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Taking Time for Food and Agriculture: The Slow Food Movement through the Eyes of Biodynamics

Hunter Francis

In October 2006, I had the good fortune to participate in the second Terra Madre convention in Turin, Italy. Terra Madre is a gathering of food communities, joining together thousands of food producers from all over the world. It is held bi-annually. Last year, over 8,000 people attended from 148 countries. They were farmers, orchardists, vintners, meat and dairy producers, fishermen and fiber producers, educators, and activists – all with the common goal of preserving traditional, artisan, and heirloom food practices and products.

Terra Madre is a creation of the international Slow Food movement. Slow Food was born out of protest in Italy as a reaction to the opening of a McDonald's fast food franchise near the Spanish Steps in Rome in 1986. The movement is the brainchild of Carlo Petrini, an Italian food activist and President of Slow Food International, the organizational seat of the movement. Slow Food was created in defense of food quality, local heritage, and the culture of eating.

Importantly, the starting point of the movement is pleasure. Slow Food is a celebration of the joy we can experience from flavorful food, good company, and a healthy environment. The belief that people are better motivated by things they enjoy, and more inclined to protect things that they love, reflects a positive point of departure and underlies the mission of the Slow Food movement. Insofar as Slow Food is a response to the industrialization, mechanization and base commodification of the food system, it shares a similar impulse with the biodynamic movement, which was born for similar reasons. Petrini objects to the reduction of the growing and eating experience to a mere



Indian food activist Vandana Shiva led a discussion for delegates from the Subcontinent

nutrient delivery system, much as Steiner objected to a material focus on agriculture devoid of an understanding of cosmic connections.

For Petrini, eating is a cultural act, which is most meaningful when its wider context is understood. Where does the food come from? What is its locality, its home? How was it grown, and who prepared it? In what company and cadence is it eaten? Is it fresh? And the key question: how does it taste? To those familiar with the superior flavor of biodynamically-produced food, the connection between the Slow Food and biodynamic movements is immediately apparent. Quality, which translates into flavor, nutrition, and shelf life, is a hallmark of biodynamic food, and this is precisely what many Slow Food advocates are seeking.

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Notes

It is with great enthusiasm that we present to you the Spring issue of *Applied Biodynamics*. With the upcoming Summer and Fall issues, we will do our best to get the newsletter back onto a timely publication schedule. From my vantage point in southern Kentucky, the preparations work is thriving. There is a wonderful combination of regional prep making and farms who are using preps from JPI. A new regional group has formed, and you can look forward to a report on that in the summer issue.

The basis of the preparations work is the transformation of substance, order and chaos, and a growing awareness of the spiritual world – in many ways a metaphor for life and death. Change came in May at JPI with the unexpected crossing of Hugh Courtney's wife, Liz. I felt very blessed to have seen her one week before she passed, looking radiant in her red hat when she was attending the national conference for the Red Hat Society. A new fund has been established for those who wish to make her memory a lasting legacy by ensuring the future of JPI's important work – you will read more about that in this issue.

I was recently reading the very first issue of *Applied Biodynamics* from fall of 1992. It stated that the publication was to be "a vehicle for going beyond any possible stag-

nation and dogma, so as to grasp anew the truths of the biodynamic preparations." That said, I would like to invite those of you who are using the preps and making the preps to share your insights, observations, and experiences with us, so we can share them with others via this newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you!

Finally, special thanks go to Hunter Francis as the co-editor for this issue.

—Christy Korrow

On FRIENDSHIP and the Making of the Biodynamic Preparations

We are part of a rhythm. A rhythm that not only includes the work of making the preps, but a rhythm of knowing that we will be seeing friends every year in the same season. I believe that the fact that these friendships have formed through the activity of making the preps has strengthened our confidence – both that the friendships themselves will be enduring, and that our group and making the preps will continue into the future.

—Wali Via addressing the Oregon biodynamic group as they recently celebrated thirty years of prep making.

Applied Biodynamics

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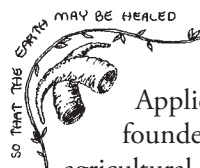
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Make plans to join the JPI community for their Fall Workshop – Making the Biodynamic Preparations (details page 11.)



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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Taking Time for Food and Agriculture: The Slow Food Movement Through the Eyes of Biodynamics

A quality eating experience is the consequence of a long chain of decisions and transactions. Thus, Slow Food, a reaction to fast food, is a call for creating a stable food system in which the environment is protected, rural communities supported, and producers respected. The battle cry of the Slow Food movement is “*buono, pulito, giusto*,” meaning “good, clean, and just.” In these basic concepts, it is akin to philosophies within the sustainability movement, which call for practices that are environmentally sound, economically viable, and socially responsible (in agriculture, industry, architecture, transportation, and a wide range of human activity). Although focused on gastronomy, Slow Food seeks to nourish a sensitivity towards food that goes beyond the palette. It fosters a sense of “eco-gastronomy” rooted in bio-diverse ecologies, healthy farms, and vibrant communities.

Slow Food International is based in Bra, Italy (in the Piedmont region) and is administered globally through national organizations comprised of “*convivia*.” *Convivium* is a Latin term meaning feast, entertainment or banquet. *Convivia* are local groups comprised of subscribing Slow Food members (with over 80,000 paying members worldwide). The *convivia* work regionally to build relationships with producers, campaign to protect local foods, and organize “taste education” events. Many *convivia* members are “co-producers,” a term Carlo Petrini uses to refer to consumers as a way of accentuating the role everyday citizens play in the food system through their food choices. There are approximately one hundred and forty *convivia* in the United States. If there is not one in your local area, you may find out about starting one by contacting Slow Food

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

BD #508 – Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)

Compost
Preparations



Tibetan yak cheese was highlighted at a Slow Food Foundation exhibit

USA (see notes on page 7). Slow Food members receive periodic publications and invitations to Slow Food events.

The Slow Food movement has devised some interesting tools for fulfilling its objectives. One, of course, is the staging of the Terra Madre convention every two years. Two other key initiatives are the “Arc of Taste” and the “Presidia.” The Arc of Taste is essentially a “cataloging of forgotten flavors.” It is an international effort to identify and document unique, traditional foods and production practices that are in danger of being lost – usually because the producers who make them are not able to compete in a cheap food economy. Since the initiative began in 1996, over five hundred heritage food products have been added to the Arc.

The Presidia are small projects dedicated to assisting groups of artisan producers of a particular product. They are “producer communities” that serve as the working arm of the Arc of Taste. The strategies of each Presidium vary depending on the needs of its members. Often, assistance in product promotion, or in the establishing of authenticity guidelines for traditional foods, is provided to help support or coordinate producer efforts. In some cases, Slow Food invests directly in Presidia projects, such as in constructing facilities for producers of a certain food. Examples of Presidia foods preserved in the Arc of Taste are preserves of the *umbu* fruit (made in Brazil), red fife wheat used for making bread in Canada and Tibetan yak cheese. I tasted each of these products, and they were delicious. All of the above initiatives are supported financially by funding from the Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity, a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of the Slow Food movement.

During the Terra Madre conference opening in the Oval Lingotto (a former Olympic skating rink, now a convention hall where Terra Madre is held), what struck



Reunion of the U.S. delegation at Terra Madre

me immediately was the level of support Slow Food receives from the Italian government. Conference delegates were welcomed by the President of the Italian Republic, his Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Forestry, the Governor of the Province of Piedmont, and the Mayor of Turin, among other officials. At the 2004 conference (the first Terra Madre), delegates were addressed by Prince Charles, an avid supporter of Slow Food. By and large, it appears the Europeans are supportive of the direction Slow Food is taking – in spite of what emerged later as some decidedly radical viewpoints expressed by other conference speakers. In many cases, presenters did not mince words when it came to exposing the perils of a corporate, globalized food economy based strictly on profit. Slow Food as a whole is quite clear about its objection to current trends such as genetic engineering, patenting of biological organisms, indiscriminate use of pesticides, factory farming of animals, and the dumping of subsidized commodities into fragile Third World markets.



Italian cheese maker presents his product at Salone del Gusto

This high level of support is reflected monetarily at Terra Madre. As one might expect, food served at the conference was exquisite, and as far as I could tell, most of the congregation was housed during the five-day event free of charge. Arrangements were made with local hotels, pensions, schools, monasteries, bed and breakfasts, and farms to accommodate the enormous crowd. I was lodged in an immaculate university apartment in the historic district of Turin. When needed, as in the case of many of the indigenous participants from developing countries, airfare was likewise provided by Slow Food.

At Terra Madre 2006, special focus was given to the relationships within the food communities between producers, cooks, researchers, and academics. In particular, the challenge of complementing scientific expertise with practical, traditional knowledge (*i.e.*, of traditional farmers) was examined. Slow Food advocates the preservation of traditional, community-based farming methods and agricultural biodiversity in the face of a trend towards modernization, globalization, and monoculture. It serves as a voice for the peasant farmer whose quiet wisdom is often drowned out in the din of “progress.” A keenly insightful and highly practical knowledge base is being lost as old farmers die out, and the Slow Food movement likens this to the loss of biological biodiversity we are experiencing in the natural world.

At several junctures, Carlo Petrini made a point of saying Slow Food is a “defense of the peasant.” At the same time, he recognizes the important role the intelligentsia and policy makers have to play in making sure our collective world heritage around food is not lost. While cautioning academics not to “romanticize” the contribution of “peasant knowledge,” he called upon university representatives present at the meeting to make traditional farmers and food systems the object of their study, and to catalog their findings for the benefit of future generations.

As a representative from an academic institution, I participated in a forum for university delegates from around the world, which was hosted at the University of Turin. Many topics were addressed. The history of the university system in Europe was touched upon, with references made about the role of higher education in modern societies. The current ecological crisis was alluded to throughout the panel presentation, often as a failure of civilization in spite of our vast intellectual resources and prowess. An overriding theme was the need to be more sensitive to local culture in adapting new technologies in agriculture. The need for greater “interdisciplinarity” was stressed. Many participants in the gathering shared news from their respective projects, such as a Latin American network of scientific

researchers in agro-ecology being spearheaded by University of California professor Miguel Altieri.

A special convocation of chefs from across the planet was also convened to highlight their work. Petrini believes chefs have a unique role to play in educating the general public on food quality. According to him, many people in industrialized societies have lost their “taste discrimination” and their ability to appreciate good food. Reunions, panels, and dinners were organized for the delegation of chefs. Austrian-born Nora Pouillon, founder of the first certified organic restaurant in the U.S. (Restaurant Nora, in Washington, D.C.), was among the featured speakers. A chef from Brazzaville who is working to create a *haute cuisine* using native Congolese foods was particularly inspiring to me. Worldwide, more and more people are eating food prepared outside the home, so chefs, particularly those who work in public institutions serving large populations, are playing a bigger role than ever in nourishing humanity. Petrini implored chefs to escape from their “cages” of restaurants and to engage their public on the importance of food quality in everyday life.

Numerous innovative initiatives (private, governmental, and non-profit alike) for helping people to forge stronger links to the source of their food were highlighted at Terra Madre. Prominent among these were certification programs to help “co-producers” identify production practices, chef collaboratives, community-based agricultural programs, education on sustainable production and processing methods, and unique marketing strategies for farmers.

One of the plenary speakers at the conference was Alice Waters, founder of Chez Panisse Restaurant in Berkeley, CA. Ms. Waters has been a pioneer in the organic and local food movements in California, and has been a leading proponent of “eco-literacy” projects for school children. Her Chez Panisse Foundation has financed several exemplary school garden projects, which include cooking laboratories where children learn how to prepare the foods they grow. High on Ms. Waters’ agenda at Terra Madre was the promotion of “Slow Food Nation” – a special food event scheduled to take place in San Francisco in May 2008. This will be a sort of national Terra Madre for the United States. It will primarily highlight foods from the Western U.S., but with the intention of creating a model that can be replicated in other regions. RAFT (Renewing America’s Food Traditions) is another initiative active in promoting awareness of America’s culinary roots. It was founded by Gary Nabhan of the Center for Sustainable Environments at Northern Arizona University.

Adjoining the Terra Madre conference was the “*Salone*



The Neapolitan papaccella is a pepper originating from the region around Naples. It was commonly preserved in vinegar.

del Gusto,” or Hall of Taste. Unlike Terra Madre (an invitational event), *Salone del Gusto* is open to the general public. It hosts over 130,000 visitors every other year simultaneously with the Terra Madre conference. During the five-day event, an enormous market covering several acres in a former Fiat factory invites people to learn about and sample food delicacies from all over the world. Here, one may meet and interact with farmers and food producers themselves. Long avenues lined with scores of booths representing a given food or beverage category are set up to showcase the various foods. These range from fresh vegetables to grain products, cheeses, cured meats, dried fish, pickles, preserves, beers, and liqueurs. For wine tasting, a separate *enoteca* stocks thousands of uncorked wines for visitors to enjoy. Several hundred taste workshops are conducted at the *Salone del Gusto* helping people to make tangible connections between gastronomy, culture, and production practices. A “theater of taste” hosts dozens of cooking demonstrations given by famous chefs. Visual and culinary displays highlighting foods from every continent were beautifully presented by the Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity. Additionally, each of Italy’s provinces hosted booths to showcase regional Italian foods. The *Salone* is truly an extravaganza of traditions, colors, and tastes!

Beyond the walls of Terra Madre and the *Salone del Gusto*, numerous outings were organized by Slow Food, taking people into the city and surrounding areas to experience restaurants, farms, production facilities and cultural attractions. The newly established University of Gastronomic Sciences in Pollenza (a Slow Food initiative) was a highly promoted destination. This is the first institution of higher education dedicated solely to the study of gastronomy. The University focuses on “food culture” and is not a cooking school. Rather, it blends subjects such as anthropology,



Biodynamic farmer Gena Nonini with Franco Pedrini and colleague – biodynamic pasta makers of San Cristoforo Co., Florence, Italy

botany, food technology, and history to provide students with tools for exploring and protecting food traditions.

In retrospect, participating in all of these events reaffirmed two important ideas, both of which have occurred to me often in my forays into biodynamics. The first is the importance of healthy communities in the effort to develop a more sustainable culture. The second is the limitation of modern reductionist science in assigning value to facets of human experience that are not quantifiable. Many representatives of the diverse constituencies convening at Terra Madre seem to be experiencing a common frustration over the negative impacts global food policies have on indigenous communities (human and non-human) and over the arrogance of a scientific paradigm that has a tendency to overlook half of life (*i.e.*, the qualitative and the spiritual). In biodynamic terms, it is as if we have allowed our fascination with “*bios*” in the material sense to eclipse our appreciation for the finer “dynamics” or forces which actually animate life and make it worth living. Without this finer appreciation, we end up, ironically, with a science of “dead” life (*bios*).

How have the problems inherent in the breakdown of communities and in an obsessively material focus manifested in the realm of food? They have manifested in “convenience” foods which are “safe” and “enriched,” but not necessarily fresh and vital. We experience them in the fluorescent glare of supermarket aisles which are abundant, yet somehow barren. (Compare the experience of shopping at a lively farmers’ market.) And, they manifest in the vast ecological deserts we have created in the cleanly manicured fields of industrial agriculture. These are but some of the cultural ironies the Slow Food movement is attempting to shed light on. Here, it is worth mentioning that the Slow Food movement is part of a much wider

movement seeking a more holistic conception of community and of nature. Anthroposophy, which includes biodynamics, should be credited as a forerunner of this wider movement. Many of the concerns being expressed through Slow Food were articulated much earlier by Steiner and his followers.

The desire to explain social and natural phenomena strictly through the observation of material processes has had a profound influence on how we have come to structure our explanations of how things work. I would maintain that it has resulted in a diminution in the value we, as a society, place on qualitative variables (*e.g.*, taste). Is it really any wonder we have created a modern gastronomic culture devoid of taste and nutrition – where farms function without communities (indeed, sometimes with barely any people), where schools, hospitals, and even homes exist without fully-equipped kitchens, and where drive-through windows act as “hearths” for millions? Focus on matter alone has made it very easy for us to exclude vital considerations from our public decision making. Our awkwardness in dealing with issues such as food and environmental quality, health of rural communities, animal welfare, and so on, are signs of our extreme dependence on a one-sided approach to life. At Terra Madre, I experienced an unmistakable and urgent demand that we work together to develop more effective strategies for coming to grips with problems such as these.

What was so inspiring and hopeful about this collective demand was the power behind it. Of all explorations of “new ways of thinking” I’ve witnessed, this was certainly one of the most impressive. (It was also, incidentally, one of the best marketed – something I have mixed emotions about.) Terra Madre was a colorful, flavorful pageant that, for me at least, was a palpable sign that a new paradigm is trying to emerge. The hopeful part of the message is that people are responding to the phenomenon in an enlivened way. Furthermore, considering the nationalism and petty bigotries so common in global culture, the gathering was refreshingly broad-based. Virtually every nation, every religion, and every discipline was represented. Heads of state convened with peasant farmers, accomplished scientists with native spiritualists. There was definitely a spirit of cooperation and solidarity in the air. In fact, the levity of this feeling took over the entire city, which was splendidly dressed-up for the event.

Of course, biodynamics offers a conception of community that goes far beyond what many people at Terra Madre may think of when they consider a “food community.” (I am referring to the unseen players at work in any natural community, such as elemental or spiritual beings.)

Biodynamics offers a particularly deep understanding of “dynamic” forces that are not directly measurable by materialistic means (though their effects can be measured, of course). Nonetheless, both the Slow Food and the biodynamic movements offer alternative models for meeting our food needs based on a more holistic vision of how we can participate with nature and with each other. With many shared intentions, the Slow Food movement is worthy of the attention of biodynamic practitioners who seek to deepen the relationship of people to their food, to value the farmer who produced it, and to harmonize sound management practices with the economic marketplace. Given the cornucopia of concepts and tools Rudolf Steiner has left us to help reconnect the material and the spiritual worlds,

I think biodynamics has the opportunity to play a very special role in this movement in the future.

Notes

Visit the following websites for more information on Slow Food initiatives:

Slow Food International: <www.slowfood.com>

Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity: <www.slowfoodfoundation.com>

Slow Food USA: <www.slowfoodusa.org>

Renewing America's Food Traditions (RAFT) Project: <www.slowfoodusa.org/raft>

Slow Food Nation (conference): <www.slowfoodnation.org>

Salone del Gusto (food show): <www.salonedelgusto.com>

In Memory of Elizabeth Courtney: 1940–2007

Nick Franceschelli

A profound and sometimes bitter truth that belongs to being human is that we don't really begin to understand and appreciate the people whom we think we know, until *after* they have crossed the threshold of death. As I reflect back on Liz Courtney, who passed away recently, I feel strongly the awful weight of the aforementioned statement.

For many years, the Josephine Porter Institute consisted of the private home of Hugh and Liz Courtney. First, it was the modest trailer that they lived in, then their small house, which they shared with the business and the helpers. My wife and I arrived there in the summer of '89, to be met with the generous hospitality of Hugh and Liz. For five plus years we all lived and worked together on the farm, so I got to know Liz a little, though she was a private and tactful soul. The few paragraphs that follow are based on my memories of that time. It will have to be left to others to give a proper biographical sketch of her life.

Liz was a well-educated, gentle person, who had a love for beauty and nature. She was not originally a biodynamic “practitioner,” as Hugh calls all us who farm and garden in this manner, but I can hardly imagine a more selfless, loyal, long-suffering and generous friend to the biodynamic movement than she was. While Hugh tackled the daunting task of making preparations and getting them to those who needed them, Liz took on the task of making sure that he succeeded. She provided a foundation of a warm, comfortable home, as well as steadiness, good spirits, wise counsel, patient forbearance, and to-die-for meals. She received all manner of guests, opening her doors to leaders of



the biodynamic and anthroposophical world, along with just plain farmers and gardeners, and not a few “characters” that a movement such as ours attracts at times. She sacrificed a good deal of material comfort, privacy, and peace of mind for a noble cause, bearing the “cross” of biodynamics, both out of a love for Hugh and an intuition that indeed she was doing the right thing.

Still, Liz was her own person. She was not a wallflower at JPI. When she moved to conservative, insular, close-knit Patrick County, Virginia, she was determined to enjoy life and develop her interest in improvisational theater and stage plays. With patience, resourcefulness, and pluck, she found a number of locals, both “natives” and “transplants,” and she sweet-talked, begged, bullied, and charmed them into taking part in a variety of theatrical productions. I know. I was one of them. She had the grit, vision, and authority of a real stage director, but without the nasty, dictatorial streak that sometimes comes with that territory. Many of her actors became her friends, and many of her friends became her actors.

Liz had no illusions of striking it rich or becoming famous with her theater work in Patrick County. In fact, I rather suspect she took a “step down” from her genteel, cultured upbringing, when she decided to go “back to the land.” Regardless, she held her head high, and seemed to find the good grace, humor, common sense, and just plain courage to make it through the struggles that destiny presented her with. I write this characterization not to oversimplify or dress up Liz. Liz was an extremely sensitive, deeply caring human being, and sometimes struggled with self-confidence. She doubtlessly had to summon inner resources to persevere with her work and station in life.

One particular feature of Liz’s life that many of us will not soon forget was her mastery in the kitchen. With the apparent ease and effortlessness of a professional chef, she would toss out five-star meals and legendary desserts. A dinner invitation at the Courtney’s was something to look forward to and brag about to envious friends. My wife learned a lot from Liz’s efficient approach to food preparation and preservation. Her small kitchen was always spotless and tidy, even in the middle of catering a dinner for eight, and she wouldn’t rest afterwards until all was cleaned and put away.

Where I work now at the Hawthorne Valley Farm, we get a visit each week from a different class of schoolchildren. Invariably, I tell them the story of the first calf ever to be born on “Mr. Courtney’s Farm.” I describe to the enraptured third graders how “Mrs. Courtney” delightedly spotted the newborn calf from her vantage point on the deck of her home, using field glasses to bring the little arrival into view. Her childlike love of animals and her joy and kindness is thereby passed on to a whole generation of Waldorf third graders.

Liz, at least in my “day” at JPI, was genuinely interested in studying Rudolf Steiner’s Anthroposophy. During our common study time, she brought thoughtful questions that came from a humble, honest place. May her striving

for a true spirituality now help her move ever closer to the Light, and may she feel the buoyant, life-giving balm of the Eternal Spirit, now that she has put aside the burden of her earthly garment, which she bore stoically right up to the end of her life on earth.

New Fund for JPI

In the spirit of honoring and furthering biodynamics and at the behest of many supportive and dedicated friends of JPI, the Board has granted permission for the creation of the Elizabeth Scott Courtney Memorial Fund. The fund will be used for the following purposes:

- Land Acquisition – To give JPI the necessary capital to purchase the farm from the Courtney Family, thus making JPI a strong, asset-based organization with real property and the capacity for building a solid future.
- Education and Training – Buildings, gardens and the land will be maintained to provide a strong educational showpiece for the biodynamic, anthroposophical, and wider communities of children, students and adults. The farm will be not only the home for the biodynamic preparations, a place for workshops, education and training, but a showplace for biodynamic agriculture.
- Scholarships – Liz wanted everyone to feel welcome. Her hospitality and warmth will be fittingly commemorated with a scholarship fund for those people who want to attend JPI workshops, but who cannot afford the expense.

Your gift to The Elizabeth Scott Courtney Memorial Fund will guarantee the perpetual care and sustainability of the Josephine Porter Institute for generations to come. In turn, JPI will be able to provide the biodynamic preparations as well as the education, training, and research necessary to heal the earth’s soil and, ultimately, its people. Your charitable donation is tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. I encourage you to give as generously as you can. Gifts in any amount will be greatly appreciated. Please feel free to call Gena Nonini, President, Board of Directors, at (559)352-8178 to discuss planned giving, estate donations and other generous gifts.

A Field is a Teacher

Sharon Carson

Sharon Carson gardens biodynamically in Delaware. She and her husband hold numerous educational events on their farm, and have done much to raise the awareness of biodynamics in their area. Recently, they hosted a midsummer camp-out for supporters of the farm – complete with a moonlight tour of the garden, barbecue, a bonfire, music, and homemade pancakes Sunday morning.

Today, I walked to the field across the road to pick some wild larkspur and Canadian thistle for a bouquet. I have a lifetime of interaction with this piece of farmland, now abandoned for the last three years. As a child, I rode past it bareback on my pony, when the blacktop road was only a dirt lane and the house we live in was the only one on the road.

In the early '80s, I took folks across the road so they could see the effects of chemicals on the land and on the soil. For years, only corn and soybeans were grown there, and at times the chemicals used to kill the weeds ended up killing the crops too. Finally, about five years ago, they applied some chicken manure. Then the land was sold for development, since, like much of the farmland around here, it was no longer profitable to farm. It took time for the housing development to get going, so the field was left to nature.

What was fascinating to me was to see the changes that took place on the land. There were spots where nothing grew and other spots with green grass, poke weed, tree seedlings, and patches of wild blackberries. Groundhog tunnels



were all over, making it an unsafe place to ride a horse like I used to do when the land wasn't planted. There were even the ethereal colors of waves of larkspur and black raspberries that had originated from our gardens – brought there by the birds and the wind. The new houses built on the land contrast our organic mini-farm with their landscaped, immaculate lawns and lights installed to show off the investment – such a contrast to our dim solar lights that twinkle like fairies to guide our way at night. Eventually, when the entire field is full of houses with all their “insecurity” lights, I doubt we will be able to see the stars anymore.

The field, however, is a teacher of how nature restores herself – if only we would listen.

Genetically-Modified Genes Found in Honeybees

Christy Korrow

Two London newspapers recently reported that a four-year study conducted at the Institute for Bee Research at the University of Jena in Germany reveals the genetic transfer of herbicide-resistant genes from rapeseed (canola) into bacteria living in the guts of honeybees. Biotech companies have long held fast that genetically-modified DNA cannot jump species barriers. If substantiated, this would be the first proof of what many anti-GMO scientists have feared for years.

In an interview for *The Observer* newspaper, Professor Hans-Hinrich Kaatz said: “I have found the herbicide-resistant genes in the rapeseed transferred across to the bac-

teria and yeast inside the intestines of young bees. This happened rarely, but it did happen.” *The Observer* noted Kaatz was reluctant to talk about his work until it is officially published and reviewed by fellow scientists. Kaatz's cautiousness is completely understandable, recalling Arpad Pusztai's discovery that GM potatoes have adverse effects on the stomach lining of mice – he was essentially fired from the Rowett Research Institute in Scotland and suffered attacks from the scientific community. Needless to say, the potatoes never made it to supermarket shelves, and Pusztai became a key spokesperson for the anti-GMO movement.

The Observer also reports: “The research reports come a day after Britain’s Agriculture Minister Nick Brown urged farmers to destroy crops contaminated with genetically modified seeds. Up to six hundred farmers in Britain are believed to have inadvertently planted more than 30,000 acres of oilseed rape contaminated with GM rape seeds, supplied by Anglo-Dutch seed company Advanta. Similar crops have been planted elsewhere in Europe, including in France, Germany, and Sweden. The French and Swedish governments have already announced they are ordering the uprooting of the crops.”

If these genetically modified genes have jumped species and invaded the intestinal bacteria of bees, are humans at risk for the same? Of greatest concern are the antibiotic resistant marker genes used in the genetic modification process. And more significantly, what are the karmic effects of this greed-driven technology?

Once again, we can turn to biodynamics as a significant remedy for our modern malaise, and as a model of sustainability and harmonious coexistence between the mineral, plant, animal, and human kingdoms.

“That which we experience within ourselves only at a time when our hearts develop love is actually the very same thing that is present as a substance in the entire beehive. The whole beehive is permeated with life based on love. In many ways the bees renounce love, and thereby this love develops within the entire beehive.”

—from *Bees*, by Rudolf Steiner

Eight lectures in Dornach

November 26, 1923 to December 22, 1923

Best Sequential Spray Periods If Moisture Lacking

Recommendations by Hugh Courtney

- Wednesday, June 27 @ 7:00 AM thru Friday, June 29 @ 1:00 PM
- Friday, July 6 @ 11 AM thru Sunday, July 8 @ 10 AM
- Tuesday, July 24 @ 3 PM thru Thursday, July 26 @ 9 PM
- Tuesday, August 21 @ 1 AM thru Thursday, August 23 @ 6 AM
- Monday, September 17 @ 7 AM thru Wednesday, September 19 @ 2 PM
- Sunday, October 14 @ 12 PM thru Tuesday, October 16 @ 9 PM
- Tuesday, October 23 @ 9 AM thru Thursday, October 25 @ 6 PM
- Wednesday, October 31 @ 9 AM thru Friday, November 2 @ 7 AM

Please Note: Other times may require an “abbreviated sequence.” An abbreviated sequence involves a spray combining BC plus BD #500, stirred together for one hour,

and applied near sunset on day one. On day two, BD #501 and #508 are stirred together for one hour and sprayed near sunrise. All sprays must be applied during a time when the moon is in a Leaf/Water constellation in order to achieve an influence on moisture conditions. Instead of BD #500 and #501, #(X)500 and #501(5X) may be used in the appropriate combination with BC and BD #508 respectively with a resultant stirring time for each combination spray of only 20 minutes. If one has sufficient time, the best choice would be to spray each preparation separately, rather than stirring them together, and to use the orthodox preparations instead of a potentized or homeopathic one, although research on these questions still needs to be done.

Read Hugh Courtney’s complete *Recommendations for Working with Crops, Sequential Spraying, and Ashing (for U.S.A.)* through December 2007 at <www.jpibiodynamics.org>.

“All life patterns of the natural kingdoms – are woven into cosmic rhythms. It is difficult for people of our time, who consider themselves objective, to accept such a fact... Rhythms are related to the forces of the universe which pour in, and then work through the layers of the Earth, and find their way in to the Earth by means of the four traditional elements of warmth (fire), air/light, water and earth.”

Maria Thun, *Results from the Biodynamic Sowing and Planting Calendar* (Floris Books, 2003)

Upcoming Events at the Josephine Porter Institute

JULY 26–29, 2007: PUBLIC WORKSHOPS AND BOOTH AT FLOYDFEST

Details at <www.floydfest.com>.

AUGUST 25, 2007: JPI OPEN HOUSE

SEPTEMBER 28, 2007: AN EVENING LECTURE BY HUGH COURTNEY

Topic to be announced. Cost is \$10.00.

SEPTEMBER 29, 2007: HOW TO MAKE HORN MANURE PREPARATION (BD #500) AND HOW TO MAKE BIODYNAMIC COMPOST

Workshop includes a biodynamic lunch to be served at 1:00 PM. Cost is \$60 (includes evening lecture on September 28).

OCTOBER 17–21: FALL WORKSHOP — MAKING THE BIODYNAMIC PREPARATIONS

Five days of hands-on work and lecture for the farmer and gardener. Cost is \$500.00.

NOVEMBER 10, 2007: MAKING HORN MANURE PREPARATION (BD #500)

Free of charge.

Other Events

AUGUST 24–26: BIODYNAMIC FARMING AND GARDENING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

To be held at Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, CA. Go to <www.biodynamics.com> for details.

SEPTEMBER 28–30: WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

A biodynamic farming and gardening conference in Red Boiling Springs, TN. For details, contact (616)699-2493 or go to <www.barefootfarmer.com>.

DECEMBER 6–8, 2007: THE 2007 ACRES U.S.A. CONFERENCE IN LOUISVILLE, KY

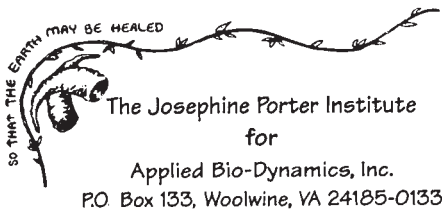
For information, contact (800)355-5313 or go to <www.acresusa.com>.



New Regional Prep Making Effort: A group gathered in late June at Hill and Hollow Farm in southern Kentucky to make biodynamic preparations. A full report will appear in the summer issue of Applied Biodynamics.

“I have always found what farmers and peasants thought about things much more intelligent than what scientists did. I would much rather listen to the experiences of people who directly work on the fields, than to all the ahrimanic statistics we get from science...”

*Rudolf Steiner – Spiritual Foundations for the Renewal of Agriculture,
Address to Members of the Agricultural Experimental Circle, p. 188*



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