



Grocery: The Buying and Selling of Food in America

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In *Grocery*, bestselling author Michael Ruhlman offers incisive commentary on America's relationship with its food and investigates the overlooked source of so much of it—the grocery store.

In a culture obsessed with food—how it looks, what it tastes like, where it comes from, what is good for us—there are often more questions than answers. Ruhlman proposes that the best practices for consuming wisely could be hiding in plain sight—in the aisles of your local supermarket. Using the human story of the family-run Midwestern chain Heinen's as an anchor to this journalistic narrative, he dives into the mysterious world of supermarkets and the ways in which we produce, consume, and distribute food. *Grocery* examines how rapidly supermarkets—and our food and culture—have changed since the days of your friendly neighborhood grocer. But rather than waxing nostalgic for the age of mom-and-pop shops, Ruhlman seeks to understand how our food needs have shifted since the mid-twentieth century, and how these needs mirror our cultural ones.

A mix of reportage and rant, personal history and social commentary, *Grocery* is a landmark book from one of our most insightful food writers.

Grocery: The Buying and Selling of Food in America Details

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From Reader Review Grocery: The Buying and Selling of Food in America for online ebook

Robyn says

Quite enjoyable, interesting, with a balanced tone but a tendency toward repetition and confused structure. |

It's not easy to write with a conversational feel in a factual book with source citations, but this manages it. I have at times in the past been harsh in my reviews of Ruhlman's books, because he can't seem to keep himself off the page in places he doesn't need to be. Here, finally, he's found a theme and style where his presence in the narrative makes sense and isn't a distraction.

I did find myself irritated by some of the points repeated ad nauseam. Constantly it was mentioned that consumers now have many places to buy the same items, when that used not to be the case. Uncountable sentences re-explaining the diversification of product lines. Again and again it was pointed out that Costco, Sam's Club, and Wal-Mart came on the scene offering better prices, and that Whole Foods and Trader Joe's, with their specialty goods, went national. Every single time these things were written as if they'd never been mentioned before. Add in the contradictions--he says Whole Foods sells a version of Froot Loops, which he lists the ingredients for to point out that it's sugar and stripped carbs, and 3 pages later says you can't buy Cap'n Crunch at Whole Foods because the chain offers food that supports health--and I find myself going round in confused circles.

There was a lot of meandering, all of it on interesting subjects (I mean, I gave this four stars, so I clearly found it fascinating), but much of it seemingly barely related to what preceded it, and a lot of very suspect ideas were given much page space without being justified by the central idea of the book. An entire chapter is devoted to the opinions of a very negative analyst, presenting them as proven fact, despite their not matching life as I've known it in the four states I've lived in.

In the end, I enjoyed the book and was glad to read it, but there was no cohesive thesis behind it, and I found it exceptionally difficult to explain to others just what this book I was reading was about.

Appreciation to the publisher for the ARC, which in no way affected the content of my review or the rating.

Chris says

I saw the author promoting his book on one of the morning news shows and was energized by his passion for food and grocery stores. It turns out this passion was nurtured by his dad who died in 2008 or so. So it's a labor of love and another son reaching out to his father.

Ruhlman is a Cleveland native and we learn all about grocery stores in the context of Cleveland's local grocer- Heinen's. These mid size grocers are the ones who drive innovation and change. Big chains like Kroger respond more slowly to change or sometimes wrongly like A&P according to the author. We also visit trade shows with Heinen buyers as well as roam the range in Idaho with shepherds and Heinen's CEO. Ruhlman goes department by department within the store. We learn a lot about health and bad food as well as meeting a host of eccentric characters loving what they do each and every day.

I'm ready for a visit to Cleveland now.

Jena says

This started out strong and had chapters that were really interesting, but it seemed like the author lost steam about halfway through. Then, it became less of what made grocery into what it is and more of an advertisement for Heinen's and a eulogy for his father. The over the top physical descriptions of women and the instance of overt anti-Native American racism were super, super distracting, too.

Michael says

A book that should've gotten five stars. I *love* grocery stores. I hoped that this book would give me all the inside scoop, like an expanded New Yorker article.

Most of the book, however, is Ruhlman talking about the kinds of food we should be eating. He's a good writer, and his advice is pretty solid, but the grocery store is less of a focus of the book than a vehicle for Ruhlman to tackle his pet food issues.

There is very little here, for example, on logistics. Nothing about employee scheduling. Nothing about career advancement opportunities, or the (presumably) complex relationship between baggers and cashiers.

If he's just given the book a more Pollan-esque name I would've been prepared and probably given a proper three or four stars, but the bait-and-switch was too much.

Robin says

4 stars based on 3 stars for chapters that I skimmed and 5 for the ones that totally caught my interest.

There were two elements that made me anxious to read this book: one was that I'm a huge fan of Ruhlman's food journalism (SOUL OF A CHEF is at the top of my favorite food/restaurant/chef books), and the other is I love delving into the inner workings of industries, businesses, restaurants, retail stores--heck, I'd even read a book about auto dealerships or realtors if they outlined how everything in the business works. So I couldn't wait to read more about grocery stores and how they operate.

Turns out I was a little disappointed. I still like Ruhlman's style but found some of the chapters less than interesting, although chapters that focused on where produce and meats come from and how they're marketed were informative, as were the chapters on prepared deli foods (who knew they weren't much of a moneymaker?), how new products are found and brought in, and the "healthiness" of many of the foods (and food should be called "nutritious" instead of "healthy").

What fell short (for me anyway) was that the book centered on Heinen's, a family owned store in the east, that is primarily a cross between a supermarket and a Whole Foods, with many specialized and "natural" type of foods (for those of you in Salem, OR, Roth's would be a good comparison, only on a smaller scale), and while he touched on the topic, I wanted more about huge conglomerates such as Safeway, Kroger, et al. Ruhlman also spent a lot of time on the history and development of supermarkets and foods.

A phrase that caught my eye was "This is a good rule when evaluating food that is a box or a bag: Read the list of ingredients, and if you can buy each one of them in the grocery store, it's probably real food." So I went to the cereal drawer and looked at the list on two favorites. One said "Contains wheat" and other had a good list until "acacia gum." Hmmm...

Read this if you want to know about grocery stores and where our food comes from, and especially if you are a frequent shopper at Heinen's or similar stores. The footnotes reminded me a bit of Mary Roach's science writing and fans of hers may enjoy the author's research experiences.

Thanks to the publisher for the advance digital reading copy.

Rachel Blakeman says

This is really a 2.5 star review. Some chapters were OK but this was largely a self-serving book. The more accurate title would have been "Grocery: The Buying and Selling of Food at Heinen's." I grew up on the west side of the Cleveland media market so I remember Heinen's ads as a child but since we didn't live in a fancy part of the Cleveland suburbs, there was no Heinen's, which makes the point that this store serves a very upscale clientele. As a result the book feels very incomplete in telling the story of America's grocery buying.

As other reviewers have said, there is a lot of rehashing other material (Omnivore's Dilemma for example) so frankly I didn't learn much. This was a wonderful 250+ page ad for a small Cleveland grocery store. However if you want to learn about America's eating habits, find another book. There are many good ones, just not this one.

Leslie says

This is much more than a history of the grocery store; it is also a behind-the-scenes look at how a modern grocery store is operated and managed, and the industry's continuous evolution.

Through interviews with the owners of Heinen's, a Midwestern grocery chain, we learn about the workings of different departments and even learn the real reason why the dairy and freezer cases are at the rear of the store. (I always thought it was to make me walk past the snack aisle!) There is an entire section on avoiding the center aisles of the store and why you should shop the perimeter. I found it amazing that we are headed towards a society where almost no one cooks anymore. Entire prepared Thanksgiving dinners can be purchased from the local grocery store, something almost unheard of a decade ago.

The author's personal stories and memories combined with his extensive research of the grocery industry make this an interesting and absorbing read. His description of the grocery store in the 1960s brought back my own childhood memories of grocery shopping as a Saturday morning family outing.

Audio production . . .

The narration was performed by Jonathan Todd Ross in a pleasant, clear voice with smooth pacing. This was an easy-to-follow narrative and a good selection for audio. Non-fiction is a good choice for new audio listeners or for listening in the car as there is no complex plot or characters to remember. I read both print and audio and found my time listening to be a perfect choice for multitasking.

Lindsay Nixon says

The title is grossly inaccurate. This book is mostly the author petaling or defending his food choices. Most of which have zero scientific backing... and the comments on vegans are embarrassing (for him). After spewing about how most Americans eat processed food devoid of nutrients he says vegans need be careful to get their nutrients ? BYE FELICIA

The whole book shows how much of a wannabe Pollan or Nestle he is, and their books are a better read.

That aside, there's little talk about buying or selling groceries or the logistics.

He does give the history of a Midwest chain grocery store he likes but that's... dribble. It's more like he strung random things he read together and packaged it with policy propaganda and his personal beliefs which are meh

Riley says

THE GOOD

The book has some good general history and observations like:

Grocery shopping can be nostalgic. Remember the times shopping with your family.

Consumers tend to throw reason out the window and pick product based on what the easiest to evaluate, not what's most important. We stick to the familiar or go by price because we don't want to deal with so many choices and scrutinize label claims or nutritional information.

THE BAD:

As much as I wanted to like this book, I just couldn't. While some of the history at the beginning it quickly transitions into an adventure of ranting regarding what is wrong with food today. If I wanted material on this I would not have picked up a book entitled "Grocery, the buying and selling of food in America". Instead I would have picked up one of the handful of books the author references constantly across chapters.

Karen says

Michael Ruhlman has written numerous cookbooks in conjunction with chefs and other non-fiction books related to cooking. Here, he gets into the nitty gritty of the grocery business. Who would have thought this topic could be so fascinating. It was! And eye-opening as well.

Ruhlman has done exhaustive research on this transforming industry. He gathers info from many sources; by observing practices, interviewing a wide scope of people - visionaries, owners, buyers, vendors, farmers, nutritionists, the list goes on. His passion for food is obvious and I found his style of writing to be very readable. The book is chock full of good information and advice.

Rahman also touches on nutrition in general and trends grocers have to keep up with in order to satisfy customers. Are you attracted to that well-placed package on the shelf marked "low fat"? Have you considered what the replacement is for the fats that are taken out? Food companies are inserting questionable

ingredients into products to increase their bottom line and too few people are paying attention. It's no wonder there are so many health issues. Ruhlman makes clear that people need to take the time to read labels and learn what puzzling ingredients are for the sake of their own health and our country's growing epidemic of health issues. Luckily, the pendulum appears to be swinging in the right direction - more consumers are making nutritious food choices and the industry is following the trend with healthier organic choices.

Via this insightful book, I earned a new respect for my own neighborhood grocery store and the efforts that go into its smooth operation. The book also reaffirmed that my family is doing it right most of the time - going the natural, whole food route, following good practices of reading food labels, buying mostly organic in the "rainbow of color" produce department and cooking most meals at home so we know exactly what we are eating.

Stephen says

Let's go shopping! There's a few errands to take care of first -- an homage to dad, a quick review of the history of grocery stores -- but then, straight to business. Aisle by aisle, from dried pasta to fresh fish, the way Americans approach food is changing, and Michael Ruhlman's Grocery shows us how, using -- literally -- the neighborhood grocery store, the one just down the block from his childhood home. Ruhlman has a particular passion for food, one inherited from his father -- a man who genuinely looked forward to his weekly run to the grocery, one who kept journals of the meals he'd entertained company with -- and has turned that into a series of books, including one that took him into chef school. Here he's spending his time with the twin brothers who run a series of stores that grew out from their father's, one that has continued to stay on top of modern eating trends.

During Ruhlman's childhood, the grocery store was a place where you bought groceries. Wal-Mart changed that, though, when they invaded the grocery market, and other stores like Target followed in their wake. A lot of what a grocery stocks, the stuff in the center aisles, are commodity goods that are the same regardless of where you buy them: a box of Cheerios, say, canned soup, or jar of olives. The quality doesn't change from store to store, and it's hard for a local grocery to compete with prices against the likes of Wal-Mart, let alone Amazon. Their future will lie in offering high-value goods or culinary experiences that can't be thrown on a truck. Although Americans cook increasingly less -- Michael Pollan speculates gloomily that the next generation may view food prep as weird and alien to their life as milking a cow or beheading a chicken --- we're still obsessed with food. Part of this is not a healthy obsession, although "health" is the object: there is an increasing tendency to view food as medicine, buying it based on its advertised health claims rather than its actual quality. Neither Ruhlman nor anyone he interviews are impressed with the USDA's track record in declaring foods as "healthy" or unhealthy, having previously damned eggs and butter to the devil's bin.

What most people miss is that no food is "healthy", Ruhlman writes. Food can be nutritious, but it's only part of a healthy lifestyle. Even if the granola bars people are so increasingly fond of were unequivocally good for them -- and they aren't, really, given the amount of sugars packed in as preservative -- people need varied diets and physical activity to be "healthy". Still, what the market demands is what it gets: the Heinen brothers visit organic expos and look for genuinely nutritious snacks they can introduce in their stores, but they're mostly beholden to what people demand...be that Cheerios or free-range lambchops. Happily, the market in general is shifting to favor organics and local produce, so the absence of spring fruit in winter is no longer a deal breaker for people who visit the store. Grocery stores are having to go beyond food, too: the Heinen brothers have long emphasized health in the products they stock, and their most recent store (in a renovated Beaux Arts bank) has a restaurant and bar. This is not not unique to the Heinen brothers, as other chains like Trader Joes have experimented with coffee houses and the like; from the surviving neighborhood grocers to WalMart, prepared food is an increasing part of the grocery store's stock in trade. What is unique to the

Heinens is that they have a doctor on staff, one who vets the quality of their produce and health departments, and who gives community seminars about food and wellness.

Grocery has a lot of topics thrown in the buggy -- the history of grocery stores, critiques of our modern diet, insight into the marketing and purchase decisions of grocers -- though some of it may be repetitive if you've been reading an author like Michael Pollan. The store he chose has a unique character, and I enjoyed learning about the brothers' business and their attempt to contribute to a fresh food culture in their part of Ohio. Also, I have to be a fan of anyone who takes a beautiful but abandoned building and turns it into a community center, at a big risk to themselves. My only real complaint with the book was the occasional repeating of a really specious claim made by people whom Ruhlman was interviewing. (For instance, that it's possible to taste mountain wind in lamb meat.)

Dawn Betts-Green (Dinosaur in the Library) says

ARC copy from ALA Midwinter--excellent microhistory.

Lynne says

3.25

This book was a love song by Ruhlman to his father, and that purpose, woven through this book, was touching and authentic. Ruhlman contrasts eating and shopping habits during his childhood and patterns now, from the perspective of the accomplished chef he has become. There was much interesting info in the book, but I felt a loss of focus in the last half, with many pages devoted to redevelopment of a historical building in Cleveland, a shopping trip with a fish monger, a wine and cheese car trip, and other stories. I felt bothered by a question whether the book was an advertisement for a family grocery chain in Ohio, which I've never been to or even heard of

Tom Franklin says

Ruhlman's *Grocery: The Buying and Selling of Food in America* is part love poem to the Cleveland area-based Heinen's grocery store chain and part memorial to his recently deceased father. Set amongst the characters of the Heinen's chain, Ruhlman's father's death, his own imminent divorce, his love for food, and his fascination with a grocery store chain that does things the way he would do them, his book weaves in and out of the Heinen's aisles and people who provide the produce and meats that encompass the periphery of any good grocery store. (The center aisles being given over to pre-packaged foods)

The title of Ruhlman's book is somewhat misleading. Early on he says he's not going to be writing a history of the grocery store. (Others have already done so) Instead, he focuses on the chain he grew up going to and learned to love early on in life. Less than halfway through his book I considered this to be the best advertising campaign Heinen's has ever had; by the end I was convinced that Ruhlman was going to hold the launch party for this book in the Heinen's in the former Cleveland Trust Building -- a renovation at the center of the final, "Where We Are Headed" section of the book.

Instead of "The Buying and Selling of Food in America" this is a book about "The Buying and Selling of Food the Heinen's Way." By Ruhlman's account, Heinen's does a lot of things the right way, from the way it

treats its own employees to the way it sources the vegetables and meats for a demanding customer base, to the way it prepares and manages the pre-cooked food it offers for people too busy to cook at home. Comparisons are sparse in this book, with the more nationwide Krogers and Whole Food being the major examples of either How Not to Do Things or How to Take Advantage of the Trails Heinen's Has Blazed at a Corporate Level.

Ruhlman's book occasionally wanders off in areas that best make sense to Ruhlman. His impending divorce and his recent father's death weigh heavily on his writing at times; he quotes from Michael Pollan's *The Omnivore's Dilemma* so often that it became distracting. Much of the book falls into the category of The Cult of Personality (Heinen's own "Doctor Todd" and employees ranging from the co-owner brothers, Tom and Jeff, and numerous Heinen's employees who came from other areas of the food industry to work for a grocer they believed in, to many of the vegetable and meat providers). Here the book is more about people who love food and the production necessary to meet grocery store demands than groceries, per se, as Ruhlman goes into lengthy details about how foods are grown/raised in the best, most sustainable ways.

I have no doubt that Heinen's will be proud of Ruhlman's book, as his father would undoubtedly have been. I found it an engaging, if somewhat distracting read that lacked any hint of negatives to what Heinen's does. Ruhlman may have convinced me that I should visit Heinen's if I'm ever in the Cleveland area, but I'm not about to believe the 'characters' in his book walk on water the way they're depicted.

Jeanette says

It's interesting and I'm glad I read it. But the title is not accurate, IMHO. He uses his own favorite grocery store and the small chain it represents as the pivot of good example. It's also a nice to read tribute to his father who loved to shop there. And why.

But this particular woman who is writing this review started out her life living behind a Mom & Pop grocery, fruit, necessity vital neighborhood store in Chicago. It was on Wentworth Ave in the 50's South. It's still there but not a store- you can see it from the Dan Ryan Expressway. All that was across the street from the Blue Goose was eminent domained taken and knocked down to build that expressway. The expressway wasn't there when I was there.

My earliest memories in my existence all have to do with filling customers' orders. I was my Nana's favorite because I was her youngest and also I could get all the correct cans and bring them to her or refill shelves where they belonged. She could hardly walk by the time I remember her. Most times I did not read as much as I used the pictures on the boxes or cans. But before I was 4 I COULD sound the words out. And I could read all the signage before I went to any school. In my life there was no tv, no flash cards, no one on one attention to me at all- but it was AWESOME for seeing things and knowing what they were. Besides I could wait on the pick and bag candy counter and give the kids a penny extra. And saw all kinds of people and every mode of talking to/with them too. And the SMELLS! You have no idea unless you've ever had a barrel of chitterlings less than 50 feet from where you slept.

So reading this book, for me, was a first choice pick. I LOVE grocery stories. Always have and always will. I go to one now at least 5 out of 7 days every week. I'll never shop at one store to the exclusive of others. And rarely shop for any bulk shopping at a store which hold great expanses of prepared foods as their mainstay. (Opposite of many working families, I know.) Because I ate fresh and natural- cooked the most difficult ways in a time sense my entire life? That's only part of it; my taste buds were developed early. And I recognize the differences to the quality/types of what most Americans eat today more easily than most customers too. Some things I know where they come from just by visuals. I always see it (current American

diet) laying on the belt for the customer in front of me. Cereals, lots of boxes, tons of cans, much that comes in plastic/ cellophane bags or plastic containers. Frozen prepared- big time on that also. Not only in meat, but in most of the fruits and vegetables absolutely too. Altered, dipped or covered. For instance, I don't think I've ever opened a can of soup to eat in my life. Which is 7 decades of years and most of them feeding between 5 to 10 others for at least 2 meals a day. Starting in my teens and never a pause either. No gap years. LOL!

So THIS BOOK! First of all, he and his family were cotton bread eaters and non-food people. His mother never entered a grocery store in her 22 years of marriage. I find this nearly untranslatable to being a food critic or grocery expert, regardless of the practice and research. His affection for his store chain overcomes many of the prime aspects this book should have been equating more evenly.

YET- he gives some interesting past cabals about salt, eggs, fat and other "nasty" and bad for you regimes that have reigned. Also the truth of having extremely small profit margins and the changes in massive "one stop to get everything" stores. And what that has meant and caused.

I could have helped write this book. Considerably. It would be a bitter task in some ways with all the dreck that people buy routinely that you'd have to get through. But cooking is rarely more than a hobby type occupation now. Not a constant at all, as in my life. Not only making everything from scratch, but also growing most of the plant based that is possible, yourself. I haven't eaten within my home meals- a store bought tomato or pepper or eggplant or squash in years, for instance. And in season also corn, broccoli, onions. It's not easy in our climate. I don't do it myself but have a physical dynamo partner who does far more than his half. But home grown and local grown are best. My Grandfather actually grew figs in Chicago proper. Another whole story.

But I grocery shop constantly and never at one store. Not even when I had no time to do so. At times I have shopped at 9 or 10 pm. Where I live, it is possible except for meat or good bakery.

So read it, but understand that it is coming from a person who ate green beans and chicken soup with dehydrated onion casserole for dinner with a side of hard cooked chicken breasts.

He talks about food deserts and this I have to add. One of the most incredible voids of ghetto living is that they have NO DECENT FOOD STORES. Food stamps and every free stuff avenue under heaven is supplied and no active work. And if a food store opens that is decent, it needs bars on all the windows, and anti-theft tags on every item over \$1 in the place. People are shot for a \$70 to \$200 cash register and the entire place is carried away in under 2 years. It happens over and over and over. Why don't the powers that be organize grocery training and franchise neighborhood watch and operated GROCERY STORES?? They do with the gardens. Which sometimes work if a few people are extremely vigilant to barriers and placements for night security. Once, we had an idea started but it failed for participant slack. But it has to be better than what calories and quality eaten now.

Michael Ruhlman in Ohio makes some extremely regional assumptions too that are odd and naive. He has not traveled much. Which I have. And I rent space and I food shop. Rarely do we eat out on vacation. I know, we are odd ducks. Some of the biggest USA cities have the best food, btw. Not only in the USA but also out of it. If you visit, always visit their food market spaces. It can tell you tons about a city too. Seattle's Pike Place Market is awesome.

Overall his estimation of Whole Foods, Aldi, Walmart are biased, IMHO. They are his opinion. All stores do some things well and others not as well. But at the rate that people actually cook their own foods, eat well and balanced, and also the time that they are willing to give to chores surrounding foodstuffs? Well, I think until people learn far more about the food they eat and are willing to feed their children prime foods unaltered - that the groceries stores are going to do what sells. Of course it can not be 50% of your income either. Overpricing is ridiculous presently too. The majority of humans do not have \$3 just for a head of

lettuce, or an avocado at \$2 each. They don't. He also doesn't include many nation wide chains beyond Kroger, the old A & P's and ones that have delved into and then left the food end, like the Super K Marts. Or that sometimes the very same chain in CA has completely different "best" departments as the same one in IN. That would be a BOOK.

The book is also somewhat outdated too, IMHO. He mentioned piped in music often. We are far beyond that in suburban Chicagoland. Mariano's has a grand piano playing for you LIVE, while you shop. And you can get a city block of cheese choices and samples, the bakery just as long- and the meat case has opportunity for individual cuts after a short wait with a number. Meijer has more quantity of choices than Walmart and is often better priced. Jewels are trying to go the two aisles of "prepared" ready to cook route. Dominicks caved when they tried that. All the individual bakeries by us have closed in the last 10 years. Some Italian specialty and meat only are still open but they are barely hanging.

He doesn't give enough space to the family operated and century long stores. Like Walt's or Butera's or some of the Meijer's. They are regional but most of them are mighty. Just like his favorite of Heiman's. Or how the benefits levels have caused some of those to demise quickly. The profit margin in excellent food for lower and middle class buyers is minute. And perishable foods have to have a quick, quick turnover.

When it goes to online- grocery shopping? I'd never eat anything that I cook at home without SEEING it before buying it. I'm old enough to assume that I may get by without ever having to do so. If I'm lucky. Food is life. Have you ever read Camilleri? Montalbano could be my food son. So we won't even talk about the fish chapters here. My real life son drives all the way to Western MI every month or two to get the freshly slaughtered 1/2 pig for the smoker roast contraption he made. Food is not tangent to my tribe. Not even among the very pickiest of us.

Good book, skewed and not titled properly but he has some great points about placements and what different people believe and choose for "proper" food. And why.

Forgot a last tidbit that has mesmerized me for more than a decade and he mentions it here too. WHY OH WHY are the blueberries in MI (when I can pick them myself on top of it) when MI supplies the great majority of blueberries in the USA; WHY are they MORE expensive in MI then they are when I see the same blueberries 3 days later in Chicago at 1/2 the price? Sometimes actually they are even the bigger sized blueberries sent to Chicago? There are some of those aspects to fresh foods that I never will understand. It doesn't make any sense, unless the locale group is protecting their own crops to not over buying/selling in their own district where it is grown. A kind of artificial built in "top down decision" regulated pricing that has nothing to logically do with supply and demand equation to pricing levels? Cabals everywhere.

And he doesn't visit sales taxes on food and any other added taxes on foodstuffs enough at all in this book. We have wars going on in IL right now over the just added (last month) beverage/sugar tax that Cook County set down to try to make up its immense budget deficits and make us "healthy" all at the same time. The Will/Cook County divisions and the Dupage/Cook division lines are all further visited now. While the major stores within 2 or 3 miles of them in Cook have empty checkers. Beyond the liquor, cigarette and other added taxes that Cook has instituted, there is a peoples' revolt going on. Every third commercial running on TV is people who are spitting mad or condescending arrogant. Families are going a couple of extra miles to get 30 bottles of flavored water that doesn't even hold any sugar but has had its price doubled by the new tax. (Penny per oz.)

It's a circus at times- the grocery store. Read your labels and YOU decide what you will eat. Do not let others make that decision for you.