

## **Last Hunger Season by Roger Thurow**



Review by Morgan Peretti

Last Hunger season is a wonderful book that follows four small, shareholder farmers throughout what is hopefully their last hunger season. The four farmers, Leonida, Francis, Rasoa and Zipporah are all clients of One Acre Fund, a new microfinance organization that give loans of seeds and fertilizer, hoping to share knowledge of developing world farmers with those in Africa, a continent that has been somewhat left behind in terms of food stabilization.

Through their stories, you can see the day-to-day choices that people living in poverty face and how they constantly struggle between their daily needs and future investments. You see how often, life's emergencies and market prices do not necessarily work together. For example, at the end of the hunger season, when food is plentiful and the markets are low, Leonida's two children fall terribly ill. Money is needed to pay for their medical bills. Though she knows that she should hold on to her maize and sell it when the market price rises, life interrupts her plan and she winds up selling the lion's share of her maize to cover these costs. Ultimately, despite this misfortune, Leonida feels grateful that her harvest had allowed her family to conquer their health challenges.

I loved this book because of the stories of the farmers. I also love how you can really see how over time, microcredit can make a huge impact. Once again, it seems to be an issue with access. When the farmers have the access to the right tools, a huge impact is made in their lives; they have more choices and more power.