the way in which we are able to show the love and the respect that we have for the land.

It is so important to support and favour a local economy. We must go against the violence of massive food production and reveal what has been destroyed by it. I was told that in this country your food distribution is controlled by two big companies. It is not fair. We need to diversify. While those companies have the right to work, small farmers also have the right to exist. So that is why it is necessary to make a distinction to diversify, and you will find out amazing things if you go on this path.

Slow Food in Australia in the next few months will start a fight, and I am asking you to support it, to give a hand, because what we are doing with this fight will change things a little. It is just a small fight. We must allow Australian cheesemakers to make their cheese with raw milk. When you pasteurise milk you deprive it of its soul. There is no difference anymore. Instead, what can you taste with raw milk? You can taste the breed, the grass that the animal ate, if it comes from the mountains, hills or valleys, you can taste the expertise of the cheesemaker, and so it becomes a pleasure. So difference becomes the real strength. And whenever I say these things here people say, 'Well it's the law, you know. And we must safeguard people's health.' Well, the law doesn't defend people's health. It just defends industry. It just defends 'Philadelphia Cheese' and they want all of us to eat 'Philadelphia Cheese'. And so cheesemakers keep on making cheese which is tasteless.



You know, the greatest foolishness that I've found here, and I told it to the Minister of Agriculture and Food in Western Australia, and I said to him, 'I went to a restaurant (in Perth) and at the end of lunch I was offered three types of French cheese, all made with raw milk.' And so I asked 'Are the French and Italian bacteria better than the Australian ones? Is it fair that Australians can pay for French and Italian bacteria and not for Australian ones?' That's not fair for Australian producers. With this issue Slow Food has been able to win in the United States. Now, with 30,000 members in the United States, Slow Food has managed to change a stupid law. And if we can win in the United States we can also win in Australia. From that campaign in the United States we now have cheesemakers in Montana, in California, and in Massachusetts. All over the United States we have a growing army of cheesemakers, and the cheese is excellent. This is the great force of diversity. And the same happened with beer. Up to 20 years ago in the United States there were only two beers, Budweiser and another whose name I don't remember. So you were forced only to drink these two beers. Now they have 4000 micro-breweries. This is the force of diversity.

Let me tell you one thing. In Europe we must defend historical biodiversity. Instead, here in Australia, you must create a new biodiversity. Let the producers create this new biodiversity. Let Australians use their creativity and become the protagonists of the future, as it happened with wine, as must happen with cheese, with beer, with tomatoes, and animal breeds. In this way you can defend your identity. In this way we can defend the future to be handed over to future generations.

Some people might tell you that this is just a utopia, that you're just dreamers, that this is not the real economy, just a marginal economy...well, let's reflect on what they've been able to do with the big economy, and the results!

We must have faith. Let us sow like farmers. Learn to sow utopia, to plant utopia. Those planting utopia will harvest reality. Young people, please, plant utopia, and young people, please, dream, and put to yourselves the question, because the future is yours. But we need to do it all together, producers and co-producers, and the most important thing is to rule the limit. Up to a certain limit is fine, but beyond that, stop. This is the most important thing: to rule or control the limit. To save the planet we must be aware of the limit.

I was in Belgium in a brewery run by Trappist monks. I went to visit it and I saw where the beer was made. It is one of the best beers in the world. The whole world would like to have this beer so everyone goes there and tries to buy this beer. And I said to the monks 'But you have only two machines to make beer, and they both work, right?' And they said 'No, only one is working, because if one breaks down we have the other as a back-up.' And I said, 'But there is great demand for your beer and how can you decide the right amount to make when everyone is wanting it?' And the monk told me, 'We gather all the monks together at the start of the year and make our decisions. The first priority is to pay all the people coming to work in the monastery from outside. The second priority is to pay for food for the monks for the year and for all the maintenance work which is required to preserve the monastery, and then, third, deciding which charity we will support for the year. And we put all these costs together and work out that to pay for these costs we need to make 20,000 bottles of beer. And there is no need to make more, even if we are asked to do that.'

This is a grand marketing idea. The best one. Because this is not greed. The value of beer. The value of donation. The giving of a gift. This is a wonderful philosophy.



I am always asked by journalists to give two pieces of advice. So I tell producers: learn to rule the limit, and we must avoid waste. Stop this waste of thousands of tonnes of food thrown away every day.

So, producers, think that you could make a gift, just like the monks, to your community, to poor people, to school gardens, to the local hospital. A donation can preserve us against waste. Think that we can use it as a way of measuring the things that we're doing. So when we have a bit more demand we will know how to regulate our production. When we have less demand we can increase our donation. So the act of donation becomes useful as a preserve against wastefulness. It is not just an ethical approach. It is an economic rule. And when you use it you really become great people, who, through donation, can change the world.

While all the chefs, chefs, chefs speak and boast through their books and television programmes, they forget all the women in ancient times who were able to produce the greatest dishes in the world in very poor conditions and with few ingredients. The greatest monuments of gastronomy come from women, not chefs. And why women? Because they love, and are still loved.

And my advice to co-producers: let's make the alliance, give a hand to this movement. It is important to do things all together. An African proverb says it all: 'If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.'

That is why I am asking you to unite and become members of Slow Food. Go to Terra Madre. Become volunteer members of associations. Devote some of your time and together you can go far. Alone you can go fast but you can get lost. But your contributions must be supported by a great value: the value of brotherhood.

It is a very important value. You will know the three great values of the French Revolution – liberty, equality and fraternity. Fraternity (brotherhood) is like the poor sister, just like Cinderella. We in the world over generations have said a lot of words about liberty. Great battles have been fought and many people have died for equality. But we have never really considered fraternity, which is the most important of them all. Because fraternity allows us to respect people who have different ideas from ours, people of a different culture, skin, or religion. With fraternity we can respect them. And fraternity helps us to listen to other people. Then with fraternity we also have equality and liberty. That is why Slow Food has called it Terra Madre, because if the earth is our mother then we are all brothers and sisters. And even if we speak different languages we can still understand each other.

Thank you.

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[Joanna Savill]: There are so many questions for us as Australians and for those of us who live in large urban centres. On the big emotional issues Carlo has given us the answers. But what can we do at a practical level to support farmers?



[Petrini]: Certainly, local economy and local agriculture is the great challenge of this century. For the first time, in 2008, the number of townspeople in the world became greater than the number of people in the countryside. So we have to formulate a new relationship between urban areas, towns and countryside. It is important to develop a proximity for agriculture. It is the great challenge that we must meet to allow small farmers to continue to farm. In (United States' President Barack) Obama's plan another 300,000 farms will be created (in the United States), which means, obviously, that politicians are very important. In 2015 in Milan there will be the universal exhibition and the title of that will be *Feeding the planet, energy for life*. And the main issue to be discussed will be agriculture's proximity (to urban centres). And in practical terms, for example, in Milan, they are raising an urban garden of 40,000 hectares. It is a very big vegetable garden and the community decided to keep it in order to feed the city of Milan. But what happens in many cities is that sometimes politicians don't really help. As farmers are not paid enough they face a great dilemma. If I have some farming land next to a city that is developing and enlarging, but basically I am not paid for my work or produce, then as soon as speculators come and offer money for building the farmers are actually forced to accept.

We need to work at two levels – that is, among co-producers (consumers), paying more for local food, and among politicians, who must be more far-sighted and preserve this land, not to build on it and transform it with cement. A new approach is here and demand is growing. I visited a farmers' market (in Sydney) and I asked one of them, 'Where do you come from?', and he answered 'I come from 500km away'. This is something which was happening in London and New York, too. But now in New Jersey there are a lot of farms and in the mornings they go and sell their produce in Union Square. Up to 10 years ago there were only 100 farmers' markets in the United States. Nowadays there are more than 12,000.

[Savill]: How do you attract people to Slow Food from other than middle class, well-educated backgrounds, especially if you are asking them to pay more for their food?

[Petrini]: Well, Slow Food must open the doors to new communities and young people. It cannot be an exclusive association. I had this meeting this morning with indigenous people and it was very important. Yesterday I met a lot of Slow Food people who are creating school gardens. So we have to open our doors and encourage diversity. If this is a challenge only concerning rich people then we will lose. If rich people are the only ones who can afford organic food then we will lose. The great challenge is to have this for everyone.

I was in San Francisco four months ago and I went to a Hispanic area and I met a lot of poor people who had come from Mexico to work there. And a farmers' market was created by Slow Food right in that area. In an American school, attended almost entirely by Mexican children, the families and kids wanted to open a school garden but there was no room, no space for it. They were surrounded by concrete. So they had a meeting at the school and decided to use a part of the carpark. They decided to remove five car spaces and so created a school garden. It was just a very small thing, in a different situation, but it can change the world.

[Savill]: We have to end. Thank you. Carlo has told me that his next project is to set up a university for chefs and to work with chefs because he acknowledges their significance.



From film footage by Michael Croft, Greg Sneddon and Fred Harden

<http://www.regionalfood.com.au>

Transcription by Jamie Kronborg