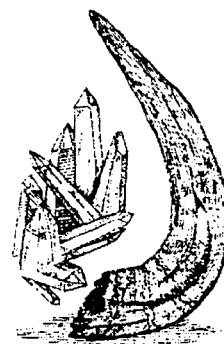


Applied BIODYNAMICS[®]



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Issue No. 66

Growing the Biodynamic Wine Industry in California: An Interview with Philippe Armenier

Hunter Francis

In July of this year, it was my pleasure to interview Philippe Armenier, a biodynamic consultant to vintners, who was visiting wineries of the central coast of California. Mr. Armenier comes from a long tradition of wine grape growers in the Provence region of southern France. He came to California in 2001, where he has consulted with dozens of wineries, mostly in the Napa and Sonoma regions, he also consults with wineries in Oregon and Washington. The day after our interview, I accompanied Mr. Armenier to L'Aventure in Paso Robles, one of the wineries he is working with (www.aventurewine.com). There we met with L'Aventure owner, Stephan Asseo, who farms approximately sixty acres of wine grapes, with half currently under biodynamic cultivation and the other half to be converted next year. Mr. Asseo has been a dedicated vintner and winemaker for nearly twenty years, and is known for his Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah blends.

Hunter Francis: *How did you become involved in agriculture?*

Philippe Armenier: I was born in Chateauneuf du Pape into a family whose roots in the area date back to 1344. Chateauneuf du Pape is only ten miles from Avignon, France, the seat of the Catholic popes for nearly a century during a schism in the Church [known as the Western Schism or Babylonian Captivity, 1305–1378]. Traditionally, the agriculture of the region included olive trees, cherries, and grapevines – though now it has all principally turned to vines. As a child, I can remember groves of olive trees, but in 1956, there was a big freeze, which killed most of them. Now, there are over 10,000 acres of vineyards.

HF: *So, were you raised on a farm there?*



Phillipe Armenier (left) and Stephen Asseo (right) assessing soil test results in the laboratory

PA: No, not a farm. There are no farms in the region, because there is no water. We lived in the village, as most people do. But my family was involved in growing grapes and making wine. We had our own “domaine,” precisely the Domaine de Marcoux, which my family still manages.

HF: *Are most of the vineyards in Chateauneuf du Pape dry farmed?*

PA: Yes, most of them.

HF: *Aside from your training in your family, did you do any formal training?*

PA: Yes, I did certificate training for enology in Avignon.

HF: *At what point did you become involved in biodynamics?*

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Editor's Note

Dear readers:

The French philosopher, mystic and activist, Simone Weil (1909–1943) once wrote “Absolute unmixed attention is prayer.” Her statement holds meaning for those who engage in biodynamic work. While practical and scientific information about biodynamics is widely available through hundreds of books, websites, classes and conferences, the spiritual aspects of our movement cannot be so neatly packaged and sold.

Though it is important to share “how-to” information, and encourage friends and fellow farmers to use the preparations, it is equally essential for practitioners to adopt a devotional mood while working with the land. Rudolf Steiner describes an attitude of reverence as a fundamental prerequisite for the human soul to gain access to supersensible worlds. After all, emphasis on how the spiritual world is active in nature and agriculture is what sets biodynamics apart from organic agriculture.

Mindfully stirring the preparations, or really being on our farms and in our gardens can become opportunities for the development of spiritual capacities. This is the juncture where we go beyond a biodynamic practice that is more or less, one of following instructions or guidelines, to one

where the gardener or farmer participates with the whole of nature; through this higher sense of awareness, spiritual scientific research takes place. We become capable of phenomenological research, “reading the book of nature,” and can come to our own understanding of what, for example, a healthy plant, field, or landscape truly looks like. From the basis of this understanding, we can problem-solve and discern what can be done to restore balance.

I think you will recognize this level of engagement when you read Hunter Francis's interview with Phillipe Armenier. Mr. Armenier is an example of a person who pays attention, specifically evident in his work using biodynamic preparation plants as teas. He sees things in plants that most of us don't. Next time you step into your garden, and spend that hour stirring the preparations, pay close attention.

—Christy Korrow

Applied Biodynamics

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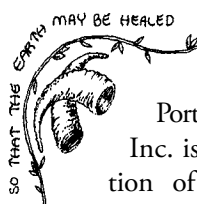
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Mission

The mission of the Josephine Porter Institute for Applied Biodynamics, Inc. is to heal the earth through production of quality biodynamic preparations based on the spiritual scientific discoveries of Rudolf Steiner and to advance education and research in biodynamic agriculture.

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An Interview with Phillipe Armenier

PA: Oh, that was a long time after I had started my work in winemaking. I started my job as official winemaker with my father in 1973. I had been farming grapes conventionally all along, and in 1988, my wife shared Rudolf Steiner's Agriculture Course with me.

HF: *What was your mindset at that time, in terms of your openness to alternative systems, such as organic, biodynamic, etc.?*

PA: Many of the organic vineyards I was familiar with at the time were awful. They were making mistakes everywhere – in the soil, in the plant, in the wine. The quality wasn't there, so I had no interest in organics. Nevertheless, I read Steiner's book with my wife, and I said to myself, "This is what I want to do!"

HF: *So, what was next?*

PA: Next was a phone call to the Biodynamic Association in France, and they directed me to a man by the name of Francois Bouchet. He was a grower and winemaker in the Loire Valley, not well known, who was just in the process of starting a consulting business. He had actually set out twenty years earlier to prove that biodynamic farming doesn't work. But what he found in trying the biodynamic method over and over again, was that it worked wonderfully, and he fell in love with it. So, he became involved with all of the older biodynamic people in France. When he retired, he decided to share his knowledge. (He taught Nicolas Joly, who is well-known to biodynamic vintners.) After I called him, he came to Chateauneuf du Pape, and we started working together. At first, I converted one-third of my vineyards to biodynamic, but after five or six months, all of the property was in biodynamic management [about 52 acres total].

HF: *What year was that?*

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*)



Looking out over the vineyards

PA: 1989.

HF: *Right after you had read the book!*

PA: Ah, yes! [laughs] We saw results right away, beautiful results. Chateauneuf du Pape is a very hot region, and it's very rocky – pure limestone. That first year, I used all of the normal preparations, though they never really touched the soil. I sprayed them right onto the rocks. I started to use them (on one-third of the acreage) in 1989, and by the next summer, I was amazed at how well the vines were withstanding heat stress. From the heat in the air, combined with reflection from the rocks, the plants "cook," as in an oven. It is normal for them just to droop. In the conventionally-managed blocks, the plants were totally heat-stressed; the leaves were looking down. But the biodynamic vines were all looking up – totally green! It was amazing to see the difference. We did blind tasting of the grapes and of the wine as well, and we saw a difference there too. The tannins in the biodynamic wines were more elegant. So, after the harvest of that year, we began to convert all of the vineyards into Biodynamic.

HF: *And you used this in the marketing of your wine?*

PA: Yes, as soon as I was able, I put Biodynamic on all of my labels. And, I encourage others to do that too. Since I started consulting in 2002, I have converted over 2,000 acres to biodynamic management, and half of those acres are now Demeter Certified Biodynamic.

HF: *When did you come to California, and why did you decide to move?*

PA: I came in September, 2001. Prior to that, I had decided I wanted a change. I didn't want to stay in France, and my wife agreed to move. We decided to come to California, but we didn't come directly. We decided to do a trip first. We took our kids in the car, with tents, and crossed Italy, went through the Greek Islands, and had the intention of



Checking fruit set

going to Egypt to study at Sekem [a Demeter Certified Biodynamic tea farm and anthroposophic community] for a year. But we never arrived there. We stopped in Jerusalem. We couldn't cross Gaza. So we went back to Turkey, and spent some time there waiting for a visa to go to Australia. We spent a year and a half in Australia. That was a wonderful experience. It was a good opportunity for me to learn English, and to study with Alex Podolinsky.

HF: *You worked with him?*

PA: Yes, and he drove me to farms across Australia, where we saw biodynamics in practice. This was in 1998.

HF: *What do you remember most about him?*

PA: Well, the last time I saw him, he was in his eighties, but still very vital, and still able to work on his farm. He is a fighter, with strong character. He is very opinionated, but what he was able to do for biodynamics in Australia was huge. It turned millions of acres to biodynamics, which is fantastic.

HF: *How would you characterize his approach?*

PA: Practice! Do it! Spray the preps, observe, watch what you are doing. He is very practical. He is all about doing, not just talking.

HF: *Do they use BD #508?*

PA: No. They are not allowed to grow *Equisetum arvense* there, because it is considered an invasive plant. However, they do use a substitute, *Casuarina equisetifolia*, which, like horsetail, has a high silica content.

HF: *So, you finally came to California.*

PA: Yes. Obviously, our path was not a direct one. I also spent time in England, where I studied art at Emerson College. During our travels, I considered many different directions for my life work, but I eventually came back to vines. I realized this is my "way." It's me. So, when I came to California, I looked for a job in the wine industry, and was hired by Jess Jackson of Kendall Jackson Winery. Jess

hired me to manage his own property. He actually helped me obtain my visa. However, due to changes at the winery less than a year after I arrived, I was let go. As I didn't want to return to France, I decided to go into consulting.

HF: *How did you start?*

PA: By knocking on doors... introducing myself and asking the vintners if they wanted to work with me. Since that time (2002), I have converted thirty-five wineries to biodynamic.

HF: *How does your consulting work?*

PA: It involves teaching and practicum – putting biodynamics into practice. I visit all of my wineries once a month, which is quite often. This allows me to develop a program for each winery for every month.

HF: *Are many of them making their own preparations?*

PA: No. Most of them are buying the preparations through JPI. A few are starting to make their own, but most are purchased. You have to realize making the preparations is a big job. It's difficult for some vineyards, particularly when they are starting out in biodynamics. It can be expensive to do. You also have the problem that the location of many of the wineries is not conducive to making all of the preparations. However, some of the wineries are now starting to incorporate animals, and are starting to make some of their own preparations.

HF: *Do you have anything to say about the stirring and application of the preparations?*

PA: Stirring should be done by hand or mechanically – not with flowforms. I am against the use of flowforms for this purpose (although they can serve other purposes, of course). In vineyards receiving preparations mixed with a flowform, I see the movement of the water go down in the canopy – the water is always going down. Flowforms create a nice lemniscate current, but without the vortex, and without any chaos, there is no dynamization. The water only rises again by the means of a pump, not by itself. There is no verticality in this way of mixing, as there is with hand or machine stirring. So, what I see as a result of preparations that have been stirred in this way, are leaves that are broad, flat, watery, and facing downward. Beyond that, we follow the calendar closely. When you are working with the cosmos, how can you farm without following the calendar? The calendar is very important.

HF: *I have heard that you often use "plant prep teas." Could you tell us about those?*

PA: Yes, we make teas with some of the herbs that are used in biodynamic preparations, for example, with yarrow. And by this I do not mean we make a tea with the BD #502; I mean we use the actual flowers. Also, we use the flowers of yarrow, nettle, valerian, and dandelion when we

can get them. We can also make teas from oak bark, or calcium, or egg shells. Sometimes we use other plants such as birch, sage, olive tree leaves, willow, etc. We use many different plants. I use them when I feel the vineyard needs something the plant can bring it. Most of the time, we spray the tea on the canopy. Or, sometimes we use a slurry that has been fermented. Combinations can be used too.

HF: *How did you learn about the teas, and how do you know when to use them?*

PA: I learned about them from my mentors such as Francois Bouchet and Maria Thun. Of course, we try to spray the teas according to the calendar. For example, a nettle tea will work best if it is sprayed on a leaf day. Ideally, we should listen to the vineyard, to what it is telling us it needs.

HF: *How about the making of the teas? Are they all made in the same way?*

PA: No, I prepare them differently, depending on the result I am seeking. I have several methods. One way is to do an “infusion”, as you would a normal tea that you drink. You simply boil the water, then pour it over the plant. Or we can make what we call a “decoction” in which you actually bring the plant parts to a boil in the water, and let it simmer for an hour. Sometimes, I make a three-day cold tea, or we can go further and make a ten-day, or fourteen-day tea – although those are more for the soil, not for the canopy. I don’t like to spray teas that are too heavily fermented on the canopy. We also make fermented horsetail teas using the Kolisko method that was taught to me by Hugh Courtney.

HF: *How do you know when to use an infusion vs. a decoction?*

PA: Well, it depends on the ingredients and how much I want to extract. Decoctions are stronger. I use them when it is harder to extract things from the raw material, as with oak bark or egg shells.

HF: *I understand that the teas carry the energies of the plants used to make them to the vineyard. Would you mind reviewing for our readers what characteristics, what beneficial properties, you are looking for from the basic herbs used in biodynamics?*

PA: Nettle, for instance, stimulates the iron process, it makes trace elements more available, and facilitates sap flow. Yarrow has more to do with the sulfur and potassium process. It improves fruit taste. In general, yarrow brings the astral down into the plant. Maria Thun used to say, if you don’t have any coffee in the morning, make a tea with yarrow. It helps bring the astral and the ego down into the body, and joins them in a very nice way. Likewise, I use yarrow tea if I see a plant is “looking down” – too linked to the earth. So, the yarrow, brings the “above” into the plant, so she can free herself from the earthly forces and rise upward.

HF: *What about chamomile?*



Inspecting the compost piles

PA: Chamomile we use for the calcium process, for preparing the plant to be able to receive and absorb heat in a healthy way. This can help protect the vines from the extreme heat we have here in the West, to a certain degree. Oak bark is also involved in the calcium process. In 2008, I used a lot of oak bark at some of the wineries in anticipation of a wave of heat I was expecting based on my reading of the calendar. Sometimes, when I really want to enhance the calcium process, I make a tea with a combination of chamomile, oak bark and egg shells.

HF: *And the dandelion and valerian?*

PA: Dandelion has to do with the silica process. It can help in the cold season, because it extends the effect of silica in the plant. For example, 2009 started off very cold here, so after spraying the BD #501 (horn silica), some of our wineries sprayed the dandelion tea to help prolong its effect. Valerian affects the phosphorus process. It has to do with Saturn... not only with the warmth process, but also with helping to align things where there is disorder. When I sense chaos, I find valerian can help bring order.

HF: *Now, when you are ready to use the teas, how do you actually prepare and apply them? Are they diluted, for instance?*

PA: Most of the time we dilute the teas, usually in a ratio of 1:9 (tea to water). Sometimes, we use a 1:1 ratio, but that’s more for the cold teas. It’s difficult to use the hot teas in larger ratios because of the quantities of water involved and the work involved in heating it. However, it can be done when you are talking about small acreages – even pure tea can be used. Usually, it’s 1:9.

HF: *How many gallons per acre are used?*

PA: Three to five gallons per acre.

HF: *Applied with spraying machines?*

PA: Yes, usually early in the morning, when the plant is fresh from the night and still breathing. It’s better to spray

when it's cooler too, because there is less chance of the tea evaporating before it reaches the canopy.

HF: *Are you only working with vineyards, or do you work with other crops?*

PA: Mostly vineyards. I would love to work with other crops, with olive orchards, for instance. But they are not as open to it yet.

HF: *Many of the principles would be the same, though?*

PA: Yes, to some degree, but you are dealing with a different product. In the case of olives, you are dealing with oil, not sugar. Oil is more subtle, more astral. So, the element of the flower is more important. The level of desired "fruitification" is different too. In grapes, you are looking for more inner maturity of the fruit. So, of course, the timing of your spraying will vary somewhat, depending on what effect you want in the leaves, flowers, fruit, roots, etc. Vegetable farmers are spraying all of the time, because they are trying to influence so many different plant parts.

HF: *And then, there is the soil...*

PA: Yes, of course! As a biodynamic farmer, I want to make a more beautiful soil. That is my first goal. The plant is only a reflection of the soil, so you have to start there. I remember visiting a farm in New South Wales, Australia, with Alex Podolinsky, where the farmer was complaining about the quality of his crops. Alex looked right to the soil; he didn't even bother looking at plants. What I have learned, is that when something is wrong with the plant, it usually means there is a problem in the soil.

HF: *And vintners are concerned with the idea of "terroir," that is, how the type and unique characteristics of the soil affect the taste of the grapes.*

PA: This is something other growers do not pay as much attention to. There is not the same link with the sense of place and the soil. It's true, the soil will affect the flavor of a carrot or of wheat, but usually when we buy flour, we have no idea where it comes from. The one exception is the cultivation of tea. Tea growers do give some attention to the "place," like winegrowers. Someday, I would like to try growing tea myself.

HF: *Given their focus on fruit quality and on distinguishing their product in the marketplace, it seems the wine makers are providing some leadership in furthering the spread and acceptance of biodynamics.*

PA: Yes. The wine business is offering the possibility for biodynamic farming to touch a lot of people. Not just here, but worldwide. This is good for the growth of biodynamics.

HF: *Have you noticed more receptivity to biodynamics since you started consulting in 2001?*

PA: Absolutely. If I had come ten years earlier, I wouldn't have had any business.

HF: *Do you think there is more acceptance in universities and research institutions?*

PA: Well, as you know, there have been studies going on in Europe for decades now, and we are now working with universities in California. This is important in helping to legitimize biodynamics, and in helping to defend it in the face of criticism from the outside. From the point of view of the farmer, however, I am finding that they are less concerned with the results of studies than with what they are seeing in practice. They can experience the difference in quality personally, and this is enough to attract their attention. In terms of the attacks from the outside, since the negative effects of chemical farming are now more recognized, some people want to say that biodynamics is nothing more than a glorified version of organic farming. So, we still have to prove that we are not simply farming organically. Thus, in some of our trials in the biodynamic vineyards I work with, we are using organic controls, not conventional ones. This way we are showing that there is a difference between organic and biodynamic. Our tests are verifying this. We have found the organic wines are drier, and shorter in terms of tannins. The biodynamic are more vivid, with good acidity and more expression. Additionally, we are also testing the effect of biodynamics on soil quality. At L'Aventure, for instance, we will be monitoring differences in soil pH, organic matter, cation exchange capacity [the chemical nutrient-holding capacity of the soil], microbial profiles, etc.

HF: *Any parting thoughts?*

PA: What Steiner gave us is fantastic. The incredible breadth of his work gives us a very rich context to work within. At this time, there is no better method in farming than biodynamics, but to do it well, you need to be able to think differently.

HF: *Thank you, Philippe!*



Biodynamic Farming and Preparation Making in Japan

Ben Campbell

We all know magic happens when we work with the preparations, and this report confirms it. In 2007, Ben Campbell and his wife Konomi met and fell in love at a JPI Preparation Making Workshop. Ben was a former cement mason, and Konomi, a music student who had recently completed an anthroposophic training at Rudolf Steiner College before going on to become one of the founding members of Hibiki no Mura, the first anthroposophic community in Japan. The two have now homesteaded an eight-hectare (approximately twenty-acres) tract of land on Hokkaido, Japan's second largest island, and are helping to spearhead a new biodynamic association in that country. This is their story.

There is some exciting news about a biodynamic association being started in Japan. Takeshi Han-ura and his wife Michiyo have started the Hokkaido Biodynamic Association (H.B.A.), but are not yet registered officially. Denis Pilliaud and his wife Yoshiko, who have been farming biodynamically for over twenty-five years, have been giving lectures on Rudolf Steiner's Agriculture Course for a long time and they have also offered workshops on preparation making.

When I first arrived in Japan in February of 2008, Konomi and I lived with Takeshi and Michiyo on a biodynamic farm outside the city of Iwamizawa (located on Hokkaido). The farmer there was growing onions, potatoes, rice, wheat, and some other vegetables biodynamically, but did not make his own preparations and did not have cows. Takeshi and Konomi were his apprentices. Takeshi eventually obtained his own land from the farmer. He now has a cow, and has built a house. Takeshi is also making preparations and using them on his land after learning how to make these at one of the workshops given by Denis.

At the end of February 2008, Takeshi, Michiyo, Konomi, and I were invited to go to Obihiro to give a workshop to a group of organic farmers connected to Hidenobu Ito-san, the owner of an organic purchasing company. He buys organic produce and has organic farms in the Tokachi area of Hokkaido. Takeshi introduced the farmers to the biodynamic preparations, Konomi talked about the rhythms of the cosmos, and I talked about CSA farms.

A New Opportunity

After the workshop, Ito-san asked Konomi and me if we would be interested in helping him expand the organic and biodynamic movement with him. We said yes, but that we would prefer to live in the Tokachi area to most effectively



caption?

take up the task. The Tokachi area has some of the best agricultural land on the Hokkaido Island, and in all of Japan. He gave us a choice of three farms. We chose the Sarabetsu village farm because of the energy we felt, the natural surroundings and the small population of about 3,400 people. It was an abandoned farm of eighteen hectares with no house, three small barns, and a spring. We are close to the Hidaka mountains there. Just a bit west of our farm are steep mountains, all wild and natural.

He said we could use two of the barns, four hectares for pasture, and rented us other places to make hay. So we bought a portable house that was used as a construction job site office, about twenty-feet by twenty-feet. I have since built attaching greenhouses on the east and south sides. We added a water heater, an indoor sink, an oil heater, and a wood stove. I built an outdoor shower and toilet.

Preparation Making

Once we got settled in, we started fencing the pasture and bought two Jersey heifers. A friend gave us our first round bale of organic hay. We also inherited thirty-five silky chickens and a hen house for them. We began collecting herbs to make our own biodynamic preparations. First, it was dandelion. Then, we tried to source cow horns, to no avail. The laws are different here for slaughtering animals because of mad cow disease. So, we found a factory that processed and inspected old, sick and dead cows for dog food, etc. We were able to collect cow hooves, mesentery, skulls, and intestines from the most healthy of the cows there. We started making all of our own preparations according to the moon's position in the constellations of the zodiac. We collected all the herbs by the same indications.



Hoof pit for BD #500

We could not find valerian, although it does grow wild here, so we planted some and will use it next year. Some of the stinging nettle here is over six-feet high and the leaves are as big as my hand. We have made barrel compost pits (a.k.a., Biodynamic Compound Preparation) and, additionally, used preps from JPI, and some Konomi and Takeshi made.

I wrote about our preparation making on our web page for those interested in more details (Ed. note: The site is mostly in Japanese, although there is a lengthy article in English on BD #500 made with cow hooves at <www.oubdfarm.com>). In addition to a scarcity of cow horns, silica quartz has been hard to find. Luckily, we brought some ground quartz with us from a farm in Arkansas. Hopefully, within the next few years, we can use organic cow parts. There are some organic beef and dairy farms here, so we may have to follow the cows to the slaughterhouse and go through a lot of paper work to obtain the needed materials.

Reaching Out

As for the biodynamic movement, we try to tell everyone what we are doing here. We started a web page, made business cards, and pamphlets. We had a summer solstice party and roasted half a pig to introduce ourselves and explain biodynamics at our farm. We rented a campground and hosted a three-day fall workshop. Denis Pilliaud came and

talked to us about Lecture Eight of the Agriculture Course, and we talked about cows. We thought it was very successful.

We (Takeshi, Denis, Konomi, and I) talked about organizing an association. So, for the 2008 winter solstice event, we decided to discuss the Demeter standards and how to organize a legitimate biodynamic association. We call it the Biodynamic Agriculture Association of Japan (B.A.A.J.). We elected Takeshi chief administrator. He will merge the previously mentioned H.B.A. with B.A.A.J. Ito-san is financing the registration fees. We are sending letters to all biodynamic farmers and interested organic farmers that we know of, to tell them about our plans of registering, and to invite them to contribute to and support our movement. There were twenty people at the winter solstice workshop, and all are serious about this movement and will do whatever it takes to see it through. There are between ten and fifteen other biodynamic farmers in Japan who I have not yet met, but I look forward to meeting them very much. Denis and Yoshiko have been helping the wine grape growers here for the last four or five years to convert to biodynamic methods, and little by little other organic farmers are finding out about biodynamics through them too. Denis, Takeshi, and Konomi are the ones who deserve the credit for moving biodynamics forward in this way. Ito-san deserves recognition too, as he is doing a lot for the movement while still maintaining a large corporation.

Goals for the Future

We call our farm oubdfarm. The ou is spirit man and earth in Japanese. We want to set an example of a model biodynamic farm and garden by sticking to the Demeter standards as much as possible. Our goal is eventually to bring Demeter certification to Japan, and assist others toward becoming Demeter Certified Biodynamic. Our farm is going to be an educational tool too. It will take several years to get to this stage, but we are both willing to do it.

We have sectioned off a plot, two-hundred and ten feet by one-hundred and twenty feet, in our pasture for a CSA garden for forty half shares and ten whole shares. We plan to recruit members at some of the organic and environmental events until the first harvest. We have the support of some other organic farmers to help us with some of the fall planted crops such as garlic, strawberries, or asparagus. We will offer eggs from our silky chickens, butter, and other dairy products from our cows, and bread from an oven I have yet to build. We will sell at the local farmers market and Ito-san's cafe too. We also want to make extra preparations for biodynamic farmers in Japan and throughout all of Asia.

On a personal note, since I have been involved with biodynamics, everything has been laid out for me as if the spiritual beings knew our intentions for the earth and humanity. The harder one works, the luckier one gets.

We want to thank Hugh Courtney for teaching us at your workshops and to let you know the seeds you have sown through us are sprouting. We love where we are at. We love what we are doing. And we love who we are with.

Contact Information

For those interested in learning more about the work in Japan, we have included the contact information:

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<www.michaelcollege.org>

2010 Planting Calendars

Stella Natura 2010 Biodynamic Agricultural Planting Guide and Calendar

Inspiration and practical advice for growers and would-be gardeners, with monthly articles exploring the question of "What is Biodynamics?" and an important piece by Michael D'Aleo on the effect of water vapor on climate change. The forty-page calendar has many aspects: a basic introduction to astronomy, a simple ephemeris, a biodynamic planting guide, a star map and aid for following the movement of the planets in the night sky, and articles by Sherry Wildfeuer, Laura Riccardi, Günther Hauk, Jeff Poppen, Danièle Laberge, Mac Mead, Jim Barausky, and Bruno Follador. All of these attempt to provide a true picture of the world outside us and ideas to assist in developing a healthy relation to that world. Available for \$14.95 (plus shipping).

Northern Hemisphere Astro Calendar 2010

The Northern Hemisphere Astro Calendar, (also known as the "Northern Star") a full-color thirty-page astronomical calendar and biodynamic planting guide, is particu-

larly useful for those interested in the movements of the heavenly bodies, who value the knowledge and wisdom that associates with this study, and who seek to develop a conscious participation in the great rhythms that link us with our cosmic environment. Each monthly spread includes information on planetary and constellational movements, lunar movements and phases, eclipses, discussions of weather patterns, information on biodynamic cultural practices, and, in this year's edition, an exploration of the Milky Way. Available for \$14.95 (plus shipping).

Faye's Freeform Kale and Radish

Compliments of Anne Morgan of Midheaven Farm

With fall greens in full swing, here is a creative way to prepare kale.

- Garlic
- Onion
- Kale, chard or other greens, chopped and rinsed
- Radish roots
- Raisins or craisins
- Sunflower seeds
- Olive oil
- Balsamic vinegar
- Soy sauce

Sauté onion and garlic. Add greens and radish dices. Cover and steam briefly. Add raisins, seeds and steam. Add vinegar and soy sauce. Heat, then season to taste with freshly ground pepper.

Thank You

In our last issue we thanked numerous individuals and groups who collected and contributed their dried dandelion blossoms, yarrow blossoms and *Equisetum* to JPI. Would you like to harvest dandelion or other preparation plant materials for JPI? If so, contact JPI for details on how to harvest.

DANDELION CONTRIBUTIONS

- Everett and Ruth Lunquist – Raymond, NE
- Frieda Lankford – Collinsville, VA
- Angela Michaeli – Sauk Centre, MN
- Ruth Zinniker – Elkhorn – WI
- Brain Wickert – Viroqua, WI
- The Viroqua Group – Viroqua, WI
- John Drew – Greene, ME
- Sharon Carson – Delmar, DE
- Randy Kadish – Boone, CO

YARROW AND EQUISETUM CONTRIBUTIONS

- Mary Lee Plumb-Mentges – Anchorage, AK

Harvey Lisle, Spiritual Scientist

1915–2009

"For 68 years I have been involved in the organic movement. Each year taken by itself shows only slight growth, but when you add them all up, 68 years, the growth has been most gratifying."

—Harvey Lisle, quoted in LILIPOH Magazine, 2007

The biodynamic movement lost one of its elders when Harvey Lisle passed away in August of this year. He was ninety-three. Besides leaving behind three daughters, ten grandchildren, and thirteen great-grandchildren, his legacy will live on through his agricultural and nutritional research, and educational efforts that spanned almost seventy years and touched thousands of lives. He was widely known for his youthful spirit and the sparkle in his eyes, which he attributed to good genetics, biodynamic food and good water. Harvey said that one of the reasons he chose to remain in rural Ohio was the access to fresh well water on his land.

Harvey was an avid naturalist, keeping life lists of birds. He was a beekeeper, a soil chemist and a grower of biodynamic fruit. Harvey and his wife, Louise, became deeply involved in the organic movement from its very beginnings, in the early 1940s. After graduating with a degree in chemical engineering from Ohio State University, Harvey had the privilege to work with professor of soils, Dr. William Albrecht. He worked for many years at the Brookside Agricultural Laboratory, which Albrecht helped to set up. Harvey recognized Rudolf Steiner as his teacher, and became a member of the Anthroposophic Society in 1950. He joined the Bio-Dynamic Farming and Gardening Association in 1955, and served on the board for many years. Complementary to his work in biodynamics, he was an active dowser, and a member of the American Dowsing Society and the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association.

Harvey frequently lectured on dowsing, soil and composting. He and authored *Enlivened Rock Powers* (Acres U.S.A.), where he articulated the spiritual/cosmic aspects of rock dusts (paramagnetic/diamagnetic), and growth and promotion of life forces in plants. He contributed numerous articles to *Biodynamics* beginning in the 1970s, including: "The Oak Tree" (No. 122, Spring 1977), "Organic Orchardry" (No. 145, Winter 1983), "Sculpting with Nature" (No. 153, Winter 1985), "Taking a Hard Look at Our Horn Silica" (No. 241, May/June 2002), and "Some Thoughts on Stirring Biodynamic Preparations" (No. 256, Spring 2006).

Although well-known in biodynamic and organic agricultural circles, Harvey also did extensive research in



the field of nutrition, particularly on the health benefits of sprouted grains and enzymes, and was a friend of Ann Wigmore (1909–1994), the founder Hippocrates Health Institute and popularly known as the mother of wheatgrass juicing and the raw food movement. He worked closely with Ann for many years. Harvey's theory that enzymes in the living food diet can combat viruses, and his view on the spiritual nature of both enzymes and viruses, were quoted in her book, *Rebuild Your Health With High Energy Enzyme Nourishment*.

His biodynamic-related research focused on subjects such as the proper grind of quartz in the horn silica preparation (BD #501), proper placement of a beehive on the land, vortex formation in stirring biodynamic preparations, and assessing the life forces in food. He was a friend to the nature spirits and invited high spiritual beings such as the Archangel Michael to bless his work. Harvey was actively researching up until the time of his death, focusing on furthering the development and understanding of spiritually-enlivened composting, specifically through the effects of earth forces, sun forces and zodiac forces. His spiritual scientific insights into the physical and spiritual realms of nature were a generous contribution indeed.

—Christy Korrow

Special thanks to Hugh Courtney, Woody Wodraska and Barbara Scott, Bob Luzader, Jim xx, and Harvey's daughter, Betty Kepler.

Anecdotes and Antidotes – Biodynamics at Work

Hugh Courtney answers reader's questions

Q: *I am interested in making my own barrel compost (a.k.a. Biodynamic Compound Preparation). I've noticed that the recipes in Maria Thun's and in Peter Proctor's books are somewhat different. I am hoping that you will share with me the recipe you are using at JPI.*

A: We follow the basic Thun recipe as detailed in the article by Xavier Florin in *Biodynamics* #137 (Winter 1981), which is: 50 liters (12.5 gallons) manure, 500 grams (1.1025 Av. Pds.) of basalt powder, and 100 grams (0.2205 Av. Pds.) of ground eggshells (not ground to a powder, but left so that egg shell particles can still be clearly identified – the size of one-half the letter 'o' in font size 12 – this according to direct conversation with Maria Thun). We do not add stinging nettle plant to the BC as it adversely affects fruiting and greatly enhances leaves of plants, which is not a good result in the vineyard. There are those making BC and adding a goodly dose of the dried (usually) stinging nettle plant to the recipe as well (see the work of Drs. Herbert Koepf and Walter Goldstein). Such an addition may well be a good thing for leafy plants including corn (maize), but it is not as desirable in the vineyard. The above single recipe uses one set of compost preparations (BD #502–507). Our current practice at JPI is to omit BD #507 (Valerian) until the half way point in the process, or until the material in the pit has reached a colloidal state.

Q: *I just recently completed a certificate with Elaine Ingham on the soil food web, composting, and compost tea making. I am currently practicing biodynamics and permaculture, and*

Elaine's teachings have illuminated soil biology for me in respect to biodynamics. I am also an astrologer, so the esoteric basis underpinning biodynamics is something I wish to learn more about. Do you recommend any reading material for celestial influence on plant form and essence?

Elaine also mentioned that the Josephine Porter Institute has done trials/experiments/studies in relation to biodynamics and I was wondering if you could share that information with me.

A: In response to your comment/question: “the esoteric basis underpinning biodynamics is something I wish to learn more about. Do you recommend any reading material for celestial influence on plant form and essence?” – besides Steiner's Agriculture lectures (\$30.00 – Adams translation), or a book attempting to interpret those lectures such as Storl's *Culture and Horticulture* (\$15.00), or a biodynamic planting calendar, *Stella Natura* (\$14.95), or Thun's *BD Sowing and Planting Calendar* (\$13.95), you might be interested in the following: *Moon Rhythms in Nature* – Endres and Schad (\$32.95), *Planetary Influences* – Kranich (\$13.00), or *Results from the Biodynamic Sowing and Planting Calendar* – Thun (\$30.00). Any of these titles can be ordered from JPI.

I am not sure what “trials/experiments/studies” Elaine Ingham is referring to, but some anecdotal results are reported periodically in our newsletter *Applied Biodynamics*. I hope this addresses your request for information.

Special Events in California This Fall and Winter

Biodynamic Field Days at Demeter Certified Biodynamic Farms

This will be a series of introductory workshops for farmers interested in knowing more about biodynamics. The field days will cover basics in the whole farm concept, regulations, fertility inputs and the biodynamic preparations. If you would like to attend one of the workshops, please contact the Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association at 1-888-516-7797 ext. 3. Cost is \$15 per day.

OCTOBER 20: Mendocino, Mendocino Organics

OCTOBER 21: Philo (Mendocino County), The Apple Farm

NOVEMBER 3: Paso Robles (San Luis Obispo County), With the Grain Farm

NOVEMBER 4: Fresno (Central Valley), Marian Farms

NOVEMBER 17: Fallbrook (San Diego County), Beck Groves

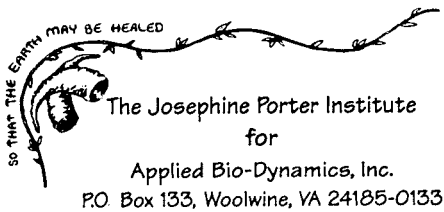
Pre-Conference Workshop at Eco-Farm

JANUARY 19 AND 20, 2010: Foundations in Applied Biodynamics

This workshop, sponsored by the Josephine Porter Institute, will precede the annual Ecological Farming Conference at the beautiful Asilomar Conference grounds in Pacific Grove, CA. Taught by biodynamic farmer, Gena Nonini, this two-day event will give an in-depth look at the foundations of biodynamic agriculture. Enrollment information will be available on the Eco-Farm website later this fall, or by calling the Ecological Farming Association at 831-763-2111.

We must recognize that fertilizing must consist of enlivening the soil, so that the plant is not in dead soil and does not have difficulty making it through to the fruiting stage out of its own vitality.

Rudolf Steiner – *Spiritual Foundations for the Renewal of Agriculture*, p. 66



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