

COMING SOON FROM CHRONICLE BOOKS, NOVEMBER 2005

# FIELDS OF PLENTY

A FARMER'S JOURNEY IN  
SEARCH OF REAL FOOD AND  
THE PEOPLE WHO GROW IT

In the face of a fast-food nation, a growing community of farmers and food artisans are producing sustainable nourishment that is respectful to the land and rich in heritage, flavor and commitment. This is their story, told by one of their own.

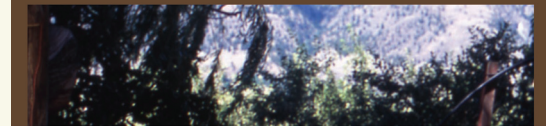
Fields of Plenty is the memoir of respected farmer, writer, and photographer Michael Ableman as he and his son travel from his own farm in British Columbia across the United States in search of innovative and passionate farmers who are making a difference in what we eat and how we experience food. From Oregon to Maine, this story captures the essence of each farmer's vision, the spirit of the land that they work, and the beauty and flavors of the foods that they lovingly produce. From a melon grower who is "militant about flavor" to sheep-cheese producers who have built their own mold-culturing caves to an urban farmer growing heirloom tomatoes on abandoned lots to the now-paved-over lands from his childhood, Ableman's odyssey takes him to those who are trying to answer the complex questions of sustenance philosophically and, most importantly, in practice.

Told with compassion, insight, and humor, Fields of Plenty is a hopeful memoir that reveals the larger issues of food in a modern world. Illustrated with Ableman's photographs and flavored with recipes that feature each farmer's bounty, Fields of Plenty is an intimate portrait of food and agriculture at a critical crossroads.



Farmer, writer and photographer Michael Ableman embarks on a pilgrimage to artisanal farms across the country to explore the meaning of food in our culture today.

Michael Ableman lives and farms on an island in British Columbia with his wife and two sons. He is the founder of the Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens, an education center and working organic farm in southern California that has become an international model for small scale and urban agriculture. A writer and photographer, his books include *From the Good Earth* and *On Good Land* (Chronicle Books), and he is the subject of the award-winning PBS broadcast *Beyond Organic*, narrated by Meryl Streep. His work has been featured on NPR's *All Things Considered*, in *National Geographic*, *The Utne Reader*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, among other publications.



MICHAEL ABLEMAN

## FIELDS OF PLENTY

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"The chronicle of a farmer's journey to the frontiers of American agriculture today, *Fields of Plenty* is a book of rare beauty and hope. American agriculture is in the process of being reinvented by the farmers Michael Ableman introduces us to here, and to overhear these pioneers in conversation with one of their own is exhilarating."

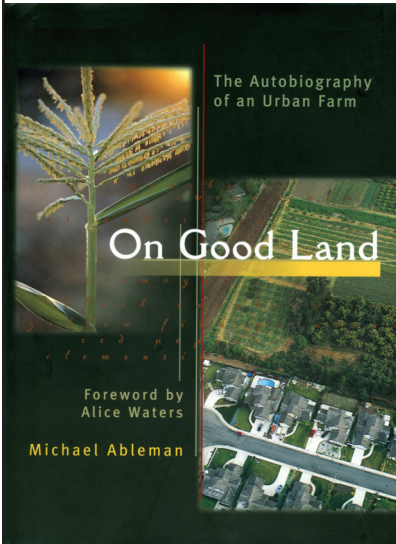
– Michael Pollan, author of *Botany of Desire*

"This is a timely and powerful portrait of the new agrarian movement that is sweeping this country. Michael Ableman's compelling stories and exquisite photographs tell a story that we too often forget; that the richness and beauty of our food is inextricably connected to a community of innovative and passionate farmers and to the land that they nurture."

– Alice Waters, *Chez Panisse* restaurant

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# Also by Michael Ableman:



On Good Land: The Autobiography of an Urban Farm  
Chronicle Books, 1998

“Lyrical tale of the survival and triumph of a small farm amid the suburban sprawl of southern California with writing as rich and satisfying as the taste of ripe melon.”

– *Kirkus Reviews*

“Inspiring and utterly absorbing.” – *Booklist*

The remarkable story of a farm’s struggle to survive amidst a sea of development, and the awakening of a community to the riches it provides. In an age when most farms are far from our homes and dangerously far from our consciousness, Michael Ableman’s tales of rural adventure in what is now the suburbs offer a glimpse of lost bounty and wildness.

Funny, inspiring and educational, this memoir-song to the land takes us into the fields where natural wonders ( and minor catastrophes) await.

From The Good Earth: A Celebration Of  
Growing Food Around The World  
Harry N Abrams Inc NY, 1993

“A compelling and very personal photographic essay. The text which comes down heavily in favor of environmentally sound farming practices, turns the elegant, romantic photographs into politics.”

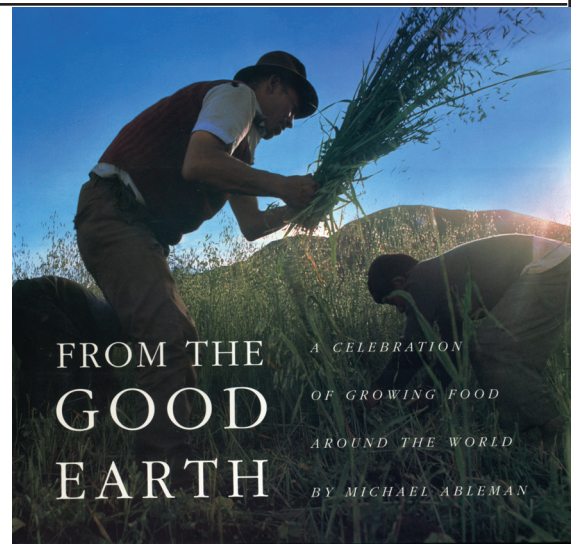
– *New York Times*

“Hopeful and inspiring.” – *Los Angeles Times*

Food, land and culture are intertwined. This internationally acclaimed book takes us on a stirring photographic journey through five continents to remote traditional farming communities, into the stark fields of industrial agriculture and to the rebirth of small scale organic farms around the world.

Armed with a farmer’s curiosity and a photographer’s eye, over a period of seven years, author Michael Ableman visited farmers in small villages in southern China, the Peruvian Andes, the mountains of central Africa, and the American Southwest seeking out cultures and individuals who grow food in ways to support their communities and care for the land. The rich images and text challenge us to participate - in the marketplace, in our kitchens and in our own backyards.

This sumptuous and timely book is for everyone who enjoys good food and the bounty of the earth.



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