

Food Flick for All

In the ideological battles over sustainable food, the criticism that skeptics most often level is that the food movement is elitist. Poor people can't afford organic broccoli, they say. *Food Stamped*, a new documentary from Berkeley filmmaker Yoav Potash and his wife, nutrition educator Shira Potash, delves into the heart of this debate as the couple chronicles their attempt to eat strictly healthy, organic food for one week on \$50, the cash equivalent of what they would get if they were eligible for food stamps.

The humorous, touching and ultimately provocative film includes interviews with actual food stamp clients, as well as policy makers and a nutritionist. The results of the couple's earnest attempt, full of black beans and brown rice, is itself food for thought. "We figured that it would be interesting to see what would happen trying to eat on a food stamp budget with a nutrition expert planning and preparing the meals," says Yoav Potash, "knowing that most families don't have that."

The results are fascinating and raise important questions about the assumptions underlying government food policy as well as the role of "personal responsibility" in American's deepening diet-related health crisis. The film should be required viewing for Whole Foods owner John Mackey whose *Wall Street Journal* editorial in August caused a flurry in the food community when he suggested health care should require more "personal empowerment" from Americans, particularly with respect to their eating habits. The Potashes are pitching the film to PBS, and screening it locally in the meantime.

— Kathryn Jessup

For the current schedule of screenings, and to learn more about the film, visit foodstamped.com.



LEFT: COURTESY OF FOODSTAMPED.COM; LIZ SALGANEK; RIGHT: CHRIS DUFFEY



Oakland Magazine
November 2009