

CREATORS OF **QUEEN OF THE SUN & THE REAL DIRT ON FARMER JOHN**



viral promoters

patent no. 5767

chemical coating



# SEED

THE UNTOLD STORY

Which future will you grow?

COLLECTIVE EYE FILMS PRESENTS SEED: THE UNTOLD STORY IN ASSOCIATION WITH SENECA FALLS PICTURE COMPANY  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY TAGGART SIEGEL ORIGINAL MUSIC BY GARTH STEVENSON BENJY WERTHEIMER GAEA OMITZA RIVER  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER PHIL FAIRCLOUGH MARC TURTLETAUB DIRECTED PRODUCED AND EDITED BY TAGGART SIEGEL JON BETZ

SEEDTHEMOVIE.COM

# SEED: The Untold Story



## A Collective Eye Films Production

In Association with Seneca Falls Picture Company  
Executive Produced by Marisa Tomei, Marc Turtletaub  
Phil Fairclough  
Original Music by Garth Stevenson, Benjy Wertheimer, Gaea  
Directed and Produced by Taggart Siegel & Jon Betz  
Runtime: 94 Minutes | HD, Color

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## SYNOPSIS

Few things on Earth are as miraculous and vital as seeds. Worshipped and treasured since the dawn of humankind. SEED: The Untold Story follows passionate seed keepers protecting our 12,000 year-old food legacy. In the last century, 94% of our seed varieties have disappeared. As biotech chemical companies control the majority of our seeds, farmers, scientists, lawyers, and indigenous seed keepers fight a David and Goliath battle to defend the future of our food. In a harrowing and heartening story, these reluctant heroes rekindle a lost connection to our most treasured resource and revive a culture connected to seeds. SEED features Vandana Shiva, Dr. Jane Goodall, Andrew Kimbrell, Winona Laduke and Raj Patel.

## LOGLINE

As many irreplaceable seeds near extinction, SEED reveals the harrowing and heartening story of passionate seed keepers as they wage a David and Goliath battle against chemical seed companies, defending a 12,000 year food legacy.

Film Trailer | <https://vimeo.com/97882647>



Stills for Press | <http://bit.ly/2a17ukw>



Social Media



@seed\_themovie



<https://www.facebook.com/seedtheuntoldstory>

## FILM DIRECTORS



### **TAGGART SIEGEL** | Director/Producer

Taggart Siegel has produced and directed Emmy-nominated, award-winning documentaries including *QUEEN OF THE SUN: What are the Bees Telling Us?* and *THE REAL DIRT ON FARMER JOHN* (ITVS, Independent Lens). These films received critical-acclaim during their theatrical release and garnered over 40 international awards. Siegel is a Fledgling Outreach and Engagement Lab Fellow and was selected to pitch at Britdoc's GOODPITCH for *SEED: The Untold Story*. His previous PBS films include: *SPLIT HORN*, (ITVS, Independent Lens), *BETWEEN TWO WORLDS*, *BLUE COLLAR AND BUDDHA* and *HEART BROKEN IN HALF*. Collectively, they capture the struggle of refugees and immigrants in America. He produced the National Geographic film *DISENCHANTED FOREST* about orangutans in Borneo and was the director of *SHADOW OF A PEPPER TREE*. Taggart is the founder and Executive Director of Collective Eye Films, a non-profit media production and distribution organization based in Portland, Oregon.



### **JON BETZ** | Director/Producer

Jon Betz is an emmy-nominated, award-winning independent documentary filmmaker. He is the co-director and co-producer of *SEED: The Untold Story* and the producer and editor for *QUEEN OF THE SUN: What Are the Bees Telling Us?* (2010). *QUEEN OF THE SUN* was critically-acclaimed during its U.S. theatrical release and heralded by The New York Times as "Revelatory! A Critic's Pick" His previous film, *MEMORIZE YOU SAW IT* (2008) journals his experience as an aid worker living with former-child soldiers in Eastern Uganda. Betz is a Fledgling Outreach and Engagement and Lab Fellow, a Britdoc's GOODPITCH alumni and a graduate from Rhode Island School of Design. He is the director of Collective Eye Films, a non-profit media production and distribution organization based in Portland, Oregon.

## EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS



### **MARISA TOMEI** | EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Marisa Tomei is an Academy-Award winning American stage, film, and television actress and founder of Seneca Falls Picture Company. She came to prominence in 1992 with *MY COUSIN VINNY*, for which she won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress. She received Academy Award nominations for her performances in *IN THE BEDROOM* and *THE WRESTLER*. Tomei is actively dedicated to humanitarian causes including VDay, a global event to raise awareness about violence against women and girls. Tomei hosted "reclaim REAL food" to bring attention to the importance of labeling our food.



## **MARC TURTLETAUB | EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

Marc Turteltaub has served as a producer on numerous independent films including the Academy Award-winning *LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE*. Recent releases include Sam Mendes' *AWAY WE GO*, starring Maya Rudolph and John Krasinski, Christine Jeffs' *SUNSHINE CLEANING* starring Amy Adams and Emily Blunt and John Crowley's *IS ANYBODY THERE?* starring Michael Caine. Turteltaub has also produced Liev Schrieber's *EVERYTHING IS ILLUMINATED*. Other producing credits include *JACK GOES BOATING*, *LAWS OF ATTRACTION*, *THE HONEYMOONERS*, and a documentary called *LUCKY* by Jeffrey Blitz.



## **PHIL FAIRCLOUGH | EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

Phil Fairclough was intimately involved as executive producer and producer on several of Werner Herzog's documentaries including the acclaimed *GRIZZLY MAN*, the Oscar nominated *ENCOUNTERS AT THE END OF THE WORLD* and *CAVE OF FORGOTTEN DREAMS*.

Phil was a network executive at Discovery Channel, EVP of Development and Production for NHNZ. Before working at Discovery, Phil held senior positions at the BBC and ITV - and had extensive production experience in the UK, including the acclaimed BBC Natural History Unit where he was an executive producer and head of the commercial production unit.

## **DIRECTORS' STATEMENT**

For years, we have passionately made films that reveal our deep connection to nature and our food. *The Real Dirt on Farmer John* (2005), tells the story of a maverick farmer who saves his family farm against all odds. *Queen of the Sun: What Are the Bees Telling Us?* (2010) investigates the mysterious colony collapse disorder ravaging honeybees around the world.

Our latest film, *SEED: The Untold Story* began with an article in *National Geographic* reported that up to 96% of the vegetable seeds available in 1903 have disappeared. Within moments we knew that was our next film. The speed and scope of this loss is staggering, and its implications for our future are stark. As the renowned naturalist and author Gary Paul Nabhan puts it, "Many of our seeds today are as endangered as a panda or polar bear." In an era of climate uncertainty, this dearth of diversity is a recipe for catastrophic crop failure and human suffering—not unlike *The Great Famine of Ireland* that saw the starvation of nearly a million people when their sole crop variety, a potato, was wiped out by blight. *SEED* explores a topic that is still largely unknown, yet it is increasingly urgent with climate change and the consolidation and control of the seed industry.

*SEED* completes a trilogy of films that uncovers the invisible connections between our food and the natural world. As we filmed seed savers, farmers, scientists and indigenous communities for *SEED*, we were struck by how little their voices are heard. *SEED* presents audiences with a hidden fabric of our food, the people that painstakingly and meticulously curate the diversity of our food. The film charts a David and Goliath battle as these marginalized people fight the large corporate power of chemical companies that now control the majority of our food.

## **ABOUT THE FILM**

Few things on Earth are as miraculous and vital as seeds. Worshipped and treasured since the dawn of humankind, these subtle flecks of life are the source of all existence. Like tiny time capsules, they contain the songs, sustenance, memories, and medicines of entire cultures. They feed us, clothe us, and provide the raw materials for our everyday lives. In a very real sense, they are life itself.

Yet in our modern world, these precious gifts of nature are in grave danger. In less than a century of industrial agriculture, our once abundant seed diversity—painstakingly created by ancient farmers and gardeners over countless millennia—has been drastically winnowed down to a handful of mass-produced varieties. Under the spell of industrial "progress" and a lust for

profit, our quaint family farmsteads have given way to mechanized agribusinesses sowing genetically identical crops on a monstrous scale. Recent news headlines suggest that Irish history may already be repeating in our globalized food system. Articles in the New York Times and other mainstream sources report the impending collapse of the world's supplies of bananas, oranges, coffee and coconuts—all due to a shortsighted over-reliance on a single, fragile variety. Without seed diversity, crop diseases rise and empires fall.

More than a cautionary tale of “man against nature,” the remarkable story of seeds is an epic “good-versus-evil” saga playing out in our modern lives. For eons, cultures around the world have believed seeds to be our birthright: a covenant with the earth shared by all and passed down across generations. But today, our seeds are increasingly private property held in corporate hands. A cadre of ten agrichemical companies (including Syngenta, Bayer, and Monsanto) now controls more than two-thirds of the global seed market, reaping unprecedented profits. Genetically modified crops (GMOs) engineered in their sterile laboratories dominate farmers’ fields and dinner tables in the United States and countries around the world.

Farmers from Minnesota to Madhya Pradesh, India toil in economic thrall to the “Gene Giants,” paying hefty licensing fees to plant their patented crops. If they attempt to save their own seed at the end of a season, following a tradition practiced by humans for over 12,000 years, they face ruthless prosecution. (Suffering under this indentured servitude, over 250,000 farmers in India have committed suicide in the last 20 years.)

People everywhere are waking up to the vital importance of seeds for our future. In recent months, March Against Monsanto protests have rallied millions in more than 400 cities and 50 countries to the cause of seed freedom. Ballot initiatives to label genetically modified foods have been proposed in U.S. cities from California to Connecticut—a direct threat to the profits of the Gene Giants and their Big Food cronies. Seed libraries, community gardens, and a new generation of passionate young farmers are cropping up to shift the balance toward a more sustainable and sovereign seed paradigm. A David and Goliath battle is underway, and the stakes couldn't be higher.

The story of our seeds is a defining story of our time. Caught between the runaway juggernaut of industrial agriculture and the ecological, cultural, and spiritual destruction in its wake, seeds offer us a profound chance to restore mutual harmony between people and planet. They are the eternal promise of an abundant new world waiting to be born. But the time for this redemption is running out. In telling this story, we aim to bring into clear focus the beauty, hope, and magic that seeds represent for humanity at this critical juncture.

A Collective Eye Films Production



# Collective Eye Films

unearthing stories to make a difference

[www.collectiveeye.org](http://www.collectiveeye.org)

Seed is supported by

