

Should We Have Faith The Market Will Provide?

Do you know where your lunch today came from? No, I don't mean from what store; I mean do you know where the ingredients all originated? Who grew or harvested them? Who put them together? And where?

Most of us (including me) don't know, and don't need to know. No one needed to show me an overall master plan for food production and distribution in order for me to feel confident that I would be able to find food today. Day after day I see the *results* of voluntary trade (which happens in *spite* of "government" interference, not *because* of it), and I don't particularly care what all the details were.

With that in mind, consider how you would answer someone who asked, "But if government didn't control all food production and distribution, how would we eat?" If you're like most people (including me), you don't even *know* the specifics of how it already happens on a daily basis. Nor do you need to. But you could at least give a general answer, along the lines of, "Well, there's a lot of money to be made growing and selling food, so plenty of people choose to do it—and do it very efficiently—on a voluntary basis."

And that is the same honest answer that applies to any question about, "Without government, how would *this* be done?" The truth is, you don't know. And neither do I. We might have predictions, or suggestions, but ultimately the details of it will probably end up being very different than whatever we can envision right now.

Does that mean people should just take it on faith that "the market" will provide? Well, based on a hell of a lot of past experience, yes. However, there's a way to rephrase the question that should ease the concerns of that common statist lament: "Which of the following do you think is more likely to produce quality goods and services?: 1) Some politicians making a master plan and forcing everyone else to go along with it, or; 2) People being allowed to try any number of solutions, and you get to choose which ones (if any) you want to purchase."

What's *really* sad is that so many people are so profoundly clueless about economics that some might not be sure how to answer that question.