

Cornucopia

Network of New Jersey

A 501 (c)(3) nonprofit corporation founded in 1983

September 2015

Organic Vegetable Garden Tour - Saturday, Sept. 26th

Four organic vegetable gardens will be open to the public on **Saturday, Sept. 26th**, at various times of day. Mark the date on your calendar. We welcome you to join us!

Azizi Birkeland's second-year garden at 225 N Mountain Avenue, Montclair, will be open from 9:30 to 12:30.

She had an abundant vegetable harvest last year in her first year of gardening. This year she is starting to transition to a mostly perennial food forest and habitat and pollinator garden for birds, bees, and butterflies. She has planted 10 fruit trees and over 30 fruit bushes around the property. This year she experimented with inter-planting, combining flowers and food in her garden beds. She aims to continue growing throughout the winter with cold frames, row covers and indoor hydroponics. She also has six chickens and is clearing space for two bee hives arriving next spring.

Pat Kenschaft at 56 Gordonhurst Avenue, Montclair, will open her garden from 9:00 to 11:00 AM.

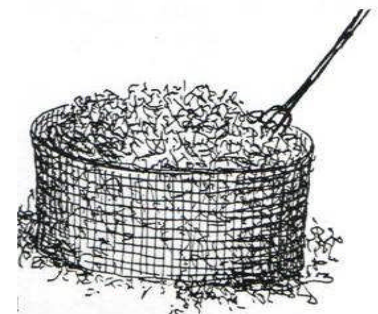
For decades she has been raising almost all her family's vegetables year round with no poisons, power machinery, or commercial fertilizer. A cold

frame is partially constructed, and winter crops are visible.

Alan Smith's front yard garden at 148 Forest St., Montclair, will be available for a self-guided tour from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

He raises greens and tomatoes, both volunteers and from purchased seedlings. His squash and herbs are all volunteers. He writes, "I like having a front yard vegetable garden. The folks in the neighborhood seem to like it, and I think it's a good educational model to show people that growing food isn't very hard at all! Since it is so accessible, I don't need to be there."

The Montclair Community Pre-K Garden Project, 49 Orange Road, includes herb and butterfly gardens, a berry patch, composter, rain barrel, and a six-bed vegetable garden. **It is open to the public all day on week-ends.** Parking permitted along the driveway to the Board of Education Building on 22 Valley Road.



How Purple Dragon Co-op Helps Small, Local, Organic Farmers

By Janit London



Every local growing season, the phone calls come. “Janit, can you help this farmer? ____ (a large natural chain store) was supposed to buy his crop and now they won’t. There is nothing wrong with it. It hasn’t even been harvested yet!”

Or “Janit, ____ (a different large natural chain store) is insisting on paying too low a price for our fruit. We won’t break even at that price. Can you buy all of it instead?” And so far, we have always been able to help out. We say, “Yes.”



Karla Fuller and Funmilayo Brown

Then we scramble to sell the product. We email our members, people in the community, and Pat Kenschaft, who is kind enough to forward our emails to her readers. Everyone helps by buying cases of delicious produce, sometimes with a cosmetic flaw, sometimes blueberries a little too soft, or sometimes perfect, but usually quite delicious. And the farmer gets the support he/she needs, and a fair price.

Or a farmer calls me and says, “Remember how it got cold a few weeks ago and then got warm again? Well, the broccoli came back. And it’s going to get too cold for broccoli next week. Can you give your members double

broccoli this week?” And we give our members double broccoli that week.

Twenty-eight years ago, we started offering a multi-farm based CSA-type basket every other week. Our model allows us to support many farmers while bringing our members, and those who help out by taking an occasional box, a wide variety of wonderful, local fruits and vegetables from over 200 small, regional organic farms, or from farms where things are very alternatively (compared to conventional farming) grown.



We buy from local farmers twelve months of the year. There are always local items in our shares. Of course, in the local growing season, almost the entire share is comprised of locally grown produce. In the winter and spring, before the local crops start, we include local storage crops, such as apples, pears, squash, onions, all kinds of potatoes, rutabagas, beets and turnips. This helps the local farmers earn money during their off season. We supplement the shares with organic produce from farmers outside of our area, such as cooking greens, lettuce and broccoli, bananas and citrus fruits.

Please join with us to enjoy a wonderful variety of delicious, local organic food, and to help support small, local, organic farmers!

289 Washington Street, Glen Ridge, NJ 07028

9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday / 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., Sat. & Sun.

(973) 429-0391 / info@purpledragon.com

To Every Person Living On This Planet

By Nancy Taiani

Pope Francis recently stepped forward as an advocate for the environment with his six-chapter, 246-paragraph encyclical, *Laudato Si -on Care for Our Common Home*, addressed to “every person living on this planet.”

Pope Francis points out symptoms of environmental problems that CNNJ has long spoken about - pollution and climate change. He talks of the circular design of the world’s natural systems, how one creature or plant feeds on another, which in turn provides food for another, and so on in a self-sustaining way. And he says that humankind has not yet managed to adopt a circular model of production capable of preserving resources for present and future generations.

The pope asks us to dialogue about “the ethical and spiritual roots of environmental problems.” He is especially concerned that the poor suffer most greatly from effects related to global warming. With their depleted means of subsistence, growing numbers of migrants flee their homelands. Pope Francis sees their tragedies as a loss of a sense of responsibility for our fellow humans.

Pope Francis cites “certain mining, farming and industrial activities” for the pollution of water sources in many places. He warns that unless urgent action is taken, there will be an “acute water shortage” in a few decades, raising the cost of food and products dependent on water. He also warns that “control of water by large multinational businesses may become a major source of conflict in this century.”

Stating that all species “have value in themselves,” the pontiff is concerned that environmental equilibrium is being upset with the too rapid extinction of plant and animal species. “The great majority become extinct for reasons related to human activity,” says the pope, and our shortsightedness for - “quick and easy profit” - could result in the loss of resources which may have become important in the future.



In his third chapter, Pope Francis turns to the human roots of the ecological crisis. He says that “science and technology are wonderful products of a God-given human creativity,” and that we are beneficiaries of two centuries of advances, some of which have “remedied countless evils.” However, with advances has come power to those with the knowledge and economic resources. The pope considers it extremely dangerous for such power and decision making to be in the hands of the few.

“The economy accepts every advance in technology with a view to profit, without concern for its potentially negative impact on human beings...and we are learning all too slowly the lessons of environmental deterioration,” says the pope. And he criticizes wasteful and consumerist development.

While admitting that “in some regions their use has brought about economic growth” and helped resolve problems, Pope Francis expresses important reservations about Genetically Modified Crops (GMOs). He says not all information about them is disclosed, that they reflect particular politico-economic or ideological interests.

Also, their introduction results in land concentrated “in the hands of a few owners” and loss of small producers. GM crops also have “the effect of destroying the complex network of ecosystems, diminishing the diversity of production and affecting regional economies.” The effects are aggravated when farmers are forced to buy seeds each year.

Because of the ethical considerations related to GMOs, the pope calls for discussions by all the stakeholders—“farmers, consumers, civil authorities, scientists, seed producers, people living near fumigated fields, and others.” He says, “It calls for a comprehensive approach which would require, at the very least, greater efforts to finance various lines of independent, interdisciplinary research capable of shedding new light on the problem.”

In his fifth chapter, the pontiff considers what has been discussed and

(Continued on page 5)

Journey to Mother

by Azizi Birkeland



This past summer was my first garden ever of any sort. It was a very enjoyable experience, but if I could describe it in one word, that would be "enlightening." It really awakened what I guess I always knew inside but couldn't previously put to words. We are all truly connected from the soil to the sun.

As I grew, some from seeds, some from seedlings, I understood that what I do to the soil I do to myself and that everywhere all over our world this is illustrated. The closer we are to nature, to the soil, the closer we are to ourselves and the further away we are from the soil the more likely we are to get off track, distracted and lost as we stumble haphazardly along unknowingly clawing our way back to the comforts of our mother, in the soil. Whether we understand it or not, we are no greater than the soil or perhaps more importantly, as the soil, so are we.

There is an unavoidable interconnectedness that we as humans depend upon. I learned that we are actually at the bottom of the food chain, as we are possibly the most dependent species on the

planet. Instead of gratitude, we extend the opposite or worse. We throw tantrums at our mother-maybe because deep down we acknowledge our feelings of weakness, our vulnerability. We run away from our mother, building - creating - more and more and trying to use technology to prove our independence, our dominance over her while using the very intimate parts of HER flesh to create our so called independence from her.

Yet each day we thirst for her, grow hungry for her, and we make our way back to feed off of her; and when we have dried her up and she grows silent and seemingly distant, we cry and beg and kill for her. Where we once pushed her away we now go on a destructive hunt for her.

She is there waiting. She has never left. She is always there watching grieving and standing in the way waiting to be reunited. But the further we race along in the dark void of our natural instincts we no longer know her scent. So she is always in harm's way as long as we trample around without our senses.

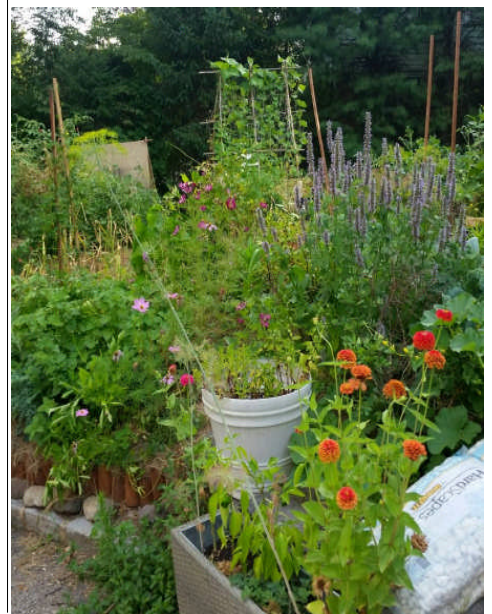
At this point we do not even know we are looking for her because we have lost our roots. How interesting it is that the few tribes still living in the remnants of the jungle and rain forest do not have a word for "the wild." We abandoned our mother. We left the wild on route to order and control. We thought we could trick her into believing we were in control. Instead we believed our own illusion so now we are delusional and we collectively

suffer as long as we are away from her, from home.

In the beginning of my gardening season I worked armed with oversized Welly boots and heavy gloves to protect me from my estranged mother but the more the memory of her came back the more I longed for her. First I removed my gloves and at once found that I naturally worked much better.

On my way back home to mother this past summer I had the honor and privilege to work in Trina Paulus' garden alone. Can I tell you that as I walked to the back of her garden I could feel that I was in a sacred space? There was this amazing presence of energy flowing through my body. It actually humbled me on the spot and it felt not just unnatural but outright disrespectful to have on my shoes in this sacred space.

My feet began to feel as though they were on fire. I removed my shoes... they still burned. I removed my socks. No sooner did I remove my socks than I had the strong irresistible urge to bury my feet as deep into the soil as it would allow. I realized at once that I was cradled in the arms of mother's embrace. I was home.



Call Your Senator About GMO Labeling

Nine of every 10 Americans support mandatory labeling of genetically modified (GM) foods, but the House of Representatives recently passed the DARK act, which would prohibit any labeling of genetically modified food in the United States. Many environmental and food groups are urging New Jersey citizens to urge their senators to actively oppose the DARK act.

Recent studies in Hawaii have concluded that there was a great spike in birth defects and heart attacks after many GM crops were raised there.

According to the Justlabelit website, "64 countries around the world require labeling of genetically modified foods. Unlike most other developed countries – such as 28 nations in the European Union, Japan, Australia, Brazil, Russia and even China – the U.S. has no laws requiring labeling of genetically modified foods."

Senator Menendez recently wrote to his constituents:

"I continue to believe these standards should be regulated on the national level by objective scientific experts in the FDA rather than through a patchwork of state regulations that could have the unintended consequence of confusing consumers. Please know that I will continue to look for ways to ensure that Americans have access to appropriate and accurate nutritional information, without misleading consumers or imposing overly onerous requirements on food producers."



Senator Robert Menendez

**Senator Menendez's phone number is (202) 224-4644
Senator Cory Booker's phone number is (202) 224-3224**

Pope Francis *(Continued from page 3)*

accomplished through the international community's dialogues on the environment, always with consideration for developing and poor countries.

"A global consensus is essential, says Pope Francis. "We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature."

Cornucopia Network of NJ echoes these words of the pope:

"Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life."

The entire encyclical can be found at the Vatican website: <http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html>. Click on *encyclicals*.

"JOIN" or "RENEW"

your CNNJ membership now!

Cornucopia Network of New Jersey survives entirely on volunteered time and your donations. Please send your dues (\$20 individual or \$30 family) with your contact information. "More is welcome and will be well used." It will be used to keep the newsletter coming. We welcome volunteer time and donations as well. Thank you!

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Make out your check to **CNNJ** and mail it to:
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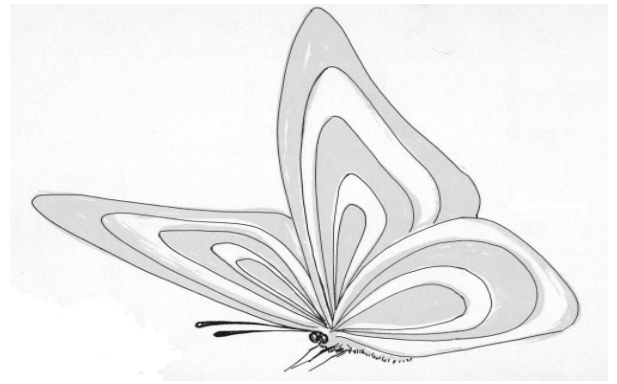
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- ◆ articles you'd like to see or contribute
- ◆ if you would prefer to get the newsletter via email



Cornucopia Network of New Jersey

Promoting local, organic food

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