
FROM GENES TO WEBS - Invitation

The rise of ag-tech poses a significant challenge to movements struggling for food sovereignty everywhere. This is an opportunity to come together and explore how to confront it.

We're inviting you to join us for a series of workshops exploring ways to create a narrative strategy in order to intervene in the ag-tech landscape.

In a series of Narrative Analysis Sessions we will analyze examples of stories promoting ag-tech, working to identify their interconnectedness.

In a series of later Storytelling Workshops we will work together to develop counter-narratives that challenge these assumptions, instead promoting food sovereignty and technology assessment.

Following the workshops, AGC and ETC will digest the dialogues and package them in a toolkit that food sovereignty movement partners will be able to use to respond to emerging issues through a lens that we have created together.

TIMELINE

Narrative Analysis Sessions / 9-11 am EDT / 1-3 pm GMT

May 3: Learning Narrative Analysis Tools

May 10: Analyzing Opposition Narratives

Creating Our Own Stories / 9-11 am EDT / 1-3 pm GMT

May 17: Narrative Media Power Analysis

May 24: Creating Our Own Stories

May 31: Strengthening Our Stories (Potential)

THE PROBLEM

Corporations, philanthrocapitalists, and governments are pushing new technologies that are branded as “support” for farmers and “solutions” for climate and biodiversity crises, but in reality are entrenching industrial agriculture and leading to the destruction of our food systems. These technologies, which include new digital and biotech technologies, are centralizing information and decision-making, effectively stripping autonomy and power from peasant and family farmers, food workers and their communities. The individuals, movements, and organizations that raise opposition to these technologies meet intense backlash — branded as backwards, standing in the way of solving problems like hunger, climate change, and poverty.

THE PURPOSE

This project will equip movements to identify, analyze, and intervene in the narratives that are weaponized to disenfranchise them, as well as support their ability to effectively produce counter-narratives rooted in food sovereignty. Together, we aim to deconstruct and destabilize a larger, coherent story, or “metanarrative” at the core of the corporate push for “agtech”, and collectively design tools to communicate intersectional struggles and contribute to the unification of food movements.

THE APPROACH

We’re inviting movements (you) at the forefront of the fight for food sovereignty to:

1. Participate in a series of narrative analysis sessions, exploring the deep underlying assumptions that connect stories around ag-tech. (AGC and ETC will synthesize the narrative analysis into an accessible document that can be circulated to movements.)
2. Participate in a series of workshops to develop a counter-metanarrative that can challenge the aggressive promotion of ag-tech and even the rise of new corporate agrotechnologies. (AGC and ETC will digest the dialogues and package them in a toolkit that movements will be able to use to respond to emerging issues through a unifying lens.)

EXPECTATION FROM PARTICIPANTS

This project is structured to build on itself. Participating in the Narrative Analysis Sessions will give us the collective insight we need in order to fully engage in the later Narrative Building Sessions. Because of this, it’s ideal for any people who want to participate to be able to commit to the full sets of workshops.

NARRATIVE ANALYSIS SESSIONS

Session 01 (Introduction)

This first session will introduce the topic (ag-tech), exploring a bit of its history and current relevance. It will also introduce the narrative analysis tools that we will be using in order to explore stories around ag-tech. We will have a chance to practice with those tools so that we are comfortable and ready to dig into the analysis in the next session.

The tools we'll be using include:

[Common Ground](#)

[Elements of Story](#)

Session 02 (Analysis)

The second session will be a chance to look at examples of stories out in the world centered on ag-tech. We will use the narrative analysis tools introduced in the previous session to analyze those examples and work to identify the aspects that connect them.

CREATING OUR OWN STORIES

Session 01 (Identifying)

In this session, we will return to the analysis from the previous session and choose the key narrative(s) around ag-tech that we want to challenge. We will explore the ways in which the realities of our movements can delegitimize ag-tech narratives and uplift food sovereignty narratives.

Session 02 (Creating)

Using the same tools from the Narrative Analysis Sessions, we will work to create a sample storytelling campaign output, based on the current and upcoming work of the movements participating.

Session 03 (Strengthening)

This session will strengthen the storytelling campaign samples developed in Session 02.