EARTH BEATS

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Coordinator: Denise Turcotte

Active Members: Ann Conroy, Diane Y. Dupere, Rachel Labonville, Pauline Maurier, Pauline Morneau

SPIRITUALITY IN HIDDEN PLACES

Two cars traveling in tandem carried a carefree and "happy six CSC's" to the little town of Wilton, N.H. Many would ask, "What's to be found in this little remote town in western New Hampshire?" Read on!

There we met Anthony who manages the Temple-Wilton Community Farm. This farm, one of the rare year-round Biodynamic Community Supported Farms, is a free association of individuals who make it possible for the farm to provide life-giving food for the local community while respecting the natural environment. The members cover operational costs of the farm.

To the casual passer-by, the farm buildings and farm itself, may receive but a cursory glance. But that's before Anthony comes forth to share his deep love and concern for Mother Earth. In a very short time, we learned so much from this wise, gentle and courageous farmer who made farming his life choice only after the birth of his first daughter. Having asked himself how he could keep his child healthy, he left his life in the



city because he knew that nutritious and safe foods on the tamily table were the only solution to his concern. His fatherly love for his daughter opened the door to his true calling.

A glimpse of the cows nearby quickened our interest and we soon had our first lesson on the benefits of raw milk. There are no added hormones and certainly no transport from one state to another and it does come from "Bessie" who also has a healthy diet. Free-range chickens strutting about provide eggs daily. (With the recent outbreak of salmonella, this really caused us to pause and ponder the advantages of "home-grown".)

Ah! And now to the fields! This is where we savored the "taste of the earth" as Anthony spoke of the fields. His peace-filled soul, the sparkle in his eyes, and the soft poetic phrases that flowed from the depth of his soul gave us the feel and genuine experience of the "spirituality of the earth," and of the "symphony of the fields."

As we moved on, the discussion turned to the realm of biodynamic farming which made its debut in the U.S. around 1930. Because the soil is suffering from its own anemia, it is not producing as it did hundreds of years ago. It is also in need of healing. What has been taken from it must be returned.



Biodynamic agriculture is a way of helping to return the missing elements to the soil. It uses various herbal preparations to enhance the microbiology of the soil and the quality of the compost. One uses the smallest quantity of matter over long periods of time. The field preparations are applied after rhythmical stirring in water over a period of one hour. This creates continually alternating periods of form and chaos, imparting the force of the preparation into the water, which is then sprayed on the land. Year after year, the soil is enriched

when sprayed with these precious, nourishing droplets. Like the yeast in the dough, it is agriculture based on good common sense practices. Aerial photographs have revealed the enhanced color and richness of the crops in such fields. The vineyards of California are now using this process to improve the quality and yield of the grapes.

In dry seasons, the Temple-Wilton fields depend on the limited supply of well water. We all know that this has been a cruel summer, one that Anthony has endured with hope, because he tells himself that at the end of each dry day he is one day closer to next rainfall.

It is with our souls nourished, our minds enlightened and our hearts filled with gratitude and admiration for all who respect LIFE in every form that we left the Temple-Wilton Farm while uttering our prayers for rain which did indeed come!

FOR MORE INFO GO TO: www.templewiltoncommunityfarm.com

HOW DOES A
COMMUNITY
FOOD SYSTEM WORK?



It begins with SMALL FARMS

working with natural cycles and ends with fresh food and stronger communities in nearby cities.

Small Farms

Grass-fed livestock has a smaller carbon footprint and leaves grain for humans to eat.

Crop diversity

increases yield, keeps soil fertile, helps fight pests.

Homegrown seed

keeps old strains alive, produces new varieties adapted to local conditions.

No-till farming reduces soil loss and sequesters carbon. Edible prairie produces grain while building soil.

Clean energy such as solar, wind, and biogas provides clean power for farm machinery.

FACTS:

If all farmers in the US used no-till, crop rotation and cover crops, they'd sequester 300 million tons of carbon a year. Since 1900, 75 percent of vegetable varieties have disappeared worldwide.

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS:

Fruit and nut orchards, farm waste converted to biogas fuel or compost, manure converted to fertilizer, clean water runoff.

From YES Magazine, Spring 2009 and yesnewsletter@yesmagazine.org

"The food crisis is not a political one but a spiritual one, prompted by a breakdown in our relationship with the Earth."

Elizabeth Amrich