

The War on Food: Achieving Self-Funding Local Sovereignty as Global Food Systems Collapse

The solution to the current food crisis is small and local, including growing food locally. But how to fund local food co-ops without pricey loans from big banks?

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“Deglobalizing” and “dedollarizing” have been much in the news. Reducing dependence on the global supply chain and the U.S. dollar are trends that are happening not just internationally but locally. In the United States, we have seen movements both for local food independence and to divest from Wall Street banks. The burgeoning cryptocurrency movement is another push to “dedollarize” and escape the international bankers’ control grid.

This article is a sequel to [one discussing home gardens and community food co-ops](#) as local counter-measures to an impending food crisis. The question to be addressed here is how to fund them. What sort of local currency could fund food co-ops independently of the credit dollars we get from banks?

But first, some framing of the problem. It’s not just about temporary food shortages. It’s about sovereignty from the sort of global control foreshadowed in [Henry Kissinger’s notorious statement](#), “Control food and you control the people.”

The War on Food

Alarmed commentators are observing that our food systems seem to be under attack. In [a June 14 article](#), ZeroHedge republished a list of 99 [accidental fires](#) hampering America’s food supply chain since January 2021. Meanwhile, many [farmers are unable to get the supplies](#) they need to produce food, from fertilizers to herbicides to tractor parts; and small trucking companies that deliver food to grocery stores are being [driven into insolvency by unprecedented diesel gas prices](#). There has also been a surge of [cyberattacks on agricultural companies](#) during critical planting and harvest seasons. And an

estimated [10,000 head of cattle died](#) mysteriously in Kansas feedlots. The deaths were officially attributed to a heat wave but that explanation is [disputed by farmers](#).

In July 2020, the Rockefeller Foundation published a white paper called "[Reset the Table: Meeting the Moment to Transform the U.S. Food System](#)." It summarized discussions of over 100 leaders and experts brought together to design a "reset" of the food system. [A skeptical Irish blogger notes](#):

The first question anybody should be asking is "How would the Rockefeller Foundation know about upcoming food shortages" in 2020. Naturally it was just a calculated guess on their part. Isn't it also interesting that the title was "Reset the Table."

Surely just another coincidence considering "The Great Reset" was announced on 3rd June 2020. Amazing how they can get all their ducks in a row lined up so quickly considering Covid had only officially been on the block for a few months.

The hunger problem in July 2020 stemmed from unemployment and Covid-19 lockdowns, which had [just begun nationally](#) at the end of March. A January 2022 [meta-analysis from Johns Hopkins University](#) concluded that "lockdowns have had little to no public health effects, [but] they have imposed enormous economic and social costs where they have been adopted. In consequence, lockdown policies are ill-founded and should be rejected as a pandemic policy instrument."

To the Rockefeller Foundation, however, the Covid crisis and policy response were an "opportunity" to make transformative changes in our food system, including "modernizing data and technology platforms." The July 2020 white paper proclaimed:

Food is medicine ... One of Covid-19's legacies should be that it was the moment Americans realized the need to treat nutritious food as a part of health care By integrating healthy food into the health care system, doctors could prescribe produce as easily as pharmaceuticals and reduce utilization of expensive health services that are often required because of nutrition insecurity.

"Doctors could prescribe produce as easily as pharmaceuticals" Food can be prescribed, controlled and rationed. The Irish blogger wrote, "The plan is to centralize and control the food supply into one body, one single executive office." In [a May 2022 podcast](#), Christian Westbrook, the "Ice Age Farmer," mused:

Where vaccine passports failed, food passports will now be eagerly accepted by hungry people who can't afford rapidly inflating food prices. This is the realization of a longstanding agenda by the Rockefeller/UN/WEF crowd to, as Kissinger put it, "control food, and control people."

That sort of control grid is what concerns preppers" and "survivalists" – people preparing for large-scale societal collapse. But we don't need to go down that controversial rabbit hole for confirmation that a major food crisis is on the horizon. [President Biden has said as much](#), and [the head of the UN World Food Program has warned](#) that we are heading into the worst humanitarian crisis since World War II.

The crisis is systemic, predating Covid. As Australian author [Dr. Liz Elliott](#) colorfully illustrates the problem in an as-yet-unpublished preface to her book "A New Way Now: Solutions to Financial and Climate Collapse":

Corporations have become bigger than ancient countries, steamrolling over Life like invading armies.... Long supply chains are making food, machines and energy insecure. So much transport, needing so much oil, just to bring carrots and soap from cheap labour places. Third World people are realizing the money driven system is the extension of Colonialism; exploitation of their work and land by those who control money and weapons....

These few then drive public policy towards more centralization, more scientific determinism, more technocratic “solutions,” more standardization, more war, more ideology....

If large corporations and banks are the problem, then the solution is small and local.... The path to decentralization is already being forged in a million initiatives everywhere.

The solution is small and local, including growing food locally. But how to fund local food co-ops without pricey loans from big banks?

Food-backed Local Credit as Money

In a 2014 article titled “[The Truth Is Out: Money Is Just an IOU, and the Banks Are Rolling in It](#),” the late David Graeber underscored the fact that money is basically just credit. What triggered his article was the Bank of England’s acknowledgment in its first quarterly report that year that virtually all of the money we use in trade is simply created on the books of banks when they make loans. It is credit advanced by the bank against the borrower’s promise to repay it, preferably backed by some form of collateral. Local currencies and cryptocurrencies can work in the same way.

To be useful today as “money,” a currency is said to need these [four main attributes](#). It should serve as:

- A medium of exchange
- A standard of deferred payment
- A store of wealth
- A measure of value or unit of account

A medium of exchange is something that people actually use and will accept in trade. Today, that would largely rule out both gold and blockchain cryptocurrencies on the model of Bitcoin (BTC). You can’t buy groceries with gold (the grocer wouldn’t know how to make change), and Bitcoin is little used in trade. It is too volatile to be a reliable measure of value and is held chiefly as a speculative asset. As [one commentator puts it](#), “Can you imagine owning a small business and having to pay your employees’ salaries denominated in Bitcoin. The actual value paid could vary by 50% or more from paycheck to paycheck. No company would commit to this as the risk would be way too high.”

To retain its value, a currency should ideally be backed by some asset that has a stable value itself. Gold and silver have been used historically, but the gold-backed money system failed because the banks did not have enough of that precious metal to satisfy the liquidity needs of the economy. The result was periodic bank runs and banking crises.

What sort of asset would hold its value and be widely available as collateral in a local community trading system today? With the threat of impending food shortages, food could

satisfy that requirement. Garden co-ops can issue their own cryptocurrencies or community currencies, backed by the food they will produce. Sellers are often reluctant to accept unbacked community currencies in payment, because other sellers may not accept them in trade; but food-backed currencies hold their value. They are promises to pay in food, or advances against future productivity. They are paper or digital stores of food that can be reclaimed in the future, cashed in for fresh produce long after storage food in the refrigerator would have gone bad.

Grain-Backed Crypto Tokens



Grain-backed cryptocurrencies are already happening at the corporate level. In March 2022, banking giant [Santander signed an agreement with an Argentinian company named Agrotoken](#), which has created a cryptocurrency to tokenize grain. Santander agreed to accept Agrotoken's soy-, corn-and wheat-backed coins as loan collateral. Each token is backed by one ton of grain held in a storage facility. Farmers generate tokens by selling their crops to participating grain elevators, which validate the existence of the commodity. The loans will be made on a blockchain, with the tokens locked into smart contracts. Agrotokens were listed on an Argentinian commodities derivatives exchange, a key to getting the lending project started.

Santander called the project the first to use cryptocurrency tokens backed by agricultural commodities as lending collateral. It said in a [blog post](#) that the project uses an innovative digital solution that "will allow farmers and the agro ecosystem to have easy and fluid access to a new financing system, expanding credit capacity by using tokenized grains."

Agrotoken was recently the subject of a [case study by Accenture](#), which said it was bringing "new financial options to the multi-trillion-dollar agribusiness sector by letting farmers convert tons of soybean crops into a commodity-backed stablecoin that could be spent with merchants and investors." Longer term, the company plans to move beyond grains into other agricultural commodities, offering Tokenization-as-a-Service (TaaS). The goal, Accenture said, is to develop "a token-collateralized loan system that would allow farmers easy, fluid access to a new system of credit at competitive rates."

Holochain

Agrotokens are issued on a blockchain, the sort of distributed ledger technology involved in Bitcoin, Ethereum and Hashgraph. But an agricultural supply chain startup called [Producers Token has rejected that technology](#) in favor of a more localized peer-to-peer technology called Holochain. Holochain developer [Arthur Brock says](#) it is rooted in biomimicry ("how nature functions and scales"). Users are not buying coins created by wealthy "miners" in China but are creating their own money, simply by extending credit to other users.

According to [Colin Stewart](#), Director of Agricultural Technology for Producers Token:

[Holochain's] method of cryptographic accounting allows for the creation of asset-backed cryptocurrencies, and this is really interesting because what we're designing and implementing in our platform is a method for agricultural producers to mint their own cryptocurrencies that are actually backed by their goods. So you can think of the cryptocurrency as a forward contract.

A typical "forward contract" might be an agreement between a wheat farmer and a grain processor for the sale of the farmer's crop at a certain price on a certain date. The currency issued by the farmer would act as a receipt for future delivery of the wheat. A food-backed cryptocurrency tied to an asset with real value is considered to be more stable than blockchain-based tokens, which again are notoriously volatile.

For Stewart, another problem with blockchain technology involves its "consensus" feature. Most versions require the entire network to agree about the order of events. But Stewart asked, "If I'm an apple grower in Washington State... why should I have to know that the avocado grower in Michoacán sold his avocados?" He explained that Holochain, like blockchain, provides for transparency, accountability, and immutability, but without the inefficiencies of using one monolithic ledger that contains the history of all transactions in the network. Instead, Holochain is "agent-centric," with users having their own individual hash-chains of data. For more on Holochain, see [here](#).

Homegrown Food-backed Currencies

If all that sounds too high-tech for your friendly neighborhood food co-op, there are more modest local alternatives. Community currency expert Thomas Greco, author of "[The End of Money](#)," maintains that a produce-backed currency could be issued without even creating a cryptocurrency. A group of local farmers could be organized to jointly issue farm currency as a paper or digital community currency, which could be spent into circulation to buy what the farmers needed to produce their crops. The currency would circulate in the local community and would be accepted back by the farmers in payment for the products they sell.

"So the currency has a beginning and an end, it's created and it's extinguished," [says Greco](#). "It's created by the act of spending and it's extinguished in the act of redemption, not in some other currency, but in goods and services that have been promised."

Community currencies operate on the same sort of credit clearing system that banks use to create the "bank money" composing the majority of our money supply today, but they do it without manipulation by profiteering middlemen. Money is created as a debit in an account and is extinguished when the debt is repaid. No interest is charged, so there is no built-in imperative for growth. Community currencies also allow communities to make decisions about where capital should flow rather than giving decision-making power solely to banks, and they foster human relationships, building community and encouraging people to interact with one another.

Spreading Financial Sovereignty: From Communities to Cities to Countries

Local currencies don't need to be printed on paper or issued as cryptocurrencies. "Mutual credit clearing systems" can keep track of credits and debits on a simple ledger. Participants of mutual credit clearing systems around the world can trade with each other, and this is

already being done.

Cities and towns can also issue their own community currencies; and [many have, particularly in times of depression](#). A major hurdle is getting sellers to accept the local currency, but this could be fixed by backing it with some public service. Tom Greco suggests “[Solar Dollars](#)” – credit instruments of a local utility company, spent into circulation by the company as credit against future electricity services. Other services the city could provide include [fiber-optic broadband](#), circumventing the perceived hazards of 5G; and [ethanol fuel generated by a community-owned still](#), processing not corn and other foodstuffs but weeds and other organic waste. The currency could be issued by the city through a publicly-owned bank.

Combining these possibilities, a global monetary system might be devised that is independent of the control grid manipulated by international financial megaliths. But that is a big subject, which will have to be addressed in another article.

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