# Literature Question

## *What does Michael Pollan’s* tracings of where our food comes from in *The Omnivore’s Dilemma* and *Barbara Kingsolver’s method of eating locally* reveal about the American diet and culture? Michael Pollan’s quest to find the origin of the produce found in his local supermarket and Barbara Kingsolver’s advice to consume local and in season food reveals the agricultural industry in its entirety: a key role in the decision of what to eat. In order to decide what to eat we must first determine the origin of our food, the time of year or season, and the cultural aspects, all play key factors in a fragile decision; which if misjudged can have devastating impacts on the once natural, but now monopolized food industry.

# Possible Flow of Essay

## National geographic eat

## Chances are, and I mean by chance as in, it is almost statistically inevitable that this essay pertains to you. (Or similar something)

## When is the last time you checked the carbon levels of your skin?

## Where did your last meal come from?

## Could you guess the country? State? City?

## If so, that’s great! Otherwise, listen up!

## How do you decide what to eat?

## First you must find origin, and season of food in order to decide what’s best to eat.

## The reader must understand what it means to eat locally, and in season.

## Lure the reader into story by encapsulating the question of “where does my food come from?” into the readers thought.

## Pose that Michael Pollan had a similar question, and how he went about ACTUALLY attempting to find the origin of the food from his local supermarket, and along the way he discovers a whacky and humorous context. Possibly foreshadow ‘corn sex’

## Talk about Farm bill maybe? Government Subsidies

## Corn. Corn. And more corn. Corn is everywhere.

“Corn is in the coffee whitener and Cheez Whiz, the frozen yogurt and TV dinner, the canned fruit and ketchup and candies, the soups and snacks and cake mixes, the frosting and gravy and frozen waffles, the syrups and hot sauces, the mayonnaise and mustard, the hot dogs and the bologna, the margarine and shortening, the salad dressings and the relishes and even the vitamins.” (Pollan, 19)

“The great edifice of variety and choice that is an American supermarket turns out to rest on a remarkably narrow biological foundation comprised of a tiny group of plants that is dominated by a single species: *Zea mays*, the giant tropical grass most Americans know as corn” (Pollan, 18)

## First evidence should concern the production costs of corn versus retail value.

## How not only is it in our food directly, also indirectly (i.e. cows, chickens)

## The manure from cows being fed corn, instead of grass.

## This affects our meat, resulting in x deaths each year from salmonella.

## There are (1000?) cows in the average hamburger. Chance for disease increases exponentially.

## The impact big Industrial farming companies (Tyson, etc.) have on farmers.

## Genetically Modified Organisms

## Seasons from Kingsolver and the relation with GMOs (i.e. certain genes can make organisms grow in seasons otherwise not meant to be)

## Both Kingsolver and Pollan’s perspective on natural selection and how the Pilgrims learned basic genetics from the Indians to grow corn.

## Cultural significance of our food.

## Avoiding rotten meat demonstrates a learned instinct, while carving pumpkins is a cultural instinct developed through history of OTHERS. Compare with lab rat in Pollan’s *The Omnivore’s Dilemma.*

## Better tasting food is the goal.

## Buy local, in season food that pertains to your cultural heritage. If you know where your food was grown, odds are it will taste better, and result in overall happiness, relationships, and health (a lady loves a man who can cook, and vice versa).

## The more papers on this subject the better.