

# The Weinstein Manifesto

**UNDERSTAND THAT ORGANIC AS DEFINED** and enforced by the NOP and the NOSB is the beginning not the end. It is the lowest common denominator that was politically feasible in 1990. Those who follow us will and must push for much more. It is our job to nurture those who will look back at what we have accomplished and see it as the altogether inadequate response to a series of life threatening challenges that it is. We must welcome this vision on the part of our successors and encourage them to demand more.

**LISTEN MORE.** Listen to people you don't like. Listen to people whose ideas strike you as self-evidently wrong, ignorant, impossible. Those would have been you 30-40 years ago. Encourage unreasonable demands.

**DISCRIMINATE AGAINST THE EDUCATED IN HIRING.** Hire physically vigorous, energetic, ambitious, advocates, trouble-makers and rabble-rousers. Look for passionate dreamers with defective resumes.

**THE ONE INNOVATION** that is our legacy to pass on is the idea that local and regionally based and privately owned for-profit businesses can be effective vehicles for large scale social change. We are not philanthropically funded NGOs. We are not in the street marchers. We do not do electoral politics. We buy things and sell things and provide services to our customers and by doing so we have enabled and facilitated a profound and enduring change in farming. By doing so, we have demonstrated the effectiveness of an overlooked model of social change. We must work to insure that this lesson is not lost on those who come after us.

**REMEMBER THAT YOUR BUSINESSES** are invested not in how things are but in how they should be. Conventional agriculture is invested in how things are. Organic farming, and the distribution model that enables and supports it, is invested in how things should be. The conventional food system may be your customer. It may be your supplier. It is not your friend. It is not your ally. The aims of the conventional food system and the people who operate it conflict fundamentally with the aims of the organic movement. Appreciating this fact must underlay all of the planning you do for your businesses. You must treat your conventional trading partners as partners of convenience and anticipate the point where the needs of your businesses and the needs of your conventional trading partners diverge irreconcilably.

**THEY KEY CHALLENGES WE FACE** moving forward are racism, class prejudice AND economic concentration. An independent, regionalized, locally-owned food system is in the cross-hairs of every economic and political trend in the United States and around the world. If we are to survive we must fight. We must ally ourselves with every enemy of economic concentration and organize to defeat it. Our businesses discriminate against working class people. Everything from the way we organize the work to the etiquette we enforce in our workplaces, privileges middle class people over working class people. This has to change if our businesses are to find their roots in the communities they serve. White people have too much power in the world. Either they find a way to give up some of what didn't belong to them to begin with or it will be taken away from them.