

Video Assignment
Human Geography

Agriculture and Development in Film

For this assignment, you'll watch **King Corn** or **Black Gold** and write a 2-page (min) essay addressing at least three of the following bullet points:

- How did you imagine corn farms (**King Corn**) or coffee farms (**Black Gold**) before you watched the movie? How do you see them differently now? Including pictures is encouraged and tends to help your grade (but pictures don't toward the 2 page minimum).
- In what ways did this movie change your understanding of how agriculture works in the U.S. or globally? What did you learn? *Please remember that each film addresses a particular type of agriculture in one time and place – none of the films represent agriculture as a whole.*
- What are the economic or regulatory issues shown in the film? How does the film demonstrate economics and/or regulations impacting (positively and/or negatively) the lives of farmers or farmworkers?
- **King Corn**: The film traces the consolidation of family farms into large farming operations, with single grain farms planting a thousand or more acres. Who benefits from, or is hurt by, this consolidation of farms?
- **Black Gold**: The film traces the economics of coffee production from producer to consumer (and many steps in between). If successful, how will the co-op, led by Tadesse Meskala, improve conditions for the coffee farmers and others in Ethiopia?
- Although these movies are based primarily in Iowa and Ethiopia, the stories reach much farther than these small geographical contexts of a single state and a single country. How/why do they do this?
- What does the end of the film imply about how we should change agricultural production?
- How have things changed since the film was made? What evidence is there that things changed for better or for worse?

Essay Requirements:

- 2 pages, minimum (images, bibliographies, and other materials do not count toward the 2 pages)
- Typed, double-spaced, 1" margins
- Common 12 point font (Times/Times New Roman/Arial)
- **Use at least 5 vocabulary words** from chapter 8 (agriculture) or chapter 9 (economic geography)
- Do not put your name or other personal or course information on the paper
- Upload through Turnitin on Blackboard; images cannot be uploaded separately
- Bibliography containing: The textbook, the film, and any outside sources.
- Don't plagiarize – plagiarism results in a zero for the assignment

The Films:

Black Gold International coffee trade and an Ethiopian coffee co-op (currently on hulu.com)

King Corn Corn production, the development & impacts of U.S. farming practices in recent decades (if you have Amazon Prime, it is often free or available to rent for a low fee)

Other films may be possible – contact me if you would like to watch a different film about **agriculture**.