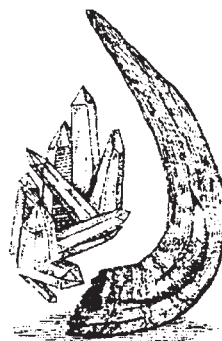


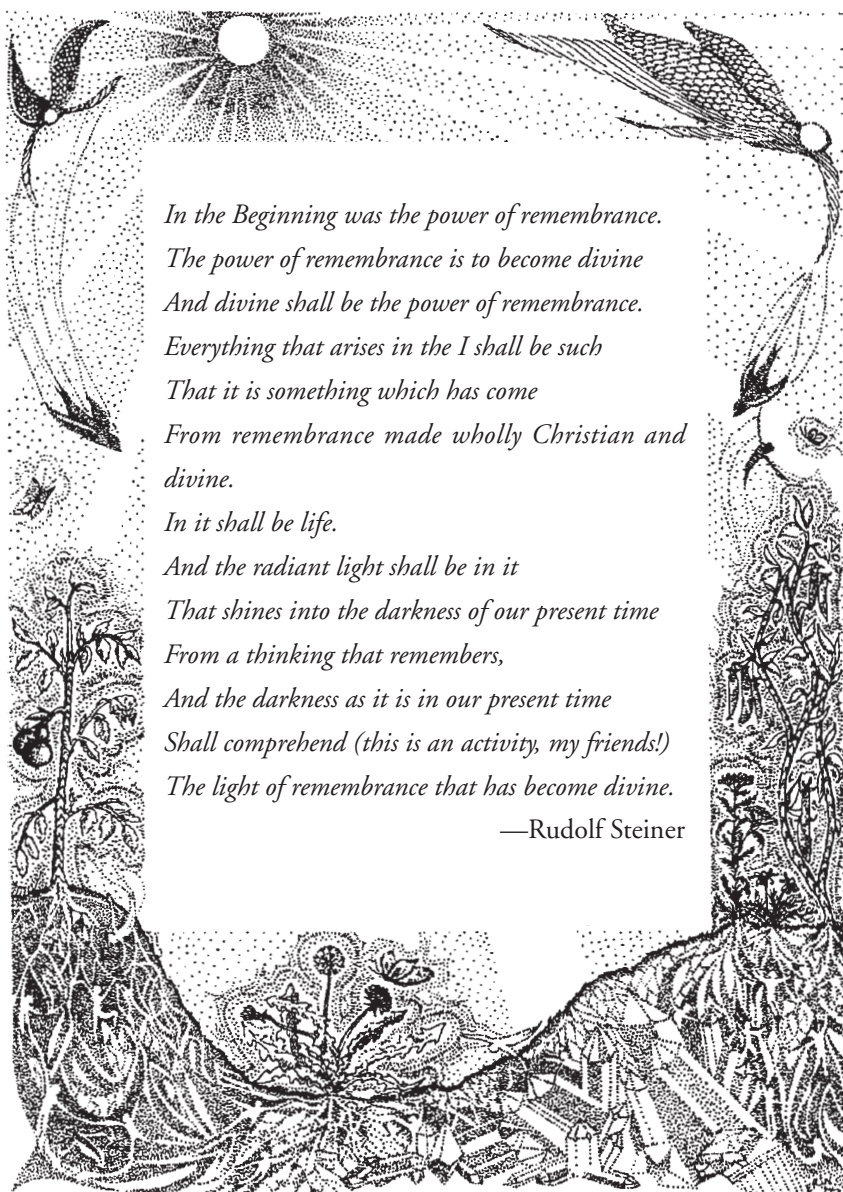
Applied BIODYNAMICS®



Spring/Fall, 2000

Newsletter of the Josephine Porter Institute • Woolwine, Virginia

Issue No. 29/30



*In the Beginning was the power of remembrance.
The power of remembrance is to become divine
And divine shall be the power of remembrance.
Everything that arises in the I shall be such
That it is something which has come
From remembrance made wholly Christian and
divine.
In it shall be life.
And the radiant light shall be in it
That shines into the darkness of our present time
From a thinking that remembers,
And the darkness as it is in our present time
Shall comprehend (this is an activity, my friends!)
The light of remembrance that has become divine.*

—Rudolf Steiner

Saying Goodbye to the Twentieth Century

Was it 1999 or 2000 when you said goodbye to the Second Millennium? Fred Espenak, an Eclipse Specialist at NASA, clarifies the millennium math: "The Second Millennium ends on December 31, 2000, NOT 1999, as was erroneously reported by the media last year. Our current method of dating years begins on January 1 of the year 1 AD, not year 0 AD. A little third grade arithmetic will tell you that the first century ended on December 31, 100 AD, and not 99 AD. Similarly, the First Millennium ended on December 31, 1000 AD."

Shortly before we entered the Third Millennium, a solar eclipse occurred on December 25, 2000. Only thirty-one solar eclipses have taken place on Christmas Day since 2000 BC. What better way to close one millennium and welcome the next!

Biodynamic researcher Ehrenfried Pfeiffer had some thoughts about the end of the twentieth century. The following passage is from his lecture entitled, "The Threshold Experience", presented September 10, 1961.

... If your Ego would speak with all its might, it would wreck you, you would not be able to take it. You have to listen to a very gentle voice of your higher inspirator. One of the lessons on the path is to learn to listen. If you learn to listen, you discover Lucifer and you discover Ahriman, if you learn to listen and wait.

Continued on page 11

From the Editorial Desk

This double issue (Spring/Fall 2000) features valerian, how it is made into a biodynamic preparation (#507), its uses and history. Also, we bid a fond farewell to the twentieth century with some insights about this time from a lecture of biodynamic researcher Ehrenfried Pfeiffer (1899–1961). Book reviews include *The Birth of a New Agriculture*, *Developing Biodynamic Agriculture*, and *Robes*. Thank you for your patience as we redouble our efforts to deliver three issues of *Applied Biodynamics* for the year 2000.

— Patricia Smith, Guest Editor

Cover Notes

The verse on the front cover is from Adalbert Keyserlingk's *Developing Biodynamic Agriculture* (pp. 74–75). See page 14 in this issue for a review of this title. Our thanks to Elizabeth Courtney for the calligraphy on the back cover.

Beautiful Blossoms

Many thank you's are in order. The time and energy devoted to these harvests of blossoms is an integral part of what makes biodynamic preparations happen. Our most recent contributors of yarrow (for BD #502), chamomile

(for BD #503) and dandelion (for BD #506) are listed as follows. For yarrow: Mike Whalen of Genesee Community Farm in Waukesha, WI and Ingeborg Rathke of Homer, AK. For chamomile and dandelion: Gregg Martens and family of Englewood, CO. For chamomile: Sharon Carson of Delmar, DE. A special thanks to Gregg Martens and family, who for many years now have provided abundant contributions of beautifully harvested blossoms. Thank you all!

Biodynamic Preparations Legend

BD #500 – Horn Manure

BD #501 – Horn Silica

BD #502 – Yarrow

BD #503 – Chamomile

BD #504 – Stinging Nettle

BD #505 – Oak Bark

BD #506 – Dandelion

BD #507 – Valerian

} Compost
Preparations

BD #508 – Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)



Mission

The Josephine Porter Institute for Applied Bio-Dynamics Inc. (JPI), was founded to produce quality biodynamic agricultural preparations based on the spiritual-scientific research of Rudolf Steiner.

It serves as a living memorial to Josephine Porter, a pioneer for this work in America.

The mission of JPI also includes education and research in biodynamic agriculture. JPI undertakes these tasks so that the earth may be healed.

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Applied Biodynamics

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How to Make the Valerian Preparation (BD #507)

The following describes the steps we usually take when making the valerian preparation at the Josephine Porter Institute here in Woolwine.

Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) grows two to five feet tall in moist soils with light shade to full sun.

Picking the Flowers

What to look for: White flowers with petals a pink hue to pure white. Refrain from picking those that are still a bit green and those that are past bloom that go a little brown on the edges. For harvesting, you can use scissors, a knife or fingernails. When cutting, leave a little bit of stem.



Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) begins to form flower heads in the spring. (Photo ©JPI Staff)



With long, sturdy green stems, valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*), grows two to five feet tall and prefers moist soils. (Photo ©JPI Staff)

Time of Year to Harvest

May through June (Northern Hemisphere). If possible, cut every nine days until finished blooming.

Time of the Moon

Preferably in a Flower Period, that is, when the Moon is in one of the Air/Light Constellations of Aquarius (Waterman), Gemini (Twins) or Libra (Scales). Ideally, the moon should be ascending (Aquarius or Gemini) or approaching full (Libra) as well.

Time of Day

If there's not too much dew on the flowers to contend with, it is fine to start at sunrise. Otherwise, picking the



When picking valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) flowers, look for petals with a pink hue to pure white. (Photo ©JPI Staff)



Harvested valerian flowers to be used for making BD #507. (Photo © Patricia Smith)

flowers from 8:30 to 11:30 AM (daylight saving time) is a good guideline, not too wet, and yet not too dry. Picking should be completed not less than one hour before meridian noon.

Processing the Flowers

Once flowers are picked, they are ready to go through a grain grinder or food processor. Place a bowl under the grinder to catch the processed valerian. Gently mist flowers with a little water to ease their way through the grinding



Misting with a little water helps to ease the valerian blossoms through the grain grinder. (Photo © Patricia Smith)

process. Scrape the grinder consistently with a small knife rather than losing some of the paste when using one's fingers. When processed through, the valerian is the consistency of pesto, a lovely bright green paste.



Use a small knife or similar tool to scrape, rather than losing some of the paste or flowers when using one's fingers. (Photo © Patricia Smith)

Extracting the Liquid

When all flowers are ground, use a K & K Juice Press or wheatgrass juicer to extract the liquid. While the manual wheatgrass juicer is more readily available and affordable (retails at \$60) than the K & K Juice Press (retails at \$350 to \$450), the latter certainly derives far more juice and less sediment buildup of the two. An even more expensive piece of equipment is the Norwalk Juicer (retails at \$1,900 to \$2,100) which can both grind and then extract the juice. Alternatively, a good mechanic could probably build a small hydraulic press with a few materials at far less cost.

The ground valerian paste is placed into a cotton cloth.



The grain grinder does quick work of making a paste from the valerian flowers. (Photo © Patricia Smith)

Recommended are two handkerchiefs, enclosed and folded loosely over the valerian paste, and placed into the container of the press. The handkerchiefs should be pre-moistened and then wrung dry by hand. Loosely fitted works best, because if it is wrapped too tightly, the pressing force will tear the cloth apart, causing the valerian paste to squeeze out. The extracted juice is then collected



A wheatgrass juicer may not extract as much liquid as a more refined juicer. However, it does grind and extract juice at the same time, suitable for making a small batch of BD#507. (Photo © Patricia Smith)



The juice collector and wooden block are parts to the K & K Juice Press. The handkerchief is used to enclose the valerian paste. (Photo © Patricia Smith)

in a sterilized bottle. To sterilize, glass bottles should be submerged for up to ten minutes in rapidly boiling water. “Grolsch” style brown beer bottles with an adjoining cap work well for this process. Use a sterilized funnel so you will not miss a drop; every little bit counts. One needs to ensure that all equipment is sterilized so that stray fungus or yeast spores will not contaminate the valerian juice. The press can sit for one to three hours as every drop is collected.

A simpler method for small scale juice extraction is to place the moist paste in the handkerchiefs and twist them



The paste of ground valerian is placed into a cotton cloth. (Photo © JPI Staff)

until the juice starts dripping through the bottom of the handkerchiefs into a bowl. Quantity extracted will be much less than with a hydraulic press, but may be suited for a small scale operation since it takes only twenty drops or so to be able to treat ten or fifteen tons of compost.

Fermentation Time

When finished with the extraction process, remove funnel and seal opening of bottle with a sterilized fermentation lock (if plastic, scald for one minute in near boiling water). Label each bottle with the date, moon aspects and phase, and what type of press used. After six weeks, the fermentation lock can be removed and a regular cap can seal the bottle. Fermentation for valerian is six weeks to three months, so use your judgement for sufficient time.

The Filtering Process

From this point on you can decide whether to filter out the sediment, or, use your fermented Valerian Preparation BD #507 as it is. For filtering the sediment, we use two glass manual drip coffee makers, milk filters, and Melita coffee filters. Be sure to sterilize coffee makers and plastic



Fold cloth loosely; if it is wrapped too tightly, the pressing force will tear the cloth apart, causing the paste to squeeze out. (Photo © Patricia Smith)

filter holders in boiling water. Pour the fermented valerian through the first coffee maker, lining the filter holder with the milk filter. Once the filter starts to clog, start the



After the valerian flowers have been ground, enclose the paste into a double layered handkerchief or similar cotton cloth. (Photo © Patricia Smith)



The K & K Juice Press extracts valerian juice with little sediment compared to a wheatgrass juicer. Use a funnel to catch every drop. (Photo © Patricia Smith)



After extraction in the K & K Juice Press, the paste removed from the cloth resembles a flat green "cake". This cake can be crumbled up and re-moistened with a little water to return it to a paste-like consistency. The re-moistened paste goes through the juice press again and funneled into a separate bottle for a valerian water extract. This can be used for an emergency backup if the pure valerian extract supply is depleted. (Photo © Patricia Smith)

second coffee maker, also lined with the milk filter. Once all the fermented valerian has dripped through, remove the sediment laden filters and replace them with Melita style coffee filters, a less porous filter than the first. Once the fermented valerian has dripped through, most of the sediment is now removed. Remove filters and holders from the coffee maker. Using a sterilized funnel, pour the contents of the filtered fermented valerian into sterilized glass bottles. These bottles can now be stored for years in a cool dark place. From time to time (every three to six months), uncork the valerian to release fermented gases. This is important, because gas buildup in bottles of fer-

mented valerian may explode and shatter when left unvented.

For Use

One unit of fermented valerian is 1 to 2 milliliters. To convert milliliters to teaspoons, use the formula: 5 milliliters x .2 = 1 teaspoon. One unit of fermented valerian is usually added to about two gallons of water. Once stirred into water for the recommended ten to fifteen minutes, or even up to twenty minutes, uses include: distributing to a compost pile, seed soaks and frost protection, to name a few. For further information on its uses and applications, see the next article in this issue, "The Valerian Preparation – Some Additional Perspectives".

Source of Supplies

- Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*): Garden catalogs
- Grain grinder: Farm supply or health foods store
- Milk filters: Farm supply store
- Glass bottles, caps, fermentation locks, funnels: Beer and winemaking supply stores
- Wheatgrass juicer: Natural or health foods store
- K & K Juice Press: Contact Natural Living Products at (800)469-7583, <www.naturalliving.com/champion.html> or Optimal Health Concepts at (888)229-4676; <www.intohealth.com/K&K.html>
- Norwalk Juicer: Contact Norwalk Juicer at (800)405-8423 <<http://home.abac.com/norwalk/>>

Hugh Courtney also contributed to this article.

Hugh J. Courtney

The Valerian Preparation – Some Additional Perspectives

In our effort to cover as completely as we can everything you ever wanted to know about BD #507, the valerian preparation, it would be useful to view historical and other perspectives on the making and use of this preparation.

In the first place, no other preparation receives such little attention in Rudolf Steiner's description of the various preparations as does valerian. It is almost as an afterthought that he describes how one makes and uses this preparation, and it is a good possibility that too many easy assumptions have been made about Steiner's indications for the valerian preparation. So far as I can determine, Steiner had little or no opportunity to clarify any of the questions that may have arisen in the minds of those early biodynamic pioneers concerning either the making or the

actual use of the valerian preparation. It is my understanding that three people were principally involved with the initial making of the various preparations: Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, Günther Wachsmuth and Immanuel Voegelé.¹ Much of this initial effort took place before Steiner gave his lectures, but apparently Steiner kept the instructions to the bare essentials as far as these individuals were concerned. He also did not give a great deal more elaboration when he actually presented the lectures in Koberwitz, most especially with respect to the valerian preparation. Given the fact that Steiner died in 1925, less than a year after the agriculture course was given, and was quite ill for the last six months of his life, it is probable there was little chance to clarify his indications about the preparations.

Within a few short years after the agriculture lectures, it appears that the general practice for making the preparation essentially involved the practice described elsewhere in this issue of gathering blossoms, grinding them up and then extracting the juice for subsequent fermentation. However, at least a few practitioners also chose to make the preparation in a fashion similar to the making of a flower essence. That is, relatively few blossoms were placed in water in a bottle and then hung up in the outdoors to receive the benefits of sunshine for a period of time. I should point out that the former method used at JPI is one received from Josephine Porter, who received it directly from Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, who, presumably, received it directly from Rudolf Steiner.

With respect to the use of the valerian preparation in its role as a compost preparation, the general practice in Europe seems to be that it is only sprinkled on the top of the compost pile after the other preparations have been inserted. It seems that it is always applied at the time the pile is treated with the other preparations. The Central European technique is thoroughly described in the following extract from the book *Biodynamic Farming Practice*:

On the basis of many years' experience, the German Research Group for Biodynamic Farming Methods (Forschungsring für Biologisch-Dynamische Wirtschaftsweisen) has published the following brief instructions for using and storing the compost preparations:

The six preparations are made from the medicinal plants yarrow, wild camomile, stinging nettle, oak bark, dandelion and valerian. They are added to compost, manure, dung liquor and slurries. To treat a compost heap, stacked manure or deep litter, use a stick to make five holes, each about 50 cm deep. The distance between holes should be not less than 50 cm nor more than 2 metres. Put 2 or 3 grams (a small teaspoonful) of the five solid preparations singly into consecutive holes, as shown in Fig. 32. The sequence does not matter that much, it is used for practical reasons.

The preparations are quite light in weight; to make sure that they go down to the bottom of their respective holes, mix each with a little dung or moist earth, shape into a small ball and drop down this hole.

Close the holes up, so that the preparations are completely surrounded by manure. For the liquid valerian preparation you'll need hand-hot water which should be soft or have been left to stand for some time. Use 2–3 ml (a small teaspoonful) to 5

litres of water and stir for 15 minutes, reversing direction at intervals (clockwise until a vortex has formed, then anticlockwise, etc.). Spray the surface of the heap with the solution.²

As biodynamic agriculture moved further to the west, there was added the practice of inserting the valerian in its own hole in the pile along with a sprinkling on the exterior surface of the pile as detailed by Katherine Castelliz in *Life to the Land* as follows:

These six plants are used for the making of the six compost preparations 502–507. The study of these plants may help to a better understanding of the working of these preparations. As compost preparations they are used in order to transform garden refuse as well as animal manures into substances which advance the development and health of plants. That organic substances are in fact transformed into good compost much quicker under the influence of the preparations than without them shows that the substances are really 'prepared' as 'plant foods' and losses are kept to a minimum.

The heaps, either manure heaps or heaps made of vegetable matter, should measure not more than four yards (or metres) across but can be much narrower. Their height should not exceed five feet (1.30 metres). Their length is unlimited. The mass of vegetable matter or manure will rot better and quicker if some soil, or better still, some half rotted or rotted compost is incorporated in the heap. Vegetable matter has to be set up with dustings of hydrated lime (or ground limestone) between layers. The sides of the heap should be slanting, which makes it wider at the bottom than it is at the top. The preparations are put in at a distance of about one yard (or metre) along the upper edge of the heap. One makes holes with a stick or a crowbar, about 20 inches (50 cm) deep, all the way around the heap. Small heaps get three holes in each side. One portion (1 gram) of preparation is put into each hole, and each hole receives a different preparation. Start with 502 and go on to 507, then begin again with 502 until all holes are served. Never put all the preparations into one hole. When all is done fill in the holes to close them. To make 507 (valerian) ready for use put enough of the liquid into lukewarm rain water to colour it slightly, make sure you can smell the valerian in it, and use some of it to pour into the appropriate hole or holes and use some of it to sprinkle over the heap after all the holes are closed. Cover the heap with a thin layer of

soil or with peat, lawn clippings, straw, etc. Manure heaps should have a generous covering of straw. Do not set up manure from different animals in different heaps, but mix them, unless you need some special manure for a particular job. For 9–12 cubic yards (or metres) of a finished heap one set of preparations is required.³

Interestingly enough, Katherine Castelliz concludes the above description with a footnote that “See also George Corrin, *Handbook on Composting and the Bio-Dynamic Preparations*.” Therein, Corrin describes essentially a use of valerian that is applied only to the exterior of the pile.

The practice of putting the valerian within as well as on the pile apparently originated with Ehrenfried Pfeiffer. It should be noted that Katherine Castelliz worked very closely with Pfeiffer in Dornach for a considerable period of time. The present instructions for using the valerian preparation remain just as they were received from Josephine Porter in 1984, and were given to her by Ehrenfried Pfeiffer himself. There is no record available to suggest that Pfeiffer ever discussed the placement or use of this preparation with Steiner, but one must presume that he would have had that opportunity. Inasmuch as Pfeiffer apparently had at least some ability for direct communication with the elemental beings, one should not dismiss as a total aberration his use of valerian as a preparation to be placed within the pile as well as on it. Given Rudolf Steiner’s very clear indication that there were differences in the geographic forces in North America in so far as how tightly the manure was to be packed into the cow horn,⁴ it is at least possible that Pfeiffer also discerned the need to use valerian differently as he moved further west.

Lectures Steiner gave on the subject of differences in the manifestation of forces in different areas of the Earth have been published under the title *Geographic Medicine* by Mercury Press. I believe that every biodynamic practitioner who wishes to broaden an understanding of the forces within the various biodynamic preparations should study these lectures and how they may impact the farm.

Those whose biodynamic training originates in Europe, but whose practice is accomplished in America seem to still follow the technique of treating the exterior of the pile only. Those whose biodynamic training originates in America, where Pfeiffer’s influence was paramount, follow the practice of both exterior and interior application of BD #507.

It is also worth bringing to the reader’s attention the view that Harvey Lisle holds with respect to the valerian preparation. Harvey feels quite strongly that BD #507 should be placed within the pile only, as he believes that

to sprinkle the pile with the valerian effectively “kills” the biodynamic forces within the pile. Harvey Lisle has been a biodynamic practitioner for many years and served for several years as the Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association. While many would be inclined to discount Harvey’s findings because he has used his dowsing abilities to arrive at his conclusions, I have too much respect for Harvey’s years of biodynamic efforts not to at least pause to contemplate seriously any thoughts he may offer out of his experience. I am inclined to believe that Harvey may not be asking exactly the right question when he comes to the conclusion that valerian sprinkled on the exterior of the pile “kills” the biodynamic effect within the pile. Nevertheless, this is another of those questions in biodynamic agriculture that cries out for comprehensive research. As I observed above, the further west that the biodynamic movement traveled, the more does the view seem to call for placement of this preparation within the pile, and perhaps to eliminate it as a surface application entirely.

When one tries to understand the underlying reasons as to why Pfeiffer would have chosen to also insert the valerian within the pile, we are provided a clue from reading Karl Konig. In *Earth and Man* he states: “Although a tremendous amount of lime is precipitated in our skeleton, the form into which it is precipitated is silica.”⁵ Later, in answer to a question, Konig says further, “When you study the silica process in man you find that it is always on the surface. It is not only on the outer surface, but also on the inner surface. Silica is distributed in the hair, and all over the body in the layers of the skin, where horny material is continually forming and being discarded. It is a layer in the eyes and in all the openings which form our senses. Now consider the skeleton. The inner and outer surfaces of the skeleton are also filled with very fine silica substance.”⁶ It is quite possible that Pfeiffer, when faced with the very strong Earthly forces in America, felt that the cosmic forces needed to be within the compost as strongly as possible. Again, this is a matter calling for research.

When we take a look at uses for BD #507 other than as a compost preparation, it appears to receive more attention as a preparation for individual application than any of the other five compost preparations. An additional excerpt from *Biodynamic Farming Practice* describes some of the other uses of valerian as follows:

A cold extract made from the flowers of valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) (507) gives compost and manure the power to relate properly to phosphorus. Added to a manure or compost heap, the valerian preparation not only regulates phosphorus and tem-

perature processes but also surrounds the heap with protective warmth. This quality can be put to good use for the prevention of late and early frost damage. If there is a serious risk of night frosts, spray the crops, e.g. flowering soft fruit plants or sensitive species such as beans, tomatoes, early potatoes and also basil, late in the evening with a valerian solution. As a rule there will be no damage with temperatures dropping to -3 or -4 degrees C; if they go down lower than that, damage cannot be prevented but can at least be minimized to some extent. If plants are covered with hoarfrost in the morning, a second application of valerian will often save the situation.

If valerian is sprayed on flowering plants (e.g. pulses, rape, linseed and mustard) and fodder plants grown for seed (e.g. sainfoin, phacelia and many others) when the shoots are c. 15–20 cm high and again just before they come into flower, the flowering process will be greatly stimulated. Crops will flower abundantly and at a good pace in sunny weather, ensuring a greatly enhanced yield.⁷

Beyond its uses for frost protection and to stimulate flowering, the valerian preparation is further recommended by Castelliz as follows:

Plants in special need of light and warmth (tomatoes, beans, carrots, etc. should be sprayed with this Valerian extract in cool and wet summers. The general health and resistance to disease are being promoted in all plants which are treated with 507, the colour of flowers is deepened, the aroma of fruit is enhanced. Use one portion (1 millilitre) to a bucket of water.⁸

Perhaps the greatest benefit to be gained from an independent use of BD #507 is as a seed bath when starting seeds to improve germination and overall vitality. Among the several preparations used for seed baths, valerian is perhaps the most versatile. It is recommended for a long list of crops beginning with wheat, corn (maize), beets (including fodder and sugar types), onions, leeks, celery, carrots, celeriac, tomatoes, peppers, potatoes, cantaloupe, pumpkin and other fruiting crops.⁹

Lastly, when BD #507 is used either alternatively or in conjunction with BD #501, fruit set and yield can be substantially enhanced. At least one vineyard experienced a full point improvement in Brix readings for their grapes this fall when using a combination of BD #501 and BD #507. Given the cool, wet summer and early fall experienced at the vineyard, this was very helpful in being able to harvest the grapes in a timely manner.

Even more important than using valerian by resorting to a checklist approach, as in the case of seed baths for

instance, is to understand valerian as a carrier of forces rather than simply as substance. One of the most helpful pictures in developing such understanding is to be found in C. B. J. Lievegoed's *The Working of the Planets and the Life Processes in Man and Earth* in which he makes the following statements about valerian:

Rudolf Steiner says about this preparation little more than that it stimulates the plants to behave properly towards what is called phosphorus.

Valerian is not prepared in any special way. The flowers are pressed and the extraction highly diluted with water. The mixture is sprinkled over the compost heap. There is no need here to prepare the plant within the sphere of the Earth. Diluting and potentizing are enough, because we are dealing with the most distant forces of Saturn, so close to the Spirit. These must be communicated to the heap, and by sprinkling them over it we surround it with something like a Spiritual sheath, just as Saturn encloses the whole planetary space.

How can we understand this “to behave in the right way in relation to what we call the ‘phosphoric’ substance?” Rudolf Steiner describes the medicinal effect of phosphorus as strengthening the Ego (in the case of the plant this means the Spiritual archetype), as against a too strong Astral activity. With the Oak Bark preparation we achieved that the Astral should work as a regulator against the rampant Ethereal. Here, in the case of Valerian, it is a Spiritual element which must win the upper hand so that the plant may, again and again, realize its own archetype. We can test the medicinal effect of Valerian by taking a large dose (e.g. 50–60 drops) of *Tinctura Valerianae*, made from the root. We notice a slowing down of the pulse, a leaden heaviness in the limbs, and a lowering of all functional rhythms. This remedy is found in every medicine chest and is used in all cases of nervous excitement and insomnia.

With the Valerian we have enumerated the last of the six compost Preparations and have brought its effect upon plants into relation to Saturn, most distant from the Earth and closest to the Spirit.¹⁰

At this point I would like to take a small exception to the statement of Lievegoed that “Valerian is not prepared in any special way.” After the extraction of the juice from the flowers, the juice goes through a fermentation process before use, which can be construed as a “special way” of preparing it. The alternative “flower essence” method for making this preparation can also be construed as a “special way” for preparing it. Both fermentation and the

“flower essence” treatment are means to imbue the preparation with a greater affinity for a spiritual rather than an earthly dimension.

Another useful picture in helping us gain an understanding of the force level rather than the substance level at which valerian functions is to be found in reading the following from *Earth and Man* by Karl König:

We now cover it [he is speaking of the compost heap] and sprinkle it with valerian. Why do we do this? We enliven the phosphorus process, and this is a process which calls down the help of the heavens to aid all that has been done. To call down the forces to act in the way we had intended these forces to act – this is actually done with valerian.

I could of course now speak at length about valerian as a medicine for men and animals. But here you use it not so much in a medicinal way, but much more generally. It is done – I hardly dare to say it for fear of creating a wrong impression – as one uses incense at the altar. You do something to call down the help of the higher worlds: “Let the archetypal plant come down.

. . . The sprinkling of the compost heap is actually the most important process, and should live in our souls when we perform it. Something like the sprinkling of valerian, this calling down of the help of the spirit for the work on earth, should penetrate and infiltrate our whole existence as gardeners and farmers.

. . . We must realize more and more what a holy gift we carry as we learn to practice it (biodynamic agriculture) and to understand it.¹¹

No matter how we choose to make the valerian preparation, or how we apply it on or within a compost pile, it seems to me that the attitude of reverence for a sacred act, which König suggests, is the most important approach to using valerian within the Earth.

Notes

- 1) Adalbert Keyserlingk, *Developing Biodynamic Agriculture – Reflections on Early Research* (London: Temple Lodge, 1999), 43.
- 2) Friedrich Sattler and Eckhard Wistinghausen, *Biodynamic Farming Practice* (Stuttgart, Germany: Bio-Dynamic Agricultural Association, 1989), 87–88.
- 3) Katherine Castelliz, *Life to the Land* (Sussex, England: Lanthorn Press, 1980), 27–28.
- 4) Rudolf Steiner, *Spiritual Foundations for the Renewal of Agriculture* (Kimberton, PA: Bio-Dynamic Farming and Gardening Association, 1993), 79.
- 5) Karl König, *Earth and Man* (Wyoming, RI: Bio-

Dynamic Literature, 1982), 240.

6) König, op. cit., 246.

7) Sattler and Wistinghausen, Op. cit., 86–87.

8) Castelliz, op. cit., 32.

9) Hugh Courtney, “Seed Soaks with the Biodynamic Preparations,” *Applied Biodynamics*, No. 7, Spring 1994.

10) C. B. J. Lievegoed, *The Working of the Planets and the Life Processes in Man and Earth*, (Experimental Circle of Anthroposophical Farmers and Gardeners, 1951), 31.

11) König, op. cit., 310, 312.

Goodbye to the 20th Century

continued from page 1

Daily we have to learn and if we get stronger and more conscious, it begins to make sense. If we don’t lose that feeling: I admire myself, I do this, it is just too bad, if we don’t discover the right twist, we then reap the consequences after death. As far as we are here, as I look at some people here, they will be here at the end of the century. And others won’t. Dr. Steiner has painted the picture that the end of the century will be the decisive moment for all humanity. In many religions, in many esoterically trained groups we learn the same thing: It will be a decisive moment. It may be my personal whim but I would like to be there. I would not want to be in heaven if the earth goes to pot. I would want to be here if the earth goes the good way, takes the good turn. I would like to be a witness to that which goes on. I would like to exercise the powers of that much Ego consciousness that I have acquired.

You may say: this is your dream, but I think it is a dream that a true Anthroposophist can develop. I am dead sure that this is a dream that Dr. Steiner developed, the conscious dream that we should be able as human beings to learn that much that we should participate, no matter under what conditions, in the decisive moments that turn the earth up or down. But there I see a certain task, a task about which we could talk, I see a task which we could develop in our own self and then talk about. This I can see as group work.¹

Ehrenfried Pfeiffer passed away November 30, 1961, less than three months after he presented the above lecture.

Note

- 1) Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, *Notes and Lectures Compendium II* (Spring Valley, NY: Mercury Press, 1991), 101.

Book Reviews

Bob Lehman

Robes: A Book of Coming Changes from the Little Men in Brown Robes

Penny Kelly

Penny Kelly begins this book with a description of her “full and spontaneous awakening of kundalini”, an awakening of the powers of consciousness, “including but not limited to visions, voices, many psychic abilities, and startling alterations in perception that introduce one to the surprising number of time-space realities that co-exist with our own.”

Inherently included in such an awakening is the process of trial and error – the learning process. She admits that she has sometimes made mistakes along the way in deciphering the information and touches upon her expectation of an earthquake in Michigan in 1981 that was in actuality an “earthquake” in her personal life. I mention this in connection with my personal dislike of “messiahs” who are not in any way reluctant to take on heavy responsibilities laid upon their shoulders (responsibilities which require great amounts of genuine modesty). I was heartened by Penny’s reluctance (she having been an engineer with Chrysler) to allow subjective material that was antithetical or inconsistent with her system of logic to enter or remain in her consciousness. She was certainly very skeptical of and resistant to the visitations of the little men for quite some time. That reluctance led to a certain procrastination in fulfilling the request of her visitors to write down the information they provided so that others might read it.

It seems mandatory that I very briefly explain the concept of the “little men in brown robes.” The spiritual entities that visited Penny and imparted their massive amounts of clarification of Penny’s thoughts and feelings about herself and the world around her always appeared as seven little men about five feet tall, ranging from balding to bald, wearing dark brown, floor-length robes with long sleeves. “There were no beards or mustaches,” she tells us, “and the faces all seemed to be quite round and ruddy, almost shining as if they had recently been scrubbed and polished. The whole group had a warm glow about them as if exuding a special inner light.” I mention the word “always” in response to their statement that “we have found that with people of your uncertainty level it’s best to be consistent. Then there is no mistaking the encounters for simple imagination. Boring perhaps, but more effective. If we showed up in different forms with a different approach each time, you would discard both us and the information

as unconnected, and unimportant!” They also seem to have respected the caution of her analytical reasoning.

Because she had read many “futuristic” books from *The Third Wave* by Toffler to John Hogan’s *The Millennium Book Prophecy* to William Knoke’s *Bold New World* and was familiar with the similarity of content between those works and her own information from the little men in robes, she was inclined at one point to ditch the writing of the book as unnecessary and redundant. “However,” she states, “when I realized that none of the other accounts of the future offered the unique “teaching approach” or the wonderful combination of depth detail and encouragement toward creative action that the little men had presented, I decided to go ahead with the project.” She continues by saying that “if we don’t have a vision of what we’re moving toward, of what we could create, we won’t see anything but destruction, won’t feel anything but fear as the changes escalate. If this happens we’ll be caught up in something painful and ugly at the exact moment when we most need to be creative and to be maintaining a vision of beauty, truth, and freedom.”

Most certainly the information disseminated by the Robes is a very refreshing augmentation to Steiner’s teachings in subjects ranging from “the return to subjectivity” to the “degradation of science” to the development of personal forgiveness. Of particular interest to me is a short discourse in which the Robes state, “Trees and vegetation are critical to moderating and controlling these electromagnetic fields as producers of magnetic fields.” This is followed by a thorough explanation of how this works. Other topics of information range from food, nutrition, and farming to childhood development, religion, family, and Gaia as a living being quite capable of healing herself.

When Penny inquires of the Robes as to why all these earth changes have to happen, their response is that “nothing has to happen but in the physical realm everything cycles since cycles are the means by which all power is regenerated.” They continue by saying “if the Earth changes come in your lifetime and you are in the habit of expecting others to feed you, to provide fresh water and fuel, and the knowledge of healing, then you are lost. Even very small changes in the Earth should require you to know how to provide these things for yourselves.”

In relation to our efforts in the realm of biodynamics, I want to quote the little men’s comment about our foundations in the world of soil and plants and how “only after

we have aligned ourselves with the life principle and learned to maintain supreme health at all levels, will we be given the secrets to regenerating life and health through the use of frequencies, whether sound, light, or otherwise.” Their response was that “if you’re not willing to go after something with your own time and energy, why should it be handed to you? You must begin to take a hand in creating your reality.” We certainly must go forward with our efforts.

Penny and her husband have certainly heeded that wisdom. Her exposure to the little men has pulled them into the direction of becoming more and more self-sufficient through growing their own food and herbs. “By stages,” she states, “we had abandoned chemical fertilizers and poisons in our vineyards, learning a variety of organic techniques for coaxing a crop out of the land. Because of its low cost and its ability to produce food with superior nutrition, we eventually settled on Bio-Dynamic farming practices which involved specific composting procedures and herbal sprays to combat disease.”

Patricia Smith

Temple Lodge Publishing of London has done a tremendous service for those interested in biodynamics in offering these two selections in English. There are not many books describing the origins of biodynamics and the following are essential reading for everyone seriously involved in biodynamic agriculture.

***The Birth of a New Agriculture Koberwitz 1924* Compiled and edited by Adalbert Graf von Keyserlingk; translated by John M. Wood; 230 pages.**

The Birth of a New Agriculture is an excellent reference for historical, social and spiritual understanding of the legacy of biodynamic agriculture. Divided into three sections, Part I describes how the Count and Countess Keyserlingk acquired Koberwitz, an estate in Silesia in Eastern Germany, with Steiner’s guidance. Koberwitz was by no means a coincidental or random location where Steiner delivered the Agriculture Course.

This is not so much about what participants learned from the Agriculture Course, but the how and why they were there. Their feelings towards Steiner and the memorable experiences they had with him lasted a lifetime. The Koberwitz impulse for some was a spiritual starting point for the rest of their lives.

Part II contains recollections of the participants: farmers, employees at Koberwitz, an anthroposophical doctor, a eurythmist, and Keyserlingk’s son, Adalbert, to name a

few. She seems to have become quite adept at juggling the incessant impulses, visions, and perceptual changes presented to her with her incredibly full schedule of running a sizeable farm and building an educational center as well. Like Steiner, she is living proof that, done correctly, opening up spiritually and taking on more responsibility in the physical world can work hand-in-hand. As in electricity, the better the ground, the better the current.

In closing, I will say that because of my own dreams and visions that began as early as high school, I have searched for information which could elucidate these personal feelings and impulses. This particular version of our human state and where it is potentially headed is both poignant and powerful and is easy to digest through the little men’s clear, positive, accessible method of teaching that is organized and reiterated by Penny in a truly enjoyable manner. Give it a read.

Bob Lehman was a member of the staff at JPI from 1999 to 2000. He now lives in North Carolina and is renovating a farm.

few. All were deeply moved by the consideration and sensitivity Rudolf Steiner had for everyone he came into contact with at the Koberwitz Conference. Through his lectures, he helped to bridge the important step for people to realize spiritually, how agriculture inspires and connects everyone to this organism called Earth. For this significance, the lectures sparked the essential importance of growing plants biodynamically in order for nutritious food to be available for humanity and animals. The message was then as it is now: if this impulse is not met, chemical agriculture will stifle our spiritual growth, allowing materialism to grow within us. Many of the anecdotes resonate from the heart, sharing with the reader how fortuitous it was for each participant to be at Koberwitz.

Part III documents the historical backdrop from 1912 to 1924, and how circumstances and decisions made in the fourth and ninth centuries all play into this particular time of immense turmoil and chaos. The history of the early part of the twentieth century in Central Europe alone is gripping. How so many lost their position of authority and dictatorial governments readily took over is truly horrific. Steiner and others would connect these events to the indifferent population being “asleep”. For this reason, humanity would pay dearly in the coming years of World War II.

In this section it also details the cataclysmic events

which turned the world towards loss of compassion. At the time, most of humanity failed to grasp heartfelt influences that could inspire them to responsible consciousness and possibly lead them to avert dangerous circumstances on an international scale. Because most people would not follow Steiner's guidance, or listen to their own inner voice, nothing was done and chaos took control. On several occasions, Steiner let officials such as Count Polzer, the brother of the leader of the Austrian Government, know what could be done to avoid conflict.

When Rudolf Steiner saw that Count Polzer could hardly bear the responsibility laid upon him, he comforted him by saying: 'One must also learn to stand back and watch things being destroyed. If what I have explained to you as a possible means of salvation does not come about, a series of catastrophes will happen. But that which cannot come about through reasonableness will happen nevertheless after great upheavals; for cosmic will requires it.' (pp. 194–195)

Shortly after his death, Countess Keyserlingk read out the following message she received from Rudolf Steiner:

My mission has come to an end.

What I could impart to the maturity in man I have given him.

I go away, for I found no ears which could perceive the spirit word behind the word. I go away, for I found no eyes which could perceive the spirit-pictures behind earthly pictures.

I go away, because I found no human beings who could bring my work to fulfilment. The Mysteries remain veiled until I return.

I shall return and reveal the Mysteries when I have succeeded in building an altar, a place of worship in the spiritual world for the souls of men. Then I shall return. I shall then continue to open up the Mysteries.

They are to blame for my death who have impeded the culture of the heart.

If people had delved deeply with their hearts into the depths, they would have found the strength to fulfil the tasks of the age satisfactorily. (pp. 211–212)

I feel better for the future after reading this book; in hopefulness that through the Michaelic Impulse, we will take a more responsible and vibrant role in agriculture. Left unchecked, the impulse and the energy that is there for transformation, will be disruptive in order to shake up what has been made a mess. Simply put, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" (George Santayana).

Developing Biodynamic Agriculture: Reflections on Early Research

Adalbert Count Keyserlingk; translation by A.R. Meuss; 108 pages

People can use their powers of mind and spirit to intervene in nature and bring about changes, changes in the geography, for example, but they must awaken faith in their hearts. To breed something new, transforming a wild life form into a cultivar, is an act that needs this kind of faith if it is to succeed, and with it must go the greatest selflessness of which a human being is capable.

—Countess Johanna von Keyserlingk recounting a conversation with Rudolf Steiner (pp.10–11).

Developing Biodynamic Agriculture gives the reader a fundamental understanding of how the first biodynamic researchers approached the uses of the preparations, their relationship to them, and the plants they devotedly sought to help transform. This is a book to get you thinking of the future of biodynamic agriculture by taking you back to where it all started.

What they accomplished is extraordinary. This book is full of fascinating research and experiments with the biodynamic preparations, ashing, crystallizations and the plant researchers who helped to 'transform' (not breed) grains, lupins, and Chinese sweet potatoes. These biodynamic pioneers achieved plant transformation through such activities as "seeing" the right seed or singing as a way to work with plants and the elements of nature.

As an example of their work, the following quotes are from the chapter entitled, "Insights gained from early work in biodynamic research":

Helpful Plants

Medicinal plants, above all peppermint and sage, had a powerful aromatizing effect on all plants growing around them. Symbiosis with horse-radish also had a positive effect. We planted it not only at the four corners, as suggested by Rudolf Steiner, but all around the field and also in the rows themselves. It absolutely vitalized those potatoes. But all cabbage varieties also showed a highly positive reaction to horse-radish. We would always create an enclosed 'space' where horse-radish would be active, or peppermint, or also raspberries. Such spaces would be created all around the plants intended for breeding. (p. 16)

Planetary Influences

We tried to expose specific plants to planetary influences by finding old tree trunks where the heartwood

had turned to earth but the bark and outer wood were still live, cutting them into handy sections and putting these in our experimental gardens. We sowed cereal grains in the rotted-down soil in these 'baskets'. Taking the stump of a plum tree and sowing wheat in it, for example, exposes the wheat to a Saturnine principle. (Plum is a Saturn tree.) Both seed and fruit showed distinct changes, with trees relating to different planets always showing different effects. (p. 17)

Seed Selection

A meditation which Rudolf Steiner had given to Mr. Stegemann became a very real part of our work in those years. We would enter wholly into it, with a small pile of a few hundred grains before us, finally putting perhaps just a single one of them into the soil. This would be the grain which had given a 'response', giving the impression that its aura had changed. Elsewhere Rudolf Steiner also spoke of 'small blue flames' that may rise above a particular seed grain when one is working with it meditatively.

Learning to work in this way we create places where people who are between death and rebirth can bring their powers into play and take our work further. This leads to transformations in the plant world which then need further care to 'stabilize' them, making them into reliable cultivars we can offer to farmers. (p. 19)

Steiner's recommendation for the Chinese sweet potato (Dioscorea batatas):

. . . it was important to acclimatize and develop the Chinese sweet potato in Central Europe, for strong light powers could be taken in when it was used for food. In the course of this conversation, Rudolf Steiner drew a curve that started high up in the East, moved horizontally across Europe and then turned downward as it reached America in the West. He said these were the light powers (not the sun's rays); they came in more strongly from the cosmos in the East, where plants would take them up. In Central Europe these powers moved in a direction horizontal to the ground, and in the West they went below ground, down into the depths, becoming electricity. People would, however, need food plants that could take in more light, and so it would be necessary to acclimatize these plants in Europe. (p. 20)

The following quote is from the chapter entitled, "Biodynamic preparations":

Bladder experiment

We have filled a bladder with fodder beet seed and let it go through the same process as yarrow, from St. John's-tide to Michaelmas and through the winter until Easter, above and below ground. We then sowed the seed. The beet grew so large that one needed two hands to lift one of them from the soil. The result was quite evident and could have been developed further, offering major economic advantages. (pp. 32–33)

Unfortunately, World War II got into the way of this research. Crops were destroyed as troops trampled through and used the papers recording the work to start fires.

The chapter entitled "Some Correspondence with Miss Windeck" offers a memorable summary of these early initiatives. Following this section, Adalbert Count Keyserlingk, considered by the Nazis 'the most dangerous anthroposophist in Silesia', makes an apology that this book was not from the heart as he had hoped. On the contrary, this small book of only 108 pages, is packed with heartfelt information regarding that most vital task of improving nutrition; not only to benefit humanity spiritually, but also for earth's evolution through the Christ Impulse.

Patricia Smith has been a part-time member of the staff at JPI since 1997, having started as a volunteer. She is guest editor of this issue of *Applied Biodynamics*, and resides in Craig County, Virginia.

From Our Bookshelves

The following titles featured in this issue in articles and reviews are available through JPI*:

The Birth of a New Agriculture – \$21.95

Developing Biodynamic Agriculture – \$16.00

Earth and Man – \$18.25

Ehrenfried Pfeiffer Notes and Lectures Compendium II – \$17.00

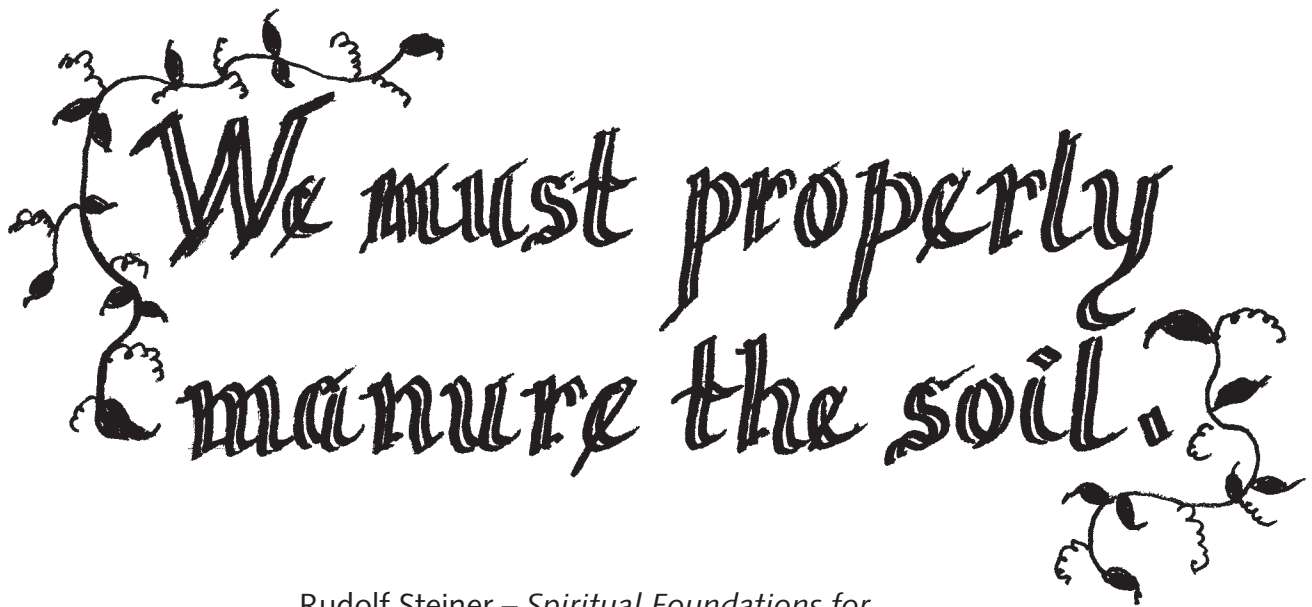
Life to the Land – \$9.95

Robes – \$22.00

"Seed Soaks with the BD Preparations" *Applied Biodynamics*, No.7 – \$7.50

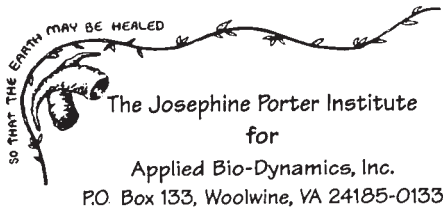
Spiritual Foundations for the Renewal of Agriculture – hard-back \$22.50, paperback \$17.50

*Please note: There is an additional charge for shipping and handling.



We must properly manure the soil.

Rudolf Steiner – *Spiritual Foundations for
The Renewal of Agriculture*, Lecture 5, page 92



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