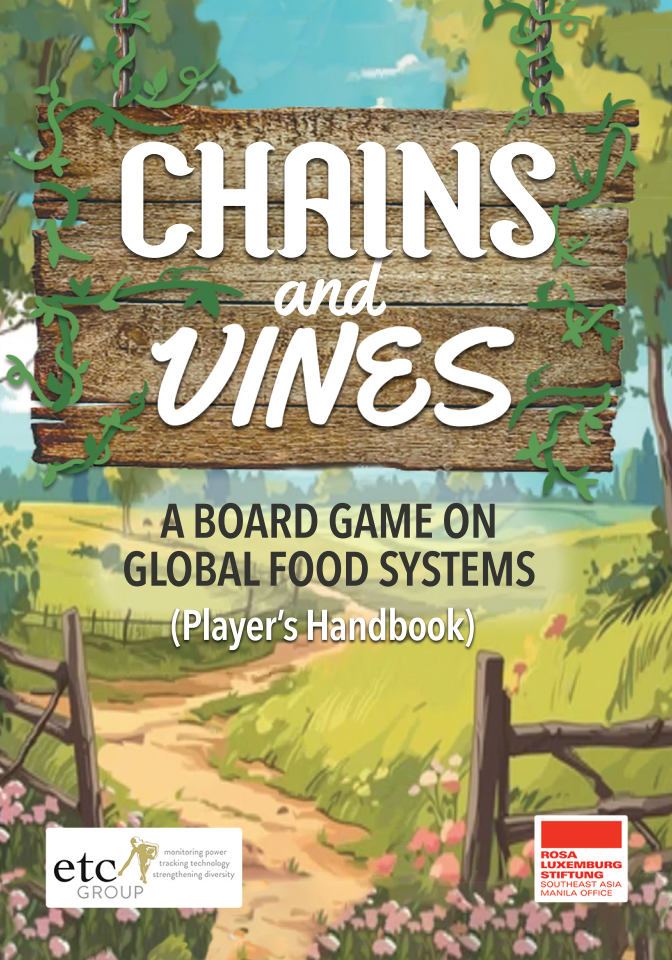




CHAINS *and* VINES

**A BOARD GAME ON
GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEMS**
(Player's Handbook)



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ETC Background

Who decides the future of food? When politicians, companies and others talk about 'the food system', they include the work of growing, producing and distributing food. But there is more than one way of organising a food system. Over the last few decades, the way in which people grow, share and eat food around the world has become a tale of two conflicting food systems—which we call the Industrial Food Chain and the Peasant Food Web. The Peasant Food Web is critical to feeding humanity: Challenging assumptions about who really 'feeds the world', our research shows that the Peasant Food Web provides food for over 70% of the world's people. But its resilience is threatened by the behaviour of the polluting, wasteful and expensive Industrial Food Chain. Practices in the industrial food chain have caused many massive human rights violations and new industrial strategies

like digital agriculture pose a major risk to farmers rights.

The Industrial Food Chain already uses more than 75% of the world's agricultural resources – including land, water and fossil fuels – to feed the equivalent of 30% of the world's population, mostly people in the global North and in cities around the world. The Chain is constantly looking for more of these resources, and land and water 'grabbing' by agribusiness is rife across peasant territories.

This same dynamic plays out in the game as players take the side of the industrial food chain or the peasant food web as either the small-scale food producer or the corporate player and navigate "boosts", "barriers," vines, and chains!

The boosts or barriers will give the players an opportunity to reflect on the developments in food and agriculture that can realise or hamper the rights of the small-scale food producers.

Game Materials

Chains and Vines Board Game includes:

- Game Board
- Player's Handbook
(for instructions and Game Master's Guide during the game)
- 4 Tokens to represent each players
 - 2 small-scale food producers (farmers)
 - 2 industrial ag corporation (corporates)
- 1 Collapsible dice



small-scale food producers
(aka farmers)



industrial ag corporation
(aka corporates)

Setting Up The Game

This game needs a minimum of two (2) players and the players need to be categorised either as small-scale food producers or corporate players.



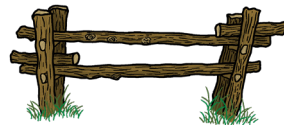
Example pair of tokens for a 2-player game

Since this game aims to highlight the battle between small-scale food producers and industrial agriculture corporations, the game has to be fought between the two. Therefore, if there are 2 players, one of them should be the small-scale food producer (farmer) and the other player should be the industrial ag corporation (corporates).

Some of the numbers on the board game have the farm fence symbol on it. These farm fences are a sign to stop at that number and read the instructions!

The instructions will point you to the farm fence throwing either a boost or barrier the player's way!

If the player gets a boost, they get to move ahead, if they get a barrier, they have to move backwards!



farm fence : sign to stop and read the instructions



boost icon :
move ahead



barrier icon :
move backwards

Playing The Game

Instructions: The first player to touch 100 wins!

- When a small-scale food producer lands at the bottom of a vine, that player gets to climb up the vine!
- When a small-scale food producer lands at the top of a chain, that player has to descend down the chain.
- On the other hand, when a corporate player lands at the bottom of a chain, that player gets to climb up the chain!
- And when the corporate player lands at the top of a vine, they have to descend the vine.
- If a small-scale producer lands on the upper-end of the vine, they do not need to move further or backwards.
- If a corporate-player lands on the upper-end of the chain, they do not need to move further or backwards.

Game Master's Guide (Player's Move)

As stated earlier, there are specific blocks that have been highlighted on the board with the help of the farm fence symbol. When a player lands on a block with the farm fence symbol, they have to follow the following instructions:

Block number 3: The two largest agrochemical companies merge to form an even bigger agrochemical giant.



Boost for the corporate player:
Take 2 steps forward.



Barrier for small-scale food producer:
Go back to number 1!

Explanation: Increasing corporate concentration means firms can jack up prices for farmers, take control of the research and development agenda in food and agriculture, thereby strengthening the position of corporations.

Continued...

Game Master's Guide (Player's Move)

Block number 7: Small farmers' seed systems are attacked by UPOV 91.



Boost for corporate:

Take 5 steps forward!



Barrier for small-scale food producer:

Go back to number 2!

Explanation: UPOV privatises farmers' seeds and criminalises farmers for sowing, keeping, exchanging, and taking care of their seeds¹ which is an attack on farmers' rights but an opportunity for corporations to extract profits by selling more of their commercial seeds.

¹<https://grain.org/en/article/5314-upov-91-and-other-seed-laws-a-basic-primer-on-how-companies-intend-to-control-and-monopolise-seeds>

Block number 33: Countries put a moratorium on genetically modified plants.



Boost for small-scale food producer:

Take 7 steps forward!



Barrier for corporate:

Go back to number 26!

Explanation: A moratorium on GM plants helps prevent the genetic erosion of plant diversity, farmers will not be pushed into loan traps for buying GM seeds and accompanying agrochemicals, and prevents ecological damage.

Block number 62: CSOs advocate for the right to assess the social, ecological and economic impacts of new technologies.



Boost for small-scale food producer:

Take 10 steps forward!



Barrier for corporate:

Go back to 52!

Explanation: By understanding the many impacts of new technologies, those impacted by technologies will be able to have the right to say no to them, or be able to resist the imposition of that technology, and engage with it on terms defined by themselves.

Continued...

Game Master's Guide (Player's Move)

Block number 66: A commercial seed company develops a salt-tolerant rice variety.



Boost for corporate:
Take 7 steps forward!



Barrier for small-scale food producer:
Go back to number 59!

Explanation: This will wipe out traditional varieties which might be salt-tolerant already and saved by and exchanged between farmers, and will make farmers dependent on corporations for commercial seeds.

Remember:

The vines favour the small-scale food producer while the chain favours the corporations!

Block number 89: Government/s sign partnerships/agreements with Big Tech companies to develop a database containing granular farmers data on their land size, yield, income, crops grown, fertility and so on.



Boost for corporate:
Take 7 steps forward!



Barrier for small-scale food producer:
Go back to number 75!

Explanation: Big Tech corporations get access to valuable farmers' and agriculture data and can analyse the soil health and weather conditions to tell farmers when to apply synthetic fertilisers, and its quantity, and where and when to apply seeds, and of which company as well. While this may sound helpful to many, it seriously undermines farmers autonomy and knowledge, and makes them implementers of directions by the platform, it puts Big Tech companies in an advantageous position to sell commercial products to farmers, find out where valuable land is, and so on.

Continued...

Game Master's Guide (Player's Move)

Block number 95: Governments allow small farmers to generate revenue from carbon credits from soil carbon sequestration practices.



Boost for corporate:
Take 3 steps forward!

Barrier for small-scale food producer:
Go back to number 92!

Explanation: This way the agricultural practices of small farmers are dictated by the government according to what will “possibly” help in sequestering carbon: farmers might have to alter their practices and implement instructions from the government or corporations that will tell them how to generate carbon credits from agriculture, thereby undermining their autonomy.

Winner of the Game

If the peasants win, they should be recognized for their invaluable role in feeding the world with nutritious food, for conserving biodiversity and our natural resources. Peasants will be able to broaden mobilisation against the erosion of their rights and biodiversity, and demand protection for their rights. We will march towards food sovereignty!



Continued...

Winner of the Game

If industrial agriculture corporations win, they should pledge to stop their destructive practices that harm people and our planet, lead to biodiversity loss and the climate crisis. They will break their monopolies and cartels, stop lobbying governments to introduce business-friendly policies and put a halt to their extractive practices!



Game concept: ETC Group
Graphic designs, layout and
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