Food: Culture, Agriculture, Ecologies

Professor: Caroline Merrifeld

Course Day/Time: Thursdays 11:00am-1:30pm

Course Description: What makes an agroecosystem? How do the tools of the social sciences and humanities help us to understand the complex natures and cultures of farmed landscapes? Food links our bodies directly to the world, to both cultures and ecologies; in this course, we approach food as a political and moral material, as well as a product of specific biophysical systems. Throughout the semester, we will study key components of foodsheds – from soils, crops, and microorganisms to markets and kitchens – through a wide range of sources and voices. We will delve into new scholarly areas, like plant humanities; explore the intersections of food studies and animal studies; and connect our coursework to urgent questions about environmental justice and climate futures. Students will learn and practice qualitative research techniques drawn from the environmental humanities and humanistic social sciences, and then use these techniques to develop a self-directed research project on a topic of their choosing.