

Classes Scheduled for Early Fall

All classes meet at 10:30 A.M. at Ecology Action and are free with no preregistration necessary.

Aug. 14 - Fall Gardening
Aug. 21 - Soil Preparation
Aug. 28 - Compost

Sept. 4 - Fall and Winter Gardening - with John Jeavons
Sept. 11 - Greenhouses
Sept. 18 - Fall Perennials and Bulbs

Ecology Action Board Meeting

The next meeting of the Ecology Action Board will be Thursday, Sept. 2, at 7:30 pm, at 1044 Maddux in Palo Alto. Phone us if you need directions. With so many activities and staff spread out between two sites it has been hard to get together. Hopefully this will be a good time to reunite and plan the next steps. All are welcome to attend.

Thank You, Barbara

As many of you know, Ecology Action was recently the recipient of a very unusual gift.

Barbara Cavileer of Hollister, California set up a living trust so that her personal and real estate property would pass to Ecology Action upon her death. On June 9, 1982, Barbara died and her 1¼ acre mini farm with a two bedroom house and 6 purebred dogs (5 Collies and 1 Sheltie) came to us.

Among the things discovered in the house was a copy of John's How To Grow More Vegetables and Barbara's hand drawn map of how she planned to develop the land (raised beds, solar greenhouse, herb beds, mini orchard, etc.) along with approximately 100 books in the general field of self-sufficiency. The books have all been added to the Ecology Action Library or sold through the store to local home gardeners.

Since Ecology Action is not in a financial position to hold and develop the land at this time, we decided to clean up the house and offer the property for sale. The clean-up turned out to be a formidable undertaking. Judy, Lynne, and Tommy Derrick took the major responsibility for this task and with the help of Jim Alden, Steve Fuller-Rowell, Betsy Jeavons, Carol, and Ian and Keith Barner, the house and grounds were put in acceptable shape.

Barbara Worl, a longtime member of Ecology Action, as well as an accomplished gardener and rose grower, has contracted to purchase the property. Barbara and her partner Israel Harris will be cleaning the house and tending the land, and eventually will be looking for someone to rent the property. (Anyone interested should contact Israel at 323-9949.) Close of escrow with Barbara Worl is scheduled for mid-August. At that time we will be able to pay off Barbara Cavileer's mortgage on the property and use the profits to help underwrite Ecology Action projects in Palo Alto and Willits. We believe this will help to carry on the work Barbara Cavileer was hoping to do in Hollister. It is clear to us that she believed very strongly in self-sufficiency and that she would be pleased to see her influence continuing in this way after her death.

As with most Ecology Action projects, it took a lot of folks to make this one work. Among those are Larry Klein and Walt Hays who gave legal assistance, Jack Johansen, President of America-California Bank, who gave financial assistance, and Keith Williams, San Benito County Animal Control Officer, who helped with the dogs. Tommy Derrick's hard work and tireless energy, and real estate knowledge, were truly invaluable. Many thanks to all of you. Especially thanks to Barbara Cavileer, who would not let her dream die.

Barbara, the dogs have new homes, the books have new homes, the animal/bird cages have new homes at the Wildlife Rescue of San Benito County, the fencing material will encircle a new garden and the money will help us push a little farther and a little harder to try to make this a better place for those of us who remain. Thank you from the folks at Ecology Action.

Store News

We're getting ready for fall! Carol is putting together a huge order of beautiful bulbs for fall and winter planting, and the Saratoga Community Garden will be supplying us again with healthy organically grown vegetable seedlings for fall crops, the cabbage family especially. We will be adding some flowering perennial plants to our selection, including Michaelmas Daisies, Coral Bells, Maltese Cross, and Dusty Miller among others. We're also ordering seeds for flowers to be sown in fall and come up magically in early spring; love-in-a-mist, larkspur, and baby blue eyes.

Our major problem right now is an overpopulation of mice and rats. They are very destructive, and are enjoying the smorgasbord we provide of tasty seedlings and nutritious fertilizers, complemented by cozy cocoa hull nests. We are considering the addition of a cat to our staff--know any good mousers who wouldn't mind being alone on weekends? In the meantime we've been setting lots of traps.

The staff at the store has been kept busy answering hundreds of requests for information from all over the country in response to the Garden-song PBS TV special. It's exciting to have so much interest--and hard work, too! We've been getting excellent extra help from Lavender Rose Jeavons, our junior apprentice, and Dena Mossar, a long-time friend and customer.

Nominations and Elections for New Board Members

Each year, at the Fall Equinox, board members are elected to Ecology Action. Current members are John Jeavons, Betsy Jeavons, Robin Leler, Judy Derrick (4 staff members), Jane Henry, Joe Kroetin, Patrick Long, Kevin Raftery, Dave Smith, and Bernie Trilling (5 community members + 1 alternate). Board meetings are held four to six times a year. The Board acts as an important sounding board for the ongoing and new activities of Ecology Action. Nominations for board members will be accepted by phone, mail, or in person, until Friday, Sept. 17, 1982. Because of members moving there are several vacancies to be filled. The annual meeting will be held Saturday, Sept. 18, 5:30 P.M., at Ecology Action in Palo Alto. All current members are invited to come and vote for board members from the nominations received.

Conference Proceedings


Intensive Food Production on a Human Scale, the proceedings of the International Conference held in Santa Barbara last October, is now available for \$7.50 from Ecology Action. (Add \$2 for first class/airmail delivery). Hugh Roberts did a great job of editing and included many of the diagrams used with the talks, plus photos and papers from participants.




also
everbearing
raspberries




Robin's Report From 'Top of the World'



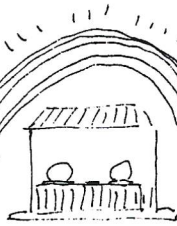
We've been living here at the new mini-farm research and demonstration center in Willits, California for 3 months now and things are settling into a nice summer routine. The first 10 garden beds, dug in the shape of a circle, are lush and green. 30 garden beds (100 sq. ft. each) have been put in in the last 7 weeks. The goal is a modest 40 for this first year. Potatoes, corn, popcorn, beets, carrots, tomatoes, onions, radish, cowpeas, peanuts, soybeans, sweet clover, red clover, white clover, alfalfa, hairy vetch, trefoil, cukes, Saudi melons, chard, watermelons, squashes, pumpkins, millet, sunflowers, rye, rice, rutabagas, and beans, beans, beans, and beans. The only thing that isn't doing well are the rutabagas (known in England as swedes) and the two varieties of rice. Old seed appears to be the problem. We get new seed soon and a rice expert from Taiwan will be coming through in August.



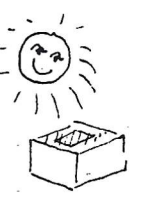
The children helped me make a new path from the "Garden House" down to the growing beds. It starts out with a flight of 45 steps carved out of the rock and clay hillside then cuts diagonally across a gravelly slope which we'll plant with California native plants in the fall. Parts of the path are still rather exciting for all but the most nimble and some visitors have been satisfied to view the garden from the top of the hill. We have to remind visitors (and ourselves) that the Hunzas' health secret really consists of walking up and down steep hills each day to tend their fields. It sure shows on Paka. Our jolly 250-lb. Lithuanian has lost at least 30 lbs. He's becoming lean, tan and oh-so handsome. Talk is circulating about starting a Fat Farm at the "Top of the World."



Dan Torjusen and Gaye Carlson begin building a modest 700 sq. ft. house today (if the backhoe man comes). Half of the "garden house/goat shed/tool shed" has been quickly taken over as an office. Paka types away and sings to the chickens. Dan sleeps in the loft and may finally convince the goats that their game of "Let's walk on the walls at 3am" isn't as funny as it sounds.



A very special redwood building of note is the well-built compost toilet, dubbed the "Moon Palace". It is a great relief to everyone here to finally have a nice comfortable "room-with-a-view" to sit in. By inaugural day all current residents were vying for the chance to use it. Nine-year-old Heather Jeavons raced to the door first but was beat out by the builder, Dan Torjusen because he had the toilet paper. Doug Maher, our eminent soil scientist declared: "It was real nice to make a contribution instead of watching it all go down the drain." Dave Duhon, who is starting an economic mini-farm in El Cerrito, expressed the hope that someday he could return and make a withdrawal. Carol Vesecky, who is nearly finished translating How To Grow More Vegetables... into French, spoke for us all when she said simply, "I could spend a lot of time in there."



What else do we do here? My pride and joy, the solar oven, works wonderfully. The design is very good, but unfortunately the building directions were unclear. A 1-2 week job turned into 3 months because so much time was spent puzzling over the instructions. Since then we've cooked stew, beans, eggs, rice and banana bread in it. We keep a big pan of water in it too, which boils in a couple of hours so we can wash dishes, bathe and sterilize milking jars. A highly recommended addition to anyone's kitchen.

The response to my report in the last newsletter gave me lots of energy. Many people wrote to express kinship with our adventures here and many visitors have kept us in touch with events in other places. My mother came to visit last weekend. She grew up on a farm in Nebraska and though she had a good time she still can't understand why we want to grow food when she couldn't wait to leave the farm. Her visits always leave me thinking about the urban/rural polarity. We seem to be a nation of people who have left the farm, though we also can't wait to get back to the country for vacations, retreats and other escapes. Many people urged us to stay in Palo Alto; they felt "farming" would be a harder life than we could handle, that we would become isolated, and that people in cities need the food-raising consciousness more. We've thought about these concerns and will continue to. Certainly we've had to make major changes in the way we live. I worry about whether the baby will tangle with a rattlesnake and what to do with dirty diapers. Snails don't live here but your garden can be leveled by a deer! So far we've found nothing but rewards. We love walking out the door and being in the woods. The valley is full of wonderful gardeners and I feel one could live on local products, from milk and eggs to blackberries and sweet corn. These personal factors explain partly why we are here. Professionally, we feel it is possible to make a living directly from the land without using it up. We know the limits of past and present farming methods but bio-intensive techniques provide a new angle for food raising that has every chance of success. Additionally, there is so much left to learn about raising crops. Local gardeners here often say one cannot grow as much as one would like to. "Some years", they say, "are good for beans, some soils can't grow carrots and so on." John's goal in 10 years of bio-intensive research has been to "break the code"- in other words figure out what it takes to grow crops well every year. Now we hope to live farming in this way. I suppose the "guarantee" is what people look for in hydroponics. Hopefully we're showing you can do it with nature and get even better results.



Publishing News

How To Grow More Vegetables has now been translated into French and is almost ready to be published (late fall), thanks to the untiring efforts of Carol Vesecky and Jean-Marie de la Beaujardiere.

Next on the priority list is a version in Mandarin Chinese. An excellent translator is ready and about \$9000 is needed in funding for this project.

Films at Ecology Action

The Briarpatch Cooperative Grocery Store is sponsoring two films at Ecology Action this month:

August 24. "Nuclear Free Pacific"

A documentary about underwater storage of nuclear waste and underwater missile bases in an especially beautiful part of the Pacific Ocean.

August 26. "The Last Epidemic"

A description and commentary on what would happen in our area during a nuclear disaster. This film grew out of a conference on the Medical Aspects of Nuclear Attack, held by the Physicians for Social Responsibility. It's excellent, according to all reports.

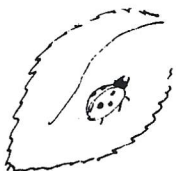
"Nuclear Free Pacific" will also be repeated this evening.

Both evenings will begin at 7:30 P.M. and are free.



Horticultural Therapy Workshop

The staff of Poplar Center Farm would like to invite people involved in horticultural therapy programs to an informational get-together to discuss our programs, their purposes, and the people we serve. The farm, located on 200 acres near Half Moon Bay, conducts activities and training for developmentally disabled and emotionally disturbed adults in these areas: agricultural labor, animal care, biointensive gardening, and aquaculture. Anyone involved in horticulture and education is invited to call Judy at (415) 726-2369 (or leave a message at 726-5939) to help organize a date, time, and place.



Update on 1982 Organic Farming Bill Action

On June 22nd, the Organic Farming Act of 1982 got a "yes" vote from the Family Farms Subcommittee of the House Agriculture Committee. The committee overrode USDA's testimony that despite its sympathy for the objectives, budget pressures would not allow pursuing this research. The Organic Farming Act (H.R. 5618) would:

- establish six pilot research projects to develop information on the best economic ways to make the transition from chemical intensive farming practices toward organic farming methods
- direct that the Secretary of Agriculture make available through the Extension Service information on organic farming
- develop teams of volunteer organic farmers who could act as advisors to farmers wishing to make the switch from conventional to organic practices
- as amended, funding would come from existing appropriations for Research and Extension

Introduced by Cong. Jim Weaver in February, 1982, the Organic Farming Act has upwards of 21 co-sponsors now on the House side. Senate bill "The Innovative Farming Act of 1982" has been introduced by Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont.

USDA's position, given by Dr. Terry Kinney, head of the Agricultural Research Service, was the only negative point in a full day of testimony. USDA field scientists presented evidence on erosion-stopping effects, energy savings and the global importance of developing these techniques. Farmers addressed the importance of the act, and the National Association of Conservation Districts call it a "shift essential to the welfare of the nation."

A record turn-out of 10 congressmen for what is considered a "small money" bill was one response to letters from all over the country that have helped nudge the bill forward.

Good publicity on the bill, including articles in the Washington Post, The Des Moines Register, Baltimore Sun and morning talk-show coverage on National Public Radio have continued to spurt interest in its potential. "The Agriculture Department has an obligation to examine experimental methods that could save costs and resources," said the Des Moines Register editorial (June 17, 1982).

The next action will be in the full House Agriculture Committee, where support is needed to get the bill on the committee schedule and get a positive vote. Your concern and ideas can go to Chairman Kiki de la Garza, asking him for action. Ask your own Representative to co-sponsor the bill and vote for it when it comes to a House Floor vote. (U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515).

"Man of the Trees" Dies

Dr. Richard St. Barbe Baker, O.B.E., known around the world as the "Man of the Trees", died June 9 in Saskatoon, Canada, at the age of 92.

Dr. Baker, an English forester and silviculturist, started the campaign in the 1930's to save the remaining giant virgin redwoods on the Calif. coast. In 1952, he led an expedition across the Sahara desert which found definite evidence that much of the desert area had once been a tropical forest. He was convinced that the desert was caused by destruction of the forest, and he campaigned for years to promote tree planting to reclaim and stop the advance of the desert. He believed the Sahara could provide a bountiful homeland for 100 million people.

A pacifist and humanitarian, St. Barbe Baker urged that the world's armies be converted from military pursuits to tree planters. It was his advice to Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt that led to the establishment of the Civilian Conservation Corps and the planting of thousands of miles of shelterbelts in the dust bowl areas of the American West. In recent years, Dr. Baker has sounded the alarm about the grave threat to the Amazon forest, an "oxygen bank" crucially needed by the whole world.

St. Barbe Baker considered the tree the highest form of vegetable progress, just as man represents the most advanced example of animal evolution. "Trees and forests are the ideal environment for man, and he should study how to help his brother trees", he has written. "By cooperating, man and forest both flourish, but if man destroys his arboreal friends for short-sighted gain, terrible retribution will result."

Old Seed Varieties

An excellent inventory of currently available old-fashioned seeds and their various names is available in Jim Johnson's Heirloom Vegetable Guide available from Jim Johnson, 31755 Muscovy Road, Hartland, Wisconsin 53029. We seem to have lost the price - it costs \$3 or \$4.

ECOLOGY ACTION/COMMON GROUND

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