



# Cornucopia

Network of New Jersey, Inc.

July 2012

## Open Garden Tour July 21st

by Pat Kenschaft

The morning of July 19 several organic vegetable gardens will be open to the public, one in Bloomfield and at least five in Montclair. Most will be open from 9:00 to noon, but mine will close at 11:00. There will be environmental displays and conversation in my front yard throughout the three hours.

**Florence Rollino**, at 45 Wells Ct., Bloomfield, is raising artichokes this year! At this writing, the artichokes themselves are beginning to form. Florence has a beautifully landscaped property, tucking vegetables in among other fascinating displays. She raises many, many tomatoes for home-drying as well as for sauce. From Montclair, take Bellevue Ave. east almost to the end at ShopRite. Take the last left (Bellevue Terr.), and then the first left onto Wells Ct. The house at the end with solar panels is number 45.

**Nick DiMinni**, at 11 Bruce Rd., Montclair, has a European inspired vegetable and herb garden including fig trees, a pergola covered with grape vines, and a Zen garden.

**Grace Grund**, at 3 Dodd St., Montclair, has a dozen egg-laying chickens, four children, two dogs, and many vegetables growing in raised beds. She runs *Terra at the Isabel Rose Café* in the Public

Library. The "girls" (hens) eat all the organic scraps from home as well as from *Terra's* kitchen. Anything the chickens don't eat is composted.

**José German** and **David Wasmuth** at 69 Grove St., Montclair, have a Certified Wildlife Habitat property that includes more than 175 different Northeast native plants. Their garden is very productive year around, producing some fruits and many vegetables. They have a hydroponic system and a beehive.

**Alan Smith** at 148 Forest St., Montclair, offers a take-your-own-tour front yard garden into which he puts remarkably little effort, using many self-seeding plants from year to year. He's having his best garden season in years.

My (**Pat Kenschaft**) garden at 56 Gordonhurst Avenue, Montclair, has provided almost all the family's vegetables year round for decades without using any poisons, commercial fertilizers, or power machinery. I do all the work myself, but my endurance is limited, so I can host visitors for only two hours. The garden is vulnerable to missteps, so nobody will be allowed in the back yard after 11:00 a.m.; last complete tour starts at 10:30. 🐦



Check out Florence's amazing artichoke! Have you ever seen one growing? photo by John Rollino

Mark your calendar!  
Sept. 15th  
Open Gardens  
Butterfly Tent  
Annual Meeting

butterflies in July?  
see page 2

# Butterflies in July?

by Una McGurk

The Sept. Open Garden Tour always features Trina Paulus and Una McGurk's annual Butterfly Tent in Pat's front yard (56 Gordonhurst, Montclair). But this year we are hoping to do *TWO* Open Garden Butterfly Tents – the *1st one will at the July 21st Open Garden* (and will also be in Pat's front yard).

Butterfly season has just barely begun and it is already quite a magnificent year for our flying friends. It all started with a bang or I should say a Kaleidoscope (which is a term used to describe a large group of butterflies) in May undoubtedly due in large part by climate change. An exceptionally mild winter followed by the unseasonable high temperatures in May brought butterflies en masse.

There was a record breaking migration of Red Admirals during the first weeks of May that made the news several times over in NJ and surrounding states. The swarms of Red Admirals were so multitudinous they could not be ignored, even by those who normally don't take notice of butterflies. Everyone was talking about Red Admiral sightings in incredible numbers throughout the beginning of May.

We continued to see the effects of this spring's unusually warm temperatures with a Monarch migration that was at least 2-3 weeks ahead – one of the earliest Monarch migrations ever! "Very early!" "Way early!" "Ridiculously early!"

These were common statements among those who anxiously await the Monarch's annual return to NJ.

When Monarchs started arriving in early May in the Northeast we thought perhaps we were just seeing some Monarchs that had been ordered and released by some well meaning school groups or brides. But then reports started coming from all over the state, with one of our butterfly friends, Anne Stires, reporting her first Monarch egg sighting and collection of the season on May 7th! Wow, that was an incredible full month

ahead of my personal earliest sighting of Monarch eggs ever in NJ!

Northeastern states like New York and New Jersey are a long distance from Mexico. Compared to the Midwest, people here see fewer monarchs of the 1st migratory spring generation. In fact, normally monarchs go undetected in these parts until later in

the summer – June or July – when the 2nd spring generation appears. Thus, many people in NJ were quite awestruck to see monarchs in early May.

Trina & I found our first Monarch eggs this year on May 15th and so our 1st Chrysalids of the season will begin emerging any day now. This gives us hope that if good conditions continue, we will begin

seeing this next generation of Monarch butterflies laying eggs within the next two weeks, and therefore be able to raise enough butterflies to host our 1st Butterfly Tent exhibit and release of the season (exceptionally early) at the July Open Garden! This, of course, depends on if the weather and the butterflies continue to cooperate resulting in enough flyers in time for the event. At a minimum, we hope to have some caterpillars in various stages of development and/or chrysalids that we'll have available for "adoption" for all those interested in witnessing the miracle of metamorphosis first hand.

Bring children and cameras! We'll occasionally release butterflies whenever there are enough children present. And all remaining butterflies will be released at the end of the Open Garden promptly at noon.

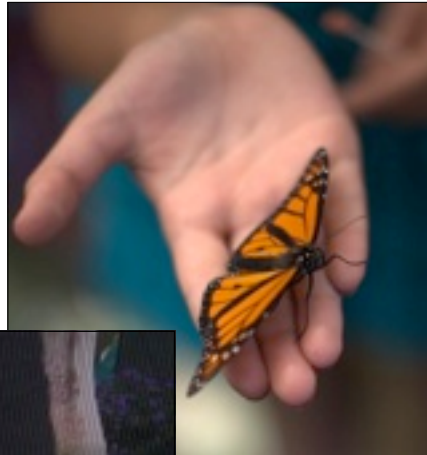


photo (right) by Kate Albright  
photo (below) by Geoff Gove



Please check [www.cornucopianetwork.org](http://www.cornucopianetwork.org) for confirmation of the Butterfly tent as we get closer to July 21st, since we will not know if the butterflies are cooperating with the necessary egg-laying until after this newsletter has gone to print, but we'll be sure to post up-to-date info on the web!

# The Farm (Food?) Bill

by Pat Kenschaft

The "Farm Bill" has grown so far-reaching that it should be called the "Food Bill." Food and Water Watch writes, "Decades of misguided food policy designed to benefit agribusinesses and mega-farms, combined with unchecked corporate mergers, have wreaked havoc on family farmers, public health and rural communities." However, they tell us that Sen. Cardin is leading an effort to at least attach a requirement that such subsidies (preferably decreased) require increased conservation practices.

I have told my congressmen for many years to stop farm subsidies, especially for corn, cotton, soy, wheat and rice. Perhaps this year, when all expenditures are being questioned, we can get action on this issue. Food Democracy Now tells us that Sen. Coburn and Durbin have sponsored an amendment to limit subsidy payments to the largest, most profitable farmers.

My primary motivator has been the extent to which the subsidies disadvantage small farmers, domestically and in other countries. Corporate agriculture has the system down and the resources to milk it.

In 1910 the United States had six million farmers in a population of 92 million. Recently we have only two million farmers in a population of over 300 million. The percentage of farmers decreased from about six percent to about 2/3 of one percent.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest urges us to support Sen. Gillibrand's "healthy food" amendment that would redirect billions of dollars of subsidies for crop insurance companies into food assistance, conservation, and local, organic, and healthy food programs. The "food stamp" program has functioned as an afterthought to the "Farm Bill," but growing

## The **FOOD ISSUES** Pages

hunger in our country makes it urgent that we give it more attention.

Also, S1773, the Local Farms, Food and Jobs Act, provides funding for local small farms in a program that would exclude large farms and would provide new organic farmers with credit to get started. The Union of Concerned Scientists reports that such adjustments to our agricultural policy can help eliminate the barriers these farmers face, while boosting local economies, creating jobs, and encouraging consumption of healthy fruits and vegetables from farmers using practices that protect our natural resources.

These bills are currently being argued and voted on in Congress; chances are by the time you read this some of it will be out of date. Now is the time to let your national legislators that you care about these issues. An Internet "search" of "Farm Bill 2012" will give you an overwhelming amount of information, and I will try to keep aware of developments; if you want updates, please email me at [kenschaft@pegasus.montclair.edu](mailto:kenschaft@pegasus.montclair.edu). Those on my gardening/environmental email list will get them. ☺



Watch the Food and Water Watch video to meet the contestants of *The Biggest Farm Bill Loser: the American consumer, the independent farmer, and the corporate fat cat.*

[www.foodandwaterwatch.org/food/fair-farm/the-biggest-farm-bill-loser/](http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/food/fair-farm/the-biggest-farm-bill-loser/)

## A Bill to Mandate Labeling of GMOs in NJ

by Barb Conover

New Jersey Food and Water Watch (FWW) has launched a grassroots campaign to help pass S1367, "a bill to mandate labeling of GMOs in NJ,"

sponsored by Sen. Vitale and Singer (currently with four cosponsors). The companion Assembly bill, A2955 is currently only sponsored by Asms. Wolfe and Kean.

"We have a right to know how much fat and sodium are in our food, and a full list of ingredients is on every box,"



says FWW's Karina Wilkerson, "but due to the influence of biotech companies like Monsanto, we don't know if the foods we are eating are genetically engineered."

The exact bill language can be read at [www.njleg.state.nj.us/bills/BillView.asp?BillNumber=S1367](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bills/BillView.asp?BillNumber=S1367). A simple, direct piece of legislation, it states, "Every genetically modified food product that is offered for sale in the State shall contain a label indicating that the product contains genetically modified material. The information shall be displayed in a manner that is conspicuous and easily understandable to consumers."

FWW has a grassroots petition to support this effort. If you would be interested in helping gather signatures on a paper petition, contact me at

*continued on page 4*

## Label NJ GMOs *cont. from page 3*

bconifer022@gmail.com, or Karina Wilkinson of FWW at [kwilkinson@fwwatch.org](mailto:kwilkinson@fwwatch.org).

Be sure “Big Ag” will fight this. “If you put a label on genetically engineered food you might as well put a skull and crossbones on it,” said Norman Braksick, president of Asgrow Seed Co. (a subsidiary of Monsanto) in the *Kansas City Star*, March 7, 1994.

According to the Truth in Labeling Coalition, bills have been introduced in 20 states, an unprecedented level of legislative activity. The states are: California (through initiative petition, *breaking news*: this will be on the Nov. ballot in CA: first time in the U.S.), Vermont (clear majority of support in the VT House

Ag Committee caused Monsanto to threaten to sue the state, so the bill languishes), Alaska, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Washington, and West Virginia. Alaska has been the only state to pass a GM food labeling law and this applies to GM fish only.

Efforts to pass GMO labeling laws at the federal level have gone nowhere, despite the fact that more than one million consumers have emailed “Just Label It” petitions to the FDA. Rep. Kucinich introduced a bill every year, knowing it would go nowhere. In June, Sen. Sanders (I-VT, see VT previous paragraph) **proposed a ‘label GMO’ amendment to the Farm Bill; it failed 29–73.**(Lautenberg: *Yea*; Menendez: *Nay*). ☹️

## Emergence of the SuperWorm

by Nancy Taiani

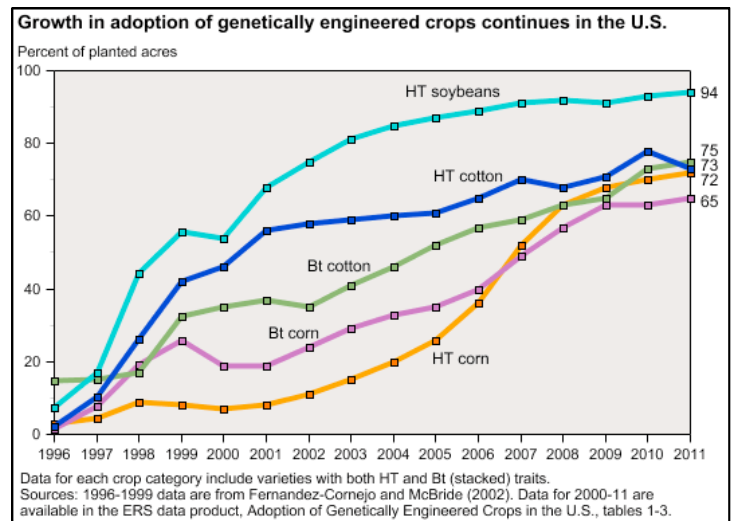
The corn rootworm is “one of the country’s most devastating pests,” according to Monsanto.<sup>1</sup> So the company offered corn seeds engineered with *Bacillus thuringiensis*, or Bt., an insect-killing bacterium, to kill the larvae of beetles including the corn rootworm.

In the past, when crops were sprayed with insecticides, new strains of insects developed over a period of time with a resistance to that poison. An article appearing in the *NationofChange* on-line newsletter on May 30th says, “But even though a scientific advisory panel warned the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that the threat of insects developing resistance was high, Monsanto argued that the steps necessary to prevent such an occurrence – which would have entailed less of the corn being planted – were an unnecessary precaution, and the EPA naively agreed.”<sup>2</sup>

Now it appears that the scientific advisory panel’s warning was correct. Covering fields with Bt crops led to the development of insects resistant to the Bt incorporated into those crops. National Public Radio’s food blog reported in December that “a new generation of insect larvae appears to be munching happily on the roots of genetically engineered corn.” The report warns that the economic impact will be huge – possibly amounting to billions of dollars.<sup>3</sup>

And, although Monsanto and the EPA insist that genetically engineered corn would only harm insects, there is evidence that the Bt-toxin is now found in many people’s blood. The *NationofChange* article speculates on the consequences of that finding: “Is it then also possible that the Bt-toxin might damage the integrity of your digestive tract in the same way it damages insects?”<sup>2</sup>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service states, “In 1996, notwithstanding uncertainty about consumer acceptance and economic and environmental impacts, in terms of share of planted acres, soybeans and cotton have been the most widely adopted GE crops in the U.S., followed by corn. This data product summarizes the extent of adoption of herbicide-tolerant and insect-resistant crops since their introduction in 1996.”<sup>4</sup>



As you can see from the chart, Bt Corn accounts for 65% of corn grown in the United States.

Meanwhile, Monsanto has developed a new corn called SmartStax, which combines two different Bt genes designed to kill the rootworm in different ways. The idea is to help prevent resistance from emerging. The EPA allows farmers to plant SmartStax on up to 95 percent of their corn acres. The *NationofChange* article warns, “If one of those genes is already compromised... such a high *continued on page 8*

# Obesity in America – beyond soda pop

by Bob Simpson

FLASH! -- We've all heard about NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg's push to eliminate oversized soft drinks. But add in some "facts" and opinions from Sam Pizzigati's\* article, "Behind Super-Sized Sodas, A Deeper Danger" and you'll have another – and challenging – view. Some excerpts:

"In 1980, only 15% of American adults counted as obese. That rate soared to 23% in 1995, and to 35% in 2006."

"Experts offer many explanations for our losing battle against the bulge. Fast food is fattening. Restaurants are super-sizing portions. Corporate food giants have engineered more fatty, sugary, and salty products."

"But [these facts] don't explain why some states in the United States have more obesity than others – or why obesity isn't plaguing every rich nation."

"Inequality *does* explain these differences... In developed nations, the epidemiological studies show, obesity levels rise as income and social status fall. On each rung of the economic ladder, people tend to be more overweight than the people on the rungs above them."

"People typically respond to stress, investigators note, by ... increasing their intake of our society's readily available relaxants, disinhibitors, and stimulants. They smoke ... do drugs ... or they eat 'comfort foods' packed with sugar, salt, and fat."

"The more chronic the stress, the more likely a reliance on these comforting props becomes. And stress becomes more chronic as societies become more unequal."

Pizzigati concludes by suggesting that Mayor Bloomberg could "produce a far greater impact on our national health – if he jumpstarted a discussion about our nation's staggeringly unequal distribution of income and wealth."

So – what are the chances of us – you, me, Mayor Bloomberg, et. al. – reducing the gap between the rich and the poor (so the poor get healthier)? Until the "second coming" or that other place freezes over, there's almost no likelihood that we're going to significantly decrease the spread between the "haves and have-nots." So let's approach the intermediary cause of obesity: and that IS primarily food. We have to change from buying cheap "junk food" to making "real, healthy food" easily, conveniently available at low cost.

## What CAN WE DO?

Stop subsidizing corn and sugar! Because of U.S. agricultural subsidies, the cost of soft drinks containing high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) has decreased by 24% since 1985, while the price of fruits and vegetables has gone up by 39%. If Congress ever hopes to get the childhood obesity problem under control, health experts argue, a new look at agricultural subsidies will be vital.

People must be educated (public schools must serve good food and teach food health). Food Stamps must be used for healthy food only. Food Pantries/Soup Kitchens should carry/serve quality food/meals.

I also advocate taxing the "foods" that cause health problems – that certainly includes "soda pop." (Use the tax revenue for subsidizing higher priced good food.) The French already pay higher taxes on Cokes and Pepsis, and the Danes pay a tax on butter.

Packaged foods are required to show a nutritional value label: why not on meats and vegetables? Why not nutritional values on restaurant and take-out menus/order boards? Why not free recipes for the healthiest foods in the store?

We need to speak out and move the politicians to do what is right and healthy for all. We, at CNNJ, would love to hear *your* ideas and solutions.

Last month (June 2012), HBO ran a four-part series, "The Weight of the Nation: confronting America's obesity epidemic." It is available to watch free online at <http://theweightofthenation.hbo.com>. Done in conjunction with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Institutes of Health, this sobering project shows that the obesity epidemic, if unchecked, will destroy not just the health of Americans, but our economy as well.

And, if you have a mind to, check out this PBS NewsHour report on soda and sin taxes aired 6-7-12: [www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/health/jan-june12/sodatax\\_06-07.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/health/jan-june12/sodatax_06-07.html). ☺

\* Sam Pizzigati contributes to *Executive Excess* 2006, and edits *Too Much*, an online weekly on excess and inequality. His email is [editor@toomuchonline.org](mailto:editor@toomuchonline.org)

**Ed Note:** CNNJ realizes the emotional content of criticism for those struggling with being overweight, and that perceived criticism can make losing weight harder as it affects self esteem (one of us admits to a life-long struggle with weight and depression). But the Obesity epidemic is too big and too dangerous to ignore in the name of sparing the feelings of the overweight.



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# Led by Seeds: A Distributed Garden

by Chris Beers

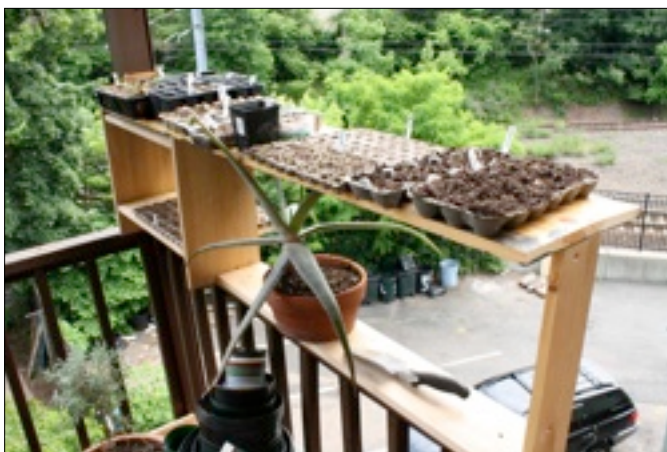
In early May of this year I knew very little about gardening. I just had an overly rigid plan for a project: grow produce in unusual public places and, when the plants bear fruit, convert the site into a pop-up café, prepare dishes out of the harvest and sell them next to the plant itself. I had no idea what this entailed – only a vision of people eating food that came from a plant two feet away. But my vision left out some important details, how to grow plants being one of them. (Note that I had never gardened before.) Not to mention the legalities of growing and preparing food for sale.

To begin learning, I met with Elizabeth Bishop, a Montclair-based artist who knew more than I about the politics of getting things done in town. She suggested I speak with a few people; one was Claire Cilliotta, an experienced Montclair gardener. Claire talked about the rich relationships she has with her plants. I realized how complex our connection to plants can be: a load of questions sprung to my mind. Where could I plant? Will the soil be healthy enough? Would people respect what was growing? What equipment and tasks are involved in tending a garden? My rigid idea had no grounding in reality so I broke it down to its core element: make produce plants an accessible part of our public space. This new approach was so basic that one hour was all I needed to start.

In the rain on May 21st, armed with a book Claire lent me, *Tyler's Guide to Vegetables & Herbs*, a few seeds, and a broken spade I'd found, I went out and planted beans in a 3'x3' public tree planter. Planting that day was rewarding work and it made the land outside my apartment into land that was cared for. The pop-up café idea turned out to be a jumping off point into an adventure. My original idea fell apart as I began experimenting; I didn't know where I was heading but went intrepidly.

**Gardeners are generous people. How could you not be when plants are so generous?**

*– Claire Cilliotta, an experienced Montclair Gardener*



In this spirit I headed to Queens to volunteer on a guerilla garden called "Smiling Hog's Head Ranch." We were transplanting rogue cantaloupe seedlings and ran out of room, so I brought some back to Montclair. Later that night I stayed at a friend's house. After I told him about my efforts, he offered me some of his plants and seeds. Since then, new relationships have formed. Friends have shared their unneeded seeds, soil, and planters with me. I gathered five contractor bags of fertile black dirt soil from a farmer friend in upstate NY. After volunteering at Schultheis Farm in Clifton, farmer Tammy let me bring three-dozen tomato plants back to my apartment. While planting sunflowers and watermelons at a corner in lower Montclair, my friends and I ran into José German who gave us a bag of his compost, showed us his magnificent backyard, and offered to share his master gardening skills with us.

This abundance found in my relationships with people fascinates me. I am now thinking about how I can develop not only the garden I started on my street, but the flow of human connections, which become garden expanding resources. My focus is shifting again: this time from growing plants in public places, to growing a community of people that could distribute the garden much farther than I could on my own. What I have gathered already has grown into somewhere between 300–500 seedlings. There is now a living momentum embodied in an army of plants. When the sprouts begin to outgrow their egg cartons, tending this garden will become the work of more than one person. It has become a necessity to look at how other people become agents in distributing and tending to these plants. 🐦

**Ed Note:** Chris Beers will have a table in Pat's front yard at the **July 21st Open Garden**. Come learn more about this distributed garden! You can email Chris at [chrisbeers01@gmail.com](mailto:chrisbeers01@gmail.com)

# CNNJ Board Member Receives NJEF Award

by Barb Conover

The New Jersey Environmental Federation awarded four former "alumni" who have gone on to "do great, amazing work in the environmental arena," at their Annual Conference on May 12th. One was Gray Russell, a longtime Board Member of the Cornucopia Network of New Jersey.

Currently, Gray is the Environmental Coordinator for the Township of Montclair. It is unusual for a town the size of Montclair to have an Environmental Coordinator, and Gray's expertise and leadership has made Montclair an innovative and enviable "green spot" in the state.

Through Gray's work, Montclair also won the NJ BPU's first-ever Clean Energy Leadership Award in 2005; in 2010, the U.S. EPA awarded Montclair a prestigious "Climate Showcase Community" grant.

Gray was selected in 2006 by The Climate Project to be trained by former Vice President Al Gore and a team of scientists and educators, to conduct *Inconvenient Truth*-like presentations. Gray has subsequently given thirty presentations on climate change to almost 2,500 people.

Gray is Vice-Chair of the Essex County Environmental Commission. He serves on the



Board of Directors of the Association of NJ Recyclers, the Advisory Council for the NJ WasteWise Business Network, and the Board of Advisors for Bike&Walk Montclair. His experience with CNNJ was impetus for him to become a founding organizer of the Montclair Farmers Market, now beginning its 20th successful season.

In 1992 Gray participated in The Global Forum at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), "The Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Gray's trip to Rio was made possible by CNNJ Board member Pat Kenschaft; Gray says he'll "always be thankful to her and CNNJ for that eye-opening and exciting learning experience."

Gray is an environmental professional whose 22-year career includes work with grassroots community organizations, local government, a state cultural and scientific institution, a national non-profit advocacy group, international research, and entrepreneurial green business. Always humble, Gray said he was "very pleased and honored to be given this award." . . .

**Ed Note:** These are just *some* of Gray's accomplishments! Please see the full article as a supplement on our [website!](#)

## We'd like to hear from you!

[CornucopiaNJ@gmail.com](mailto:CornucopiaNJ@gmail.com) to let us know:

- what you care about
- articles you'd like to see or contribute
- if you would prefer to get the newsletter via email

### Ed Notes:

- The Newsletter is available online! [www.cornucopianetwork.org](http://www.cornucopianetwork.org)
- Pat Kenschaft's blog: [patsorganicgarden.blogspot.com](http://patsorganicgarden.blogspot.com)

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**Cornucopia Network of New Jersey** survives entirely on volunteered time and your donation. Please send your dues (\$15 individual or \$25 family) with your contact information. We welcome volunteer time and donations as well. Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Can we send our Newsletter only by email?  Yes  No

## Superworm *cont. from page 4*

percentage of Bt corn could rapidly produce insects that are resistant to the second one, too... There can be little doubt that genetically engineered crops are the most dangerous aspect of modern agriculture."<sup>2</sup> ☹️

1. Monsanto, "What's the Story with Corn Rootworm Technology?," [www.monsanto.com/newsviews/Pages/bt-corn-performance-in-us-corn-belt.aspx](http://www.monsanto.com/newsviews/Pages/bt-corn-performance-in-us-corn-belt.aspx)
2. Dr. Mercola, "First Super Weeds, Now Super Insects – Thanks to Monsanto," *NationofChange*, 5/30/2012, [www.nationofchange.org/first-super-weeds-now-super-insects-thanks-monsanto-1338362046](http://www.nationofchange.org/first-super-weeds-now-super-insects-thanks-monsanto-1338362046)
3. NPR, "Insects Find Crack in Biotect's Armor," 12/05/2012, [www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2011/12/05/143141300/insects-find-crack-in-biotech-corns-armor](http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2011/12/05/143141300/insects-find-crack-in-biotech-corns-armor)
4. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, "Adoption of Genetically Engineered Crops in the U.S.," 07/01/2011, [www.ers.usda.gov/Data/BiotechCrops](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/BiotechCrops)

## Ask a gardener

*With this issue, we launch the "Ask a Gardener" column. Send your questions to Cornucopia's experienced gardeners via [cornucopiaNJ@gmail.com](mailto:cornucopiaNJ@gmail.com), and watch our website for more.*

I have grown potatoes before in potato sacks, and had mild success, but would like to try again. I'd like something that is a pretty universal potato, easy to grow and am thinking about using large pots, so the roots don't run away! I have no idea where to buy the seed potatoes from though. Any help you can give would be greatly appreciated.

–Helen

Dear Helen,

Thank you for contacting me. It is a pleasure to share gardening information with another gardener, especially if is related to food production. I have been experimenting with potatoes for almost 8 years with success. I have changed my technique several times and the results have not been so great. So I prefer to keep everything simple and basic.

First, you need to have a soil rich in organic materials and very loose. Second, get your potatoes eyes from organic potatoes. I prefer red potatoes from Whole Foods supermarket. Cut the potatoes eyes 1/2 to 3/4 inch thick and plant them no more than 2 inches deep with a separation of 14 inches between each potato eye. (yes, they are much more delicious than store-bought!)

Best regards, –José



Web: [www.cornucopianetwork.org](http://www.cornucopianetwork.org)

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### see website for supplements:

- full Gray Russell article
- Enviro sue Christie over RGGI