

BDANC

Biodynamic Association
of Northern California



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Summer 2010 Newsletter



*Seek the truly practical,
material life*

*But seek it in such a way
that it does not numb you
to the spirit that works
within it.*

*Seek the Spirit, but not out
of spiritual lust or spiritual
egoism.*

*Seek it rather because you
wish to become selfless in
the practical life of the
material world.*

*Turn to the ancient princi-
ple: Spirit never without
matter, matter never
without Spirit.*

*And say to yourselves,
We will do everything
material in the light of
the Spirit,*

*And will seek the light of
the Spirit in such a way that
it enkindles warmth in us
For our practical deeds.*

- Rudolf Steiner -

The Biodynamic Association of Northern California, BDANC

is a member-run organization that aims to promote the biodynamic approach to farming and gardening. We allow time at our meetings for planning. Decisions are made by those who show up. We happen to really like getting together and through BDANC we have the opportunity to:

- gather a dynamic interchange of people from many arenas of biodynamics
- spread our collective knowledge, learn from each other and grow together through study
- get reports of activities in the larger biodynamic and farming community
- learn about the preps by making them together
- ensure availability of the preps to the community
- experience other farms and gardens
- renew our spiritual intentions and our commitment to each other

We accomplish our goals through:

- quarterly meetings
- a quarterly newsletter
- a membership mailing and emailing list
- making and selling the preparations
- meeting expenses with income from dues and preps

Membership

Marney Blair, marney646464@yahoo.com

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email biodynamic@aol.com, www.biodynamics.com

It Doesn't Get Better than BD

What a treat to spend a weekend on TWO biodynamic farms. Our Spring Meeting, held jointly by Gena Nonini (Marion Farms in Fresno) and Chris and Jamie Velez (Stellaluna Farm in Prather) was one of those amazing combinations of fun, education and community that we in BDANC are so privileged to enjoy as we travel around to our various farms.

As we made horn feldspar and dug up five hundred 500 horns (yes, 500 of them!) we were joined by several local residents. They were as enamored as we were of the beauty and "rightness" of the biodynamic farm organism. It is a wonderful thing to experience a farm from the perspective of the farmer, and both Gena and Chris really know their stuff. We left quoting Gena "The farm is the symphony, the farmer is the conductor, and the universe writes the music."

Join us this summer when we visit Chris and Stephi Tebbutt at Filigreen Farm in Anderson Valley (information later in the newsletter) and experience another amazing biodynamic individuality.

Laura Liska, Editor
lauraliska@cs.com

*Cover photos by Laura Liska
Inside photos by Andy Scott*



Laura Liska, helps coordinate biodynamic training and education efforts locally and nationally. She is the administrative coordinator for Biodynamic Education at Rudolf Steiner College and Interim Education Director for the Biodynamic Association of America.



Gena Nonini and horns at Marion Farms

On CSA

Excerpt from a blog by John Bloom

As a founding member of the first CSA west of the Mississippi (Live Power Community Farm) in 1988, I would like to describe how we work. While there are various interpretations of what CSA is, there are some core principles that are essential to the deeper value of the practice—especially the relationships between the farmers and member-shareholder-eaters (the community), price, and risk. At Live Power, the farmers and some of the interested eaters gather to consider the annual budget for the farm. The farmer lays out all the costs for twelve months including seed, apprentices, housing, health insurance, transportation, maintenance, retirement funds, etc. Based upon the capacity of the garden, the farmers also determine how many families or shareholders they can reasonably grow food for in a year. After some (often lively) discussion of the details, this total annual cost is divided by the number of shareholders to arrive at the cost per share.

When this amount is determined, shareholder-eaters commit for the year and make a deposit for their share. The food comes over a seven and half month period, but the farmer is actually supported for all twelve months. This is a simple form of associative economics, but accomplishes many things. First, the food itself is not a commodity, because the shareholder is not paying for the food but rather the real cost of the farmers' living and all that it takes to grow the food. Second, the farmer's labor is not a commodity because there is no direct way to tie the work and winter rest to the farm income. The farmer manages a closed-loop, bio-diverse farm organism. He grows virtually all the feed the animals need, uses the manure for compost to renew the soil, and then from the soil grows the food and feed. There are no imported inputs, no externalized costs. The farmer works constantly on building the fertility of the soil rather than thinking of the land, as in petro-chemical farming, as nothing more than a vehicle to produce food. Being supported by the community, the associative form operates completely outside the market economy. What this also means is that the community shares the risk of the farm and the produce. The farmer will still



Making horn feldspar

have a means of support even if the growing season is bad; in fact, they will be able to make it financially to the next season when things will hopefully be better.

I have been asked how this approach is different than a farmers' market or a veggie-box subscription. Both these approaches are warmer, friendlier (and better for the farmer) versions of a commodity marketplace.

While there is less intermediation between the farmer and the customer than in a typical grocery store system, it is also true that the farmer will have no income if there is no produce to sell. And how are the prices for food at the farmers' market set? On what basis—what the traffic will bear?

In an associative economic model such as Community Supported Agriculture, place and price are inseparable. The community connection to the farm and farmers is fundamental. It is in many ways an economic form that parallels the organic processes in bio-matter compost. In the associative price setting process, all aspects of the farm and operations (except, of course, who will do the farming) are visible and up for consideration. The multiple perspectives of the eaters and the farmers are transformed through the community dialogue process with price as the outcome—a price that reflects a market-free system warmed by care for the land and the vocation of farming. Such an associative approach is demanding of time and human effort, and not every farmer or eater can work in this way. But, the "inconvenience" of such an economic community is well worth the convening if transformation of economic practice is a heartfelt longing.

My Life as a Young (woman) Biodynamic Farmer in Nepal

by Misha Vega

Today I was once again stressing the importance of proper soil management, which means that yes, you must make compost, and yes we must acquire manure (preferably cow) from somewhere. This appears quite strange indeed to most people. The concept of 'humus' seems to have left the average Nepali mentality some century ago. Things like walking all over garden beds, using the single small 'compost pile' as a convenient step, and wondering why anyone would gather nettles (the ones here are much pricklier than

*John Bloom is a LPCF CSA founding member. He lives in San Francisco and is the Director of Organizational Culture at RSF Social Finance. His book, **The Genius of Money**, was recently published by SteinerBooks. His eldest son, now a litigation attorney, apprenticed at LPCF, and his youngest son, Andreas, is eighteen and fully trained to be a sort leader. He attributes to the biodynamic vegetables from LPCF the fact that all his sons are taller than him.*

Misha Vega apprenticed with Harald Hoven at Raphael Garden in Fair Oaks and worked her own vegetable garden in Mendocino County before she took off for Nepal to work with the Kevin Rohan Memorial Eco Foundation. We're thrilled she found her way to a computer to send us this update.



Almonds and tree paste

their demure English cousin) are more common in the modern Nepali mind. However we have a goal. Hans Mulder is coming to give a 2-day biodynamic at the end of April! Which is why I came to surprising the villagers by my rather hands-on turning of 'the compost heap', not being repulsed by liquid dung in the slightest, collecting eggshells out of the rubbish pile like some large rodent, and resorting to contacting Indian prep makers in my unintelligible English in an attempt to acquire some much needed horn manure and preps.

On a more immediate level, I struggle to find quartz, as its cowhorn waits patiently and may have to go on doing so for quite some time, if my luck continues as is. However, things are slowly starting and people are interested. Villagers have helped with small projects and asked questions (which my 17 year old Nepali friend has translated, as my grasp of the language exists, and is quite good, but by no means thorough.) Hopefully they will continue to be interested in these slightly strange 'western' practices. I myself am enjoying sampling a number of strange and delicious foods—'gundrook,' or dried and fermented mustard greens, whey in which usually floats a chili, and 'masioda' which appears to be some root vegetable mashed with greens, dried, and rehydrated to be something like temeph. I am becoming well acquainted with whatever spirit resides in white rice, I have a bowl and thank Pfeiffer and associates that compost is a flourishing concept in N. California.

Native American Spirituality related to Bison and Biodynamics

by Devon Strong

Synopsis of his presentation at the Goetheanum, Feb 2010

The Plains Indian cultures developed with the bison, interdependent on one another, which I discovered for myself, through my own practice of the ceremonies, and from being adopted into it. The link to Biodynamics developed naturally in my raising of the Bison with the old ceremonies and the Archetype of Earth being the Native way of life; discovering the similarity to the use of the earth elements used in Biodynamics. The preps made from this animal Archetype

4 are strong, and carry that strength in the energy avail-

able for enlivening the substance of the farm. I started with a poem describing the personal connection I have with the bison through Ceremony, which is also a reflection of that connection the bison have with humanity through the Ceremonies. A flow of pictures played on the background screen as I spoke; pictures of my herd of Bison, at home on my farm, taken throughout the year. I sang a traditional song from the ceremonies to give a sense of the connection of the language to the process. I then explained the domestic link of Bison and Native people over the past 10,000 years.

Native Americans developed the ceremonies from interaction with the bison, modern traditional ceremony is independent of the bison though still linked spiritually, returning a spiritual value to the land by enlivening the traditional culture, and by developing Biodynamics using the revitalizing forces of the native animal. The present stage of development on my farm with bison and Biodynamics, I hope will demonstrate that the old ways are strong enough to survive spiritually and are linked to present powers that can inspire all peoples to be in touch with the land spiritually as well as physically.

My personal stories during the workshop, were intended to bring alive the intuitive nature and collective persona of the Bison, and their need to be a part of the ceremonies, which remind me of the biodynamic perspectives of the relationships between all things- between cosmos and earth. The Sweat-Lodge is the representation of the cosmos in microcosm; with the lodge representing the earth/womb/grandmother and the altar being the moon/reflection, with the fire being the sun/sky/ grandfather. The fire heated stones taken into the lodge as Wisdom-Keepers, impart this to the people, wisdom released by water of life, blessing and purifying. The lodge is surrounded by the stars, represented by the stones from past ceremonies. By connecting with the songs of traditions from past to present we are related to all our surroundings as we are related to family.

I attempted to bring alive the sense of culture and tradition that native spirituality and the bison have carried to me, and the connection with biodynamic farming with the enhanced preparations made from the bison horn/manure, as well as the other preps made with bison materials.

*Involved in organic food production for local community since 1985, **Devon Strong** started the first Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project in the Rogue Valley and Siskiyou regions, and then began raising bison; integrating biodynamics with bison for the first time on this continent. **Four Eagles Farm** uses Organic and Biodynamic methods, in order to raise the level of health and nutrition above that of most store purchased meat and vegetables, without use of modern medicines and farm chemicals.*



Chris Velez and the greenhouse at Stellaluna Farm

BDANC Summer Meeting

A Weekend of Biodynamics: June 19-20, 2009

Hosted by

Chris and Stephanie Tebbutt
At Filigreen Farm in
Anderson Valley, Mendocino County



About our hosts

Filigreen Farm is a diversified intensive orchard and garden in the process of being developed by Chris and Stephanie Tebbutt.

They will lead us on farm tours and talks to introduce us to their work. "Of Rain and Water" Explores how Biodynamic work at the farm is influenced by experiments with water.

"Riparian Restoration at the Farm" is a look at Anderson Creek through three El Nino's.

Schedule of Events

Saturday June 19

- 9:15 Welcome and Announcements
- 9:30 Observation of Yarrow
(led by **Laura Liska**)
- 10:30 Making Yarrow Preparation
(led by **Harald Hoven**)
- 12:30 Potluck Lunch
- 2:00 Of Rain and Water
(talk by **Chris Tebbutt**)
- 3:30 Tour of Filigreen Farm
- 6:00+ Dinner followed by socializing
or a swim in the pond

Sunday June 20

- 8:00 Breakfast
- 9:00 Carpentry skills
(group study led by **Mike Melillo**)
- 10:00 Riparian Restoration
(creek walk led by **Chris Tebbutt**)
- 12:30 Join us at Boont Berry Farm Store
for lunch on the way out of town

Cost

We invite you to attend at no charge, but ask that you pay for your meals.

Meals

Saturday lunch is potluck so bring something to share. Saturday dinner (\$12), Sunday breakfast (\$7). Apprentice discounts available (\$2 off per meal).

PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS by June 15.

Accommodations

Rustic camping is available on the farm. Please let our hosts know you are coming.

Camping is also possible at nearby Hendy Woods State Park (6 miles away) through: www.ReserveAmerica.com.

For those who prefer not to camp, Anderson Valley Inn is only 2 miles away, in Philo: 707-895-3325.

Directions

From Ukiah:

Take 101 South to the exit for Hwy 253 West (towards Boonville, 18 miles). At the T, turn right onto Hwy 128 West, and travel to Boonville.

From Santa Rosa:

Take 101 North to last Cloverdale exit, Hwy 128 West (to Boonville/Mendocino/Ft Bragg). Go LEFT under freeway, LEFT on frontage road, RIGHT on Hwy 128 West. Travel 27 miles to Boonville. (IF you miss the exit, stay on 101 until you reach the exit for Hwy 253 and follow the directions "from Ukiah".)

Then:

About 2 miles outside Boonville take a LEFT at "The Little Red Schoolhouse" (museum). At the T, take an immediate RIGHT onto Anderson Valley Way. After about 1/2 mile, turn LEFT at the gate to

Filigreen Farm.

**11600 Anderson Valley Way,
Anderson Valley 95415.**

Park at the tractor shed. If you are camping someone will meet you there with directions for pitching your tent.

Contacts

Stephanie Tebbutt spoor@pacific.net or 707-895-2111 for meal reservations and camping.

Harald Hoven (916-965-0389) to order preps in advance

Group Study

Mike Melillo, an apprentice at Live Power Community Farm, will lead us in a study on basic carpentry skills. Time permitting, we may even work on a simple project together.

BDANC Planning Session

Join us over lunch on Saturday as we catch up on business for 2010. We invite you to bring proposals for work or events you'd like BDANC to support. We are a member-run organization, so everything that happens does so because someone took up the challenge to make it happen!

CALENDAR

Newsletter and Calendar submissions

We welcome calendar items, articles and photographs for the newsletter. Submissions should be related to local biodynamic farming and gardening activities. Inclusion is subject to editor's discretion and space available.

Items need to be submitted electronically, in the simplest format possible (no formatting please).

Deadlines are:
Spring : Feb 15th
Summer: May 1st
Fall : August 15th
Winter : Nov 15th

Please email our editor,
LauraLiska@cs.com

BDANC Events

June 19-20 2010, Summer Meeting
Filigreen Farm in Anderson Valley
Sept 25-26, 2010, Fall Meeting
Mendocino Organics/Heart Arrow Ranch

Rudolf Steiner College Workshops

www.steinercollege.edu, 916-961-8727
biodynamics@steinercollege.edu

Biodynamic Farming & Gardening Series

Harald Hoven, Saturdays 9am-5pm
May 8: Pests, Insects, Beneficials
June 9-13: Advanced Biodynamic Intensive

Natural Beekeeping Workshop Series

David Basile, Saturdays 9am-5pm
May 22: Care of the Hive
September 25: The Harvest

National Biodynamic Conference

The Biodynamic Association's Annual Conference will be held at the Threefold Educational Center in Chestnut Ridge, NY from **Thursday, Sept. 30 through Sunday, Oct. 3, 2010**. The theme this year is "Biodynamics and the Future of Agriculture: Nourishing the Food Revolution". More information is available on the BDA website www.biodynamics.com

Purchasing the Preparations

	member/non-member
Horn Manure [500]	\$5 / \$7
Horn Silica [501]	\$3 / \$4
Compost Prep Set [502-507]	\$15 / \$18
Compound Prep [Barrel Compost]	\$5 / \$7

To purchase preparations at the next meeting,
contact Harald Hoven SEVERAL DAYS in advance.
916-965-0389 or hhoven@steinercollege.edu

BDANC Membership

Today's Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

phone number _____

email address _____

Are you a: new member? renewing member?

Are you a: farmer? gardener? teacher? other?

What would you enjoy having included in the BDANC programs this year?

How did you find out about BDANC?

Select one:

For BDANC membership only:

Please make checks out to BDANC for **\$25**

Mail check and this application form to

BDANC, PO Box 715, Penn Valley CA 95946

For joint membership with the BDA:

Please make checks out to Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association for **\$60**

Mail check and this application form to

**Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association,
25844 Butler Road, Junction City OR 97448**

Are You Due to Renew?

Membership is for one year. The last year for which you paid dues is indicated on your address label. IF YOUR LABEL DOES NOT SAY 2010, please use this application to renew your membership.

Thank you !

Your support contributes to the health of biodynamics in northern California, and allows us to offer this newsletter and special discounts..

BDANC membership includes quarterly issues of the BDANC newsletter, attendance at quarterly meetings and discounts on the purchase of preparations and on special events. Membership is for one year

National BDA membership includes the quarterly Biodynamic Journal and other member benefits.

Join BDANC and the BDA at the same time, and save! The \$60 fee covers both memberships.



Biodynamic Association of Northern California
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address correction requested

