"The Course itself will show us how intimately the interests of Agriculture are bound up, in all directions, with the widest spheres of life. Indeed there is scarcely a realm of human life which lies outside our subject. From one aspect or another, all interests of human life belong to Agriculture."

Rudolf Steiner – *Agriculture*, Lecture 1, p. 18

Commemorating the 80th Anniversary of the Agriculture Course at Koberwitz, Silesia
June 7-16, 1924

SO THAT THE EARTH MAY BE HEALED
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Spring, 2004 ***Newsletter of the Josephine Porter Institute • Woolwine, Virginia*** **Issue No. 44**

Maria Helenita Betsy Ruizo-Gamela

Report from the Philippines: Effects of the Milk and Honey Spray and Other Major Breakthroughs in Biodynamic Rice Production

The Don Bosco Diocesan Youth Center, implements a centerpiece project, Integrated Programs and Initiatives on Sustainable Agriculture & Development. Biodynamic agriculture is at the heart of the project. The program is a forerunner in the expansion of biodynamic agriculture, not only in the immediate region of Cotabato, but throughout Mindanao in the southern Philippines. Today, it serves as the training resource institution for other civil society organizations, people's organizations, academia and government agencies interested in biodynamic agriculture.

There must be a deeper meaning to the biblical reference to milk and honey in the Old Testament's "land flowing with milk and honey" other than the obvious interpretation of abundance. Whatever it is, it will need deeper anthroposophical study and meditation. However, my current interest is to report to the biodynamic movement our own experience of "abundance" related to the use of the milk and honey spray[1] for rice.

Our biodynamic movement involves more than 3,300 small farming families from the rural areas of the province of Cotabato in the Philippines. The small farms cover 2,978 hectares [One hectare is nearly two and a half acres.] and the number is growing. Of these, 1,196 farms are devoted to rice production. We were only practicing organic farming when we started in 1994. In 1996, our sustainable agriculture movement gained momentum after we encountered biodynamic agriculture through Nicanor Perlas of the Center for Alternative Development Initiatives (CADI, a Philippine based civil society organization). However, our practice was limited to the use of biodynamic preparations of 500 (horn manure), 501 (horn silica) and 508 (*Equisetum* species, horsetail herb).[2] We are able to produce these locally, along with the use of the peppers and the planting calendar. It was only later, in 2001, when we were able to connect with the US-based biodynamic agriculture movement that we were able to use the Pfeiffer BD field spray, compost preparations and barrel compost (a.k.a. biodynamic compound preparation) on a limited scale.

One of the most serious problems in rice production (for which until now mainstream chemical-based agriculture has yet to find a solution) is tungro virus infestation. Tungro is a virus [two species: rice tungro bacilliform virus and rice tungro spherical virus] which is spread to other rice plants by small green leafhoppers. The use of BD 508 (fresh tea version) among the biodynamic rice farmers was our first major breakthrough in rice production.[3] The efficacy of BD 508 in controlling tungro virus infestation in rice is beyond question. This ability to control diseases extends to other diseases which are bacterial in nature. This result led to the growth of the number of farmers shifting to biodynamic agriculture.



One of our farmer-partners in Midsayap, Cotabato wanted to show that height and vigor of a certain seed is determined by site or location, as well as the soil's fertility. In this case, the use of the BD field spray made all the difference in the performance of this rice variety. Photo ©Maribel Lim

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Notes

This year, 2004 marks the 80th Anniversary of Rudolf Steiner's agriculture lectures at Koberwitz, Silesia in June 1924. The result of these lectures gave us what we know as the agricultural preparations, Steiner's indications, or simply biodynamics. We may call it by different names, but what does matter is that we continue on, in Steiner's words, "to make the benefits of our agricultural preparations available to the largest possible areas over the entire earth, so that the earth may be healed and the nutritive quality of its produce improved in every respect."

Eighty years on, biodynamic methods are practiced all over the world. One country in particular, the Philippines, has taken up biodynamics with over 3,000 small farming families involved! As the cover story, read Maria Helenita Betsy Ruizo-Gamela's inspirational account of local rice farmers' success with biodynamics and the milk and honey spray recipe.

A further offering in this spring issue is information of the coming Venus transit in early June. Hugh Courtney describes its significance in history and how biodynamics can play a role for practitioners who would like to participate in this once in a lifetime celestial event. In 2003, a rare planetary alignment, the Harmonic Concordance occurred in November. Steven Adams shares his moving and thoughtful commentary of this transcendent occasion at Chrysalis Farm.

Also in this issue, Elizabeth Schaldach and Lloyd Nelson report on the Third Annual Future of the Preparations Conference, a positive, community building experience that took place earlier this year.

And last but definitely not least, remember to mark your calendars for the JPI Preparation Making Seminars in June and October. Classes fill up fast so be sure to reserve early. An itinerary of these workshops is provided in this issue.

May we reflect on this 80th year of biodynamics in the world today and realize the tremendous role it plays in restoring agriculture as part of the spiritual work of humanity.

Patricia Smith, Editor

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*)

Applied Biodynamics

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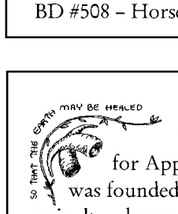

Mission

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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Preparation Making Seminars at the Josephine Porter Institute For 2004

Seminar Part 1 – June 24-27
Seminar Part 2 – October 20–24

Please mark your calendars for JPI's Biodynamic Preparation Making Seminars for 2004. The opportunity to directly experience for yourself the making of the biodynamic preparations rather than to merely watch a demonstration of someone else making a preparation is available at JPI to a greater degree than anywhere else in the country.

Seminar Part 1 takes place in early summer, beginning Thursday, June 24 at 8 p.m. and ending Sunday, June 27 at 6 p.m. This session concentrates on the making of BD Preparations #501, #502, #504, #507 and #508. As time allows, other preparations to be dug up and examined will include #500, #502, #503, #505 and #506. Cost of Seminar Part 1 is $375.00, which will include midday and evening meals (a breakfast bar will be available) for Friday, Saturday and Sunday.



The Yarrow Preparation (BD #502)

Seminar Part 2 takes place in the fall, beginning Wednesday, October 20 at 8 p.m. and ending Sunday, October 24 at 6 p.m. This intensive session features the harvesting of bovine sheaths for various preparations and will concentrate on the following BD preps: #500, #503, #505 and #506. If time permits, other preparations will be covered. Cost of Seminar Part 2 is $475.00, which will include midday and evening meals (a breakfast bar will be available) for Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.



Making the Dandelion Preparation (BD #506)

We will be more than glad to work out a payment plan with anyone who needs such an arrangement. We can also offer a limited number of work scholarships for those who need financial help to attend. Anyone who has previously attended a JPI preparation making seminar is also eligible to receive a $100.00 discount off the tuition fee.

Attendance at these seminars is limited, so make your reservation early. Reservations must be secured by a non-refundable deposit of $75.00. (A deposit is required to cover costs of advance meal preparation.) For further information, contact the Josephine Porter Institute for Applied Biodynamics, P.O. Box 133, Woolwine, VA 24185; (276) 930-2463; fax (276) 930-2475; email: <info@jpibiodynamics.org>.

take qualitative testing further.

The morning ended with a group discussion taking the yarrow preparation beyond a mystical, faith-based view of biodynamics and into the forces that truly are at work. In short, common observations of the strong yarrow stem gradually refining away into the imponderable were drawn out in relationship to its ability to help where weaknesses in the astral realm might exist. A deer is imbued with its environment through heightened sensitivity. The regulating quality of the bladder in effect filters and secretes these surroundings via sun-drenched yarrow representing a wholly new kind of knowing within the finished preparation. Thus, perhaps we can see how the preparation can have both a localizing effect and a concentration of outer world astrality within a farm 'individuality'.

The afternoon began with an outdoor demonstration by Dewane Morgan of the removal of the bladder from a stag. This is something which could be beneficial for us all to become comfortable with and proficient at! Once back indoors, brief reports of the preparation making activities of these specific groups were given: the Viroqua Biodynamic Group, Zinniker Farm, Dewane Morgan, Community Homestead and Nokomis Dairy/Stella Gardens. Then, representatives Laura Riccardi and Lloyd Nelson from the Josephine Porter Institute gave us a thorough look at their current work and their general status. It seems that JPI continues to be strongly committed to the distribution and research of biodynamic preparations and to the education of prep making. Hugh Courtney remains strong in his unique position as advisor and consultant, and the new impulse of a young, motivated team is now helping him to carry on JPI's work. Their concern for the future of prep making was explicitly shared, and they looked toward active strengthening of both JPI and regional prep making groups. The afternoon ended with a continuation of the morning group discussion of the yarrow preparation with more practical issues explored.

Saturday evening was ushered in by a short, yet very lovely recital by Mary Schunemann. Then, Harald Hoven presented the lecture, "Preparation Making and Community Building". He spoke of the process of individualization, of the spiritual intimacy and knowledge of specific place. In preparation making we take special responsibility for a specific area and through this mutual, intense commitment, true growth can happen.

The conference concluded Sunday morning with a group discussion focusing on community building and how individuals, regional groups, and beyond relate to and interact with one another. The concept of fellowship, stepping outside of ourselves, exerting tolerance, and meeting in a middle ground was reinforced as we all strive to bridge gaps and forge ahead. A practical task list was set up for 2004, focusing on publishing regional group reports and strengthening regional representation. The 2005 Future of the Preparations Conference is scheduled to be held in Fair Oaks, California on January 14–16. "Creating a Relationship of Earth and Cosmos: Human Being as Shaper", is the working title and the chamomile preparation will be the focus. Until then, how can each of us strengthen our relationship to the preparations, to biodynamics, and to each other?

Elizabeth Schaldach lives in La Crosse, Wisconsin where she is a core member of the Viroqua Biodynamic Group and is continually exploring more ways to bring biodynamics into her gardening and tree farming.

Report from JPI Board Member

Presentations about JPI were well received, with much positive feedback. From the participants we were told our presentation brought a new perspective, a new understanding, a new beginning, healing, a re-union, and a renewed chance for all to work together.

We were asked what are the needs of JPI. I responded with the following issues:

1. Flowers for the preps, especially dandelions.
2. The financial situation needs improvement.
3. The land at JPI needs to be secured for future preparation work.
4. The future of JPI is uncertain. The work must continue.

—Lloyd Nelson

Verse for America

May our feeling enter the core of our heart
And strive with love to unite itself
With those human beings who have the same aim.
And with the Spirit beings
Who full of grace look downward
On our solemn heartfelt striving
Strengthening us from regions of light
and illuminating our love.

—Rudolf Steiner

The translation is believed to have been by Hagen Biesantz. Thanks to Priscilla Coe of Sonoma County, California for providing this version.

New Book Title

Available from JPI is *The Biodynamic Spray and Compost Preparations - Directions for Use*, Booklet 2, compiled by Christian von Wistinghausen, Wolfgang Scheibe, Hartmut Heilmann, Eckard v. Wistinghausen and Uli Johannes König. Assistance with translation, editing and proofreading for this first English edition by Anna Meuss and Olga Holbek. Published by the Biodynamic Agricultural Association, Stroud, England. 90 pages. $14.00 plus $5.00 for postage and handling charges.

continued from page 1

Report From The Philippines



The office of the Don Bosco Diocesan Youth Center, established in 1994.

The second breakthrough involves the milk and honey spray. One serious problem among our biodynamic rice farmers involves infestations of the rice stem borer [various species from the Lepidoptera family]. With the rice black bug (a pest that sucks the juice from leaves and stems), it is so easy to prepare the peppers for ashing. However, with the rice stem borer it has been very difficult to gather them at the auspicious time based on the biodynamic calendar. One and a half years ago, we conducted a participatory experiment on the use of the milk and honey spray to combat rice stem borer with five farmers from five different locations. The amazing effect of milk and honey from these five experiments became the basis for the replication of the practice among the rest of the more than one thousand rice-based farmers.

Observations and experiences

The following recounts the five farmers' experiment using the milk and honey spray:

1. Three days after the application of the milk and honey spray during the early stage of infestation with rice stem borers, farmers observed a massive presence of beneficial species: beetles, ladybirds, crickets, grasshoppers, bugs, spiders, wasps, and even frogs. Farmers obtain from zero (Rodrigo Piamonte's farm) to minimal damage (Eduardo Lapinid's farm) by stem borers, compared to total major damage in chemical-dependent farms just adjacent to these farms.
2. One farm, Billy Pilare's was 85 percent damaged by whorl maggots (feeding on the whorl of the leaf) one month after transplanting. Three days after the milk and honey spray was applied, the massive presence of many species of beneficial insects was observed and the rice crop fully recovered.
3. Rizalito Bermudez' farm was 98 percent damaged by brown plant hopper (feeding on the leaves, causing them to dry out and turn brown) during the vegetative stage. BD 500 followed by the milk and honey spray was applied. Five days later, new tillers started shooting from the damaged plants. As maintenance, milk and honey spray was applied every fifteen days and Equisetum tea (BD 508) two days before or after full moon and perigee. The crop fully recovered.
4. Arthur Jimena's farm was 75 percent infected by tungro virus. BD 508 was sprayed in five successive days and after three days, the milk and honey spray was applied in the late afternoon. Fifteen days after the application, the rice crop fully recovered.

From these experiences of the first five farmers, the milk and honey spray has become officially part of the indications for rice production. Besides controlling pest infestations, it was observed that the spray also promotes plant vitality and rejuvenation after stress caused by infestations both of pests and diseases.



The region of Cotabato, located in Mindanao in the Philippines.

Not only is the milk and honey spray used in rice crops, it is very helpful too for vegetables and fruits; but less documented, as the focus is currently on rice. Farmers use the milk and honey together or alone. Milk is amazingly very effective in producing blemish-free tomatoes as observed by the farmers. Since dairy cows are not common in the Philippines, farmers use either [water] buffalo milk, goat's milk, or sometimes cow's milk if available. It is observed however, that buffalo and cow's milk with honey seem more effective in drawing the beneficial insects to the treated farm.

Other practices at work

Don Bosco has been using the BD methods for its own

food production centers devoted to bananas, vegetables and other crops. We must however point out that for these food production centers and for the farmers' land, we use the Korean natural farming method. This method uses indigenous microorganisms through a fermentation process, along with the biodynamic methods in both crops and livestock. Together, they work pretty well.

BD 508 is especially effective in combating the dreaded Sigatoka disease (a fungus, causing serious damage to leaves, with transmission by wind, rain and very humid conditions) in bananas. This we apply along with the milk and honey spray and also with BD 501. Before this application, the fields are first sprayed with the BD field spray and BD 500. We cannot however attribute everything to BD because we mix our practice with the (Korean) method of using indigenous microorganisms in soil fertility and solutions of fermented plant and fruit juices, lactic acid serum, fish amino acid, etc. in disease management together with the BD methods.



This is one of the pioneering biodynamic farms in the village of Bulanan, Midsayap, Cotabato. Around this farm are conventional chemical and pesticide treated farms. Taken at twilight, the haze in the photo is caused by the burning of rice straw of conventional farms after the harvest. Currently however, with the success of this and other biodynamic rice farms, conventional chemical-dependent farmers in this village are decreasing in number as more and more of them are convinced of the sustainability and economic viability of biodynamic rice farms and have actually shifted their production systems to biodynamic agriculture. Photo ©Maribel Lim

We have been conducting studies in application of the biodynamic tree pastes and other indications based on the book, *Biodynamic Treatment of Fruits, Berries and Shrubs* by Dr. Ehrenfried Pfeiffer to different fruit trees like mango, rambutan (a sweet fruit, covered with soft red spines) and pomelo (larger than a grapefruit, but sweeter). Studies are also conducted on the use of BD methods in sugar cane production.

The success of the biodynamic methods is the real force that attracted farmers to shift to the system. One rice farmer, Gaudencio Peñalver's first adoption of the biodynamic method was tested with severe stem borer infestation. All the other farmers in the neighborhood also had such severely damaged rice crops that they already had to repeat planting three times (and had failed three times also). Gaudencio persisted, applying BD 501 and 508. His crop survived, recovering with very minimal damage.

Another farmer, Jerry Liong with seven hectares, converted to BD farming and for the first time in his life got 705 bags (averaging at 65 kg, or about 143 pounds per bag) when his highest yield was only 687 bags with chemical farming.



A rice crop which is about to ripen. Photos for this article by Maribel Lim, who is a plant pathologist researcher at Don Bosco's Integrated Programs and Initiatives on Sustainable Agriculture & Development.

Side by side with the hybrid rice of Monsanto, Syngenta and other seed companies, we stand proud, and we are able to hold our own with self-pollinated indigenous varieties.[4] The national average of rice production in the Philippines was 2.9 tons a hectare. In Cotabato, the provincial average is 3.4 tons per hectare. Our farmers far surpass these figures. Some have already reached 7.11 tons a hectare. This of course is site specific and depends on factors like extent of soil degradation, BD practice and length of period after the shift to BD practice. There are many success stories of the BD farmers, and all of these are spreading like wildfire.

Notes

1) The Milk and Honey Spray was developed by Hugh Courtney. The basic formula used is one (1) part milk to nine (9) parts water, (i.e., 1:9 ratio). The honey is sometimes added in a ratio of 1:100 to the entire volume. It is stirred in the biodynamic fashion for twenty minutes and then sprayed in a medium to fine mist. For larger volumes, the proportions of both the milk and the honey to the total quantity of water can be substantially reduced. For instance, if one is spraying a forty acre field using a 300 gallon tank, the total volume of milk could be as little as 6 gallons (one gallon of milk to 49 gallons of water), and the quantity of honey could be as little as a pint-and-a-half (one quarter cup per 49 gallons of water). For more information regarding The Milk and Honey Spray, please refer to Applied Biodynamics, Issue No.'s 6 and 39.

2) We have planted valerian, chamomile, dandelion, stinging nettle and yarrow. We have yet to plant oak and are trying to find

possible choices as a nation/people in the world. As I worked my way up the hillside and around the area of the nest, giving it a wide berth, I sent my thoughts and prayers to the soul of America, asking that we may strive to become our best self, to reach towards our highest Self/Spirit. I felt myself uplifted and hopeful. It has been nearly impossible for me to feel this hopeful about the United States in 2003.

As I walked through the woods and down into a north-facing wash, the sun set again. I went to one of the most special sacred places on our farm. While I sprayed the preparation blessings around this place I experienced most strongly the sense of many different qualities and spiritual traditions of blessing, all weaving together. Truly it seemed that many different cultures and peoples who have known Christ and/or his angelic helpers over



Chrysalis Farm
Photo courtesy of Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School, Viroqua, Wisconsin.

all the ages and by whatever names were striving to weave their spiritual work together, so that each blessing way permeates and enhances other blessing ways to the greater strength and good of the whole earth and all peoples. This represented the most uplifting and enlightening time of the walk for me. I almost felt as if I was walking on air.

Perhaps I needn't say that as I finished the sequential walk that I had long since lost any sense of doubting the rightness of offering this blessing in just this way and with this timing. Even when I arrived at the house to discover that it was after 8 a.m., I still felt the knowing that all my efforts were blessed.

Later in the morning, around 10:30 a.m. I went down to our barn to water our horses. As I put them back out to pasture, I looked out over our main fields and realized that one of the eagles was circling over the field. As I watched, she circled round and round, again and again, gradually spiraling higher and higher into the air. Wanting to continue watching her, but also wanting to let Marcia share in this experience, I walked backwards up to our house, watching the circling of the eagle. Marcia came out of the house and watched for awhile. Even though the eagles have lived on our hillside for five years, we've observed that it's not really common for them to just circle in this manner. Usually they fly with more purpose. As I watched, the eagle circled higher and higher. I prayed that the blessings of this sequential spray might be not only for our farm, but, rather that our farm might become a blessing, radiating out into the world. At this moment the eagle soared off, disappearing over the hills towards the northwest.

Steven Adams and Marcia Halligan have farmed organically along the Kickapoo River in Wisconsin since 1985. In 1994 they started incorporating biodynamic practices at Chrysalis Farm and supporting other farmers and gardeners in southwestern Wisconsin interested in working with biodynamics as well.

Elizabeth Schaldach

Future of the Preparations Conference

The Third North American Future of the Biodynamic Preparations Conference was held at the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute in East Troy, Wisconsin on Feb. 13–15, 2004. The theme for this year's conference was "Preparation Making and Community Building," with yarrow preparation being the focus. The conference supports the building of a fellowship of preparation makers through the discussion of experiences and needs, use and distribution, and activities surrounding preparation making.

On Friday night, thirty-six participants from ten states gathered into one circle to share their own biographies related to prep making. Women and men, old and young, novice and seasoned began bridging the activities of each region. The weekend that unfolded was true community building.

Saturday morning began with a lecture comprising several topics by Walter Goldstein. These included: "Living Forces", "Yarrow Preparation", "Testing Biodynamic Preparations", and "Results With Testing a Nettle Compound Prep". Working with Rudolf Steiner's insights, Walter explained three kinds of living forces—cosmic, terrestrial and body forming (forces that work between cosmic and terrestrial). These forces can be experienced not merely in a biological way, but in a qualitative way as well. Without a proper balance of these living forces, soil may not be "alive" enough to take up necessary substances for sustained health and vigor. The yarrow preparation seems to enhance manure's sensitivity specific to sulfur allowing it to convey properties necessary for soil and plants to take up the forces involved in model formation of plant protein. In conclusion, Walter explored the concept of preparation plants as gates or organs for cosmic forces and emphasized the need to

Steven Adams

Harmonic Concordance November 8, 2003 Chrysalis Farm

The Harmonic Concordance, which took place Saturday, November 8, 2003, included a series of positive celestial aspects. Most intriguing was the occurrence of a Grand Sextile pattern, known as the "Star of David" or "Seal of Solomon", formed by the Sun, Moon, Jupiter, Mars, Saturn and Chiron (the largest asteroid, often used by astrologers), that also coincided with a lunar eclipse.

In October of 2003, the Viroqua Biodynamic Group sent two of our members [Elizabeth Schaldach and Erik Thomsen] to attend the fall preparation-making seminar at the Josephine Porter Institute in Virginia. When they returned, they informed us about the Harmonic Concordance. Hugh Courtney had said that biodynamic practitioners might choose to work with this event through a sequential preparation spraying.

On Hugh Courtney's recommendation, I mixed all four evening and morning sprays, Biodynamic Compound Preparation (BC), horn manure (BD 500), Equisetum ferment (BD 508) and horn silica (BD 501). By accident, not by conscious intention I mixed in twice as much Equisetum as I normally would add, nearly one gallon of ferment. I'm still wondering about the significance of this occurrence.

In the course of preparing for this sequential walk, I experienced many doubts creeping into my awareness about mixing all four preparations, something I've never attempted, and about the temperature, which had dropped to 15 degrees Friday evening before I even went to bed. Would it be alright to spray preparations into such very cold conditions? Would I be able to finish my walk by 7:15 a.m., wandering from the river, in and out of our fields and pastures, up into the very steep forested hillsides and woods? Whenever I've offered a giveaway sequential in the past, not to seek rain, but only with the intention of offering a blessing to the land and all of its inhabitants, seen and unseen, I've always tried to visit as many of the less accessible places as possible, especially those which don't receive the preparations as regularly as the fields and gardens. This process slows me down. I'm not known for finishing much of anything on time anyway!

Woken by my alarm clock at 4:10 a.m., I discovered that our house was very chilly as the outside temperature had dropped to 10 degrees. Of course I had to step outside, if only briefly, to look at the stars. As I stood looking up into a crystal clear sky, I saw a bright flash of light nearly directly over my head, a point of light, not a meteor trail. After a moment I saw another bright flash in the same area of the sky. I wondered if a meteor would look like this if it was moving more or less directly towards the viewer. With some regret, I pulled myself away from the sky to return indoors.

I decided to start our woodstoves even though I knew that this might delay the start of my walk. I finally began stirring around 5 a.m., half an hour later than I had hoped to begin. My actual walk began just after 6:15 a.m. I'd intended to move along steadily to try to finish as close to 7:15 a.m. as possible, this being the beginning of the 12 hour grey time leading up to the lunar eclipse. Yet, it wasn't long into my walk before I found myself relaxing, slowing down and striving to become more present to this time and this walk. I felt an ongoing inner prompting to become aware of the sacredness of this work, to try to really wake up and become attuned to it. The urge to prayerfulness, to offering this spraying to the spiritual beings, grew. I strove to receive the blessings from the Christ and to pass them along, through the preparations, to the elemental beings, asking them to carry the blessings to wherever they were needed. I found myself returning to this prayer/thought again and again throughout the walk.

The sun rose as I climbed up the east facing hillside. I felt uplifted and lightened by the work. In the moment of first turning to look at the sun just rising above the eastern horizon, I experienced a sense of both the Libra sidereal zodiac quality which we biodynamic farmers/gardeners work with, and of the Scorpio tropical zodiac quality which the astrologers work with. For the first time I experienced simultaneously two different celestial zodiac qualities shining through one planet at the same time.

On the walk I encountered wild turkeys roosting in the trees and several deer in a field. The deer seemed remarkably unalarmed by my approach. Seldom, if ever, have deer allowed me to approach them without their turning tail and running. When they did leave, they walked in a calm and relaxed manner. On our hillside a pair of bald eagles have been building a nest this fall. They began this work on October 4th, the day we held our fall preparation-making gathering here. This is a long story in itself. Briefly, the nest that the eagles are now beginning replaces their original nest, built five years ago on the same hillside in another tree not 200 feet from the tree where they are now building a nest. The original nest broke out of the tree top during the third week of April in 2003, when the U.S. invasion in Iraq was devastatingly unfolding. At the time my partner Marcia Halligan and I felt this event deeply as a kind of picture of how the soul of America is being endangered by our arrogant and self-serving behavior in the world. To use the biblical language, pride goeth before the fall. All summer we've wondered if the eagles would build a new nest here and if this might present another, perhaps more hopeful picture of our

a local Philippine oak. However, the quantity is not enough as these plants are still in the process of acclimatization. Yarrow is not a problem as these are abundant in the Philippines and they thrive very well. Dandelions are abundant only in the very cold region in Baguio in the mountain province. Chamomile and valerian do not thrive very well. Stinging nettle is adapting to the local climate. Our local horsetail is not *Equisetum arvense*, although I believe it is one of the eight varieties of *Equisetum*. It is our serious wish to find alternative local plants.

3) The most effective form of BD 508 used by most farmers is the fresh tea version. Farmers have tried the fermented version, but it has not been successful. The fresh tea version follows the original prescription of Rudolf Steiner. This is also very good since we do not have abundant horsetail growing around and we need to gather it from a far region, stocking up on the herb. The fresh tea version is the most practical, cost efficient and very effective also. The farmers also use the horsetail we made for human consumption, that is, anthroposophic homeopathic medicine in the D6 or D8 potency [see Applied Biodynamics, Issue No. 28], which works too.

Take note also that with regards to animal health, we use BD 508 very effectively in the treatment of illnesses among goats, chickens and hogs. Our farmers also use anthroposophic homeopathic medicines on their livestock along with the Korean natural fermented juices and effective beneficial microorganisms.

4) Our farmers do not just save self-pollinated seeds from year to year, but are also actively involved in the collection of traditional varieties (land races), seed selections, adaptability trials, and formal breeding (doing crosses of varieties whose qualities they think are suitable to their needs based on their specific sites).

Maria Helenita Betsy Ruizo-Gamela is the founder and executive director of the civil society organization, Don Bosco Diocesan Youth Center, Inc., established in 1994. The center is based in Batasan, Makilala, Cotabato, located in the central Mindanao region of the Philippines.

Contribution to biodynamic efforts in the Philippines

If you would like to contribute towards helping more farmers become involved with biodynamic agriculture in the Philippines, you can send a donation to: The Josephine Porter Institute, P.O. Box 133, Woolwine, VA 24185. Your tax deductible donation will be applied as a credit towards Don Bosco's purchase of additional Pfeiffer Field Spray for their project, Integrated Programs and Initiatives on Sustainable Agriculture & Development. We thank you for considering this most ambitious and beneficial activity.

Hugh J. Courtney

The Venus Transit of 2004 – A Biodynamic Opportunity

Biodynamic practitioners, in my opinion, may have a unique opportunity to affect in a very positive way, the health of our desperately ill planet Earth during the period of time leading up to and following the Venus transit of the Sun on June 8, 2004. A Venus transit occurs when the relationship of Sun, Earth and Venus is such that the planet Venus can be seen crossing the face of the Sun. While this is not an event that should be viewed directly, if one provides for proper eye protection, it is clearly a once-in-a-lifetime celestial event. Eclipses of the Sun or Moon take place two or more times a year, but a Venus transit of the Sun occurs in a rhythm of only four times in 243½ years. According to Will Tarrants in his article, "Transit of Venus" in *The Christian Star Calendar 2004*, this cyclical pattern takes place with the "first two transits in any cycle of four" occurring in the ascending node ☊ about 8 years 2 days apart.[1] He further explains:

> The next two transits come 105½ years later in the descending node ☋ again about 8 years 2 days apart. There is a 'bridge' of 121½ years between each cycle of four transits. The cycle and the bridge total 243 years 2 days.

As an interesting, but perhaps meaningless side note, this Venus transit cycle is very close to the period of 245 years needed by the planet Pluto to complete a circuit around the Sun. When one plots the pattern of the Venus conjunctions, the diagram of a pentagon is inscribed over the course of eight years. We will see such a pentagon inscribed between the transit of June 8, 2004 and the next transit of June 6, 2012. Digesting the meaning of this current pair of transits presents a particularly challenging exercise, especially when we remind ourselves of the Mayan calendar significance assigned to the year 2012; i.e., the end of time, space and matter as we know it and the beginning of a more heavenly consciousness. The upcoming 2004 transit will be at maximum visibility in the Middle East, specifically at noon in southern Iran.

In an effort to interpret the Venus transits historically, Tarrants suggests that a transit has a certain analogy to an eclipse. It has been suggested that the duration of an eclipse lasts in the ratio of one year to each hour of the actual eclipse. If one interprets a Venus transit as bearing an influence similar to an eclipse, then the upcoming Venus transit, which is calculated to last for 6 hours 12 minutes, can be regarded as having an influence from 3 years 36 days before (about May 2, 2001) to 3

years 36 days afterwards (about July 14, 2007). It is more than a little disconcerting, when one contemplates all that has taken place in the world since May 2, 2001, and regards those events as possibly being under a Venus transit that still has another three years plus to run. After digesting this information, one then stops to realize that the current transit will shortly be followed by another 6 years 2½ months under the influence of the Venus transit due in June 2012. While Venus transits can be associated with many positive educational-cultural, musical, and artistic events in human history, the negative influences have also been substantially present. The Academy of Gondishapur, which was established in the year 666 AD, under the influence of forces inimical to the proper course of human evolution, is a prime example of such negative influences. According to Rudolf Steiner, the Academy of Gondishapur sought "to replace the exertions of the Consciousness Soul and turn human beings into materialistic thinkers, devoid of the concomitant morality."[2] One other noteworthy piece of information concerning this 2004 transit is derived from the work of Robert Powell, who has attempted to chart a horoscope of Christ based on his research of Rudolf Steiner, Anne Catherine Emmerich, and the four gospels of the Bible. Powell's research suggests that the position of the Sun at the time of the Venus transit is very close to its position on May 14th AD 33, at the Ascension of Christ on the Mount of Olives. Whether or not we are approaching an "Ascension" event, or an Academy of Gondishapur event, will probably be determined by the behavior of human beings.

Rudolf Steiner also offered some interesting insights on the Venus transit phenomenon during one of his lectures to the workers at the Goetheanum.[3] When asked a question about any possible effect the planet Mars, which at the time was very close to the Earth, was having on the very unsettled weather then being experienced, he indicated that Mars would more likely have an effect on the insect kingdom.[4] He explained that sunspot activity had a much greater influence on the weather. He further spoke at some length about the Venus transit and the fact that to really understand weather patterns, it was important to know how long it had been since the last Venus transit.[5] In particular, he referred to the ability of Venus to "eat up" the Sun's light during a transit. One can speculate that a Venus transit event brings about a great effect on the Sun. Therefore such a transit has a strong correlation to future sunspot activity, and thus a long-term effect on weather patterns. Such a speculation is further supported by Steiner's lengthy reference to the popularity of the so-called "Hundred Years' Calendar," which was in vogue in the folklore of past years.[6] The most telling statement Steiner makes in his discussion of the Venus transit is: "This event brings about great changes."[7] Although no reference is specifically made to changes in human affairs, one almost immediately holds the question in mind and is stimulated to explore events in human history with before and after comparisons focusing on previous Venus transit periods.

If a Venus transit is of such great importance in human affairs as well as weather and other possible effects on the Earth, do we as biodynamic practitioners have a possibility to encourage those effects to be of a more positive nature? Indeed, it is my firm belief that we have some of the most exceptional tools available to stimulate a positive result by our use of the nine biodynamic agricultural preparations. While many would see this as a full blown delusion on my part, I have seen too much evidence of the powerful effects that the preparations can have even within human affairs. They can accomplish much more than merely affecting the fertility of a farm or a garden in a positive way. The difficulty is in knowing with certainty which preparations to apply and when to apply them. (See page 7, "Venus Transit 2004 Suggested Sequential Spray Protocol".) Before I present my answers to these questions, I would like to invite others to consider joining me in applying a kind of "sequential spray" in the period before and after the Venus transit of June 8, 2004. The reason I make this suggestion is a factor that I have come to label the "resonance factor". Basically the resonance factor involves what I believe to be the multiplying effect that is achieved when people all around the country, and even around the world, apply the biodynamic preparations more or less simultaneously. In other words, when I spray the preparations on my farm or garden, it mostly affects just my farm or garden. If others at some distance also join with me in spraying more or less the same sequence of preparations at essentially the same time that I do, the effects of our spraying are linked and will result in a much greater benefit to the Earth. Since one hardly has the objective tools to measure such a claim, you may choose to see it merely as my illusion. If, on the other hand, you choose to take action and spray as well, the results can be quite positive even when cause and effect for such results remains impossible to prove. Those who participated in the sequential spray effort in November of 2003, centered about the so-called "Harmonic Concordance", or who have applied the Three King's Preparation of Hugo Erbe on January 6 (Epiphany) in recent years, may have an awareness of this "resonance factor" as well. You are invited to join together with those of us at JPI in a Venus transit sequential spray application during the month of June 2004. Please RSVP your intentions to <info@jpibiodynamics.org> or by calling us at (276) 930-2463. Together we can make a difference.

Notes

1)Will Tarrants, "Transit of Venus", *The Christian Star Calendar 2004* (Eugene, OR: Sophia Foundation of North America),15–22.
2) Rudolf Steiner, *Three Streams in Human Evolution*, (London: Rudolf Steiner Press).
3) Rudolf Steiner, *From Sunspots to Strawberries*, (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 2002),170.
4) Ibid.,162–163.
5) Ibid.,170.
6) Ibid.,172-173.
7) Ibid.,170.

Venus Transit 2004 Suggested Sequential Spray Protocol

Please bear in mind that the following spray sequence to enhance the positive effects of a Venus transit is merely one person's best effort to comprehend both the Venus transit phenomenon and how the nine biodynamic preparations might best be employed in bringing about a more positive effect from that transit.

In the first place, the two members of the solar system most affected by this event are, of course, Venus and the Sun. Because any planet near its upper or lower nodal point is essentially seen as having its forces or energies cancelled by the Sun, then one can conclude that the energies of Venus need to be reinforced. In addition, because the Venus transit can be considered to have an eclipse effect on the Sun thereby diminishing its energies, one can readily conclude that the energies of the Sun also need to be reinforced. While there is less than total agreement on which planets relate to which biodynamic preparation, the assignment of the yarrow preparation (BD #502) to the planet Venus is virtually unanimous to my knowledge. With respect to the Sun, the first choice would seem to be the horn silica preparation (BD #501), although the horn manure preparation (BD #500) also can be seen as relating to the winter Sun forces. In any case, my particular choice is to place a heavy emphasis on using both BD #502 and BD #501 in a suggested sequential spray to support positive results from the Venus transit event. Accordingly, JPI will undertake the following schedule (Sequential Spray Schedule 1) of spray applications using BC (Biodynamic Compound Preparation), BD #500, BD #501, BD #502 and BD #508 fermented:

Sequential Spray Schedule 1

Tuesday	June 1 - PM	BC-with added #502
Wednesday	June 2 - AM	BD #508 fermented-with added BD #501 & 502
Thursday	June 3	Avoid spraying because of Moon at perigee
Friday	June 4 - AM	BD #501
Saturday	June 5 - PM	BD #500-with added #502
Sunday	June 6 - AM	BD #501 and #502
	Monday, June 7 & Tuesday, June 8:	
	Contemplative or meditative time to reinforce a positive outcome for our efforts.	
Wednesday	June 9 - AM	BD #501 and #502
Wednesday	June 9 - PM	BD #500 with added #502
Thursday	June 10 - AM	BD #501
Thursday	June 10 - PM	BC-with added #502
Friday	June 11 - AM	BD #508 fermented-with added BD #501 & #502

To reduce the total number of sprayings, an alternative schedule can be considered by combining some of the above applications more or less as follows:

Sequential Spray Schedule 2

Thursday	June 3	Avoid spraying because of Moon at perigee
Saturday	June 5 - PM	BC plus BD #500-with added #502
Sunday	June 6 - AM	BD #501 and #502 plus BD #508 fermented
	Monday, June 7 & Tuesday, June 8:	
	Contemplative or meditative time to reinforce a positive outcome for our efforts.	
Wednesday	June 9 - AM	BD #501 and #502 plus BD #508 fermented
Wednesday	June 9 - PM	BC plus BD #500-with added #502

If the above dates from Sequential Spray Schedule 2 are not convenient, alternate spray dates could be June 1st, 2nd, or 4th preceding the Venus transit, and June 10th and 11th following the Venus transit.

The above proposed schedules may seem like a considerable amount of effort. While many who might like to participate may not have time to complete one of the protocols outlined above, I would encourage everyone who can possibly do so, **to at least consider applying the sprays listed in Sequential Spray Schedule 1 for June 6 - AM and June 9 - AM.** To that end, JPI will gladly supply for handling and shipping charges only, two units each of BD #501 and BD #502 upon request from anyone wishing to participate in our Venus transit 2004 spraying effort. We hope you will join in our endeavor to the greatest extent possible.