



# Lentil Underground: Renegade Farmers and the Future of Food in America

Liz Carlisle



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**A protégé of Michael Pollan shares the story of a little known group of renegade farmers who defied corporate agribusiness by launching a unique sustainable farm-to-table food movement.**

The story of the *Lentil Underground* begins on a 280-acre homestead rooted in America's Great Plains: the Oien family farm. Forty years ago, corporate agribusiness told small farmers like the Oiens to "get big or get out." But twenty-seven-year-old David Oien decided to take a stand, becoming the first in his conservative Montana county to plant a radically different crop: organic lentils. Unlike the chemically dependent grains American farmers had been told to grow, lentils make their own fertilizer and tolerate variable climate conditions, so their farmers aren't beholden to industrial methods. Today, Oien leads an underground network of organic farmers who work with heirloom seeds and biologically diverse farm systems. Under the brand Timeless Natural Food, their unique business-*cum*-movement has grown into a million dollar enterprise that sells to Whole Foods, hundreds of independent natural foods stores, and a host of renowned restaurants.

From the heart of Big Sky Country comes this inspiring story of a handful of colorful pioneers who have successfully bucked the chemically-based food chain and the entrenched power of agribusiness's one percent, by stubbornly banding together. Journalist and native Montanan Liz Carlisle weaves an eye-opening and richly reported narrative that will be welcomed by everyone concerned with the future of American agriculture and natural food in an increasingly uncertain world.



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