A battle for the future of food

Goals and Rules

Contents of the game
Playing Area: 5 cards, green and red border and back
4 Food System cards:
  Genetics (seeds, breeds and biomes)
  Ecosystems (land, water and biodiversity)
  Knowledge (story, culture and technology)
  Economy (production, distribution and consumption)
1 Dispossessed card

Peasant Deck: used by the Peasant Player, green border and back
  12 Peasant Food Web cards, 7 Peasant Action cards, 7 Did You Know cards

Corporate Deck: used by the Corporate Players, red border and back
  12 Industrial Food Chain cards, 13 Chain Reaction cards, 13 DoubleSpeak cards

10 Corporate Identity cards: Colored game tokens that identify different Corporate Players. (The Peasant Player does not need any tokens.)

Setting up the game
Players compete to control the four ‘commons’ of the Food System: Genetics, Ecosystems, Knowledge and Economy. The game ends when any one player has taken over both Footholds (white rectangles) on three out of four Food System cards.

Choose the Peasant Player, who will defend the Peasant Food Web. The other players each choose a Corporate Identity card and cut out their 3 marked tokens. Their aim is to build a food empire by grabbing land and resources. Space the four Food System cards and the Dispossessed card out on the playing surface so that all players can see them. White rectangles on the corners of Food System cards signify ‘Footholds’ where players can place certain cards to claim the Footholds during the game. Place the Corporate Deck and Peasant Deck in the playing area, with a separate discard pile for each.

Next, the Peasant Player retrieves three Peasant Food Web cards from the Peasant Deck and places them on Footholds of their choice (as long as the cards share a matching System Symbol). The Peasant Player then shuffles the remaining cards in the Peasant Deck and places them face down on the table. They take the top two to create their hand. The Peasant Player plays from the Peasant Deck only.

The Corporate Player to the Peasant Player’s left shuffles the cards in the Corporate Deck, then deals two cards from the top of the Corporate Deck to each Corporate Player and places the rest face down on the table. The Corporate Players play from the Corporate Deck only. Now you’re ready to play!

Playing the game
Playing a turn: Play moves in a clockwise direction from the dealer, with the dealer going last. At the beginning of your turn, draw one card from the top of your assigned deck and add it to your hand. During your turn you may play as many cards from your hand as you want. This is the only time when you can win Footholds. Most cards can only be played during your turn. However, Peasant Action cards and Chain Reaction cards may be kept and played at any time, including during an opponent’s turn. If you are a Corporate Player, you may also choose to initiate a Trade during your turn. Your turn ends when you have done everything you want to with the cards in your hand.
How the Peasant Deck works:

Peasant Food Web cards enable the Peasant Player to gain Footholds. You can only place a Peasant Food Web card on a vacant Foothold during your turn, and after the two cards share a matching System Symbol. If there are no vacant Footholds, the card can be placed on the Dispossessed card.

Peasant Action cards may be played at any time. These have different effects which are explained on each card.

Did you know? cards can only be played during your turn. The Peasant Player reads the description aloud and then selects a Corporate Player. Without seeing their hand, the Peasant Player chooses the card that the Corporate Player must then discard without playing.

How the Corporate Deck works:

Industrial Food Chain cards enable Corporate Players to win Footholds. An Industrial Food Chain card on a Foothold that already has a card with the Commons Conquest effect on it. You can only do this during your turn, and when the two cards share a matching System Symbol.

Chain Reaction cards have different effects which are explained on each card, and some have the Commons Conquest effect as well. These cards can be played at any time.

DoubleSpeak cards can be played on vacant Footholds on Food System cards, as long as the two cards have matching System Symbols. They pave the way for claiming the Foothold with an Industrial Food Chain card, which can happen during the same turn. You may also play this card on a Foothold already occupied by a Peasant Food Web card, which is then relocated to the Dispossessed card pile. DoubleSpeak cards can only be played during your turn.

During the game

Systems Symbols:

Each of the four Food System cards – Genetic, Ecosystems, Knowledge and Economy – has its own System Symbol. Matching System Symbols are found on the Peasant Food Web cards, the Industrial Food Chain cards and the DoubleSpeak cards. The symbols need to be matched up when cards are played, they determine which Food System cards you may choose. Chain Reaction cards with the Commons Conquest effect do not have System Symbols and can be played on any Food System card.

Commons Conquest:

DoubleSpeak cards and some Chain Reaction cards that have the Commons Conquest effect are played on vacant Footholds or Food Web cards already occupied by Peasant Food Web cards. They pave the way for a Corporate Player with an Industrial Food Card to claim the Foothold. A Corporate Player cannot gain a foothold without a Commons Conquest card having first been played there.

How the Peasant Player gains a Foothold:

You can place Peasant Food Web cards on any vacant Foothold with a matching System Symbol during your turn. If there is no vacant Foothold, the card can be placed on the Dispossessed card pile.

How Corporate Players gain a Foothold:

You can only play such a card on a Foothold that already has a card with the Commons Conquest effect on it (it does not matter who placed that card there). The Industrial Food Chain card is then placed on top of the Commons Conquest card, without removing it. You can also play a card without the Commons Conquest effect on a Foothold that is already occupied by a Peasant Food Web card. In this case move the Peasant Food Web card to the Dispossessed card pile. When you claim a Foothold with an Industrial Food Chain card, place one of your tokens on it.

Clearing Footholds:

Any time that more than two cards stack on a single Foothold, remove all cards except the top two, and place them in the appropriate discard piles.

Peasant Uprisings:

When there are four Peasant Food Web cards on the Dispossessed card an uprising begins! The Peasant Player takes a card from the top of the Peasant Food Web cards in the Dispossessed pile (equivalent to the number of Corporate Players playing) and places them on their Industrial Food Chain cards and vacant Footholds of their choice (as long as System Symbols match). The remaining Peasant Food Web cards are returned to the Peasant discard pile. If an Industrial Food Chain is covered in this way, all cards beneath the Peasant Player’s card are discarded. That Foothold is then considered reoccupied by the Peasant Food Web.

Trading:

Any Corporate Player can initiate a trade with another Corporate Player when it’s their turn. They cannot force anyone to trade with them and they cannot trade with the Peasant Player. Either trade one card for another card, or trade a card for a promise (that the other Corporate Player may or may not break).

Winning the game:

The game ends when any one player has taken over both Footholds on three out of four Food System cards and therefore controls most of the food system.