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## 1A

In the Introduction, Pollan asked a question: why Americans could change their attitude towards foods overnight, redefining the standard of healthy diet merely based on several articles (Pollan 2)? This phenomenon, “national eating disorder” as he put (Pollan 2), motivated him to trace back the whole food production chain underlying modern foods.

In the next three chapters, he described the dominant position of corn in our food supply system (Pollan 17) and explained how corn evolved to such status. In chapter one, Pollan enumerated the advantages corn has over other plants. First, unlike the normal photosynthesis cycle found in most plants, corn has a system called “C-4” that is more efficient in producing organic compound (Pollan 21). Second, corn can also adopt different environments easily (Pollan 25). Last but not least, scientists discovered a way to force farmers to purchase seeds of corn every year, providing incentives for big companies to spread corns (Pollan 31).

Then, Pollan recounted how human factors came into play. This time, his evidence was drawn largely from historical facts as well as first-hand report. For instance, he described how the American government decided to turn chemical compounds for making explosives into fertilizers (Pollan 41). By interviewing Naylor, a local farmer in Iowa state, he revealed the shocking fact that the cost of producing a bushel of corn is more expensive than its market price (Pollan 53). He also described how the corn market developed an efficient system to handle such a large amount of food, namely the concept of Number 2 corn (Pollan 59).

The conclusion Pollan drew was clear: planting corn is not good for human beings. It has negative impact to our environment. It reduces biodiversity and forces many species to go extinct. Eating products made from corns, such as corn syrup, is not good for health (Pollan 62). Neither is it good for farmers (Pollan 53, 62 – 63). As he put in the third chapter, corn “could contribute to obesity and to hunger both.” Perhaps the only beneficial part is big companies such as Cargill and ADM (Pollan 63).

Schlosser might not like the argument made here. In his article, he proposed that an artificial flavor is no less, if not more, healthier than its natural counterpart (Schlosser 27). He should agree with the idea that the industrialization has a huge impact on the food factor though. On the contrary, Biello is likely to support Pollan’s anti-corn sentiment. In his article, Biello stated the fact that organic food with careful farming could deliver nearly the same yield as the “conventional methods” (Biello 233). He also pointed out that the pollution issue brought by the “conventional methods” were too large to neglect (Biello 234). While some might say that even the industrial way of farming could hardly eliminate starvation, Biello thought that the real issue to solve is about food distribution and waste (Biello 234). To Biello, moving away from the corn empire would be a wise decision.

## Works Cited

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