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WATERKEEPER

Spring 2006

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FOOD

WATERKEEPER

Volume 2, Number 4

Spring 2006

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GOOD FOOD

Versus Green Eggs and Ham

Artful propaganda by industrial meat producers has succeeded in persuading most Americans that our meat and dairy products still

come from bucolic farms like the one pictured on this month's cover.

In reality the vast majority of America's meat and produce are controlled by a handful of ruthless monopolies that house animals in industrial warehouses where they are treated with unspeakable and unnecessary cruelty. These meat factories destroy family farms and rural communities and produce vast amounts of dangerous pollutants that are contaminating America's most treasured landscapes and waterways.

In North Carolina today hogs produce more fecal waste than the human population. But while human waste must be treated, hog waste is simply dumped into the environment. Giant warehouse facilities shoehorn 100,000 sows into tiny cages where they endure bleak and tortured lives without sunlight, rooting opportunities, straw bedding or the social interactions that might give them some joy or dignity. Concrete culverts collect and channel their putrefying waste into 10-acre, open-air pits three stories deep. Noxious vapors choke surrounding communities and endanger the health of neighbors, destroy property values and civic life. Billions of gallons of hog feces ooze into America's rivers from these facilities, killing fish and putting fishermen out of business. The festering effluent has given birth to lethal outbreaks of *Pfiesteria piscicida*, a toxic microbe that causes massive fish kills. Scientists strongly suspect *Pfiesteria* causes

brain damage and respiratory illness in humans who touch infected fish or water.

Beef and dairy cattle, poultry, hogs and sheep and the facilities that house them are doused with toxic pesticides and the herds are fed antibiotics and hormones necessary to keep confined animals alive and growing. Residues from those chemical wastes saturate our waterways, fostering the growth of drug-resistant super-bacteria.

These new industrial techniques have allowed a few giant multinational corporations to put a million American chicken farmers and most of America's independent hog farmers out of production and gain control of our precious landscapes and food supplies. In North Carolina, 27,000 independent hog farmers have abandoned that business in recent years to be replaced by 2,200 factories, 1,600 owned or operated by a single company, Smithfield Foods. In this way, America's rural communities are being shattered and our landscapes are being occupied by giant corporations who have demonstrated little concern for our national values or welfare. They are driving the final nail into the coffin of Thomas Jefferson's vision of an American democracy rooted in tens of thousands of independent freeholds owned by family farmers – each with a stake in the system. They are undermining

In North Carolina today hogs produce more fecal waste than the human population. But while human waste must be treated, hog waste is simply dumped into the environment.

America's national security by putting our food supply in the hands of a few ruthless corporations rather than millions of American citizens.

Family farms are replaced by stinking factories, manned by a miniscule and itinerant work force paid slave wages for performing some of the most unpleasant and dangerous jobs in America. The market dominance by corporate meat factories is not built on greater efficiencies, but on the ability to pollute and get away with it. The whole illegal system runs

on massive political contributions by billionaire agriculture barons who must evade laws that prohibit Americans from polluting our air and water. They rely on this political clout to undermine the market, reap huge government subsidies and pollute. If existing environmental laws were enforced against them, these multinationals simply couldn't compete in the marketplace with traditional family farmers.

Waterkeeper Alliance has been on the frontlines fighting corporate takeover of American food production since our first day in business in 1999. This January we settled a case with Smithfield Foods, the nation's largest hog producer, forcing the company to clean up 275 meat factories in North Carolina. Our historic settlement put industrial meat producers

across the country on notice they will have to meet a higher standard of performance. Most importantly, this settlement will, for the first time, force the factory meat industry to closely monitor its pollution and its impact on surrounding waterbodies and groundwater. The Smithfield agreement sets the stage for the next phase of Waterkeeper Alliance's Pure Farms/Pure Water campaign to civilize the industrial meat industry. It's time that the agro-industry either figures out how to produce meat without poisoning our drinking water and destroying our fisheries and communities, or get out of the food business.

But reforming the system is as much about personal choices as it is about winning our environmental campaigns. A growing number of America's consumers are coming to recognize what great chefs have long known, the best quality meat comes from good animal husbandry.

Americans can still find networks of family farmers who raise their animals to range free on grass pastures using natural feeds without steroids, sub-therapeutic antibiotics or artificial growth promotants. These farmers treat their animals with dignity and respect and bring tasty, premium-quality meat to customers while practicing the highest standards of husbandry and environmental stewardship. They give the rest of us an opportunity to do right by eating well.

When we demand the highest quality food, Americans promote our farmers, our democracy, our children's health and national security. Waterkeepers work with traditional farmers, ranchers and fishermen across the country who share our vision for a sustainable American food production – grown by farmers who earn a living wage and contribute directly to the economic, environmental and political health of our nation.

For these reasons we are heartened by the proliferation of organic food markets and products. Organic sections are migrating from gourmet to mainstream supermarkets. A growing number of chefs and restaurateurs – who represent the vanguard of our thinking on food – are converting to sustainable foods. Retail sales of organic foods were \$10.4 billion in 2003 and are expected to be more than \$15 billion in 2006. That's still a small piece of the \$550 billion retail food market, but organic sales have maintained an impressive growth rate of 17 to 20 percent per year (against only 2-3 percent growth for the rest of the industry.) Americans know good food when they taste it, and choose sustainability even when it costs more.

This issue is filled with the voices of farmers, fishermen, chefs and consumers who are standing up for good-tasting foods and American values.

Sustainable food tastes better. It is more nutritious and safer for you, your family and the environment. 

Americans know good food when they taste it, and choose sustainability even when it costs more.

WATERKEEPER

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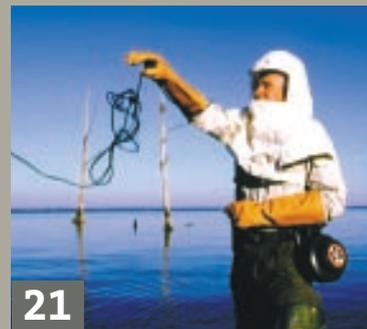


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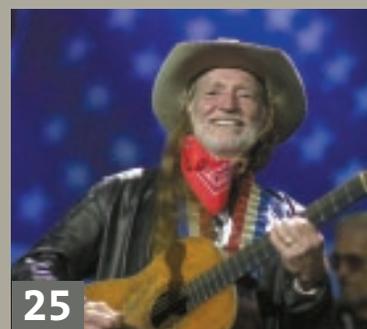
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The official magazine of Waterkeeper Alliance

Mission: Waterkeeper Alliance connects and supports local Waterkeeper programs to provide a voice for waterways and communities worldwide.

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On the Cover



Andy Radtke, Art Director at Organic Valley Family of Farms, painted this view of the round barn on the LaValle, WI, Bodendine farm from across the old mill pond before the 150-year old dam was removed, draining the pond and restoring the Baraboo River. At 115 miles, it is now the longest free-flowing mainstream river in the United States. This beautiful scene, however, was preserved with a berm and pumps that keep the millpond filled.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Is there anything you'd like to say? Submit your letter to the editor via email editor@waterkeeper.org or by mail to **Waterkeeper Magazine, 50 S. Buckhout St., Ste 302, Irvington, NY 10533.**

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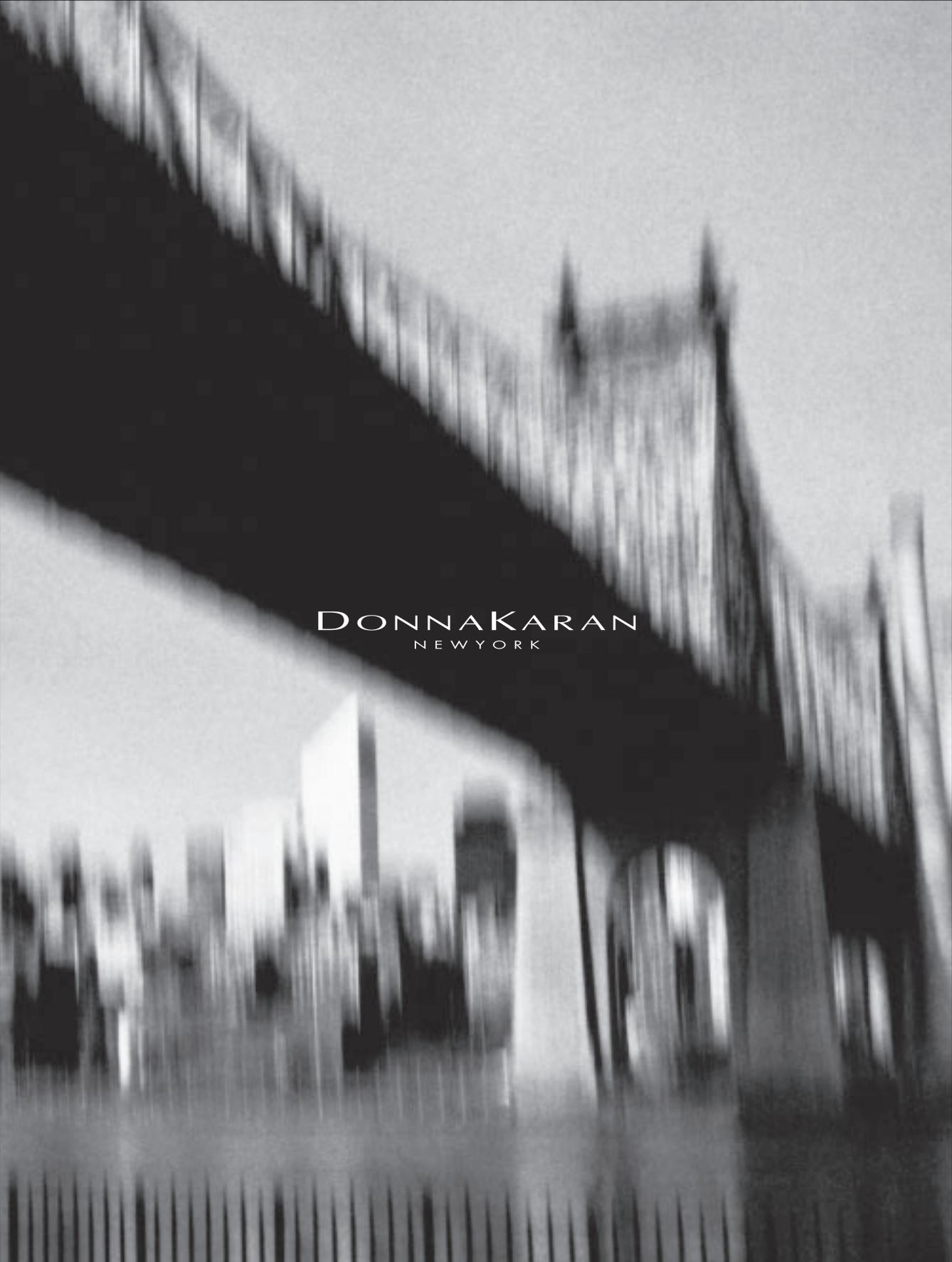
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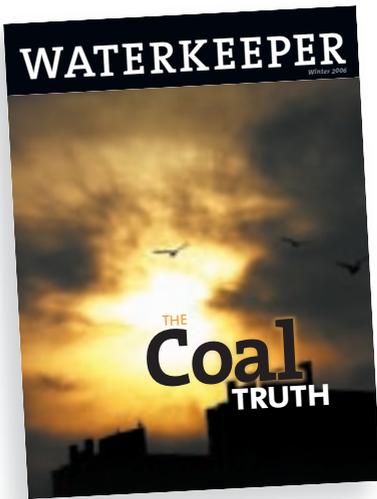
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DONNA KARAN
NEW YORK



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Increasing awareness of the issues surrounding coal mining is a real gift to the many West Virginians who pay the externalized costs of coal. Leaving oil for coal may be this administration's definition of homeland security, but it only assures that the forests, watersheds and future generations of Appalachia will not be secure. Once again we are given a lot of hype about economic booms, and then are left with economic busts. The supposed billion dollar coalfields are some of the poorest counties in the nation.

Thanks for the great articles on coal and the good work you do to protect our watersheds and homes.

MARY ELLEN CASSIDY
Wheeling, West Virginia

Authors Update on the Coal Truth

Sago Mine Disaster

The very day the winter issue of *Waterkeeper* magazine was mailed a blast at the Sago mine in West Virginia killed 12 men. One survived and is only slowly recovering. I'm privileged to have a friend who survived the Jim Walter blast that killed 13 of his workmates in a similar disaster in Alabama in 2001. Rick Rose was blown some 75 feet back through the mine and lived to tell about it. He will be the first to say that his life changed that day and will never be normal again.

In the same week of the Sago disaster there was another incident where two more men were killed in West Virginia. A week later a miner was killed in Kentucky. In the next week 75 men were trapped underground in Canada. Fortunately the Canadian government cares enough about its miners to force the installation of "Safe Rooms" where oxygen and supplies are stored for just such an incident. Unfortunately, the 65 Mexican miners trapped underground as I write this on February 23 also live in a country that places coal profits above men's lives. [None survived—Editor.]

JOHN L. WATHEN,
Hurricane Creekkeeper



John Wathen speaks with a CNN reporter on behalf of the Sago-tragedy families. He was asked not to be overly critical of mine owners and operators, "the profit jockeys from Wall Street that now run a large number of mines," says the not easily censored Hurricane Creekkeeper.

CORRECTION

A caption on page 36 of the winter issue underreported the weight limits of coal trucks. Rather than the 12,000 pounds listed, many coal trucks in Kentucky run 126,000 pounds. In West Virginia trucks weighing 120,000 lbs. (60 tons) are permitted to run on roads built to withstand only half that weight. —Editor

Business As Usual For a Belligerent Industry

On January 2nd the nation awoke to news about a mine explosion in West Virginia that had trapped 13 miners. As events of the next 24 hours unfolded, the tragic death of 12 of the Sago miners caught and kept the nation's attention.

Formal investigations by both federal and state teams are underway. But behind the veil of concern and investigations, it's business as usual:

- **NO COMMENT:** After delivering testimony in front of the U.S. Senate, David Dye – Acting Assistant Secretary of the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) – defied Senator Arlen Specter's request to stay another hour to answer additional questions.
- **SAFETY LAST:** Don L. Blankenship, chairman, CEO and president of the Massey Energy Co. – the nation's second largest coal mine company and owner of the Aracoma Coal Alma No. 1 mine in Melville, WV, where two miners died Jan. 19 – clarified that:

MINES ARE SAFE (EXCEPT WHEN THEY ARE NOT)

"As far as avoiding accidents, the industry avoids thousands of accidents every year."

WORKERS SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL

"Most often, the problem is not the safety rules, it's the day to day (activities of mine workers)."

NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT

Blankenship was reported as saying he believes that the type of explosion that occurred at the Aracoma mine and the Sago Mine are "rare and statistically insignificant."
- **CORPORATE TAKEOVER:** Governor Joe Manchin III has put up new welcome signs at state borders – West Virginia is no longer "Wild and Wonderful." It's now "Open for Business."

Twenty-one mining fatalities have been reported in the United States as of February 19, 2006.

An avalanche of media attention by *National Geographic*, *Orion*, *Harpers*, *The New York Times*, the *Christian Science Monitor* and others is raising the profile of the issue. In addition, a new book, *Missing Mountains*, compiles essays on Mountaintop Mining by Wendell Barry and other Kentucky writers. Documentaries *Black Diamonds – Mountaintop Removal and the fight for coalfield justice*, *Kilowatt Ours* and *Mucked* also cover the issue, along with Al Gore's soon to be released global warming film, *An Inconvenient Truth*.

CINDY RANK,
West Virginia Headwaters Waterkeeper

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Want to be heard?

If you feel strongly about the issues raised in *WATERKEEPER* Magazine, make your voice heard. Visit

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to take action or to get involved with your local Waterkeeper program.



Stay tuned for the summer issue of *Waterkeeper* where we'll uncover sewage, tour post-hurricane Louisiana and pronounce our 2006 Enemies of the Environment.



Toxic Stream Cleanup a Success

After nearly six years and a multimillion-dollar cleanup project, recent sediment samples from a Brockport tributary leading ultimately to Lake Ontario shows a successful cleanup.

General Electric, Black & Decker and the 3M Corporation cleaned up the PCB's, cyanide, heavy metals and other highly toxic chemicals. During the cleanup six homes were razed, 21,000 tons of contaminated soils were removed from residential and commercial properties, one half mile of tributary was cleaned and restored and more than 3,000 feet of contaminated storm sewer was replaced.

The recent test results released by New York State environmental officials showed the cleanup and remediation was a success and the tributary is returning to a flourishing ecosystem.

Shawn Lessord, Erie Canalkeeper, says that much of the success came from the persistence of a small group of committed citizens, along with the help of the renowned environmental activist Erin Brockovich. "Erin's notoriety helped move along the cleanup process and make the responsible parties aware of just how serious a situation this was," says Lessord.



John Lessord, of Erie Canalkeeper, and Erin Brockovich celebrate the successful cleanup.

Cape Fear Riverkeeper's Non-Stick Chemical Fight

The North Carolina C8 Working Group, a coalition of environmental, health and safety organizations, including the Waterkeeper Alliance and the Cape Fear Riverkeeper, are challenging DuPont, the world's second-largest chemical manufacturer, to commit to reductions in the production of the chemical C8 at their facility in Fayetteville, NC.

Ammonium perfluorooctanoate or C8, is a processing aid used to make Teflon® non-stick cookware and other water, oil and solvent-resistant products and materials. Because of its durability, the chemical is extremely persistent in the environment and in human bodies, and is a likely carcinogen. DuPont's Fayetteville facility is the only facility in the nation that still manufactures the chemical. C8 poses a severe threat to the health and safety of the DuPont workers and the community, as well as the adjacent Cape Fear River.

The EPA has set 2015 as the deadline for DuPont to eliminate C8 and all-related chemicals from industrial emissions and consumer products, with a 95 percent reduction by 2010. The C8 Working Group believes, however, that the EPA's deadline is far too long to allow the chemical to enter the environment, and is skeptical that EPA's policy and the lack of strong enforcement will yield results.

Two New Movies Premiere:



CLYDE BUTCHER

Cypress trees on the shore of the Apalachicola River

Apalachicola River: An American Treasure

Apalachicola Riverkeeper and the Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science in Tallahassee will present the premier of "Apalachicola River: An American Treasure" on March 31. The film is a collaboration of four renowned, award-winning Florida artists – filmmaker Elam Stoltzfus, fine-art photographer Clyde Butcher, photojournalist Richard Bickel and musician Sammy

Tedder. The hour-long film follows the Apalachicola River, meandering through Georgia, Alabama and Florida to the port town of Apalachicola on the Gulf of Mexico. The film explores the rich history of the area and captures the faces of the people who live and work along its waterways, including botanists, beekeepers, ecologists, politicians, oystermen and townsfolk. You can view clips from the film and preview some of the photos at <http://www.apalachicolaamericantreasure.com>

The Wabash: Life on the Bright White River

This hour-long documentary film captures the Wabash's power and beauty, and the lives of people living and working on the banks of the Wabash. Produced by Indianapolis Public Television station WFYI it includes a segment on the Wabash Riverkeeper, Rae Schnapp, looking for clues about the identity of those responsible for illegal dumping at a recent De-Trash the Wabash river cleanup. Although it is not the same crystal clear river it was in centuries past, the Wabash is still a jewel of rich bio-diversity, one that people are working hard to protect. For more information, visit <http://www.wfyi.org/wabash.asp>

Mercury Switch Bill Passes In Utah

Mercury switches are used in cars to control interior lights, alarms and other electronic equipment. A new Utah mercury law will force junkyards to remove mercury switches before scrapping cars. The new law is expected to greatly reduce mercury emissions within the Great Salt Lake watershed from the Nucor Steel plant

in Plymouth, Utah (Nucor Steel is one of the state's top mercury emitters). The passage of this law demonstrates how a wide array of interests can work together for common environmental objectives. In this case, representatives from Nucor Steel, recreational hunters and anglers, environmentalists, government agencies and concerned citizens

combined forces to counter auto industry lobbying and facilitate the bill's passage.

Great Salt Lakekeeper would like to thank all of the many concerned citizens who worked for passage of the Utah mercury switch bill. Great Salt Lakekeeper would also like to thank all of the Utah legislators who voted to make the mercury switch collection program law.

And she lived happily ever after...



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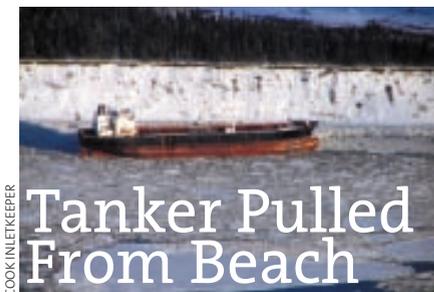
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COOK INLETKEEPER

Tanker Pulled From Beach

Cook Inletkeeper Commends Response; Calls for Better Safeguards

On February 2, a tanker carrying five million gallons of oil ran aground when extreme ice and tides ripped it from its mooring at the Tesoro Refinery loading dock in Anchorage, Alaska, spilling approximately 80 gallons of oil.

Unlike other U.S. waterbodies, such as Prince William Sound and Puget Sound, laden tankers are permitted to ply Cook Inlet – even during extreme ice events – without the aid of tug boats. This grounding is just one of many incidents where heavy ice and sea conditions caused spills, accidents, injuries and property damage. For the past decade, Cook Inletkeeper and other groups have called for tug assist vessels and other safeguards in Cook Inlet.

“Now is the time to adopt new legislation that will ensure Cook Inlet fisheries and the communities they support are protected from the heightened risk of oil spills during heavy ice conditions,” said Lois Epstein, Senior Engineer and Oil & Gas Industry Specialist for Inletkeeper.

Apparent shortcomings in the operation raised many questions. Why didn’t the Coast Guard close loading and unloading operations due to the extreme ice and tide conditions? And, if tug assist vessels were not present, why weren’t the tanker engines running during loading to ensure that the ship remained under control if ice floes separated the vessel from its mooring?

“We’ll need to breakdown all phases of the response to understand why this occurred under the Coast Guard’s “extreme ice rules,” and why full response capabilities were not available within the crucial first 24 hours of the incident,” said Cook Inletkeeper Bob Shavelson.

The powerless 601-foot tanker *Seabulk Pride* drifted half a mile before running aground in the heart of Cook Inlet’s salmon fisheries. Fortunately, the tanker had double hulls – supported by conservationists but opposed by shipper and oil corporations in the wake of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill – which successfully contained the oil cargo.

Michigan Cherry Producer Busted

In response to pressure from Grand Traverse Baykeeper, local residents, non-governmental organizations and its own findings, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality filed a civil suit against Williamsburg Receiving and Storage (WRS), a maraschino cherry-processing company, for violating the Natural Resource and Environmental Protection act and an earlier consent agreement.

Wastewater from the cherry processing contains high levels of biological oxygen demand and chloride. WRS illegally discharged this wastewater into areas around its property, killing trees, vegetation and contaminating groundwater, and sending a putrid smell through the area.

Concern culminated in November when a storage lagoon broke, sending several hundred thousand gallons of untreated wastewater into the stormwater collection system, a roadside ditch and Petobego Marsh, which drains into Grand Traverse Bay. Grand Traverse Baykeeper, residents and community groups sent strongly worded letters, emails and telephone calls to the Michigan Attorney General urging that enforcement action be taken. Attorney General Mike Cox filed the suit on February 6, 2006.

WRS has a history of environmental violations; thus, Grand Traverse Baykeeper will continue to monitor developments in the case to ensure the action will protect the integrity of the Petobego wetlands and the quality of life of its neighbors.

Baykeeper and California to Tackle the Toxic Legacy of Empire Mine

On January 13, the Deltakeeper Chapter of Baykeeper and the California Department of Parks and Recreation agreed to prevent 100-year-old toxic waste at Empire Mine State Historic Park from continuing to pollute nearby waterways.

Tens of thousands of mines, abandoned since the late 1800s, dot the foothills of ‘gold country.’ The Empire Mine in Grass Valley operated for 106 years producing 175 tons of gold. The state purchased the 800 acre park and the toxic waste from a century of mining. Stormwater washes mercury, arsenic, cadmium, lead and other pollutants into area waterways. “The California Gold Rush left us a tragic legacy,” says Deltakeeper Carrie McNeil.

The court-enforced agreement requires that the agency prevents contaminated stormwater from entering nearby tributary Little Wolf Creek, monitors discharges from the mine and remediates hazardous mine tailings and sediments at the park. They will also address toxic discharge from the Magenta Drain, which drains some of the 300 miles of abandoned mine shafts at the park.

“For the sake of our neighbors and wildlife that rely on fish, we cannot afford to ignore the toxic legacy of our abandoned mines, says McNeil. “It is my hope that the state will now focus sufficient resources statewide, as they are at Empire Mine, to address this problem.”

Altamaha Riverkeeper Volunteer Wendell Berryhill Honored

Budweiser’s 2006 Conservationist of the Year

Wendell Berryhill of Cochran, Georgia, was honored in February as Conservationist of the Year at the annual Budweiser Outdoors press reception during the Shooting, Hunting, and Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show.

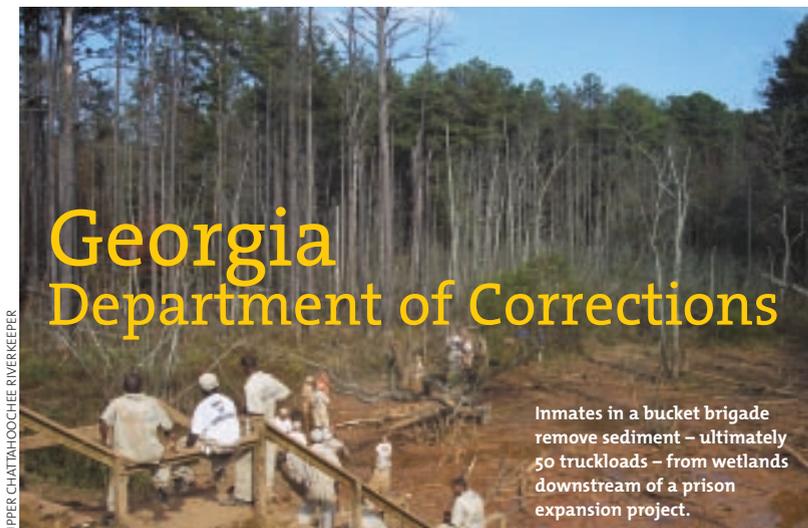
Along with the title came \$50,000 from Budweiser and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for the conservation group of his choice. “It is quite an honor to be named Conservationist of the Year,” said Berryhill “The best part is being able to give the money to the Altamaha Riverkeeper so that it can be used to protect our watershed.”

“As our first volunteer Wendell has actively investigated water pollution problems by conducting field research and collecting water samples at hundreds of sites,” said James Holland, Altamaha Riverkeeper. “His boating skills have helped us navigate the watershed and his angling skills have aided in documenting aquatic species impacted by pollution. These investigations have raised public awareness and protect our watershed.”



ALTAMAHA RIVERKEEPER

Wendell Berryhill accepts honors from Anheuser-Busch representative Bob Scheetz in Las Vegas.



UPPER CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVERKEEPER

Georgia Department of Corrections

Inmates in a bucket brigade remove sediment – ultimately 50 truckloads – from wetlands downstream of a prison expansion project.

Federal Judge Rules for Ventura Coastkeeper

California Failed to Meet Clean Air Act Standards for Pesticides

A federal judge ruled on February 22 that the state Department of Pesticide Regulation, the Air Resources Board and the California Environmental Protection Agency violated the Clean Air Act when they decided nine years ago that no regulations were necessary to cut smog forming compounds in farm and commercial pesticides. The lawsuit was filed by the Ventura Coastkeeper and other advocacy groups.

In 1994, the agencies were required by the U.S. EPA to adopt regulations that would cut emissions from their 1990 levels by 20 percent in five California air basins, including San Joaquin Valley, Sacramento and Ventura. Instead, they asked pesticides manufacturers to reformulate products to reduce the toxic ozone-depleting emissions, according to the ruling.

“The agencies mandated to protect our health manipulated the numbers so they wouldn’t have to abide by regulations; they were supposed to meet reduction goals, but they cheated the process,” says Mati Waiya, Executive Director of Wishtoyo Foundation and the Ventura Coastkeeper.

U.S. District Judge Lawrence Karlton’s decision means that the Ventura Coastkeeper and the co-plaintiffs – Community and Children’s Advocates Against Pesticide Poisoning, El Comité Para el Bienestar de Earlimart and the Association of Irrigated Residents – will meet with the state to discuss possible remedies for pesticides pollution that has compromised air quality and caused illnesses in California communities.

In fall 2004, Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper received a call from a concerned resident in South Fulton County, Georgia. The adjacent Georgia Department of Corrections detention facility was allowing sediment-laden stormwater to flow into downstream wetlands and lakes.

Upon investigation, Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper found that Corrections workers had stripped a forested hillside, piped a stream without a permit and failed to stop mud and silt from filling wetlands and lakes that drain into the Chattahoochee River. When it became clear in April 2005 that the agency was not going to satisfactorily correct the problems, Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper filed a federal lawsuit for violations of the Clean Water Act.

In October 2005, Department of Corrections agreed to remove, by hand, sediment from the impacted wetlands and plant 225 large trees, thousands of native seedlings and 150 medium-size trees and shrubs, and guarantee their viability for a year. They also agreed to pursue a conservation easement to permanently protect approximately nine acres of the site from any future development.

The settlement provides substantial benefits for the affected wetlands and lakes, the neighborhood and the Chattahoochee River watershed as a whole. Since the agreement, Corrections officials have been very proactive and responsive at the site, and have made substantial progress in implementing the terms of the agreement.

GE Spent \$65M to Dodge Cleaning Up Hudson PCBs



Jeffrey R. Immelt is Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of General Electric

General Electric spent \$65 million in public relations, legal and lobbying costs to avoid cleaning up PCBs from the Hudson River, says a recent report released by GE in response to pressure from the Tri-State Coalition for Responsible Investment.

Between 1947 and 1977, General Electric dumped an estimated 1.3 million pounds of PCBs into the upper Hudson. The PCBs are now found in sediment, water, wildlife and people throughout the Hudson River ecosystem as far south as the New York Harbor. In 2002, the U.S. EPA ordered GE to clean up the PCBs. But GE has been delaying the process since 2005, when the dredging was to begin. Instead, GE’s money and time has gone towards perpetuating the myth that the

PCBs are encrusted in a layer of sediment, and therefore pose no risk to the river ecosystem or to the people who fish, swim and drink from the water.

GE waged a massive public relations, legal and lobbying campaign to avoid dredging. They produced infomercials on the “dangers” of dredging, started phony websites and planted “no dredging” road signs around the area. They challenged the constitutionality of the Superfund law, but lost, and are currently suing the government to prevent enforcement of the law. They continue to lobby through trade associations.

“But for a company that makes profits of at least \$4 billion each quarter, why not pay their dues?” says Robert Goldstein, senior attorney at Riverkeeper.

Study Confirms Cancer in South River Fish

On January 24, 2006, a joint U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and South Riverkeeper study confirmed suspicions that red lip growths on catfish from Maryland's South River are a form of skin cancer. Nineteen of 30 brown bullhead catfish collected last year from the South River near Annapolis, MD, were found to have cancer.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reports, "In studies conducted over the past 10 years, the Service linked the types of tumors found in bullheads with a class of chemicals known as polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons. Petroleum, coal and other fossil fuels contain [these chemicals]. They enter rivers through water runoff and build up in sediments where bullheads live. Service biologists found high concentrations of these compounds in areas of the Chesapeake watershed that also had a high incidence of tumors in bullheads."

Drew Koslow, South Riverkeeper, has already assembled a technical committee to take more samples from the sediment and fish in the South River to determine what is causing the cancer. This knowledge will help target possible sources of concern, such as nearby highways and dump sites.

H₂OPI Hopi to Mexico City Run Gathers Steam

Black Mesa Trust (home of the Black Mesa Waterkeeper) is pleased to announce that the 22-member All-Pueblo Council of New Mexico passed a resolution endorsing the Trust's planned Hopi to Mexico City Run scheduled for March 2006. Long-distance Hopi runners, with runners from other Southwestern tribes and nations, will carry sacred messages and teachings of water to the Fourth World Water Forum in Mexico City, some 2,000 miles from Hopi.

In its Resolution, the All-Pueblo Council recognizes the impending worldwide water crisis, including the fact that by 2050 an estimated six billion people will experience water scarcity and affirms the duty of indigenous peoples to safeguard Earth and share teachings and knowledge with other people.

In addition to delivering sacred messages and related lessons of traditional science which recognize all waters as comprising a singular life-sustaining system, the Mexico Run will bring critical information to Native and non-Native peoples living along the route, renew Hopi traditions and ceremonies of distance running, reaffirm Hopi clan



BLACK MESA WATERKEEPER

origins and ties to the peoples of central Mexico and re-establish collaborative efforts of respect among Southwestern tribes.

The Run will also recognize and honor 19 Hopi leaders, who in 1890 were sent in chains to Alcatraz by the U.S. government as punishment for "seditious acts." The Hopi leaders believed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo guaranteed them full rights as U.S. citizens, including the right to their land and water, the First Amendment right to worship and be free from religious persecution and the right to educate their children in their own way. The Hopi runners will honor them as they travel to Mexico, carrying messages of peace and respect for water.

The run is undertaken in conjunction with Black Mesa Trust's Decade of Water observances and will serve to celebrate the Black Mesa Trust's successful grassroots campaign to stop Peabody Western Coal from pumping pristine N-aquifer water to slurry coal from the Black Mesa Mine to Mohave Generating Station in Laughlin, NV. The slurry pipeline is set to shut down at the end of this year.

Supremes to Decide Fate of Waters Protected By the Clean Water Act: Rapanos v. United States & Carabell v. United States

The U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments on February 21 in two of the most important cases in the 34-year history of the Clean Water Act (CWA). The Court chose to take up two Clean Water Act cases that question the reach of federal law in protecting tributary streams and their adjacent wetlands.

John Rapanos, a Michigan farmer, was given a prison sentence and \$13 million in fines after he was convicted of illegally destroying 54 acres of wetlands between 1988 and 1997. Both lower courts ruled against Rapanos, holding that his activities at the sites were prohibited by the Clean Water Act and held that the federal government maintained regulatory authority under the CWA over wetlands.

Developer Carabell sought permission to fill a wetland to build a condominium complex. A ditch constructed during excavation for the condominium created a berm

that sometimes overflowed with water. The ditch connects with a drain at the corner of the property, and the drain flows into a creek, which flows into Lake St. Clair – a 'navigable' waterway. Lower courts found that a wetland separated by a berm or other man-made barrier from a tributary remains 'adjacent' to that tributary, and thus the Clean Water Act's protections apply.

In their appeal on behalf of both defendants, the Pacific Legal Foundation – a conservative legal think tank – is asking the Court to either limit the reach of the Clean Water Act to true navigable waters or to declare that federal regulators overstepped their constitutional authority. The Court will be asked to clarify whether Congress has authority to regulate wetlands on private property. Congress' authority over these waters is derived from the Commerce Clause of the Constitution.

Loss of Clean Water Act safeguards for these waters would remove federal limits on pollution in millions of acres of valuable wetlands and thousands of stream miles that have been protected since the Clean Water Act's passage in 1972.

An impressive array of public officials, hunting and fishing advocacy groups, scientists and environmental groups, including Waterkeeper Alliance, filed 'friend-of-the-court' briefs urging the Court to maintain the longstanding protections offered by the Clean Water Act. Members of Congress, four former U.S. EPA Administrators and the Attorneys General of 34 states and the District of Columbia expressed strong support of the Clean Water Act's core safeguard: the requirement to obtain a permit before discharging pollutants into waters of the United States.

The court is likely to issue its decision sometime in May or June.

SPRING GARDENERS: Spread the Word About **CYPRESS**



RICK DOVE

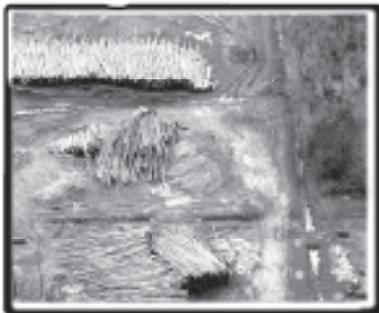
Clear-cutting of cypress forest for garden mulch destroys vital wetlands that stabilize Louisiana's coast against the impacts of hurricanes. At a time when Louisiana is asking the nation to invest billions to save its coastline, it is allowing cypress forests to be ground into bags of mulch that are cleverly marketed at garden supply stores.

Superior mulch? It's a myth.

Only 'heartwood' from mature cypress trees is rot and termite resistant. Mulch from the young trees being clear-cut across Louisiana to feed the growing cypress mulch industry does not have these qualities.

A University of Florida study confirmed that cypress mulch isn't any better than pine bark or needles/pine straw (even leaf litter.) Pine bark and needles are byproducts of the pine lumber industry, which harvests pine trees from commercial plantations, not critical coastal wetlands.

Why kill a tree to grow a flower?
SAY NO TO CYPRESS MULCH



ILLEGALLY CUT CYPRESS FUELS MULCH INDUSTRY

Stacy Sauce and Dean Wilson,
Atchafalaya Basinkeeper,
with Aaron Sanger, ForestEthics
Photos by Rick Dove

Ancient bald cypress once covered much of southern Louisiana, towering 120 feet tall and holding the old growth forest in perpetual darkness. At the turn of the 20th century cypress logging was one of the biggest industries in the state. And by the 1920's there were no significant cypress stands left and the industry disappeared. Much of the majestic delta forest did not regenerate.

Where cypress did grow back, the forest's biodiversity and productivity is amazing. The Atchafalaya Basin is home to 300 species of birds and is visited by 40 percent of the migratory birds in North America. The area also boasts a rich cultural heritage – this is Cajun country.

Today's cypress are 100-years-old on average, still too small for timber. It would take up to a hundred more years for the trees to reach lumber harvesting size in the Atchafalaya Basin. It would take several hundred years for them to grow to their former size. Cypress mulch allows landowners to cash in their cypress now, but this means the end for the cypress forest.

Gone Forever

A scientific panel convened by the Governor estimated that 70 to 80 percent of Louisiana's cypress forest will never grow back if cut – even if artificially planted – because of changed water levels, invasive species and other stresses.

Florida to Louisiana

The cypress mulch industry is moving to Louisiana as it exhausts Florida's cypress swamps and as the public there catches on – some Florida municipalities have even banned cypress mulch. Cypress swamps along the entire southern U.S. coast are at risk from this industry.

Certified Sustainable?

There is no credible system of environmental certification for wood products in Louisiana. Nothing prevents producers from slapping an 'environmentally friendly' message on their bag and claiming the sustainability of their product. While cypress was historically cut for lumber, and mulch collected as a byproduct, today whole cypress trees are ground up into garden mulch.

Illegal Logging

Much of the logging of cypress in Louisiana is illegal. Loggers claim they do not need a Clean Water Act permit to cut because their activities are "normal silviculture activity" – logging that ensures the trees will grow back. But up to 80 percent of Louisiana forest will never grow back. The Atchafalaya Basinkeeper has documented and reported numerous clear-cutting operations of high-risk cypress stands. U.S. EPA is not enforcing the law.

On the other hand, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is enforcing a section of the River and Harbors Act that protects wetland forest. But members of the Louisiana Congressional delegation are applying enormous pressure to stop the Corps from enforcing the law. U.S. Congressmen Billy Tauzin and Richard Baker sent a letter to the Commander of the Army Corps of Engineers in an attempt to pressure the New Orleans District, to reverse his decisions to enforce the law. Waterkeeper Alliance commends the Army Corps in New Orleans for standing tall against attempts to prevent it from doing its job.

Senator David Vitter proposed an amendment to change the law and take away the Corps' ability to regulate logging of critical wetlands, swamps and bottomland hardwoods. Atchafalaya Basinkeeper, in coalition with others, rallied support to defeat the rider.

Liquidation: habitat and flood protection converted for quick cash.





Irreplaceable ancient forest

An extensive levee system in the Atchafalaya basin keeps water levels high, preventing cypress seeds from germinating and slowing the growth of existing trees.

Atchafalaya Basinkeeper Has Made Progress, Needs Your Help to Stop Cypress Logging

With the growing recognition of this enormous threat, Louisiana groups are organizing their efforts to stop cypress logging. Basinkeeper patrols have halted the illegal clearing of thousands of acres of cypress forest and forced timber interests into increasingly desperate means to circumvent the law.

But a national effort is needed to close this market. Gardeners and retailers must understand how their decisions are connected to the destruction of the coastal forest that protects Louisianans.

Expression of public outrage will impact the policies of large companies. In 1999, after two years of protests, Home Depot adopted a policy to eliminate wood products from endangered areas. Lowe's and others soon followed suit. From 2002 through 2004, a dozen large North American companies changed their policies regarding Chilean wood in response to a public campaign led by ForestEthics.

It's time to stop mulching our natural heritage. 



Whole trees ground into mulch. Entire forests mulched by the acre.

Join Atchafalaya Basinkeeper, Lower Mississippi Riverkeeper and Waterkeeper Alliance to stop the trade in our endangered cypress forest. Visit www.waterkeeper.org for more information.

WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE

Resolves Smithfield Case

Nation's Largest Hog Producer to Address Pollution at 275 North Carolina Hog Facilities

By Jeffrey Odefey, Waterkeeper Alliance
Photos by Rick Dove



From its headwaters near Durham to New Bern,

where it empties into the Atlantic, the Neuse River journeys through some of the most concentrated hog raising country in the nation. According to the State of North Carolina, the river carries nearly 4,000 tons of nutrients each year, much of it from sprayfields where giant industrial hog facilities apply millions of gallons of liquid manure. This overload of nutrients chokes stretches of the river with algae, causes regular fish kills and has decimated a once vibrant fishery. Rural North Carolinians have memories of their favorite swimming holes and fishing spots, but the places themselves are long gone.

In the spring of 2000, Waterkeeper Alliance, Neuse Riverkeeper and its parent organization the Neuse River Foundation joined together to file lawsuits against a pair of giant hog facilities that were polluting the Neuse River. At the time, these facilities were operated by Murphy Farms, but were acquired by Smithfield Foods during the course of the case.

After five years of litigation and negotiations, including a motion to dismiss ruling in our favor that sets a helpful precedent for future lawsuits, we reached a settlement that resolved the case before the actual trial. The settlement agreement is a landmark in our efforts to enhance environmental protections for North Carolina's waters. Expanding beyond the two facilities named in the original lawsuit, the agreement covers every one of the swine production facilities in North Carolina owned by Murphy-Brown, Smithfield's hog production subsidiary – more than 275 facilities in all.

The settlement calls for Murphy-Brown to develop and implement a computerized weather alert system that will send “red flag” warnings to each of its facilities, prohibiting them from spraying liquid hog waste onto fields when a rainstorm is imminent or predicted. This requirement will dramatically reduce the chances that the nutrients and pathogens contained in swine manure will be washed into nearby streams and rivers. Murphy-Brown will also install automatic shut-off devices that will stop their spray guns on windy days. High winds tend to “aerosolize” liquid manure



Photographer and plaintiff Rick Dove dons biohazard suit to avoid phistheria while sampling in the Neuse River.



Waste from lagoon is sprayed onto fields



Hog sheds and waste "lagoon" – note the nozzles aerating the waste, sharing the wealth with neighbors by releasing noxious odors and air pollution.

as it leaves these sprayers, sending mists of waste into nearby ditches and streams.

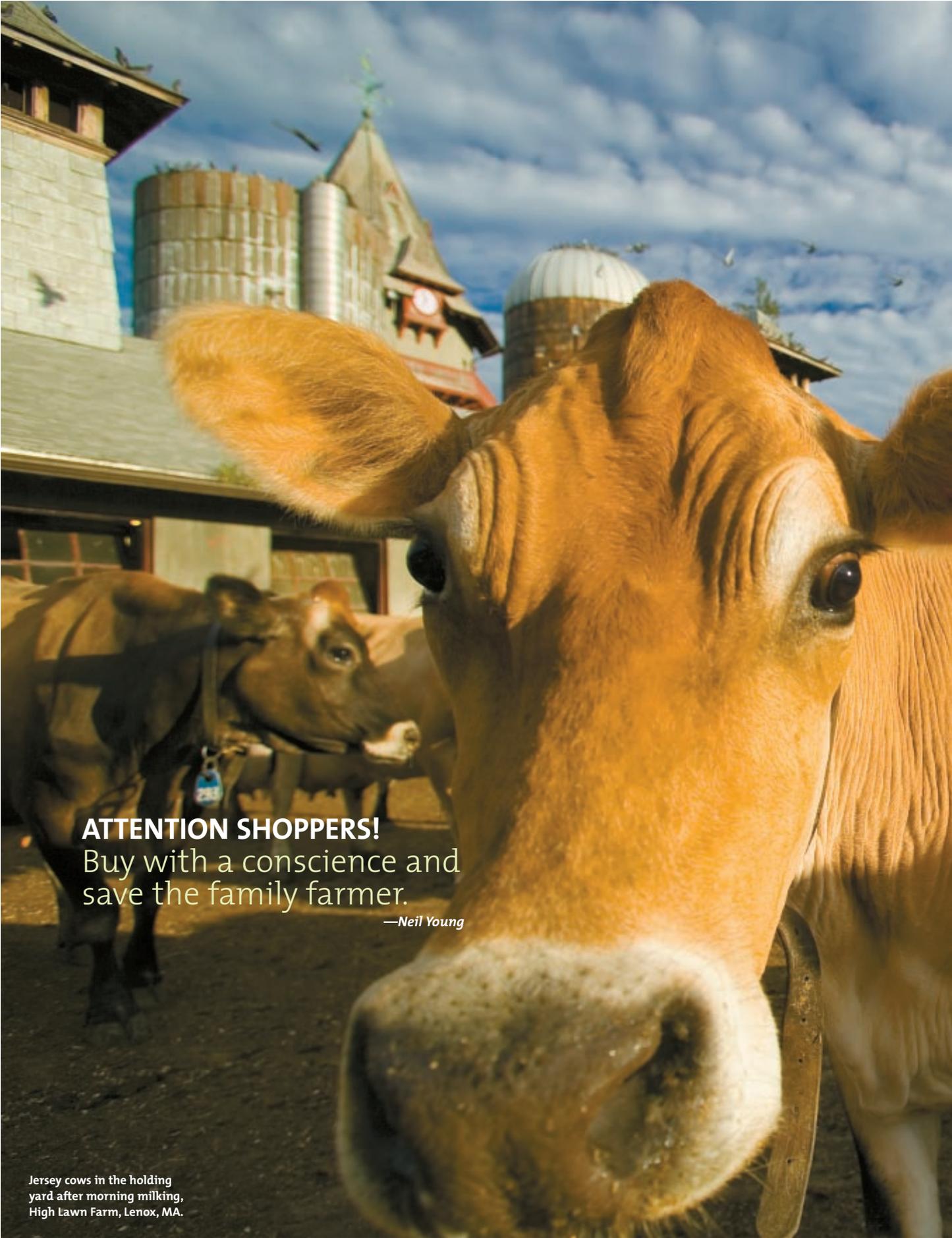
The agreement also contains several long-term programs that will help us better understand the impacts of swine waste application on North Carolina's waters, and to improve farming practices to create better protections for these streams and rivers. An independent consultant will conduct a risk-analysis of all Murphy-Brown facilities to identify ones that may be polluting groundwater with nitrogen, bacteria, or other contaminants. If this analysis identifies any facilities that pose a risk to human health or the environments, Murphy-

Brown is required to take any necessary steps to solve the problem.

Another independent consultant will conduct a survey of runoff leaving Murphy-Brown's fields after rainstorms. This may be the first and most thorough study of this source of water pollution in the State of North Carolina. In addition to expanding our understanding of the potential that sprayfields have to pollute streams and rivers, this study will help guide a further effort to enhance environmental management practices at all Murphy-Brown owned facilities. Under this program, Murphy-Brown has agreed to spend \$1.2 million to

upgrade setbacks, buffers, wetlands and other practices that are intended to keep pollution from reaching surface waters.

Waterkeeper Alliance is very pleased with this result. Our settlement expands environmental protections at hundreds of swine operations. It also sets a new standard for environmental performance at similar facilities, whether in North Carolina or across the nation. In the coming months and years, our campaign will focus on extending this success to other operators, ensuring enhanced protection and water quality improvement in watersheds around the nation. **WK**



ATTENTION SHOPPERS!
Buy with a conscience and
save the family farmer.

—Neil Young

Jersey cows in the holding
yard after morning milking,
High Lawn Farm, Lenox, MA.

JOHN HOUSTON



THE Good Food MOVEMENT

Chase Farm and
Farm Stand,
Victor, NY.

Securing the Future of Family Farms and the Environment

JASON HOUSTON

By Willie Nelson

As one of the founders of Farm Aid, I have watched with admiration and a good amount of satisfaction the growth of what many now call the “Good Food movement” – the growing interest in and demand for organic, humanely-raised and family farm-identified food that is transforming the way America grows its food and how our food gets to our tables.

While it might seem obvious to many, good food comes from farms with healthy soil and clean water. I’ve always believed that the most important people on the planet are the ones who plant the seeds and care for the soil where they grow. As the stewards of the land, family farmers are the foundation of this movement, as well as its guarantor.

No one can say they planted the original seed that gave rise to this movement, but many can claim they have helped nurture and cultivate its growth. Farm Aid’s vision for America is to have many family farmers on the land – a vision born out of our strong conviction that those who grow our food and care for the land and water are of vital national importance; that farmers and their fields are the fabric that holds our country together.

Many have asked me, “What is the Good Food movement?”

The Good Food movement isn’t just about good and delicious food – although this is certainly one of its greatest achievements. The Good Food move-

PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE INC.



Farm Aid board members Dave Matthews, Willie Nelson, Neil Young and John Mellencamp.

ment is at the center of some of the most important issues and debates that will define American society for years to come: issues like stewardship of our soil and water, local and democratic control of decisionmaking and land use, health and nutrition and a thriving and sustainable food and farm economy needed to feed and fuel America.

While good, healthy, fresh food from family farms is the most visible product of the movement that each of us can enjoy, the movement stands for much more. It represents the interests of all who care about the future of this land, its resources and its people. As members of this movement and as eaters, the food we choose connects us directly to those who produced it and to the many reasons why it is in our own interests to see this movement flourish.

Natural resources

The future of safe and sound food production depends on taking care of the most basic resources needed to grow food: soil and water. Family farmers eat the food they grow in their fields and drink the water from their wells. They know that they have to take care of the soil and water in order to pass on the promise of the farm's bounty to the next generation. Sustainable family farms are the alternative to the large-scale industrial farms that erode our soil and pollute our waterways. Excessive chemicals, soil erosion, runoff from hog factories laced with hormones and antibiotics and the growing threats of widespread genetic contamination from genetically engineered crops threaten our capacity to grow the food we need to feed our country. By supporting family farms through the Good Food movement, we are all helping to ensure that our children and our children's children inherit a healthy and resilient environment.

Health and nutrition

Good food leads to good nutrition and good

health. There's no comparison between fresh, organic food at the local farmers market and the mass-produced, additive-laden, highly processed stuff that corporations would have us think is real food. The rising epidemics of childhood obesity and diabetes are clearly linked to the highly processed food peddled to kids and served in school cafeterias. The Good Food movement is helping to turn this situation around, bringing farm-fresh food grown by local farmers into school lunch programs. A diet of fresh, wholesome food will improve kids' health and provide new markets for family farmers.

Strong local economies

Family farms are the engines for economic vitality, in both rural communities as well as urban areas that benefit from jobs created by vibrant local and regional food systems. When family farms thrive, so do main street businesses. The Good Food movement is creating new markets and opportunities that help farmers stay on their land and provides hope for new and young farmers to make farming their life. A growing number of those now participating in direct farm-to-consumer marketing are first generation farmers! The more we keep farming local, the stronger the community. Participating in local and regional food and farm markets helps keep food dollars circulating in the local economy – rather than increasing the profits of distant corporations that suck the dollars and the life out of our communities.

Energy

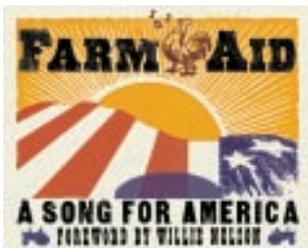
Many Americans are becoming aware of the startling and troubling fact about our food system known as "food miles." On average, each food item travels 1,500 miles before arriving to our tables. It makes little sense to burn fossil fuels that pollute the environment to ship apples across the country and around the world when local growers can



Willie Nelson

PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE INC.

Family farms are the engines for economic vitality, in both rural communities as well as urban areas that benefit from jobs created by vibrant local and regional food systems.



FARM AID: A Song for America chronicles the concerts that galvanized a grassroots movement for the independent family farm. Through hundreds of photographs, readers are given a front row seat to performances by the vast and varied roster of Farm Aid performers – from Arlo Guthrie and Bob Dylan to Eddie Van Halen, Phish and Sheryl Crow. Essays by such diverse writers as Eric Schlosser, Michael Pollan, Wendell Berry, Howard Zinn, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Barbara Kingsolver and Ruth Reichl, as well as interviews, song lyrics and poems create a tapestry chronicling the growth of the Good Food movement.

provide us with fresh apples. By strengthening local food production, the Good Food movement is reducing the ecological footprint of American agriculture.

Keeping farmers on their land also enables them to use their know-how and ingenuity to help us achieve more energy independence. Farmers are key to our energy future – growers and harvesters of renewable energy that will power our vehicles and heat our homes. Farm Aid is working to link the Good Food and Green Energy movements as two sides of the family farm-centered agriculture system we envision.

Animal Welfare

The Good Food movement increases the demand for humanely-raised beef, pork and poultry products by family farms. As opposed to the factory livestock farms, where thousands of animals are raised under one roof and never see the light of day their entire lives, family farm-raised animals are fed natural diets and allowed to live in healthy conditions with access to open pastures.

Democracy

I believe keeping family farmers on the land is inextricably linked to a strong and thriving democracy. Thomas Jefferson wrote, “cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens...they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interests by the most lasting bonds.” Family farmers are the backbone not only of a strong economy; they are also the defenders of local, democratic decisionmaking. In communities across farm country, large and powerful food corporations are working their political connections at the State House and on Capitol Hill to change local and state laws to take local control and decisionmaking away from communities, stripping local communities of their democratic right of self-determination. In many examples, corporations are working to change state laws so that communities cannot block the construction of hog factories.

We live in a time when all of us must take our responsibility to exercise our democratic rights seriously – before it’s too late. Family farmers are

standing up for their rights – and they’re standing up for our rights too. The Good Food movement is about democracy at the grassroots level – building decentralized, sustainable and locally controlled farm and food economies.

Farm Fresh Food

And yes, the Good Food movement is about better food. Growing up in Texas, I learned at an early age the difference between a fresh tomato, a fresh farm egg and the stuff most other people eat and think is food. There is just no way to compare a family-raised ham to a ham from a factory farm, or fresh strawberries to berries shipped thousands of miles. To understand this, you have to taste it yourself. The next time you drive by your local farmers market, stop by and pick up some farm-fresh food. I guarantee you won’t regret the flavor and freshness of food from the family farm.

Growing the Movement

If you enjoy good food and care about the issues behind this movement, I invite you to take action today to ensure the future of family farming and your right to choose food from family farms. The most direct and regular action you can take is to search out and buy as much of your food directly from farm families in your area. Our food choices today shape tomorrow’s agriculture. Buying organic milk today strengthens tomorrow’s outlook for organic dairy farmers. Think about one food item that you can buy from local farmers and commit to buying it. These small and simple actions are building the Good Food movement and changing American agriculture for the better.

The other opportunity we have to further this movement is the upcoming debate over the next Farm Bill. If you value good food from family farms, call your legislator and demand a Farm Bill that strengthens local and regional food economies. If you care about local and democratic control, demand a Farm Bill that curbs the power of factory farms and the influence of lobbyists for large food corporations. If you care about health and nutrition for children, demand a Farm Bill that puts more fresh, wholesome food in our schools. If you want your children and grandchildren to enjoy the benefits of a clean environment, demand a Farm Bill that increases protection of our natural resources by helping farmers transition to organic and more sustainable growing methods. If you eat you have a stake in the next Farm Bill. Don’t wait – call today! The future of good food depends on you. **WVK**

THE CASE FOR COMPASSIONATE CONSERVATISM – for Animals

By Matthew Scully

A few years ago, I began a book about cruelty to animals and about factory farming in particular; problems that had been in the back of my mind for a long while. At the time, I viewed factory farming as one of the lesser problems facing humanity – a small wrong on the grand scale of good and evil. By the time I finished the book, I had come to view the abuses of industrial farming as a serious moral problem, a truly rotten business. Little wrongs, when left unattended, can grow and spread to become grave wrongs, and precisely this had happened on our factory farms.

The result of these ruminations was *Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy*. And though my tome never quite hit the bestseller lists, there ought to be some special literary prize for a work highly recommended in both the Wall Street Journal and Vegetarian Teen. When you enjoy the accolades of PETA, George Will and Policy Review, Deepak Chopra and Gordon Liddy, Peter Singer and Charles Colson, you can at least take comfort in the diversity of your readership.

The book provides an occasion for fellow conservatives to examine animal cruelty issues on the merits. Conservatives have a way of dismissing the subject, in part based on their dislike of certain animal-rights groups. It is assumed that animal-protection causes are a project of the Left, and that the proper conservative position is to stand warily and firmly against them.

I had a hunch that the problem was largely one of presentation and that if fellow conservatives saw their own principles applied to animal-welfare issues, they would find plenty of reasons to be appalled and support reasonable remedies. Conservatives, after all, aren't shy about discouraging on moral standards or reluctant to translate



COURTESY MATTHEW SCULLY

the most basic of these into law. Setting aside the distracting rhetoric of animal rights, that's usually what these questions come down to: *What moral standards should guide us in our treatment of animals, and when must those standards be applied in law?*

We don't need novel theories of rights to do this. The usual distinctions that conservatives draw between moderation and excess, freedom and license, moral goods and material goods, rightful power and the abuse of power, will all do just fine. Treating animals decently is like most obligations we face, somewhere between the most and the least important, a modest but essential requirement to living with integrity.

Matthew Scully is the author of "Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy." Scully served for five years, until August 2004, as special assistant to the president and deputy director of presidential speechwriting and was part of the team that drafted every major speech of the first term. He is pictured here, first on the left, with President Bush and the rest of the speechwriting team preparing the 2003 State of the Union address. This essay is adapted from a longer version first published in *The American Conservative* (www.amconmag.com).

good
FOOD

Wayne Burkhart
preparing a cow for
milking at Gould Farm,
Monterrey, MA.

A certain moral relativism runs through the arguments of those hostile or indifferent to animal welfare – as if animals can be of value only for our sake. In practice, this outlook leaves each person to decide for himself when animals rate moral concern. It even allows us to accept or reject established facts about animals, such as their cognitive and emotional capacities and their conscious experience of pain and happiness.

There is a disconnect here: Elsewhere in contemporary debates, conservatives consistently oppose moral relativism by pointing out that, like it or not, we are all dealing with the same set of physiological realities and moral truths. We don't each get to decide the facts of science on a situational basis. We do not each go about bestowing moral value upon things as it pleases us in the moment. We do not decide moral truth at all: We discern it.

Likewise, the great virtue of conservatism is that it begins with a realistic assessment of human motivations. We know man as he is, not only the rational creature, but also, as Socrates told us, the rationalizing creature, with a knack for finding an angle, an excuse and a euphemism. Whether it's the pornographer who thinks himself a free-speech champion or the abortionist who looks in the mirror and sees a reproductive health care services provider, conservatives are familiar with the type.

So we should not be surprised that these very same capacities are at work in the \$125 billion-a-year U.S. livestock industry. The human mind, especially when there is money to be had, can manufacture grand excuses for the exploitation of human beings. How much easier it is for people to excuse the wrongs done to lowly animals. Corporate farmers hardly speak anymore of "raising" animals, with the modicum of personal care that word implies. Animals are now "grown." Barns became "intensive confinement facilities" and the inhabitants "production units."

The result is a world in which billions of birds, cows, pigs and other creatures are locked away, enduring miseries they do not deserve for our convenience and pleasure. We belittle the activists with their radical agenda, scarcely noticing the radical cruelty they seek to redress.

At the Smithfield Foods mass-confinement hog farms I toured in North Carolina, the visitor is greeted by a bedlam of squealing, chain rattling and horrible roaring. Creatures are encased row after row, 400- to 500-pound mammals trapped without relief inside iron crates about six feet long and less than two feet wide. They chew maniacally on bars and chains, as foraging animals will do when denied straw, or engage in stereotypical nest-building with straw that isn't there, or just lie there like broken beings.

Everything about the picture shows bad faith, moral sloth and endless excuse-making. We're told that they're just pigs – or cows or chickens or what-



Production unit? Laying hen on pasture, Moon In the Pond Farm, Sheffield, MA.

JASON HOUSON



Hogs are highly intelligent, social animals. This sow is building a nest of grass.

ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE/WWW.AWIONLINE.ORG



ever – and that only urbanites worry about such things, estranged as they are from the realities of rural life. Actually, all of factory farming proceeds by a massive denial of reality – the reality that animals are living creatures with natures and needs. The very modesty of those needs – their humble desires for straw, soil, sunshine – is the gravest indictment of the men who deny them.

Conservatives are supposed to revere tradition. Factory farming has no traditions. The whole thing is an abandonment of rural values and a betrayal of honorable animal husbandry – to say nothing of veterinary medicine, with its sworn oath to “protect animal health” and “relieve animal suffering.”

For the religious-minded, and Catholics in particular, no less an authority than Pope Benedict XVI has explained the spiritual stakes. Asked recently to weigh in on these very questions, then-Cardinal Ratzinger told German journalist Peter Seewald that animals must be respected as our “companions in creation.” While it is licit to use them for food, “We cannot just do whatever we want with them... This degrading of living creatures to a commodity seems to me, in fact, to contradict the relationship of mutuality that comes across in the Bible.”

If reason and morality are what set human beings apart from animals, then reason and

morality must always guide us in how we treat them. When people say that they like their pork chops, veal or foie gras too much to give them up, reason hears in that the voice of gluttony, willfulness or, at best, moral compliance. What makes a human being human is precisely the ability to understand that the suffering of an animal is more important than the taste of a treat.

Factory farmers assure us that this is an inevitable stage of industrial efficiency. Leave aside the obvious reply that we could all do a lot of things in life more efficiently if we didn’t have to trouble ourselves with ethical restraints. Leave aside, too, the tens of billions of dollars in annual federal subsidies that have helped megafarms undermine small family farms and the decent communities that once surrounded them (and to give us the illusion of cheap products). And never mind the collateral damage to land, water and air that factory farms cause and the billions of dollars it costs taxpayers to clean up after them. Factory farming is a predatory enterprise, absorbing profit and externalizing costs, unnaturally propped up by political influence and government subsidies such as factory-farmed animals are unnaturally sustained by hormones and antibiotics.

So it shouldn’t be surprising that every conservative who reviewed my book conceded that factory farming is a wretched business and a betrayal of human responsibility. And having granted that certain practices are abusive, cruel and wrong, we must be prepared to do something about them.

Americans, conservatives and liberals, need to start by confronting such groups as Smithfield Foods (my candidate for the worst corporation in America in its ruthlessness to people and animals alike), the U.S. National Pork Producers Council (a reliable Republican contributor) and the various think tanks in Washington subsidized by animal-use industries for intellectual cover.

If such matters were ever brought to President Bush’s attention in a serious way, he would find in the details of factory farming many things abhorrent to the Christian heart and to his own kindly instincts. Even if he and other world leaders were to drop into relevant speeches a few of the prohibited words in modern industrial agriculture (cruel, humane, compassionate), instead of endlessly flattering corporate farmers for virtues they lack, that alone would help set reforms in motion.

The law that’s needed would apply to corporate farmers a few simple rules that better men would have been observing all along: We cannot just take from these creatures; we must give them something in return.

We owe them a merciful death and a merciful life. And when human beings cannot do something humanely, without degrading both the creatures and ourselves, then we shouldn’t do it at all. **WK**

Heartland

Sustainable Ag on the Wabash River

By Rae Schnapp, Wabash Riverkeeper, and Tom Healy.

Schnapp holds a Ph.D. from Purdue School of Agriculture.

The Wabash River has the longest undammed stretch of river east of the Mississippi, draining some 24,000 square miles of Indiana, Illinois and Ohio. This region is well known for its agricultural productivity. Yet family farms have been declining steadily over the past few decades as the “get big or get out” mentality became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Farmers who follow this advice take on huge debt to buy big equipment and get more land. Meanwhile, overproduction drives prices down making it difficult to repay loans. But many Indiana farmers are challenging the conventional wisdom that increased production is the best way to increase profits. Their approach to agriculture is based on traditional farming values, a deeper understanding of farm economics and innovation. And a healthy Wabash River is just one of the many benefits of their labor.

The upper half of the river basin was originally a mixture of oak-hickory forests interspersed with tall grass prairies. Native peoples often settled near the prairie-forest margin because that environment offered well-timbered tracts for wood, food and forage, as well as easily cleared and tillable prairie soils. Native Americans relied heavily on maize, beans and squash. These, with mussels, deer and the now extinct wood buffalo, provided an abundant and varied food supply. Permanent settlements were established with populations well over a thousand people.

Euro-American settlers began to drain, clear and plow the prairies and woodlands in the early 19th century for agriculture. Today, much of the watershed is dedicated to row crops or pasture. Remnants of prairie are found only in a few cemeteries. What remains of the forested areas are on the steepest slopes, poorest soils or in floodplains too low and wet for cultivation.

Forest and prairie retain rainwater over a much longer period than cropland, meaning a steadier supply of water for the river. In 1841, renowned artist George Winter, who lived and painted in Logansport wrote, “The river is a clear and rushing stream,

dotted by small islands which threw their images upon the glassy surface.” A few years later, in 1845, Winter wrote that the clearing of the forests had a striking effect on the Wabash – “the beautiful islands... are beginning to wash away under the influence of the greater volume of water that fills the banks and increased current of the river.”

Early residents of the Wabash River valley shipped their timber, corn, wheat, pork, sugar beets, potatoes and flax to New Orleans via flatboats during the spring floods. Another important product of the area was mussels (freshwater clams), gathered in huge quantities to manufacture buttons. By 1908, the Midwest was also producing a half a million dollars worth of freshwater pearls a year. But over-harvesting and waste from growing industrial centers depleted shellfish populations.

In 1828, construction began on a series of canals to link the Wabash to Lake Erie so that goods could be shipped to markets in the east. At 468 miles from Toledo, OH, to Evansville, IN, it was the largest man-made structure in the United States. Canal usage reached its peak in 1850, but the tolls were inadequate to keep it in good repair. In 1854 spring floods damaged the aqueduct and repairs were not justified because 1,300 miles of railroad had already been completed.

While the canal era was short-lived, it had a huge impact on the river. The canals encouraged draining of land that had previously been too wet to cultivate. Nowadays, nearly all of the wetlands in the upper watershed have been drained with agricultural field tiles, buried pipes designed to carry rainwater away and drain fields as quickly as possible in spring. This has created unpredictable flood conditions that make farming precarious in the lower Wabash valley.

Farmers continue to install drainage pipes under farm fields. Antiquated drainage laws treat water as the “common enemy” and upstream communities have far more rights than the downstream communities that experience increased flooding. The entire Wabash watershed is dominated by production of corn and soybean. The cultivation of



Transaction over scallions.

these annual row crops releases nutrients and silt into the river. And the abundance of grain makes the area attractive for animal factories known as concentrated animal feeding operations.

Unsustainable agriculture practices are the major challenge to water quality on the Wabash. Fortunately, an alternative, parallel food system is emerging in the Wabash watershed.

Levi Fisher is a farmer who sells his produce at farmers' markets and serves four Community Supported Agriculture contracts. CSA members subscribe for shares of his harvest, sharing the risk as well as the abundance. “The CSA gives us a more dependable market,” says Levi. “It helps us estimate how much we should plant. Also there is less waste and spoilage because each day's harvest is delivered right away.” Levi does some direct marketing of pasture

pork and chickens. He also hosts field days so his customers can get a first-hand look at his operation. He uses this opportunity to explain that soil and water management are important aspects of his business.

Subscribers say they like the freshness and quality, the personal relationship with the grower, the transparency of the production system and the sense of community with like-minded consumers. They also like the specialty items that Levi grows for them, including raspberries and heirloom tomato varieties.

"Animals need fresh air and exercise just as humans do," says Lisa Stickdorn, who raises beef on pasture. "It is very difficult to find information about how to improve the profitability of a small scale farming operation. All the literature provided by extension agents and USDA is geared toward larger operations. We have learned that the key to increasing profitability is to lower our overhead costs, doing things by hand instead of investing in equipment. We also market directly to discriminating consumers who are willing to pay a bit more for quality and want to support local farmers so corporations don't completely control our food supply."

Lisa's partner Eric Stickdorn adds, "The so-called 'economies of scale' are really based on subsidized grain prices. A bushel of corn sells for less than its production costs. The only reason farmers keep growing corn is because of the price supports. And the low cost of grain is the thing that makes industrial scale confinement operations profitable. Sustainable agriculture and corporate agriculture are not compatible because of health effects associated with living near large confinement operations. We suffer from the sewage fumes when we are out there working in the field; our animals suffer too."

Allen and Judy Hutchison raise and train draft horses. They support a network of

farmers that use horse-drawn equipment to plow and pull farm equipment. With a large dairy next door, they have serious concerns about corporate domination of agriculture. Sustainable agriculture is based on increasing the self-reliance of small farmers and reducing inputs from off the farm such as grain that is harvested elsewhere and fuels.

Dairy owners Dave and Helen Forgey farm on the banks of the Wabash near Logansport, IN. Their farm has fragile sandy soils but they grow great forages. Dave says, "The real secret to successful farming is not to produce more, but to increase the margin of difference between the price and what it costs you to produce it. I do this by having the cows harvest their own feed from April through November. This gives the cows plenty of exercise so they are healthy and deliver calves with no assistance. It reduces my expenses for feed, transportation, equipment, labor and vet bills! I use free inputs like rainwater and sunshine to grow my feed and I utilize every bit of grass."

"We milk 200 cows. They don't produce as much per cow as large confinement operations, but we are able to produce each gallon of milk at a lower cost than those who must either harvest or purchase every pound of grain a cow eats, and then store and deliver feed to the cow on a daily basis." But this is not his grandfather's farm, sustainable does not mean low-tech. To save labor, the Forgeys use radio-transmitting devices to let them know when their cows are in heat. This makes breeding more efficient and ensures that all calves are born within a few weeks of each other so that they are managed more easily.

"Many farmers are expanding because they need to earn more income," Dave explains. "My father installed a confinement system in the 1970s. We did everything Purdue told us to do, but got deeper and deeper

in debt. Now we have abandoned that! A grass-based system is a great way for those entering farming because of the reduced overhead costs. I travel the country telling farmers that there is a lower cost way to produce food but the many farmers still fear that they cannot be profitable unless they produce all they can."

Another way is to increase profitability is to market a premium product that can command a higher price from discriminating consumers. Trader's Point Creamery is a grass-fed organic dairy that sells premium quality dairy products. On the outskirts of Indianapolis, they market milk and yogurt drinks in glass bottles, as well as ice cream and cheeses, directly from their huge barn-turned-dairy bar. David Robb of the Creamery says, "The market for organic products is growing 20 percent each year but the support offered by government funded programs is pitiful." In order to provide their customers a broader selection of natural and organic foods, the Creamery hosts a farmers' market in their dairy bar each Saturday. Customers can buy in-season locally grown vegetables, greens, mushrooms, pasture pork and chicken, as well as their dairy products.

The farmers' market, says Robb, "is a great way to educate consumers. Chefs demonstrate seasonal food preparation. Customers can meet producers and ask questions. It inspires confidence in the food system." Other premium markets include restaurants and caterers. Lali Hess, caterer from Crawfordsville uses locally grown organic food whenever she can. She caters many local functions from the kitchen space she rents at the local 4-H County Fairgrounds.

Steve Bonney, president of the nonprofit group Sustainable Earth, organizes the Midwest Small Farm Conference each year so farmers can network and learn from each other. "A centralized food supply controlled by a few corporations is every bit as much a national security threat as our reliance on foreign oil," says Bonney. "The key to change is to eliminate agricultural subsidies that amount to a kind of corporate welfare system, making the whole system unresponsive to consumer preferences and market forces. Consumers are beginning to realize that eating is not just a matter of conscience, but a political act."

Consumers and farmers alike are beginning to realize that they have choices. Small farms are sometimes disparaged as "hobby farms" serving niche markets, but these niches represent consumer values that are emerging as real market forces that can ultimately tip the balance toward a more sustainable food production system. **WIK**

Choosing Sustainable Seafood

By Lisa Kelly, Development Director,
Hackensack Riverkeeper

Two years ago, Hackensack Riverkeeper ran its first-ever Sustainable SeafoodFest, a benefit that features seafood exclusively from sustainable fisheries. The theme not only drew enthused seafood lovers to support our work, but it spurred countless inquiries and conversations about sustainable seafood.

Sustainable seafood refers to fish and shellfish that is harvested without depleting or permanently damaging the species, other species or the waterway. So when we spend our money on fish for dinner, we can – and should – choose seafood that is “sustainable.” Generally, there are four issues that affect seafood sustainability.

- **Overfishing.** 70 percent of the world’s major fisheries are overfished or on the brink of being overfished, according to the World Wildlife Fund.
- **Bycatch.** Seabirds, marine mammals, turtles and juveniles of the targeted species that are captured in nets or fishing lines are typically discarded dead at sea. An estimated 27 million tons of fish and shellfish, or one-quarter of the global fishery catch, is unintentionally killed each year.
- **Habitat damage.** Trawl nets damage bottom habitat, coral reefs and sediment dwelling species. An area about twice the size of the lower 48 United States is dredged or dragged by bottom trawling vessels annually, often destroying critical fish habitat, according to The Marine Fish Conservation Network.
- **Aquaculture.** Aquaculture is the farming of fish and shellfish. According to the United Nations, about one-quarter of the seafood consumed worldwide is farm-raised. Aquaculture’s environmental impact varies depending on the species. Salmon farms are notorious for discharging untreated waste, uneaten food and antibiotics into surrounding waters. But farms that are contained inland may have minimal impact. Native clam, mussel and oyster farms are also sustainable as shellfish are filter feeders and actually clean the surrounding water.



HACKENSACK RIVERKEEPER

There are several organizations that work diligently to evaluate and monitor fisheries and they publish guides for both industry and consumers to assist in seafood purchasing. Among them are <http://www.thefishlist.org> and <http://www.ecofish.com>.

Hackensack Riverkeeper is extremely fortunate to have Whole Foods Market, a natural and organic foods supermarket chain with 181 stores in North America and the United Kingdom, as a supporter. Whole Foods Market works closely with the Marine Stewardship Council, an international non-profit organization that provides a globally respected certification to fisheries that meet strict, independently reviewed standards of sustainability. Ellie Spray, marketing team leader at the Ridgewood, NJ store, is on Hackensack Riverkeeper’s Board of Trustees and has been integral to planning the annual Sustainable SeafoodFest.

Whole Foods catered the cocktail hour of Hackensack Riverkeeper’s 2005 Sustainable SeafoodFest with sustainable shrimp and salmon, the main course was provided by the hotel where the event was held. Hackensack Riverkeeper had given the hotel’s catering staff a list of acceptable sustainable seafood options for the main course. The chef proposed salmon – but it was from the Atlantic, an unsustainable fishery. (Wild salmon from Alaska is the better, sustainable choice.) Last-minute negotiations with the chef resulted in a delicious – and sustainable – herb-encrusted mahi-mahi.

As Hackensack Riverkeeper learned, if you are committed to sustainable seafood, you have to ask, double-check and, finally, speak with your wallet. Markets respond to consumer demand. Today, sustainable seafood is probably where organic food was ten or 15 years ago. Before long—if we speak up—we’ll be able to choose sustainable seafood as readily as we can buy a quart of organic milk. **WK**

Capt. Bill Sheehan, Hackensack Riverkeeper, with Ellie Spray and Bill Corff of Whole Foods Market, Ridgewood, NJ.



ISTOCK.COM

All fish must now say where they’re from.

As of April 2005, U.S. retailers must provide country-of-origin labels for the seafood they sell, and they must reveal whether the fish or shellfish were raised on a farm or caught in the wild. Vendors will put the information on each package or on signs in their display cases, but consumers must still do their own research and recognize which sources are sustainable fisheries.



Union Square Farmers Market, NYC

The Modern Economics of Food

By Bill Weida, Director, GRACE
Factory Farm Project
Photos by Karen Hudson

Several years ago, a speaker at the “Conference on the Chicken” at Yale University declared the best way to save endangered chicken species was to eat them. Increased demand would then cause increased supply. This applies to all food, not just chicken, and this is the crux of the problem for good food.

The supply of good food – food produced in a socially responsible manner – will increase only when consumers always have a choice between it and the mass-produced, chemical-laden, antibiotic-laced, non-natural food now served in most homes and restaurants. This will require a seamless marketing and distribution network for good food, as well as affordable prices.

The marketing system that gave people access to good food – from independent slaughter-

houses to independent grocers – has been systematically destroyed over the last 40 years. Most attempts to use existing marketing systems to distribute good food by re-labeling – using the term “organic,” for example – have been hijacked by corporate interests. And using niche markets, while a good way to hold out until conditions improve, often leads to a two-tier food system only the wealthy can afford.

The price of good food is currently higher than the price of non-natural food for a number of reasons: producers of non-natural food lower their prices by shifting costs of their air and water pollution to their neighbors, by using antibiotics and genetic modifications in potentially harmful ways, by taking short-cuts on both animal and human health and safety

issues and by exploiting a poor, under-represented and largely immigrant workforce. These practices, not efficiency of production, result in artificially low prices for non-natural food. The real cost of good food is actually less because socially responsible farmers don't shift their costs to taxpayers and society.

Cost shifting should not be tolerated in any sector of our economy. It exists in agriculture because large corporations, fronted by the American Farm Bureau, have convinced our political leaders that theirs is the only valid vision for agriculture. Instead, their vision is anti-capitalist, anti-free market and at its most fundamental level, profoundly destructive of socially responsible farming.

Those who produce food in a socially responsible manner can reclaim the market when the economic advantages given to producers of non-natural food are removed. This requires the following actions:

(a) Cut subsidies to agricultural producers. Most subsidies are given to large producers and they quickly find their way into the coffers of

industrial agriculture. Instead, we should establish price floors that allow socially responsible farmers to produce good food.

(b) Break up corporate agriculture. Most of the world's agriculture is controlled by three huge, vertically integrated corporations. Their control extends all the way from the field to the retail outlet. These companies should be broken up, just as AT&T was.

(c) Stop the non-therapeutic and unnecessary use of antibiotics in animal production. Seventy percent of antibiotics are used to promote growth and more are given to compensate for health problems in concentrated animal facilities. Neither use is justified and both uses degrade our ability to use antibiotics to fight disease in people.

(d) Fully fund and staff all state and national inspection agencies through fees, levied by size, on agricultural operations. Insist all agricultural operations meet the same environmental standards now required in the manufacturing sector and shut down those that don't. Allow local control of all agricultural zoning decisions so state agencies cannot force unwanted agricultural operations down the throats of rural communities.

If we exclude the methods producers of non-natural food use to lower their costs, we can make the price of non-natural food reflect the real costs of its production and consumption.

Producers of good food cannot compete in a market where the price of non-natural food is supported by subsidies. To rebuild a food supply in the U.S. focused on quality, not quantity, and to do it at an affordable price is still possible. All that is required is to stop subsidizing the unhealthy, destructive system we now support. It's up to us. **WK**



BROOKVIEW FARM

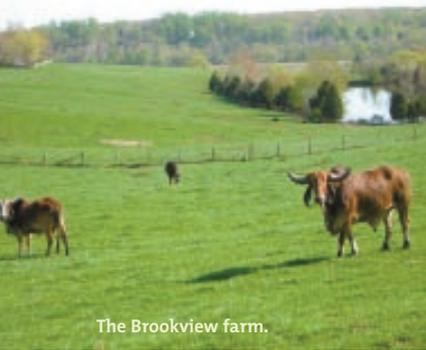
Putting Values into Action

By Jane and Murray Fisher

Our parents are owners, farmers and stewards of Brookview Farm, a beautiful, organic cattle farm just 30 minutes west of Richmond Virginia. The 600-acre farm has two creeks running through gently rolling hills of hardwood forests and open pastureland. These creeks flow south into the James River, which forms our southern border for several miles. The James flows east to Richmond and eventually drains out into the Chesapeake Bay near its mouth to the Atlantic Ocean. Our family has been deeply connected to this land and the water flowing through and from it, and we all believe that everyone has a right to clean air, water and food. Our practices at Brookview Farm put those beliefs into action.

Over a decade ago our parents decided that their lifelong sustainable practices may be marketable. We were approved as a USDA organic farm – a rigorous test proving the absence of any chemicals in the fields or food stream. The farm is also in a conservation easement, ensuring long-term protection from Richmond's encroaching development. Our cattle are fenced out of the streams and we've planted native fruit and nut trees, especially persimmons and oaks.

Everything on the farm is connected to another product: the compost (made from Henrico county leaves) is spread on the fields; the chickens scratch through the fields and distribute



The Brookview farm.

fertilizer, while producing delicious, nutritious eggs; and the cows graze the grass that sprouts up behind the moveable chicken pens. This grass-fattened beef, “Virginia Lean” is lean, healthy, much tastier than feedlot beef and has become our specialty.

Once a week we open our farm to the public and encourage neighbors and customers to come and see firsthand what we do at Brookview. Children run around and collect the eggs from the nests, while asking all sorts of good questions. (“Why does the girl cow have horns? Are there baby chickens in each egg? Will the chicken claw me with her long fingernails?”) Seeing families really enjoy the experience reminds us that education – and connection to the natural world – is another reason we run the farm. There is real value in sharing the farm experience with others, having them learn firsthand where their food comes from.

Brookview owners Sandy and Rossie Fisher both have served on the Board of the James River Association, the host of the James Riverkeeper, and Murray Fisher is a former Waterkeeper Alliance staff member who now holds an honorary seat on the board.



David and Margaret Ann on Snow's Bend of the Black Warrior River, Tuscaloosa County, AL.

NELSON BROOK

Tuscaloosa Chocolata Snow's Bend Farm

By Nelson Brooke, Black Warrior Riverkeeper

Ten miles west of Tuscaloosa, AL, as the crow flies, Snow's Bend Farm sits on a large bend in the Black Warrior River. The area's rich bottomland soil, “Tuscaloosa Chocolata,” is composed of fine silt and large amounts of organic matter deposited over millennia in flood events. Alabama's mild climate and the soil's fertility have made the farm an excellent agricultural site since prehistoric times – as evidenced by a mound and many artifacts. The farm was used by the Mississippian people more than 700 years ago for agriculture and hunting.

In 2004, after learning and practicing organic agriculture around the U.S. and in Ecuador, Senegal and Morocco, Margaret Ann Toohey and David Snow returned home to begin their own farming operation on the Snow farm. Through hard work and intense determination the Snow's organic garden has grown from less than a quarter acre in 2004 to nearly three acres in 2006, producing 50 different vegetables – encompassing nearly 250 varieties – and numerous cut flowers. Snow's Bend Farm's produce is marketed solely in Tuscaloosa and Birmingham through a CSA, farmers' markets, a few fine restaurants and a small grocery store. Their plan is to transition 150 acres to organic production and diversify their operation to include livestock and perennial fruit and nut orchards.

“Farming has enabled me to be my own boss, do something I feel good about and eat really well,” says Snow. The Snow farm has eliminated tons of petrochemical fertilizers and pesticides from the watershed and restored wetlands giving native plant and animals of West Central Alabama a place to express themselves to their fullest extent. **WIK**



NELSON BROOK

Harvest on the banks of the Black Warrior River.

Cooperatives AND OUR Hope

By George Siemon, C-E-I-E-I-O of CROPP, known more familiarly as Organic Valley® Family of Farms
Photos by Carrie Branovan

We often hear negative talk about corporations with their lack of long-term focus. All corporations may not fit that description, but there is no doubt that corporate decisions are increasingly dominated by considerations of stock value and the next quarterly results. Businesses have a mission to answer to a specific need of the consumer. That mission can be complimentary to community values, environmental concerns and other ethical deliverables. Unfortunately, corporations all too often leave behind any sense of reasonable or sustainable profit – or community benefit.

Starting as far back as the 19th century, social movements have looked for alternatives to corporate structure. Cooperatives first swept through the United States in the early 20th century, peaking in the late 1920's with a primary focus in rural America. Cooperatives provided services in

regions where no business would go and provided alternatives to limited markets.

Most people don't know that there are many cooperatives in our society today. But they do know cooperative brands like Ocean Spray, Welch's and Land 'O Lakes. Most consumers don't realize how many independent retailers have formed cooperatives to access larger buying capacity. Worldwide the number of cooperatives has tripled in the last 20 years.

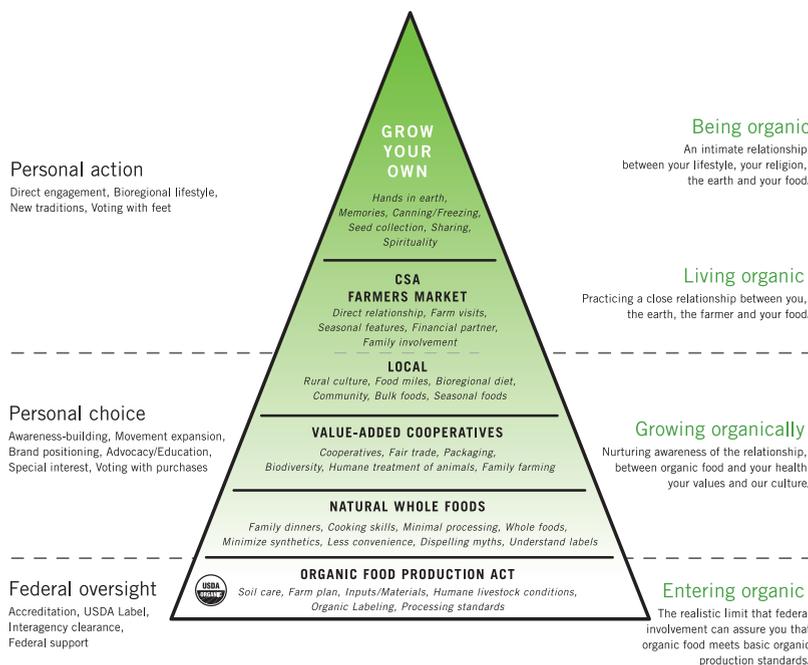
So, how are cooperatives different from corporations? Primarily, a cooperative's purpose is the same as a traditional corporation. But stock value is not a consideration. The cooperative member-owners are building a vehicle that will provide ongoing service for generations – not a business to generate maximum profits. This does not mean that profits are not important, but it does mean that those profits are based on a long-term purpose. Another

Wynton Lewis, fourth generation farmer, Sulphur Springs, TX.



CROPP, better known as the Organic Valley® and Organic Prairie® brands, is a movement of organic farmers working together to deliver top quality organic foods to consumers and economic stability to family farmers.

THE EVOLVING ORGANIC FOOD LIFE





Jennie and Justin Wolfe, third generation farmers, Cochrane, WI.

Specializing in dairy, eggs, produce, citrus juices, soy beverages, beef, pork and poultry, CROPP represents nearly ten percent of all certified organic farmers in the U.S., making it the nation's largest organic cooperative.

Celebrating the Earth – One Dinner at a Time

The Earth Dinner™ is a new tradition gathering friends and loved ones around the kitchen table for meaningful conversation about our connection to our food, the Earth and each other. Since 2004, Organic Valley and Waterkeeper Alliance have partnered to get the word out about Earth Dinner. The goal of Earth Dinner is to raise public awareness about food issues and connect people to how food is grown, its origins and the farmers who produce it. By farming in harmony with nature, Organic Valley farmers protect the water for all of us.

In 2005, Organic Valley along with award-winning author Douglas Love, created the Earth Dinner creativity cards for people to use during their Earth Dinners to spark a dialogue about how the food we eat impacts the health of our Earth. Download free sample cards, planning tips, recipes and purchase the collector's edition of Earth Dinner cards at www.earthdinner.org.



www.earthdinner.org



key difference is that management cannot own stock in cooperatives, so the pressure to maximize stock bonuses is eliminated.

I have been very fortunate to be part of founding a cooperative in 1988 with a group of pioneering organic farmers that has blossomed into CROPP (Cooperative Regions of Organic Producer Pools) Cooperative, more commonly known as the brand Organic Valley Family of Farms. Organic Valley now represents nearly 750 farmers in 23 states.

U.S. agricultural policy has long favored the corporate takeover of food production. In my lifetime, nearly four million farmers have gone out of business. It has been a long time since farmers were able to set their own pay prices. Cooperatives put farmers back in charge. Our cooperative is governed by an all farmer member board and elected Executive Committees that act as our Congress. Each region reviews all the issues that are of concern to them, including their pricing structure. It is this democratic process that makes cooperatives so unique. Cooperatives practice democracy in their governance, allowing the member-owners to actively participate in their business. Most cooperatives, like CROPP Cooperative and unlike most corporations, designate each member with one vote regardless of size.

We are dedicated to the highest organic standards, best tasting organic foods and to encompassing organic principles and environmental stewardship in all aspects of our business. But most critical to achieving these higher, long-term goals is CROPP's dedication to paying farmers a fair and stable pay price for their products and to provide meaningful and fair employment.

The cooperative model and the USDA organic standards provide an excellent foundation but do not represent all of the values that are important to us and to our customers. Values such as food miles, whole foods, domestic fair trade and farm scale are not inherently addressed. We have developed a pyramid of values to help us remember where organic and cooperative fit into the hierarchy of how we think about food and farming as a whole. The pyramid is also a visual way of communicating to our customers and partners how their personal food choices fit into a sustainable model. Personal food choices, ultimately, drive the evolution of sustainable eating and farming practices. Encouraging brands that match our values will help to support a sustainable food system for future generations.

Organic cooperatives are our hope. They give us a democratic model of working together for a common cause. This is perhaps the most difficult challenge we face – how to work together most effectively for the good of the whole. If we can do this, then we can succeed at protecting the environment and returning our waters to purity.

If we want business to be about long-term sustainability and social responsibility, then the cooperative model is the strongest option. Luckily, cooperatives are quietly prospering – empowering people and businesses to be competitive and build long-term prospering communities. **WIK**

Cook Inlet Fishermen, Inletkeeper Protect & Market Wild Alaskan Salmon



BILL SCOTT

By Bob Shavelson, Cook Inletkeeper

Purse seiner salmon boat plies Cook Inlet.

The rich and productive waters of Cook Inlet, Alaska, support vibrant runs of all five species of wild Pacific Salmon. Native Alaskans have relied on this bounty for thousands of years. Today, Cook Inlet's renowned salmon fisheries represent vital threads in the social and economic fabric that supports countless fishing families.

In 1995, commercial fishermen grew increasingly concerned with the rapid ecological changes they witnessed with the expansion of the Cook Inlet oil and gas industry. In response, they joined with local conservationists and Alaskan Natives to form Cook Inletkeeper. Today, Inletkeeper works closely with commercial, sport and subsistence fishermen to protect water quality and fish habitat so current and future generations can enjoy fresh, wild and healthy Alaskan salmon.

Rob Ernst is a life long Alaskan who serves as president of Inletkeeper's Board of Directors. He fishes red – or “sockeye” – salmon in Cook Inlet's drift net fishery. “Drifters,” as they are known, catch returning salmon runs in long hanging nets cast into the water from large stern reels on 30-40 foot vessels.

In response to a glut of farmed - or “fake” - salmon on world markets in recent years, Rob works

with other commercial fishermen to brand and market Cook Inlet red salmon under a new certification program that ensures all fish are bled, iced and shipped quickly to ensure a superior product.

“Farmed salmon are pumped full of antibiotics and phony coloring,” explains Rob. “Our wild fish are clean and healthy, and that's what consumers increasingly demand.”

Ben Jackinsky is an Alaskan Native who serves as Inletkeeper's Vice-President. Ben fishes commercially for red and king (or “Chinook”) salmon using nets set from the beach. Cook Inlet boasts the highest tides in the United States, and “set netters” like Ben arrange their nets so incoming tides fill them with returning salmon. Ben's Native heritage, combined with his reliance on commercial fishing, highlights the need to protect our salmon resources for future generations.

“We can't kill the goose that lays the golden egg,” explains Ben. “That's why I work with Cook Inletkeeper – because they're the most effective watchdog I know when it comes to cracking down on polluters and making sure we have clean fish now and in the future.” **WIK**



ISTOCK

Wild caught King salmon in Seattle's Pike Place Market

No-Till Farming Keeps Lake Erie Clear

By Sandy Bihn, Western Lake Erie Waterkeeper



WESTERN LAKE ERIE WATERKEEPER

The Myers from left to right are Bob and Bill (back) and Ivan and Margie (front). The Myers are standing on one of their naturally covered no-till farmed fields.

The Myers are a fifth generation farm family who have farmed the rich black soils near the shores of Lake Erie in Northwest Ohio since 1890. Ivan Myers and his two sons farm 1,700 acres in the Western Lake Erie/Maumee Watershed. This watershed is the single largest contributor of phosphorous and sediments to Lake Erie and all of the Great Lakes.

Lake Erie is the shallowest and warmest of the Great Lakes, requiring almost constant dredging to allow shipping traffic. No-till farming is one solution to reduce sediment runoff into the watershed.

About 20 years ago when the government was first trying to reduce sediments from flowing into Lake Erie, Ivan Myers was watching the wind blowing the soil from his fields. Loose topsoil washed into ditches and streams with rain and eventually into Lake Erie. Ivan Myers decided to try no-till farming. No-till is the practice of not 'digging up' and turning over the soil with the old crops to prepare for the new. No-till allows vegetation to remain in the winter months so plants and their roots hold the soil in place. No-till provides fields with a natural cover.

Ivan said about his first year in no-till, "There were pickup trucks driving past to look at the field. They all said 'Myers flipped his lid.' I was nervous when I planted, but those little beans started climbing right up through those corn stalks and pretty soon you couldn't see the stalks under the beans. We got a really good crop that year."

The Myers family produces corn, soybeans, wheat and hay using no-till. They say that these conservation no-till practices save money on fuel and equipment. The Myers family designed some of their own equipment to make no-till work and they have won numerous yield awards through the years, due in part to their leadership in no-till farming.

The Myers farm is a great example of farmers innovating to help the watershed, the environment and themselves. **WK**

A wooden signpost stands in a field of tall grass and yellow wildflowers. The top sign reads "ORGANIC FOODS" in red letters on a white background. Below it, a sign for "SWEET CORN" is visible, though slightly out of focus. The signpost is made of weathered wood and has a horizontal wooden beam across it. The background shows more of the field and some trees in the distance.

ORGANIC FOODS

Roadside signs at Taft Farms in Great Barrington, MA.

JASON HOUSTON

A Matter of Vision

The Future of American Agriculture

By Brian Snyder, Executive Director of Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA)

For at least four decades, since about the time when many of us as children began to idealize the processed foods originally prepared for astronauts, American farming sat on the brink of... something.

Whether that “something” amounts to greatness or disaster depends on the perspective of the observer. But few would argue that this 40 year period can be characterized as one of intermittent decline for the bulk of farmers and, more importantly, for the agrarian culture that was once the hallmark of our country.

Today, the decline continues, with some notable exceptions. At least two generalized approaches to farming, located mostly at opposite ends of the farm-size spectrum, seem to be flourishing. Traditional farms, now often referred to as “mid-sized farms,” are disappearing fast. It is only natural to inquire as to the drivers of this divergent trend, and whether any particular model holds the key to a brighter future.

In pursuit of answers, it can be very instructive to note how, when faced with the same set of facts, equally well educated and otherwise sophisticated people can sometimes reach very different conclusions. Take for instance the appearance of Mad Cow Disease in America’s beef industry, or the impending specter of deadly Avian Influenza.

Faced with these circumstances, advocates of so-called “modern” confinement and mega-feedlot production systems see a need for more uniformity and control, as well as larger production facilities in general. On the other hand, practitioners of alternative agricultural systems, usually implemented on smaller and more widely scattered farms, will talk about the urgent need for increased diversification and holistic approaches that look at the health of the entire system.

In order to understand and evaluate these contrasting attitudes, one must first comprehend the visions that generated them. In this case, a “vision” is being defined as *a series of interconnected*

A PASA farmer with his pasture-raised pigs. "The sustainable vision is notably founded on the concept of 'connection,' which refers as much to a farmer's connection to the land and animals as it does to a consumer's connection with the farmer."

BRIAN SNYDER, WWW.PASA.ORG



principles that logically lead to a desired result. For example, consider the following diagram of one agricultural vision:



In this vision, representing the principles underlying what has come to be known as "conventional" agriculture, we see a progression of ideas ending in a desired result, i.e. an efficient production system that provides inexpensive food for the masses.

The term "isolation" is used here to depict the typical concept of an independent American farmer, operating in an intensely competitive market environment including not only neighboring farms and those across the country, but increasingly those in other countries as well. As the vision goes, such farms make the best use of, or "exploit" available resources in order to operate as efficiently as possible. The desired outcome is to produce the relatively inexpensive food supply that we often take for granted.

In contrast to this conventional thinking, an altogether different vision underpins the alternative farming methods relied upon by the "sustainable" farming community, diagrammed as follows:



This vision, while different in obvious ways, also represents a progression of ideas that brings about a desired outcome – food for our society that, while not necessarily inexpensive, is of very good quality for the money paid, i.e. high-value food. The emphasis on "quality" as opposed to "efficiency" is the key to understanding this particular vision, and a key to understanding the difference between conventional and sustainable systems.

The sustainable vision is founded on the concept of "connection," which refers to both the farmer's connection to the land and animals and the consumer's connection with the farmer. This vision sees farmers collaborating with each other, as opposed to competing, to achieve common goals. And this collaboration holds whether talking about farmers next door, or those in different regions or countries within the national or global marketplace.

The major strength of this vision lies in its replacement of resource exploitation with an emphasis on "systemic health." Sustainable farmers are concerned with the health of the entire food system, beginning with the soil, land and water and ending with the health of consumers. A breakdown in vitality anywhere in the production chain means the whole system must be reevaluated.

Volumes could be spent comparing and contrasting the two visions presented here. But even in this somewhat simplistic form, it should be clear how powerfully descriptive and consequential these two portrayals are in understanding the way decisions about national farm policy have been made in the past, and what is really at stake for future generations.

If you subscribe to Vision A, which depicts the status quo of agriculture for the last 40 or 50 years (but not so much before that), then you will necessarily reach certain conclusions that are by now familiar features of the rural American landscape, e.g. fewer farmers, more mechanization, ever-increasing farm size, ever-decreasing biodiversity. A careful study of current farm policy in the country, especially with regard to the federal Farm Bill, reveals a very complicated effort to prop up and patch together a system



BRIAN SNYDER, WWW.PASA.ORG

A PASA Farm Based Education field day held in Lancaster County, PA. The sustainable farming vision "sees farmers collaborating with each other, as opposed to competing, to achieve common goals."

that long ago outgrew any ability to replenish its own resources.

Today, however, there are signs everywhere you turn that this prevailing vision is crumbling, and that we really are on the brink of an important, if not so graceful transition to a more enduring vision of what agriculture can and will be in the future.

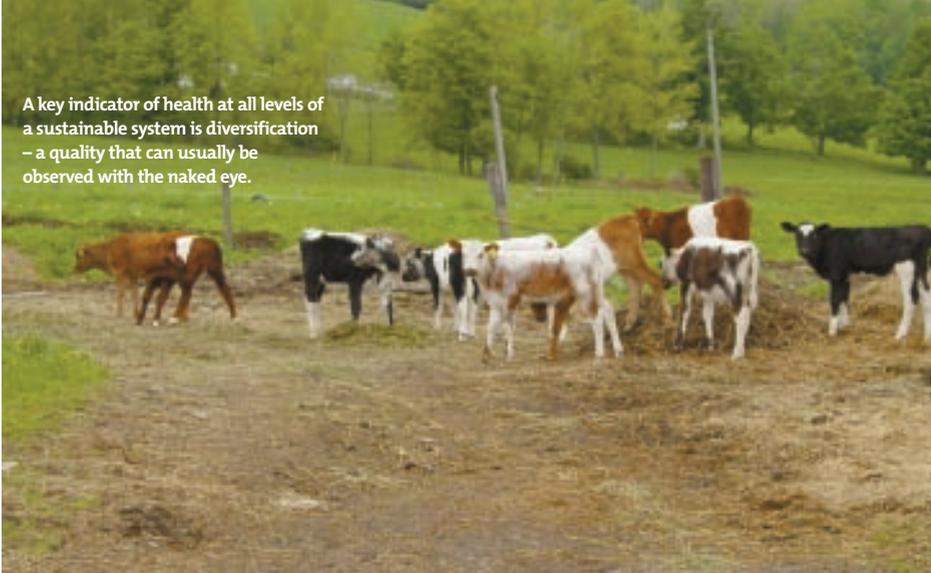
Fortunately, the best farming practices for preserving the environmental and economic vibrancy of rural communities happen also to be the ones that will make our food system safer and more secure, with an improved quality of life for all its participants.

There is no real credence to support the often-repeated claim that “sustainable farmers could never feed the world.” On the contrary, given the current outlook for global energy resources, sustainable methods in farming and many other industries will likely be required to meet the future needs of a burgeoning world population.

Consumers can likewise perform this experiment: test the results of a life-changing decision to seek out the high-value end products of sustainable farm production. It is as simple as choosing

A key indicator of health at all levels of a sustainable system is diversification – a quality that can usually be observed with the naked eye.

BRIAN SNYDER, WWW.PASA.ORG



between Vision A and Vision B. In some ways, we are indeed like astronauts, now re-entering the Earth’s environment to re-discover the power of the creation that has been beneath our feet all along.

Perhaps it will be as if we have spent these last forty years wandering in an agricultural wilderness, with only one – sustainable – way out. **WK**

LIVING OFF THE LAND

REMINISCING ABOUT FARM LIFE with 101 year old Kesar Kaur:

Can you tell me about life in rural Punjab, India around 1910?

Life back then was very, very easy. As land-owners, we were not very rich, nor were we very poor. The farmers, who worked for us, didn’t have as much money as us landowners, but they lived a comfortable life; they worked on the land, so they had money, clothes, a place to live and food. In the villages we also had cobblers, shoemakers, carpenters, blacksmiths. We were all very close-knit.

What crops did you have on your fields?

On our land, we used to sow wheat, corn, millet, oat and barley. There were different kinds of cauliflower and yams, carrots, radishes, cabbages, tomatos, small potatoes, big potatoes, ginger – all kinds of fruits and vegetables. In the sandy places near the riverbeds we used to grow lotus roots too. There were also different kinds of oranges in our orange grove, and different berries, like gooseberries. We also grew all sorts of beans and lentils.

How were the crops watered and cared for?

We had a canal system built up from the rivers. From the canals, smaller streams would be used to water the fields. Even when there were no heavy rains, the canal system would link the land with the rivers, which were always flowing.



What animals did you have on the farm?

We had many buffaloes, cows, horses to ride into the villages. Nowadays they have cars, but back then we would get on the horses. We used to have oxen to plow the fields, because people didn’t use tractors back then. We had one donkey that would climb the mountains. We used to have roosters and hens for eggs. We had goats and different kinds of sheep that would give us wool.

What would you do if someone became ill?

People rarely became ill because the villages had open, fresh air. Even the old people were not pale-faced, but strong, with a rich golden complexion from working out in the fields. They would eat all the natural foods: radishes, carrots, lentils and in

the morning, thin, sweetened, flavored yogurt. There were people knowledgeable in medicine, who would know how to heal a sick person with natural remedies.

What was your best memory of the village?

The village life. People were very simple. People in the villages were helpful to each other, never clever or conniving. They were good sincere, folk. After our land was divided into India and Pakistan, the lifestyle totally changed. After partition, we didn’t have the same kind of peace of mind. But in the village, no matter who the person was, we had a good relationship, with good food, and a good life.



LEADING THE WAY TO Better Wine AND A Healthy Watershed

By Don McEnhill, Russian Riverkeeper
Photos by Russian Riverkeeper

Above: Quivira Vineyards knows that chemicals degrade a wine's "terrior" and use only biodynamic farming practices that are kid and salmon safe.

When I was a kid, Healdsburg, CA, was like many small agricultural towns. When I went fishing on winter days I always had a good chance of catching a wild Steelhead Trout in the emerald Russian River. But today, it can take a month after a rainstorm before the muddy sediments settle out of the water, the river clears and the Steelhead return.

Healdsburg and the once sleepy Russian River watershed have experienced explosive growth since the 1980's when winemakers discovered

that our soils and climate produce great wines on par with the best labels of neighboring Napa Valley. The Russian River wineries trace their heritage back to Russian colonists who first planted grapes in 1812. Today, vineyards cover more than 50,000 acres and the wine industry is Sonoma County's primary economic force, generating an estimated \$1 billion each year.

The wine industry is also the single most important influence on the environmental health of the watershed. In 2003, Russian Riverkeeper

conducted a stormwater monitoring study to determine pollutant loads in the middle reach of the river during three varying storm intensities. During a minor flood event, we were surprised to discover that we were detecting a chronically toxic herbicide, Simazine, in small streams below vineyards and in the main stem of the river – Healdsburg’s drinking water supply. We also found that nutrient and sediment loads were tens of times higher than water quality standards in most vineyard area tributary streams.

The Russian River is polluted from runoff carrying sediment and pollution from the vineyards and countless miles of dirt roads. These sediments bury streams, cover spawning gravels and literally choke fish to death – think of breathing in a dust storm. Fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides used by some grape growers create serious threats to water quality and fish. In 2003, grape growers used more than 3.2 million pounds of active pesticide ingredients.

Russian Riverkeeper, and its predecessor Friends of the Russian River, have worked closely with winemakers since 1994 to identify sources of pollution, devise solutions and, when necessary, take enforcement action on bad actors. We work closely with winemakers to support organic farming, integrated pest management and other approaches that reduce or eliminate pesticides and chemical fertilizers. And with the cooperation of some truly innovative and committed winemakers, we have made real progress protecting the river, and perhaps even improving the wine. But we continue to see problems every time it rains.

One very beneficial attribute of wine lovers, for watershed protection, is that they judge wines based on subtle flavors and taste nuances expressed in the French term “terrior.” Terrior is a reflection of the local soils, climate and grape varietal that give wine its unique taste. Many grape growers and winemakers know that everything they do in the vineyard affects those subtle flavors and potentially interferes with the wine’s terrior – and its price! One very large winery was taken to task by their new French owners who, with their centuries-old winemaking traditions, were horrified that the chemicals would change the very nature of the soil and permanently affect the flavor of the grapes. The terrior, in this case, made the strongest argument for sustainability.

In the past, pumice, the leftovers from pressed grapes, were simply piled along waterways during rainy season. In spring they were then turned into the fields. Russian Riverkeeper documented numerous cases where the highly-acidic pumice runoff lowered pH levels in streams, damaging fish habitat. So, in 2003, we helped shape the first waste discharge requirements for wineries. That led to better wastewater controls and requirements that pumice stockpiles be covered and located at least 50 feet from streams.

Wineries require huge amounts of water to process grapes. That, coupled with arcane state water



Davis Bynum Vineyards flooding



After flooding

Davis Bynum Vineyards

Over the last few years Hampton Bynum has led a changeover to biodynamic farming – where everything in the vineyard is natural. Eventually, all amendments to the fields will come from the vineyards themselves... true sustainability! Having more biodynamic fields in the floodplain would eliminate many of the water quality impacts from farming. Unfortunately the vineyards behind the Davis Bynum are not owned by Bynum and are among the least sustainable winegrowers in the region. I cringe when the river floods into the fields where herbicides and pesticides are used.



Harvest at the Preston vineyard.

Lou Preston poses on his vineyard. As we took this picture a 20 pound steelhead flushed out from behind a log.



Preston of Dry Creek

Lou and Susan Preston bought their property in Dry Creek Valley along Steelhead-bearing Pena Creek in the late 1970's. They found car bodies lining the stream banks – put there by previous owners in an attempt to stabilize the eroding banks. Today those same banks are lined with willows to create habitat and stabilize erosion. Preston has revegetated native plants to increase the quality of riparian habitat in his part of Pena Creek. This has little to do with growing grapes, but to Preston it is part of taking care of his land. Almost on cue, during a recent visit to look at stream restoration on Pena Creek, a large wake gave away the presence of a three foot adult Steelhead holding behind one of his structures. “Maybe we could be making more money, but this is where we call home so stewardship comes naturally,” said Lou when we were touring his vineyard on that nice rainy day.



A sign of coming times we hope, now proudly on display at Preston.

Sonoma County Grape Growers Association Promotes Sustainability

Since 2003, the SCGGA has promoted the Code of Sustainable Wine Growing program – workshops and educational tours that give growers a chance to see how to improve their practices. In 2005, 285 growers representing 45 percent of Sonoma County acreage went through the self-assessment process, according to SCGGA Executive Director Nick Frey, and 230 growers reported their results to the state. SCGGA started an organic producers group to provide in-field education for growers interested in incorporating organic practices or converting to organic. Each meeting attracts over 35-40 growers.



law and almost no enforcement, presents another major challenge. Many once-productive juvenile fish rearing streams are now dry in summer, even in the wettest years, because of diversions for irrigation. In 2004, a very dry spring led to a municipal water supply crisis in the upper watershed. The local government estimated that if the 10,000 acre-feet of water that was illegally appropriated from the Russian River was returned, the crisis would not have occurred. Russian Riverkeeper identified and compiled the legal water rights holders on a CD to assist enforcement officials check compliance and prosecute illegal diversions.

Many winemakers are compelled to produce on every inch of land to satisfy unknowing shareholders far away. Streamside riparian forests are vital habitat for juvenile salmon. These transition areas give vital shade, keep water cool, filter polluted runoff and provide food sources for juvenile fish. When winegrowers clear these forests and plant right up to the riverbanks they increase runoff from fields and cause bank erosion. Winegrowers may dump rock and riprap to attempt to stabilize eroding banks. Two years ago while patrolling the river I caught a vineyard illegally dumping fill in the river and later found out that the California Retired Teachers Association owned the land. The investors had no idea what the vineyard manager was doing. But the many retired teachers I know were upset when they heard how their savings were degrading their watershed.

In another case, after a six-year fight, Russian Riverkeeper forced design changes at one of

the largest proposed bank armoring projects in the watershed. We hope that our success in this high-profile fight will get landowners and county and state officials to appreciate the importance of natural bank stabilization, and find a balance between protecting vulnerable vineyards and the need for healthy riparian areas.

Industry trends of consolidation and venture investment create enormous pressure on winemakers to focus on profit margins. But many winemakers in the watershed are reaching back to tradition and prioritizing stewardship.

At Russian Riverkeeper we have high hopes for continual improvement from the wine industry. In the last five years we have seen a lot of positive action by many in the industry. We will always keep our eye out for problems, continue to work with our many friends in the industry and keep our minds focused on solutions. How can you help? That's easy. Next time you are out buying wine, check the label or winery website to see how they farm. Many can and should boast of their good work. And please consider a nice glass of sustainably farmed and produced Russian River wine that even a fish could like! **WK**

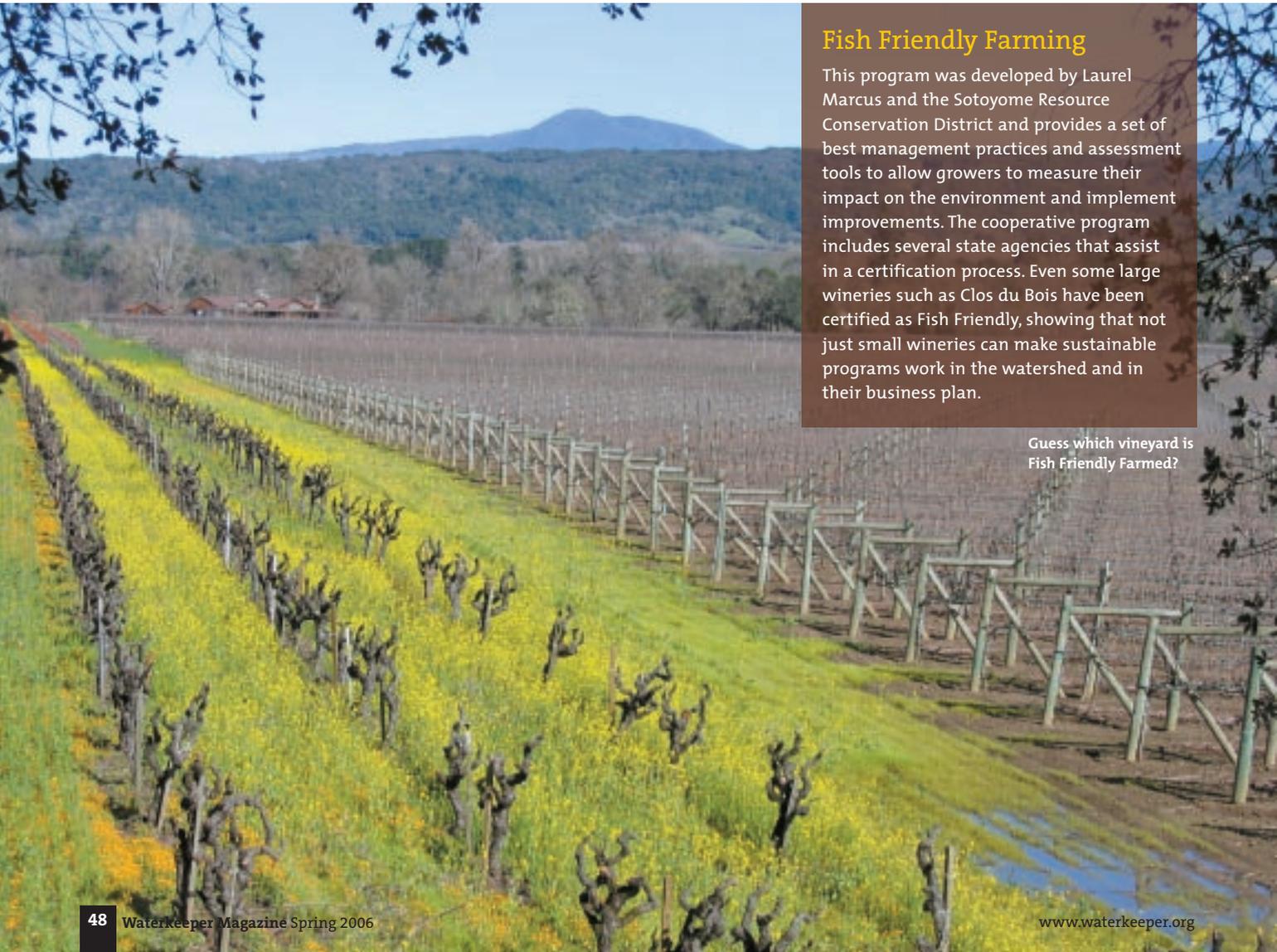


Illegal riprap on vineyard owned by California Retired Teachers Association placed by vineyard management firm.

The Russian River watershed is home to the endangered Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Trout. The watershed also supplies drinking water to more than 650,000 residents in three counties and offers recreation that lures a million visitors a year.



Water samples taken in February 2004 detected Simazine where this picture was taken. Note water intake structures on right bank.



Fish Friendly Farming

This program was developed by Laurel Marcus and the Sotoyome Resource Conservation District and provides a set of best management practices and assessment tools to allow growers to measure their impact on the environment and implement improvements. The cooperative program includes several state agencies that assist in a certification process. Even some large wineries such as Clos du Bois have been certified as Fish Friendly, showing that not just small wineries can make sustainable programs work in the watershed and in their business plan.

Guess which vineyard is Fish Friendly Farmed?

LIVING OFF THE LAND

REMINISCING ABOUT FISHING THE HUDSON RIVER

Bob Gabrielson began his fishing career in 1942

How did you become a fisherman?

Right where the Tappan Zee Bridge hits the shoreline on the Hudson River there was a big sandy spit of land and about four different groups of fishermen. When I was 12, I'd go down by the shoreline and they would give me \$1 a day and a fish to grab the fish from the hall-seine net and throw them in boxes. When I went home with the fish, I loved it, I loved it.

What was it like to be a fisherman in your early years?

We would fish 24 hours a day during the tide and we slept, a lot of the times, in the boat. We'd catch striped bass in March, and then set up a line to catch catfish in April and May. Then, in June, we'd catch enough crabs to develop a market for them.

I used to take my fish, run down to the Fulton Fish Market (in lower Manhattan) and drop them off. There I'd pick up about 400-600 pounds of ocean species, porgies, flounders, sea bass, whichever one was cheap. I'd bring them to my dock here in Nyack and put them right near the stand and sell them. I had people standing around like the Grand Union waiting to buy them up.

How much of your earnings did you get directly from fishing?

It varied, like anything you take from the earth. We had good years and we had bad years. There were some guys that made 50, 60, or 70 percent of their living from the river. We always caught fish, even the times when it was bad we still caught things. I've made some good money from fishing. I built my house with shad.

What was your favorite thing about being a fisherman?

I love being my own boss and I love fish. I should have scales. I really feel I had the capability to do a lot of big things with my life, but I grew out of everything else and am still involved with fishing. I'll be doing this for the rest of my life. **WK**



COURTESY BOB GABRIELSON



COURTESY BOB GABRIELSON

Bob Gabrielson when sturgeon were still fished commercially on the Hudson River.



ASK FOR **Change**

Meat as a Wedge Issue

By Mike McConnell, Vice Chairman of Niman Ranch and a founder of the Husbandry Institute

Above: Free-range sows forage in woods on the Minnesota farm of Arvid and Lois Jovaag. When crowding isn't a problem, manure isn't either.

Americans love meat. We eat more than 65 billion pounds of it each year; that's more than 200 pounds for every man, woman and child. Americans also love cheap food. We spend the lowest percentage of our income on food of any nation in the history of the world.

The combination of these two facts is devastating. In 1950 there were more than 1 million hog farms in the U.S. In 2004, the country was producing more pork than in 1950, but the number of farms had shrunk to a mere 65,000. Today, industrial hog operations cram up to 100,000 hogs into closed factories, with slatted floors under which manure can be flushed into multi-acre cesspools.

The effect of the disappearance of the family farm on the social fabric of the nation is difficult

to quantify. But driving down country roads in rural America and seeing farmhouses just abandoned as families have given up and moved to town, one realizes that a profound shift is taking place. Schools close, forcing school children to bus further and further to regional facilities. Town centers and locally owned stores shutter from dwindling populations. Only the regional Wal-Mart benefits as families are forced to drive hours each week just to supply their necessities.

The long-term effect of this removal of a population from the land, of the destruction of local communities by concentration of land into the hands of fewer and fewer people, is difficult to assess. But in 1787, two years before the ratification of the Constitution, Thomas Jefferson wrote to James Madison:

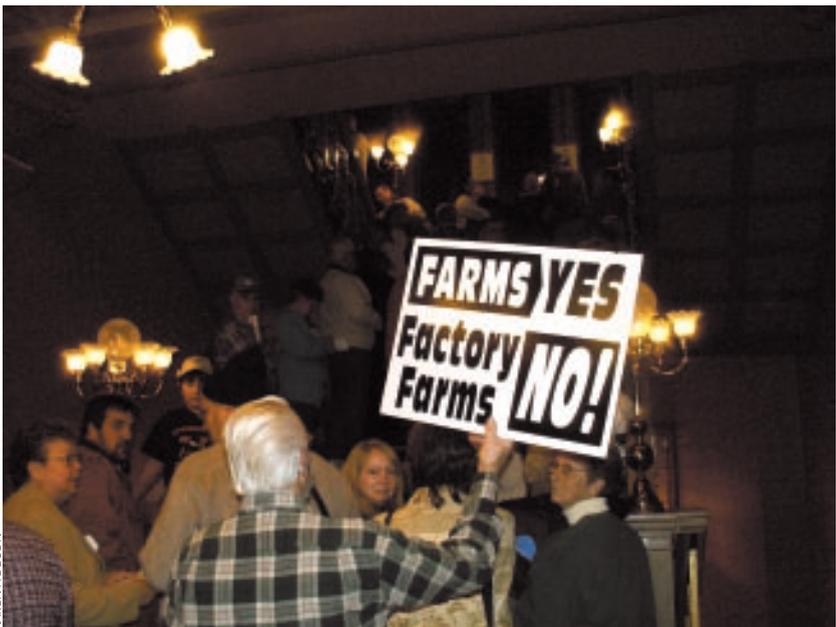
“I think our governments will remain virtuous for many centuries as long as they are chiefly agricultural; and this will be as long as there shall be vacant lands in any part of America. When they get piled upon one another in large cities as in Europe, they will become corrupt as in Europe.”

There is no question what the framers of our nation had in mind – a country in which the majority of its citizens were in touch with the land, and living in local communities. And they were right. The gradual dissociation of the American electorate from the affairs of its government has coincided with this shift from a largely rural to a largely urban population.

Behind the drive for cost cutting is another fact: the food industry is fast becoming controlled by a few mega-corporations. According to a study by the University of Missouri, in 2002 only four beef packers controlled 81 percent of the beef processed in the country. Four pork packers controlled 59 percent of the hogs processed. And only four companies controlled 46 percent of the hogs produced. Retailing had also become highly concentrated, with five companies controlling 38 percent of the nation’s food retailing – and the drive for further concentration has only continued.

The net result of this concentration for those farmers who remain on the land is that the formerly wide variety of options to market their food has shrunk radically. You may produce the finest-tasting pork in the country, treat your land as your home and heritage, manage your farm as if you swam in the local stream and drank water from your own well. But when you go to market, you can only sell your livestock (or your grain, or your beans) into a commodity system controlled by a few large corporations. And they tell you what your meat (or grain, or beans) is worth. You can look it up in the Wall St. Journal on the Commodities page.

I grew up on a farm and I understand the challenges of competing with these conglomerates. So when I met Bill Niman in 1996, I saw a possibility that I had not seen before: creating an alternative distribution through which family farmers could reach urban markets and reach buyers who put a premium on the care they took of their animals, of their land and for the superior quality meat that they could produce.

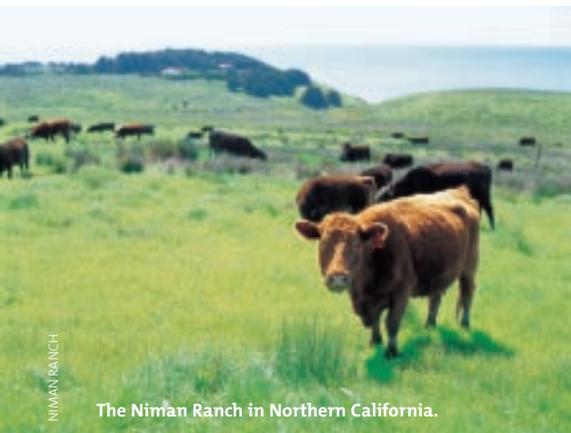


KAREN HUDSON



KAREN HUDSON

Liquefied manure is sprayed on fields. Sounds sustainable, but meat factories hide behind their legal status as “farms” to dump waste without regard to the capacity of the land to absorb it. Streams, groundwater and the air fill with the noxious mess.



NIMAN RANCH

The Niman Ranch in Northern California.

“We host a farmer’s market at my restaurant every Saturday morning and I purchase a lot of produce from my local growers. One of them is certified organic; the others grow sustainably (no herbicides or pesticides). I want my vendors to know that I would like organic if they can get it and, apart from organic products being more healthy, I like supporting a more environmentally sustainable farming system. And I think food that is being bought in local markets, in season, does taste better, have more flavor.”



Chef Monica Pope has spent the last thirteen years cooking in Southeast Texas, where she purchases her ingredients from local farmers, ranchers and food producers. Doing so has dictated her cooking style and become the foundation for her current Houston restaurant, t’afia.

Bill had been raising cattle in the San Francisco Bay area for more than 15 years, and over that time a number of bay area chefs had come to appreciate his beef, not only for its flavor but for the way it was raised. As demand for his beef outgrew his own herd’s ability to supply, he began marketing the beef of a few friends whose values he shared, and also the pork and lamb of a few like-minded ranchers.

The question we asked ourselves: could this be scaled to be more than a “feel good” local effort, and be made into a system that would provide a meaningful alternative distribution system for family farmers. We knew there was a need; we did not know if we could build a viable alternative. The odds were certainly stacked against us. At every step of the way, our costs would be higher: the farmers’ too because he or she was raising animals humanely, not using growth hormones or daily fed antibiotics. Processing would cost more on a small scale; transportation would as well. At least in our early stages, our meat would have to cost double what the commodity markets were paying. Was there a market for this kind of meat?

The question of long-term business viability is still unanswered, but we definitely made progress. In 2005, Niman Ranch sold more than \$50 million of beef, pork and lamb to American chefs and retailers. More than 500 farmers and ranchers now market their livestock under our brand. One out of every 150 hog farmers in the country now depend on Niman Ranch to reach the market.

But this is in an overall market in which more than \$12 billion worth of pork was sold. And our 600 head of cattle harvested per month, while gratifying to us, is miniscule in the face of the 1.7 million cattle coming out of America’s industrial feedlots each month.

So, is the cup mostly empty or partly full? That’s where you come in. Because in the nearly ten years I have been working on this issue, one realization has become central to my thinking: **Restaurants and retailers don’t think that Americans care** – about humane husbandry, about family farming, about water quality, about greenhouse gases, about sustainable rural communities. **They think all we care about is price.**

My wake-up call came in a meeting with a well-known Bay area chef. He said, “I think what you guys are doing is important. I really believe in it. But that’s a personal choice I am making. My customers don’t really care.” And then it hit me: Of course that’s what he thinks. Because his customers aren’t telling him otherwise!

All too often, when we walk into a restaurant, or we walk into a retail store, we check our values at the door. If we had had the time, money or ability to go to Whole Foods, we would have. The fact that we are somewhere else means we have given up, at least for that shopping trip. The fact that we are not eating at a restaurant well known for their commitment to social values, means we have given up on striving for something better, at least for that meal. As a result, chefs and retailers are buying as if you didn’t care. **Because you didn’t tell them.**

Continued on p. 51



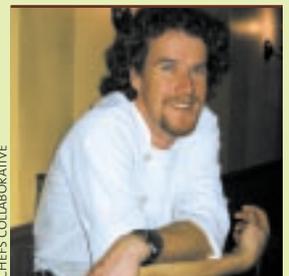
DIANE HALVERSON/ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE

At Good Shepherd Turkey Ranch, KS, turkeys enjoy pasture-foraging, natural mating and the conscientious husbandry of long-time conservator of old, pure genetic lines, Frank Reese.

When Benjamin Franklin lobbied for the wild turkey, rather than the bald eagle, as the U.S. national bird he wasn’t talking about broad-breasted beasts of today — flightless birds with breasts so large they tend to tip over, so docile and dumb that they are as likely to drown in a rainstorm than seek shelter. Heritage turkeys such as the Beltsville Small White, Bourbon Red, Jersey Buff, Narragansett, Royal Palm, Slate, Standard Bronze and White Holland are intelligent and noble creatures that fit the description of the nation’s emblem.



CHEFS COLLABORATIVE



Chef Ed Doyle has led the way in operating a “green kitchen,” implementing the first on-site composting system in any Boston hotel and developing a 600 square-foot organic garden to supply Aura (at the Seaport Hotel) with fresh herbs and produce. Doyle founded RealFood, Inc. a sustainability-focused food and beverage consulting business to help others increase efficiency and profitability while protecting the environment.

JASON HOUSTON

The road ingredients travel from harvest to the dinner table is a part of their “character.” Simplifying this path changes the taste, often enhancing it. Actively reconnecting the farm and the table creates a distinct consciousness. Through our choices of food and ingredients, we – chefs, waiters, diners – are inescapably active participants in not just eating, but in agriculture. This awareness adds to the pleasures of eating.



Dan Barber was first introduced to and gained respect for locally grown and seasonal produce at Blue Hill Farm in the Berkshires. After working in California, Paris and the South of France, Dan returned to New York determined to demonstrate his philosophy of cooking with sustainably grown and local ingredients. Since 2000, Dan has seen Blue Hill at Stone Barns in Westchester County, NY, grow from a noted neighborhood restaurant to be named one of America’s Best Restaurants by *Gourmet* magazine.



KAREN HUDSON

Abandoned family farm in West Central Illinois.

Meat Matters.

Ask questions to find healthy and environmentally friendly meat, dairy and eggs:

- What can you tell me about where this meat comes from?
- Was it raised without antibiotics and added hormones?
- Is it free range and pasture fed from birth?



KAREN HUDSON

How do I Ask For Change?

- 1) Carry the AFCI card in your wallet or purse. Anywhere you eat, ask these questions.
- 2) A surprisingly wide variety of restaurants offer sustainably raised meats. *Your server or butcher may not know and have to ask someone else.* Restaurants and retailers that put care into selecting their meats are proud to tell you about their choices!

The *absence* of information often tells you more. Listen carefully, if they don’t know, another selection may be best. “*It was raised naturally,*” or “*It was farm-raised,*” are just industry marketing claims.

- 3) When no satisfying meat, dairy or egg options are offered, this can be a perfect opportunity to let them know why sustainable options are important to you. More pasture-raised, antibiotic-free meat choices will become available as demand grows. These questions will help get more chefs and grocers thinking about the meats they are selling you.



JASON HOUSTON

Open pit pig roast for farmers and friends at Moon in the Pond Farm, Sheffield, MA. The chef, Jeremy Stanton, is widely known for whole animal open pit roasts and is presently opening a new 'local foods' BBQ restaurant in Great Barrington, MA.

The average American is no expert in meat or meat issues. So it can be daunting to think about asking questions about the meat a chef is serving or a butcher is selling. But more and more people are seeing that it is important to do so. Working last year with a new organization, the Husbandry Institute, I developed a short list of questions that could be published on a wallet-sized card. A broad coalition of groups are now supporting the Ask for Change campaign – a campaign we kicked off at the Waterkeeper Alliance national conference last June.

The wonderful and terrible thing about living in a capitalist society is that business will respond to consumer demand.

And so, as Waterkeepers across the country employ the powerful stick of whistle blowing and suing polluters, each of us can simultaneously brandish the complementary carrot of expressing our demand for humanely, sustainably-raised meat. We can shop at stores that feature them. We can tell our grocers that we want them to stock sustainably-raised meats, not just in the meat case but in the deli case as well. We can make asking the waiter in a restaurant how their meat was raised, and by whom, part of our routine.

In short, we can tell those who sell to us that we want them to offer something that hasn't damaged the Earth. If you don't know what to ask, use the card that came with this issue of Waterkeeper magazine, or download an Ask for Change card from www.askforchange.org. Because if we don't tell them, they won't know.

If everyone who cares about our water, about our air, about humane husbandry, about the family farmer, speaks up and puts their dollar behind their words, the American meat industry will organize itself to serve that demand. The one beautiful thing about Big Ag is that it is agnostic about these issues; if they can make more money not destroying the Earth than by destroying the Earth, they'll gladly do so.

But you've got to tell them. **WKK**

White Dog Café, Philadelphia

By Judy Wicks

I had no idea about how pork was being raised in this country until I read John Robbins's book *Diet for a New America* in 2000. I was outraged. I went to the kitchen of my restaurant and said, "Take all the pork off the menu." I realized that the pork we were serving came from those barbaric conditions. Most of the pork in this country does, unless you seek an alternative. I said, "Take off the bacon, the ham, and the pork chops – until we can find a humane source for our pork."

We asked the farmer who was bringing in free-range chicken and eggs from Lancaster County if he knew a farm that raised pigs in the traditional way, and he did. He started bringing in a pig every week. Now we get two pigs a week, whole pigs. This means we have to find a way to use all the parts, which is actually quite a good thing environmentally and a creative challenge for our chefs.

Eventually I was able to find acceptable sources for all of our meat products – our beef, pigs, lamb and chicken – mostly from small farms in our area or from Niman Ranch, which buys from small farmers. When I finally got that taken care of, I thought, well, I'm finished now; we have a cruelty-free menu. We're the only restaurant in town that can say it, so we've cornered the market.

But then I said to myself: Judy, if you really care about how those animals are treated, if you really care about the small farmers who are being driven out of business, if you care about the environment, if you care about rural communities, if you care about the consumers who eat meat full of antibiotics and hormones, then you will teach your competitors to do what you're doing. That was the next step for me, and it was a huge one because as business people we're taught to be competitive and to want *our* restaurant to be the best restaurant.

So I started the White Dog Café Foundation. Our first project was to provide free consulting to our competitors – the chefs and restaurant owners of Philadelphia – to teach them the importance of buying humanely raised meat from local family farms. I asked the farmer who was bringing in two pigs a week if he would like to expand his business. When he said yes, I asked what was holding him back. He said he needed \$30,000 to buy a refrigerated truck. I loaned him the money and he bought the truck and now delivers to restaurants all over town. Since then the Foundation has provided grants to farmers to move from indoor to outdoor farming, to expand herds with heritage breeds and buy a second refrigerated truck. There are now actually two farmers delivering to us with trucks we helped them buy.

Author Judy Wicks with "Mustard and Sage Grilled Loin of Pork topped with Apple Chutney" from the White Dog Café's Executive Chef Andy Brown. The free-range pork is from Meadow Run Farm in Lancaster County. It's served with brown butter sweet potato-parsnip puree, bacon sautéed Brussels sprouts and heirloom apple chutney. The sweet potatoes, parsnips, and apples came from Green Meadow Farm, also in Lancaster County. The bacon is from the same animal that the loin came from and the sage is from Branch Creek Farm in Bucks County.



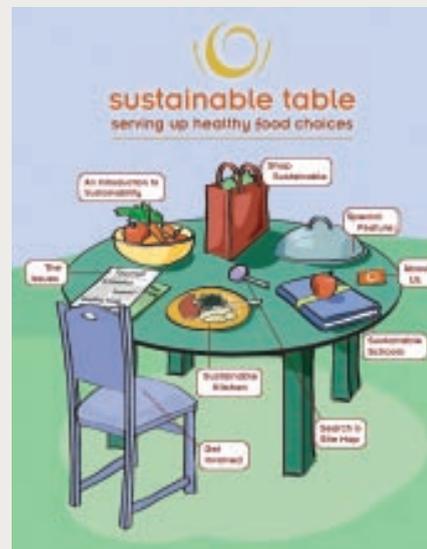
WHITE DOG CAFÉ

Meatrix II

In an age characterized by mechanization, there is a large gap between our illusions about where food comes from and the stark industrial reality of meat production. Enter the *Meatrix* films. *The Meatrix II: Revolting* is the second chapter of the smash hit, critically acclaimed exposé of industrial farming, *The Meatrix*. Simultaneously spoofing the popular *Matrix* films while educating consumers about the evils of factory farming, much of *The Meatrix's* success has been attributed to its combination of humor, parody and pop culture references; a combination that changes the definition of activism to bring the concept of sustainability to a wider audience of consumers. With more than 10 million viewers worldwide and translations into more than 20 languages, as well as a 2005 Webby Award, an Environmental Media Award and acceptance into film festivals across the globe, the *Meatrix* has been an incredibly successful tool for raising interest in Sustainable Table's unique goals and projects. www.themeatrix.com and www.themeatrix2.com

The Meatrix is all around you, Leo. It is the story we tell ourselves about where meat and animal products come from. This family farm is a fantasy, Leo. Take the blue pill and stay here in the fantasy, take the red pill and I'll show you the truth.

- MOOPHEUS



Sustainable Table

Today, more and more consumers are shopping smarter, eating healthier, and enjoying an abundance of fresh, locally-grown food. As the sustainable food movement quickly spreads across the world, helping to preserve the environment, save family farms and provide healthier food, SustainableTable.org has arisen to celebrate this vibrant movement while educating consumers on the issues, showing them where to shop and offering ways for you and your family to get involved. With recipes, cookbook reviews, resources for teachers and students, projects, learning materials and more, Sustainable Table is the go-to place for your introduction to sustainable food and a hub for connecting to a network of sustainable food organizations. With the advent of antibiotics, hormones, genetically modified organisms and even mad cow disease, the problems we face with our food supply can seem overwhelming, but, luckily, Sustainable Table is here to help consumers find the way to healthier eating. www.sustainabletable.org.

Eat Well Guide



As more and more consumers begin to question the food being sold to them in the supermarket and turn to organic food and local farms for their daily bread, the time has come for a nationwide directory of sustainable food. And EatWellGuide.org is doing just that! EatWellGuide is a free, online database of farms, stores, restaurants, organizations, online retailers and bed & breakfasts throughout the U.S. and Canada that sell sustainable meat, poultry, dairy and eggs, searchable by

zip code. With close to 6,000 detailed listings, consumers can search the Guide by product, growing method, region or establishment to find exactly what they're looking for in their area. With maps, links to websites and customized accounts to bookmark favorite restaurants and stores, the Eat Well Guide is quickly becoming the most easy-to-use and reliable resource on the web for people seeking practical ways to change their diet and buying habits. www.eatwellguide.org

T H E

MEATRIX II:

REVOLTING



ACTION. ROMANCE. MANURE.
The Meatrix saga continues.

www.themeatrix2.com

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE COST?

Affording Organic



Summer Vegetables at the Farm Girl Farm stand at the Sheffield Farmers' Market, Sheffield, MA

Jeffrey Odefey and Janelle Robbins
of Waterkeeper Alliance

It's true – many times organic products are more expensive than their non-organic counterparts. As market demand has grown over the past decade, mainstream grocery stores have begun to carry organic products – but often as specialty items, and priced accordingly. The good news is that organic food is more widely available now than ever before; the bad is that until the forces of supply and demand get things under control, grocers will continue to command a higher price for organic fruits, vegetables and other food.

As a rule, organic produce, meat and dairy simply cost more to produce than their conventional counterparts. Because farmers don't rely on pesticides, for instance, they must do more hand weeding. Farming organic also means farmers run a higher risk of losing all or part of a year's crop. Organic feed for cattle and other livestock can cost twice as much as conventional feed.

But you can shop organic without breaking the bank. And with each organic purchase you help keep real farmers on the land, and give a future to thousands of rural families and communities. Living wages for farm families, healthy rural com-

Smart Terms for SAVVY SHOPPERS

HERITAGE FOODS

Heritage foods are meats, fruits, veggies and grains that come from rare breeds. While it seems counterintuitive, raising and consuming heritage foods actually saves animals and vegetation from extinction while preserving genetic diversity.

ORGANIC

Organic is a federal program certified by the USDA. Farmers must raise food under strict guidelines (though they do not take animal welfare into account).

PASTURED/PASTURE-RAISED

Pastured or pasture-raised animals are raised eating grasses and other vegetation found in pastures. They are not given unnatural by-products, synthetic hormones or antibiotics to promote growth or prevent disease (antibiotics can be given to treat existing disease.) Watch out, cage-free animals could have been raised indoors in crowded conditions, and grass-fed could also be confined and merely fed grass.

munities and clean water are some of what you are buying when you choose organic.

Back at the cash register, it's important to realize that the non-organic foods in the grocery store have extra costs that aren't fairly reflected in their prices. As a shopper you may not be paying these costs, but as a taxpayer and citizen you certainly are.

Farmers' markets are places where once, twice, sometimes even four times a week, farms bring their goods to sell directly to consumers. This is a great way to get fresh food and know that you are directly supporting sustainable agriculture and the people who work hard to preserve it. To find the market closest to you, check out the USDA's nationwide list at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/map.htm>

CSAs are community-run groups that bring neighbors together to support a local farm. By paying for the entire season up front (not as expensive as it sounds – normally less than what you'd spend at the store) the community guarantees a farm's income, so that the farmer can concentrate on producing the best food to be delivered to the shareholders each week. To find your local CSA, visit <http://www.csacenter.org/statesfr.htm>.

Food cooperatives are another great way to join others in your community and together purchase better food at a lower cost. Some co-ops involve volunteer work, others have varying levels of membership. Many co-ops work directly with local farms to ensure fresh food for their members as well as community support for farms. To find your local food co-op, visit: <http://www.coopdirectory.org/directory.htm> **WVK**



JASON HOUSTON

Sustainable and efficient – computerized dairy at High Lawn Farm in Lenox, MA. All of High Lawn Farm's milk comes from on site Jersey Cows, no-antibiotics or rBST, non-homogenized, not ultra-pasteurized.



Polled Hereford (beef) calf grazes at Foggy River Farm, Great Barrington, MA.



Peppers at the Happenstance Farm stand, Eagle Bridge, NY.

JOHN HOUSTON

JOHN HOUSTON

NO ADDED HORMONES
By law, hogs and poultry cannot be administered hormones, so this label is meaningless if found on pork or poultry products. Beef and dairy cows are often given hormones to promote growth.

NATURAL
Natural meat and poultry are minimally processed and do not contain artificial colors, artificial flavors or preservatives. It does not necessarily mean that the food was raised sustainably, organically, without hormones or antibiotics or that the animals were raised humanely.

RBGH-FREE OR RBST-FREE
rBGH-free or rBST-free dairy products are produced from cows that have never been given synthetic hormones administered to boost milk production. USDA-certified organic dairy products are rBGH-free.

100 PERCENT VEGETARIAN
Animals raised on a 100 percent vegetarian diet are not fed any animal products or byproducts. It doesn't necessarily mean that they were pasture-raised, just that they dined on grasses, grains, hay or silage.

WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE'S Pure Farms, Pure Waters Campaign

Photos by Jason Houston

Rural watersheds form the sources of our streams and rivers, and the lifeblood of the communities they flow through. Protecting these watersheds requires steadfast efforts to prevent the spread of factory-style agriculture and to promote the security of family-owned, sustainable farms. The Pure Farms, Pure Waters campaign combines hard-nosed litigation with education and outreach on sustainable agriculture.

The Stick: Our lawsuit against the Environmental Protection Agency resulted in more responsible, more democratic regulation of factory farms. Our lawsuit against Smithfield Foods (see page 20) secures real protections for North Carolina's waterways. And our ongoing case against North Carolina state factory farm regulations will expand on these successes.

The Carrot: We are working with farmers, supporters and our many partners (some of whom are represented in this issue) to spread the message that there IS a viable alternative to factory raised food. Our series of Hog Summits focused on bringing farmers, environmentalists and concerned citizens together to learn more about environmentally and socially conscious food production.

As Pure Farms, Pure Waters moves forward, building on our legal and advocacy achievements, we will continue to make the best use of our twin tools, the sword and the plow. **WK**



Harvesting carrots at Gould Farm, Monterey, MA



Clockwise from left: Farmer Sean Stanton and his Berkshire breeding sow, North Plain Farm, Great Barrington, MA; Scottish Highlander beef cows, Moon In the Pond Farm, Sheffield, MA; Fly fishing in the Berkshires.



WATERKEEPERS

IN THE NEWS

EACH DAY, Waterkeepers are making headlines in local, regional and national news. We tracked the press for one month and the results are astounding. Hundreds of TV, radio and newspaper articles testify to the expertise, commitment and effectiveness of our 153 local programs. Here are some of those remarkable stories, stories of a grassroots movement that is changing the way we look at water.

JANUARY 1 Annapolis Capital
Man Gains Steam In Ridding Creek Area Of Trash

Mr. Whitcomb and other organizers of the cleanups said they wanted to focus on getting the job done, rather than assigning blame. "Our attitude was, 'Let's just get it fixed,'" said Scott Hymes, executive director of the Severn Riverkeeper Program.

JANUARY 2 Syracuse NewStandard
Activists Oppose Plan To Dredge Up Agent Orange Residue In NJ Bay

"We like when federal agencies follow their own rules," said New Jersey/New York Baykeeper Andrew Willner. "The Corps has issued a permit and contract for a project that is a navigational dredging project on a Superfund site." And that, says Willner, means the Army Corps is required to conduct what is known as a supplemental impact study before going through with its plans.

JANUARY 3 Everett Herald
Push For More Tanker Traffic Decried: Activists And Officials Worry More Tankers Could Raise The Risk Of Oil Spills In Puget Sound

"When you get right down to it, the ecological risk trumps the economic potential, and, in fact, it drives the economic potential way down," said North Sound Baykeeper Wendy Steffensen.

JANUARY 4 San Diego Union Tribune
San Diego Cuts Its Number Of Sewage Spills In Half

"I would look at San Diego as a really incredible anomaly," said Bruce Reznik, executive director of San Diego Coastkeeper... "We never thought they were going to do this so quickly."

JANUARY 5 Hamilton Spectator, Canada
Provincial Report Could Force City To Keep Beaches Clean

Both the Canadian Environmental Law Association and the Lake Ontario Waterkeeper want the ministry to require Hamilton, St. Catharines, Toronto and Kingston to ensure beaches affected by combined sewer overflows be open for swimming 95 percent of the time... Waterkeeper president Mark Mattson said yesterday, "The targets were to be met within 10 years. It's been 12 now, and we asked the ministry to move from guidelines to mandatory rules. They said they would study it."

JANUARY 5 Shallow Water Angler Magazine
Coastal Hall of Shame

"Our organizations will continue to fight for the cleanup of the Passaic River and Newark Bay, and to reclaim these waterways for the public," said New York/New Jersey Baykeeper and local angler Andrew Willner.

JANUARY 5 Statesman Journal
Waste Piles Rise With Floodwater

"Unfortunately, when we have water at such a high volume as we have, the sheer

force of the water sometimes carries undesired items into the river," said Travis Williams, executive director of Willamette Riverkeeper.

JANUARY 6 The Ocean City Dispatch
Ocean City Today

Assateague Coastkeeper Jay Charland investigated a report from West Ocean City residents of a gleaming water trail in the coastal bays last week, which he followed from the area's fishing canal to Frontier Town for over 2 1/2 miles, eventually concluding it was an oil slick.

JANUARY 9 Tallahassee Democrat
Nuclear Equipment To Move On Apalachicola

"Accidents happen," said David McLain, senior policy director for the Apalachicola Riverkeeper group. "And I will be concerned so long as there is that potential."

« **...TO RECLAIM THESE WATERWAYS FOR THE PUBLIC...**

JANUARY 9 Ventura County Star
Plant Move Means Water Quality On Area's Beaches Will Improve

...[I]n 2000, [Santa Barbara] Channelkeeper took some water samples and, in the

process, found the first evidence of resin beads at the beach... Based on these findings, Ventura Coastkeeper filed a notice in October 2002 of intent to sue Puretec for violations of the Federal Clean Water Act.

JANUARY 9 Huntington Herald Dispatch
Mountaintop Removal On National Radar

Other January/February issues of the Christian Science Monitor, E Magazine and the Waterkeeper Alliance organizational magazine Waterkeeper have also published stories about mountaintop removal in Appalachia.



...SHOWED US JUST HOW UNPREPARED AND ILL-EQUIPPED FEMA IS WHEN IT COMES TO EVACUATING HIGH POPULATION DENSITIES.

JANUARY 9 The Charlotte Observer
Mount Holly Opposes River Water For Cabarrus: Interbasin Transfer Could Have Environmental Repercussions, Catawba Riverkeeper Says

The cities of Concord and Kannapolis have asked permission to transfer up to 38 million gallons a day from the Catawba River into the Rocky River basin... Catawba Riverkeeper Donna Lisenby told City Council members on January 3 that the transfer request doesn't adequately address the effect that water removal would have on the river, especially in drought conditions.

JANUARY 11 The Beacon
Volunteers Needed for Creek Study

With a \$239,000 grant from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, an effort will be mounted to identify any sources of pollution and areas of erosion. Persons who have stepped forward to monitor the creek are a diverse group, according to Faith Zerbe, monitoring coordinator with the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, one of the partners involved in the project.

JANUARY 12 Pensacola News Journal
Coastkeeper Takes New Name And Adds New Board Members

The Pensacola Gulf Coastkeeper changed its name [to Emerald Coastkeeper], appointed a new Coastkeeper and welcomed four new board members Wednesday.

JANUARY 12 Mid-Hudson News Network
Three Of Four Indian Point Counties Don't Sign Annual Certification Letter

Lisa Rainwater van Suntum, Riverkeeper's Indian Point person said [events] last August and September "showed us just how unprepared and ill-equipped FEMA is when it comes to evacuating high population densities." Add to that, Indian Point "had a slew of safety problems this past year," she said.

JANUARY 13 U.S. Newswire
Environmental, Public Health Groups Counter Industry Demand for Blank Check to Pollute Waters; Supreme Court to Hear Clean Water Act Cases

Earthjustice, representing American Rivers, Environmental Defense, National Audubon Society, Natural Resources Defense Council, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Sierra Club, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council and Waterkeeper Alliance, filed the amicus brief on the side of the U.S. government in the two consolidated Clean Water Act cases, *Rapanos v. U.S.* and *U.S. v. Carabell*, that the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear February 21.

JANUARY 14 Asbury Park Press
Rezoning Plan Irks Residents of Highlands

Deborah A. Mans, a policy director for NY/NJ Baykeeper, a Keyport-based environmental group, urged planners to withdraw the proposal because she said residents were not given adequate notice about it.

JANUARY 14 Times & Transcript
Riverkeeper Survey Shows: 11 Of 12 Metro Candidates Say Open River Gates

Eleven candidates out of 12 running in the three federal ridings directly impacted by the controversy over the Petitcodiac River causeway favour opening the structure, a survey by the Petitcodiac Riverkeeper says.

JANUARY 14 Myrtle Beach Sun News
NC, SC Authorities Try To Divide Limited Water In Booming Area

Donna Lisenby, executive director of the Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation and a leading activist against the Concord-Kannapolis proposal, said those numbers are evidence that the state needs to be more careful in granting inter-basin transfers.

JANUARY 15 Gainesville Times
Local Pair Put On Influential List: Kit Dunlap, Jimmy Tallent Are Honored By Georgia Magazine

Georgia Trend's 2006 listing of the 100 most influential Georgians includes two people from Northeast Georgia. Others with ties to the region on the list of 100 were Sally Bethea, executive director of the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper...

JANUARY 16 Secaucus Reporter
In The Same Boat: Documentary Tells Of Recent Battles To Preserve Meadowlands

"There were fierce battles in the beginning, but with time, everyone came to see that it was in the state's best interest to preserve the Empire Tract and to think in terms of ecotourism about the river," said Captain Bill Sheehan, a Secaucus resident who heads the Hackensack Riverkeeper environmental group. "Now everyone is pretty much on the same page."

JANUARY 17 Nevada City Yuba Net
Baykeeper and State Parks Reach Agreement on Toxic Legacy of Empire Mine

The Deltakeeper Chapter of Baykeeper and the California Department of Parks & Recreation signed a consent decree on January 13 to prevent hundred year-old toxic waste at Empire Mine State Historic Park from continuing to pollute nearby waterways.

JANUARY 17 Ashbury Park Press
Tract Of Land Spurs Debate

NY/NJ Baykeeper [conservation director] Greg Remaud recently met with Holmdel officials to discuss the possible sale of Hazlet's development rights for a 14-acre tract of land known as the Mahoras Preserve, for incorporation into a proposed greenway.

WATERKEEPERS IN THE NEWS

JANUARY 17 The Jersey Journal **Calling All Treehuggers**

Does the sight of cattails put you in a trance? Do you collect sea shells? Are you enthralled by blue herons? Then, if you're a college-bound high school senior with good grades, you may want to apply for the sixth annual Ron Vellekamp Environmental Scholarship offered by Hackensack Riverkeeper.

JANUARY 17 The Eureka Reporter **Harbor District Gets OK From EPA To Start Dredging Work**

The maintenance dredging, which is done every seven to 10 years, was put on hold in September when information by Humboldt Baykeeper was presented to the commission, identifying elevated levels of cancer-causing dioxin in the bay's sediment.

JANUARY 18 San Diego Union Tribune **Environmentalists: Georgia Marinas Will Boost Traffic In Waters Of Endangered Whales**

Gordon Rogers, the Satilla Riverkeeper and one of the plaintiffs in the court challenge, said the legal fight aims to set precedent for how Georgia safeguards rare species and salt marshes as new developments rise along the state's 100-mile coastline.

JANUARY 18 Hamilton Spectator, Canada **Fallout From Flying Rocks Set To Land In Court Feb. 7**

"Ministry of Environment investigators took up the case in summer 2004 after Lake Ontario Waterkeeper and Environment Hamilton submitted a brief with media reports, legal precedents and a description of the incident," a release from Lake Ontario Waterkeeper said. The joint brief had called for the ministry to investigate "quickly and diligently."

JANUARY 19 Costa Mesa Daily Pilot **Education On Ice**

This school year, [Orange County] Coastkeeper started a program called WHALES, an acronym for Watershed Heroes – Actions Linking Education to Stewardship. Through the program, Coastkeeper works with schools to teach subjects related to water quality and nature preservation.

JANUARY 19 Ontario Mirror Guardian **Liberals Pledge To Clean Up Waters, Toronto's Waterfront Would Be Included In Its Plan**

The money, which the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority would direct to restore lost habitat and clean up toxins in water and sediment, is welcome at a time when beach closures are at a "disgraceful level" – Bluffer's Park in Scarborough was off-limits for 92 percent of the last swimming season – and there are more restrictions on eating Lake Ontario fish than ever, said Mark Mattson, president of Lake Ontario Waterkeeper.

JANUARY 20 The Bergen Record **Not All Smooth Sailing Over Ferry Grant**

Bill Sheehan, the Hackensack Riverkeeper, who also serves on the Open Space Trust Fund Committee, was disappointed the county will be awarding the money despite the change of plans. "They came to the committee seeking money for an open space and recreation

time, we will see improvement in both groundwater and surface-water quality as a result of this settlement," Fleischli said. "Our focus will now turn to convincing the rest of the industry to follow Smithfield's lead."

JANUARY 22 The Sun News **A Quarry Quandary**

Waccamaw Riverkeeper Hamp Shuping is among those who say mines are a danger to the vast wetland and rivers of Horry County.

JANUARY 23 The Wall Street Journal **Environmental Suits Are Settled; Water-Protection Plan To Be Set**

Smithfield Foods, Inc. agreed to implement new environmental measures at hog production facilities in North Carolina, settling two lawsuits filed by an environmental group. Waterkeeper Alliance, a grassroots advocacy group led by Robert F. Kennedy Jr., had targeted Smithfield as part of its broader cam-

...AGREED TO IMPLEMENT NEW ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES AT HOG PRODUCTION FACILITIES IN NORTH CAROLINA



project and turned it into a transportation infrastructure project," Sheehan said. "I felt and I feel that that's a violation of the public trust."

JANUARY 20 Ocean City Today **County Makes Pier Restrictions Permanent**

Jay Charland, Coastkeeper for the Assateague Coastal Trust, and Dave Blazer, executive director of the Maryland Coastal Bays Program, said they supported the bill.

JANUARY 20 Raleigh News and Observer
Deal Requires New Measures To Stop Hog And Manure Pollution
Steve Fleischli, the executive director of the Waterkeeper Alliance, said that the agreement represented a milestone in efforts to protect North Carolina's waterways. "Over

paign against factory-style farms.

JANUARY 23 Macon Telegraph **Growing Problem: Unchecked Building Boom Could Be Adding To Erosion Woes**

"The whole system has failed," said James Holland, the Altamaha Riverkeeper. "You see everywhere mud going into streams, and you can't get anything done about it without a lawyer. And that's not right."

JANUARY 24 Northwest Newschannel 8 **Superfund Milestone Achieved On Willamette River**

Travis Williams, Executive Director of Willamette Riverkeeper, said he remains concerned that "what remains in the groundwater doesn't make it to the river."

JANUARY 25 The Melbourne Times, Australia
**Recovery Begins Under
Riverkeeper's Eye**

The Yarra Riverkeeper formed in late 2004 from representatives of several community groups, to give the river a unified and influential voice. There are signs the group could become hard to ignore. The Riverkeeper has taken on developers further upstream and been vocal on several issues, including sustainable development, and rethinking how we deal with stormwater.

JANUARY 25 New York Daily News
**Group Says State Hides Oil-
Spill Info**

"We'd been told that they were getting the oil out of the ground as quickly as possible," he [Basil Seggos] said. But [Hudson] Riverkeeper's investigation has revealed the state was not moving as quickly as it could on the cleanup, he said.

JANUARY 25 Washington Post
**Catfish in Maryland River
Have High Cancer Rates**

Drew Koslow, South Riverkeeper, said anglers eat the South River's catfish, perch and pickerel... "A lot of kids and adults swim in the river, [and] we don't have the authority to close it to swimming" or fishing, Koslow said.

JANUARY 25 Seattle Post Intelligencer
**EPA Proposes To Tighten Rules
On Use Of Sewage 'Bypass'**

"No matter how you roll the dice, it all seems like more sewage being allowed into Puget Sound," said Sue Joerger, executive director of Puget Soundkeeper Alliance. "My biggest problem is it doesn't provide incentives for communities to truly treat their sewage, to increase their sewage-treatment capacity."

JANUARY 25 Contra Costa Times
**Suit Alleges That City's Water
System Pollutes Bay**

The environmental protection group [San Francisco] Baykeeper announced on Monday that it had served a suit against Richmond, Veolia Water North America Operating Services and the West County Wastewater District for dumping large amounts of untreated sewage into the bay mostly during heavy rains.

JANUARY 26 The California Aggie
**Hazardous Waste Prohibited
From Disposal In Regular Trash
Pick-Up**

"During the last five months, Richmond has not taken concrete steps to fix its system or made any real commitments to do so," said Sejal Choksi, San Francisco Baykeeper. "The city continues to foul its streets, creeks and popular fishing spots with raw sewage, creating a public health problem."

JANUARY 27 Jacksonville Business Journal
**New Discharge Restrictions For
St. Johns River**

St. Johns Riverkeeper Neil Armingeon said his group will fight DEP's attempt to weaken water quality standards for the river.

JANUARY 27 Salem Statesman Journal
**Ship-Breaking Firm Shifts Its
Search To Portland Area**

"The harbor is going to be industrial," [said Travis Williams, Willamette Riverkeeper. "The question is: Is [ship-breaking] done in a way that is safe for the harbor and doesn't replicate problems we've had in the past?"

JANUARY 27 The Journal News
**Lower Hudson Valley Groups
Win Environmental Grant**

Riverkeeper, through the Leafpack Network Program, sixth- to 12th-grade students and their teachers from New York City and Westchester County will investigate local river ecosystems by creating an artificial leaf pack and examining it over time to discover aquatic insects that serve as indicators of stream health.

JANUARY 29 New York Times
**The Rift Over a Deeper
Delaware**

Maya van Rossum of Delaware Riverkeeper Network in Philadelphia, said that dredging would churn up in the sediment, causing those same toxins to flow into the bay, harming marine life.

JANUARY 30 The Eureka Reporter
**State Announces Non-Native
Organisms Protection Plan**

"California desperately needs strong controls on ballast water dumping," said Leo P. O'Brien, Executive Director of Baykeeper, an environmental advocacy orga-

nization. "The San Francisco Bay-Delta estuary, in particular, is one of the most invaded estuaries on earth, with a new species establishing itself on average every 14 weeks."



**...FOR DUMPING
LARGE AMOUNTS OF
UNTREATED SEWAGE
INTO THE BAY MOSTLY
DURING HEAVY RAINS.**

**...CALIFORNIA DESPERATELY
NEEDS STRONG CONTROLS ON
BALLAST WATER DUMPING...**



JANUARY 31 The Oregonian
**Riverkeepers Sue Over
Storm-Water Permits**

Permits issued by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to municipalities in the Portland area don't set enforceable pollution limits for storm water, which may result in discharges that harm the Columbia and Willamette rivers, the Tualatin, Willamette and Columbia Riverkeeper groups claimed in the suit. **WK**

One in six American women of childbearing years has unsafe levels of mercury in their body.

I was one of them.

By Annabeth Gish

Fish absorb methylmercury through the water and their prey, accumulating larger and larger amounts as it goes up the food chain until it reaches us, at the top of the food chain.

As an actress living in Los Angeles, I am lucky to have ready and privileged access to organic restaurants, fitness trainers, nutrition counselors, yoga instructors and holistic health practitioners on the cutting edge of traditional and alternative medicine. But two years ago heavy metal toxicity, specifically mercury poisoning, became a real and alarming health threat for me.

My doctor had suggested that I get tested for mercury because emerging data showed a dangerous spectrum of health effects from mercury exposure, particularly for pregnant women. My doctor's concern proved absolutely correct.

The results of my diagnostic tests revealed mercury levels exceeding twice EPA's maximum safe level. I was shocked. Even though I wasn't planning for pregnancy right away, the discovery that my body could potentially be toxic for a baby was startling. Though there were no symptoms, I discovered there were serious concerns just for me as a woman, before even worrying about carrying a child.

I had no knowledge of terms such as heavy metal toxicity, or total body burden, which refers to the buildup of environmental toxins in our bodies. As a longtime nature lover and (so I thought) conscientious advocate for the environment, I was concerned about the danger of chemical pollutants and carcinogens; pesticides and nuclear waste – but my concern was superficial at best. Until I began to learn of the real effects of heavy metal toxicity within my own body, and the potential of having my own child's health compromised, I did not grasp the urgency surrounding this

issue. Nor did I take personally the extent certain agencies of our government and in particular this current administration are complicit in contaminating not only our planet, but also our population. It has been an eye-opening journey.

Mercury is a naturally occurring metal that can take a variety of forms. All are toxic, but the most common type of mercury exposure is dietary exposure to methylmercury, an organic form that is found in fish and shellfish. Methylmercury is formed when elemental mercury (mostly from coal-fired power plants) is released from smokestacks into the air, falling into our soil and waterways. Fish absorb the methylmercury through the water and their prey, accumulating larger and larger amounts as it goes up the food chain until it reaches us, at the top of the food chain. In our country coal-fired power plants release almost 50 tons of mercury into the air every year. (See *Waterkeeper* magazine Fall 2004.)

According to information published online by the Physicians for Social Responsibility, short term exposure to high concentrations can cause harmful effects on the nervous, immune and respiratory systems. Chronic exposure can permanently damage the brain and kidneys at any age and has been recognized as a possible co-factor in diseases like Alzheimer's, MS, ALS and Autism. But the developing brain of a fetus is by far the most vulnerable organ system as methylmercury is a potent neurotoxin that passes through the placenta and accumulates there. It can cause mental and developmental retardation. Nursing mothers also can pass mercury through their breast milk.



The results of my diagnostic tests revealed mercury levels exceeding twice the maximum expected level.

Author Annabeth Gish, pictured here with Lola, has an expansive list of film and television credits, including President Bartlet's older daughter on NBC's "The West Wing."

I was faced with a troubling trade-off. Either consume my primary source of protein, specifically salmon and tuna, rich with essential fatty acids and other well-documented nutritional benefits and risk my health via unknown amounts of mercury, or deny myself a food source that should be rightfully available to me and protected by environmental standards. This is a dilemma we all now face.

While the FDA has issued guidelines for fish consumption for women of childbearing years to counteract the effects of mercury, there has been conflict over the accuracy of the advisories. I wonder where our government is in terms of providing truly adequate warnings, aggressive outreach and education to women. For me personally, it has not been an easy task to determine recommendations that are consistent, although the

consensus seems to be that coldwater fish such as wild Salmon, Tilapia, Haddock and (gulp) Sardines are the safest.

Notwithstanding my disillusionment at their failure to make food options safe and nourishing (what does EPA stand for anyway?) I am upset by what I have learned of the deference afforded to polluters over the health of our present and future generations. Under the Clinton Administration there was hope our government might make significant progress in reducing emissions from coal fired power plants (EPA claimed a 90 percent cut was achievable and affordable), but under President Bush we have seen EPA offer pollution credits rather than reducing their actual emissions (and now the goal has been cut to 60 percent over the next 29 years.)

To me, it is more than ironic to hear Bush's rhetoric of "No Child Left Behind" and watch an administration that is obsessed with fetal rights given their blatant disregard of this risk. Mercury is toxic to everyone, but most especially to babies in utero. Something must be done to stop mercury pollution.

I have successfully lowered my levels to where it is safer now for me to get pregnant. That is success on a small personal scale. But on a much larger and more imminent planetary scale I believe it is time for all of us to sound the alarm. Time for education and advocacy – for cleaner forms of energy and to clean up coal plants and other polluting industries that are contaminating our precious water supplies and food sources. Our lives and our children depend on it. **WVK**

Spirit Fish AND THE *Mighty Murray*

By Paul Sinclair, Waterkeepers Australia

Henry Jones loves fish so much he bought his wife a commercial deep fryer so she could cook fresh fish and chips for their kids and grandkids.

All his life, Henry has been a commercial fisherman, along with five generations of his family. But today, when Henry wants to show his grandkids silver perch, blackfish, catfish or Murray cod, the fish that made up his catch 20 years ago, he can only show them pictures. These fish are now extinct from the Coorong, the huge wetland system at the end of the great Murray River system. Henry believes that two-thirds of the Coorong is now dead.

The Murray is Australia's greatest river. For much of its length, the Murray flows through country that can feel as hot and dry as the Sahara Desert. It meanders 2,570 km (1,600 miles) from its headwaters near the east coast of the continent to the Southern Ocean. But 75 percent of the Murray's flow is removed before it reaches the ocean, mostly for irrigation, and an estimated 10 percent of native fish populations in the Murray remain from pre-European settlement.

Murray cod, Australia's biggest and longest-living inland native fish, started

spiralling towards extinction in the 1950s. Because the river can no longer naturally replenish healthy populations of cod, over one million fish are artificially raised and then poured into the Murray River system each year. Astounding it is, that a river that provided people with Murray cod for more than 30,000 years now relies on people to provide it with Murray cod.

Murray cod are a spirit fish. Aboriginal creation stories tell of how the meandering river courses were formed by the thrashing body of a giant cod trying to escape the spear of a hunter. When the hunter caught the giant cod near

the Coorong, he threw his spear deep into the fish's body. Flesh from the speared fish flew into the air and fell back into the river, to become the other 27 species of native fish who call the river home. Aboriginal peoples along the river are still fighting to be recognized as stewards of the great fish and its river.

Murray cod has been feeding people for thousands of years. About 25,000 years ago a young woman that archaeologists named "Mungo Woman" was cremated in the Murray River Basin. The



Fisherman with a Murray Cod

PAUL WHITE

ritual cremation of Mungo Woman is the oldest evidence ever found on Earth of human communities showing respect for the dead. Nearby were the charred bones of animals that had sustained her life. They included the remains of Murray cod.

For 100 years, trainloads of cod supplied Australian cities for their dinner tables, but today not a single wild Murray cod can be found in a city market. The spirit fish has disappeared from the lives of many Australians. Henry Jones hasn't caught a Murray cod in the Coorong for 15 years.

When I ask Henry how he feels about the catastrophe facing the Murray he says: "Mate, this is a unique place but in the last 20 years we've lost so much. We don't have a right to do this to the river. I won't accept it. While there's a breath in my mouth I'll keep telling people what the Coorong was like."

A major cause of the Murray's decline is unsustainable water-use. The dairy and rice industries in the Murray river system use almost four times more water than all the 8,800,000 people who live in the cities of Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide. Most of what's grown with irrigation water is exported. So while Australia is the driest inhabited continent, it is the fourth largest exporter of virtual water on Earth. And while irrigated agriculture accounts for about 70 percent of all the water used in Australia, it contributes less than one percent to Australia's Gross Domestic Product and five percent of our exports. It does not make sense for one sector of the Australian economy to control so much of our water.

Unsustainable water use, coupled with drought – which all Australian governments agree has been made worse by human-induced climate change – is delivering a knockout punch to vast areas of red gum forests. River red gum forests are home to birds, bugs and reptiles who need the river to regularly rise up through its banks to survive. The floods that once sustained these forests are now captured in dams and used to grow rice or grass for cows. In 2002 about 50 percent of the mighty river red gum trees along a 1,000 kilometre stretch of river were dead or dying; two years later, the number had skyrocketed to 75 percent.

Stewardship of the Murray means taking action now to recover water for the river. Scientists report that a 30 percent drop in water consumption will go far. With just under half its natural flow, the Murray could sustain its land, fish, birds and water quality. Though governments have admitted the river is in trouble, they have committed to reduce water use by only five percent by 2008. So far, not a drop of that water has been returned.

But the Murray has little time left. Governments should buy water from irrigators at a fair price now, or require them to give up a percentage of their water allocation to the river each year, until the river has enough water to be a river again.

Henry Jones, a fisherman in South Australia, stands on a beach in the Corrang National Park holding cockles.



Hundreds of thousands of Australians frequent the Murray's banks each year to fish, camp and relax. If these people contribute to the renewal of their cherished river through price levies, governments could generate enough money to pay for the ongoing repair of the Murray River System.

Irrigation industries, too, should have stronger obligations to the river. One reason why so much water is taken out of the Murray is that it's seemingly free; the ecological costs are passed on to the taxpayer. The price of irrigation water should include a charge that can be reinvested back into the Murray's renewal.

People who buy products that are produced using Murray water should also know how water efficient and environmentally responsible the producer is. Consumers should be able to choose the good from the bad. This already happens with products as diverse as washing machines, heaters and eggs – so why not apply it to rice, dairy, vegetables and wine grown with Murray River water?

Stewardship means taking pride in our country, our land, our water. Could any Australian honestly say they are proud

to send Murray cod into extinction? Over 1,000 kilometres of dead and dying river red gum is not a tribute to our greatness as a nation. Restoring the Murray, creating a sustainable irrigation industry and dramatically cutting our greenhouse gas

emissions will be something of real and lasting benefit to those Australians who are still a twinkle in their mother and father's eyes.

Australians have a right to clean water, to swim in water free of disease and poison, and to enjoy abundant wild native fish. It is the duty of our government to protect clean water and river systems on behalf of the Australian people. And it is our duty to hold government officials accountable when they idly watch our precious river systems collapse.

Our challenge is to bring together communities and individuals who will fight in the defense of these rights and force governments and industry to make food production sustainable, urban water-use wise and river systems healthy.

The Murray can be revived. But we need to rediscover pride in our country and create a future to be proud of. When we do, the river will be renewed. Wild Murray cod will once again be so abundant that they will grace our dinner tables. Henry Jones will then be able to put away his pictures and take his grandkids fishing for real Murray cod down in the Coorong. **WKK**

The signs are plain to see:

- ▶ 3,000 beach closures every summer
- ▶ 100% of Great Lakes fish have consumption restrictions
- ▶ 2/3 of wetlands have disappeared
- ▶ The commercial fishery is less than 15% its original size
- ▶ 160 alien species threaten natural plants and wildlife
- ▶ Pharmaceuticals in human sewage are mutating fish and frogs
- ▶ Diporeia – shrimp-like amphipod that serves as the bedrock of the Great Lakes food chain – are extinct in some lakes and disappearing rapidly from the rest
- ▶ Six million people drink water contaminated with tritium from nuclear plants
- ▶ 300 different toxic contaminants have been found in the Great Lakes

And new threats are emerging:

- ▶ New and increasingly toxic contaminants are discovered in the food chain every year
- ▶ Ontario is negotiating to build at least one new nuclear plant on Lake Ontario
- ▶ Hundreds of thousands of people from dozens of towns just outside the Great Lakes Basin are eyeing water as local supplies dry up



GREAT STAKES

Great Lakes on the Verge of Collapse

Each one of these problems is enough to signal the need for Canada and the United States to immediately increase protections for the Great Lakes: more money to bring back lost resources, more officers to enforce our environmental laws and more willingness to stand up to polluters who threaten the few natural assets we have left.

We are proud of the work of Waterkeepers and our peers, but citizens alone cannot stop the collapse of the Great Lakes. We need vision in government and commitment to law and order. The stakes are enormous.

Above: Great Lakes from space. Light green indicates algal blooms and sediment pollution.

PHOTO: SEAWIFS PROJECT, NASA/GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER, AND ORBIMAGE

WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE CALLS FOR MORE STRINGENT GREAT LAKES PROTECTIONS

Annex 2001 Opens Spigot to Water Bottlers

By Lauren Brown, Waterkeeper Alliance

On December 13, 2005, a council of the eight Great Lakes U.S. governors and two Canadian Premiers signed agreements with some important safeguards to discourage new water diversions out of the Great Lakes watershed. Unfortunately, they also opened several dangerous loopholes that will allow bottlers to remove Great Lakes water.

The agreements, called “Annex 2001,” were the culmination of a four-year process involving various stakeholders from around the U.S. and Canada. The goal was to strengthen protections for the aquatic integrity of the entire Great Lakes Basin.

The Great Lakes Basin is the watershed of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River upstream from the Trois-Rivieres Quebec. It includes the geographic areas surrounding each body of water where water drains towards the lakes and the river. The lakes are vital for the well-being of Americans and Canadians alike – 40 million people on both sides of the border use these waters for drinking, food production, work and recreation.

Waterkeeper Alliance and others in the environmental community commented on the draft agreements this past summer. The Alliance noted then that the council did not go far enough to protect the basin and urged a stronger agreement. Unfortunately, with its final agreements, the council chose to ignore almost all of these recommendations.

The Council of Great Lakes Governors missed out on an important opportunity to provide proper, effective safeguards for this vital watershed. Among the more serious shortcomings of Annex 2001 is its failure to adequately control diversions of water to “straddling” counties. Water that is diverted from the basin is not replenished by nature. The agreement sets up a slippery slope whereby communities outside of the basin – with no hydrological connection to the Great Lakes – are free to divert water in much the same way that Basin communities can. The mining of underground water by counties outside the basin could prove the death of this important watershed.

Another major concern is the exemption of bottled water from the definition of diversion. The Public Trust Doctrine states

that water resources are held in trust by the government for all people. The agreements pay lip service to this doctrine, while creating loopholes that allow bottled water companies to freely withdraw public water for private sale.

Waterkeeper Alliance and its Great Lakes member programs remain committed to ensuring the future integrity of the Great Lakes Basin. To that end, we will continue to advocate for strict limitations on all types of diversions and a more protective Annex agreement. Though Annex 2001 is final, we are now urging legislators to adopt stronger implementing laws with regard to conservation, bottled water regulations and diversion proposals. We are also pushing states to recognize hydrological boundaries, rather than political boundaries, and ban shipping bottled water out of the basin.

Despite disappointment in the final agreements, Waterkeeper Alliance remains cautiously hopeful that future steps will be taken to ensure the ecological health of the Great Lakes.

Beach combers on Lake Michigan dunes, IN, with power plant in background.



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, RICHARD REAR

Protecting the Great Lakes

FROM ANNEX AND OVERUSE

MINNESOTA SEA GRANT BILL KIELCZEWSKI

By U.S. Representative Dennis J. Kucinich

The Great Lakes inspire a strong connection with the millions of people who live on her shores. Connecting with the Great Lakes is personal as well as collective. In my lifetime, the Great Lakes have been a source of recreation and sustenance, as well as conscience-calling moments. I'm thinking of the shameful chapter in history when the Cuyahoga River, which empties into Lake Erie, caught fire. Our awareness and behavior changed as a result.

Today, a threat that could eclipse the more commonly known threats, like chemical contamination and invasive species, now confronts us. The ongoing challenges of overuse and systematic under-replenishment could now be catastrophically magnified by new trade laws that will exacerbate, not solve, the problem. I am concerned about the future of the Great Lakes.

Maintaining the quantity of water in the Great Lakes is a well-established problem. There are several major diversions and withdrawals already allowed under law, including a diversion of water for the City of Chicago, which pulls two billion gallons per day from Lake Michigan. Urban sprawl

has created new demands for water while robbing aquifers of the chance to be replenished (by paving over previously permeable ground). Water supplies that are contaminated or depleted need to be replaced. In 2004, the U.S. Geological Survey found that ground water is now flowing away from Lake Michigan instead of replenishing it.

There are good reasons to think the demand for this already strained water source will increase significantly. Most educated guesses say that evaporation resulting from increased temperatures associated with climate change will result in significant water losses. The population in the basin is expected to grow from 34 million to 50 million people in the next 30 years. Many experts fear that the thirsty and rapidly growing southwestern U.S. will need water so desperately that it will soon become financially viable for them to divert it from the Great Lakes. And that region is expected to experience more frequent, prolonged and more severe droughts as a result of climate change.

Finally, and perhaps most perniciously, attempts to privatize Great Lakes water pose an unprecedented threat. Currently,

the only way anyone can withdraw or divert water from the Lakes in significant quantities is to get the approval of every governor of all eight states in the Great Lakes basin. Acknowledging that some diversions of water for the public good may be necessary, the eight Great Lakes governors and two Canadian premiers in the Great Lakes basin decided there should be guidelines created to specify the conditions under which an entity can be expected to get approval for a new or increased withdrawal. The negotiations between the Great Lakes Governors and Premiers, which concluded in December of 2005, proposed groundbreaking levels of protection as written in the Annex Implementing Agreements (Annex). Unfortunately, bottled water companies also managed to leave themselves a loophole that could pave the way for a massive privatization and export of Great Lakes water.

The bottled water language was cleverly written. The Annex needed to respond to the widespread desire for a ban on diversions that was exemplified by the public outcry that squashed two recent efforts by companies to privatize Great Lakes water in bulk. "In bulk" is the key. The language

redefines water that is in containers of 5.7 gallons (20 liters) or less as a product, not a natural resource managed by the public for the benefit of the public. It therefore exempts bottled water from the ban on bulk water withdrawals. In other words, in order to export a seemingly indefatigable amount of water and make a handsome profit from it, you need only to put it in bottles instead of trucks or enormous tankers. It is a loophole big enough to float a tanker through.

Once Great Lakes water is legally defined as a commodity instead of a public resource, the door to private gain at the expense of public benefit is pried open a few inches. After that comes the effort to swing it wide open. Laws or regulations that may be designed to protect an essential natural resource like the Great Lakes can be challenged in court by businesses because they are restricting trade. For example, let's say that Ohio decided that excessive withdrawals by a bottled water company were irreparably damaging the Great Lakes and they decided to reduce or stop the withdrawals. The company, knowing the water was a product and not a public resource, would be able to use the Commerce Clause of the Constitution or the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to challenge Ohio's efforts to pro-



tect the Lakes. In fact, NAFTA gives companies the right to sue governments in situations like this for future profits they might lose. That would have the chilling effect of discouraging all governments from trying to protect the Great Lakes. Indeed, once water is a legal "product," even the part of the Annex that provides worthwhile protection of the Lakes could be challenged. We could be left with private control over much of a life-giving resource.

Privatization of a commons is often destabilizing and regressive. The resource becomes less reliably accessible and its quality can decline because public oversight is absent. A formerly free resource can then become too expensive for the most vulnerable to afford. In fact, this is a primary reason that myriad communities in the U.S. and all over the world have fought efforts to privatize water systems.

Furthermore, contrary to what ideological conservatives often espouse, privatization frequently decreases efficiency. For example, the added costs of profit, CEO salaries, marketing and administration can be a strong driver of increased costs. By encouraging Great Lakes water to be shipped in smaller bottles, the privatization loophole in the Annex creates incentives for tremendous waste. The plastic in water bottles is made from petroleum, bringing the social, political and environmental problems that come with it. The manufacturing process creates hazardous and toxic waste like vinyl chloride. Plastic bottles require hundreds of years or more to degrade in a landfill with no light or water to aid in their breakdown. And wherever trash is burned, plastics create highly toxic dioxins that are released into the air, falling down on our soil and roofs. Thanks to countless studies, we now know the toxic waste from the manufacturing and disposal process is disproportionately borne by people of color.

There is another equity component to consider. The Annex rightly contains requirements for the public to reduce its water usage in recognition of the fact that we are already withdrawing more than is sustainable. We will be asked to take shorter showers, install water saving fixtures, load our dishwashers more fully and water our lawns more judiciously. These are low effort, high return behavior modifications that we, as citizens, can do to help take care of the natural world on which we depend for life.

But the Annex puts the water saved by the collective actions of conscientious Great Lakes residents into millions of bottles and ships them out of the Great Lakes basin. Where conservation efforts would normally go to enhancing the public good in the form of restoring flows to the Great Lakes, they



AP PHOTO/CHARLES DHARAPAK

Congressman Dennis Kucinich speaks as country music legend Willie Nelson looks on during a news conference about the importance of revitalizing family farming on Capitol Hill Wednesday, Oct. 6, 2004. They said that the government must commit all necessary resources to encourage growth in family farming and protect farmers so that they can continue to be economically viable.

would now go to the profits of bottled water companies and their parent companies. It sets into international law the untenable idea that peoples' personal sacrifices benefit corporations rather than the common good. This could be the end of environmental altruism. It is a dangerous precedent to set. As President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

The next step for the Annex is that it has to be approved by each of the Great Lakes state and provincial legislatures. If it moves through unchanged, Congress then approves it. If any state amends it, it will have to go through each of the other state and provincial legislatures again. Since it took over five years for the Governors and Premiers to get it to this stage, there will be considerable resistance to making any changes. Fighting the bottled water loophole will not be easy. Powerful corporations will support it (and tout their green "credentials" in the process). But principled organizations like Waterkeeper, along with attentive community groups and elected officials like me are committed to protecting the Great Lakes, our common heritage, from privatization. I hope you will stand with us.



Healing the Great Lakes

WEGE FOUNDATION

By Peter M. Wege

The Great Lakes are an extraordinary natural resource – a national treasure for both the United States and Canada. The Great Lakes make up one-fifth of the world’s surface fresh water. They provide drinking water to more than 35 million Americans and are an unparalleled recreational and economic resource as well. For decades dedicated environmental groups and philanthropists have worked hard to protect the Great Lakes. But, in the fall of 2003, I realized that a more coordinated effort bringing together national, regional, state and local groups was needed if we were going to heal our Great Lakes. I knew it would be the single most important project I have undertaken since creating the Wege Foundation in 1968.

In late May 2004, the Wege Foundation convened over seventy of the leading environmentalists, ecologists, scientists and academicians in the country at Steelcase University in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Over two long days of intense work sessions, these high-powered thinkers drafted a call for restoring the lakes so significant, I call it the “Magna Carta for the Great Lakes.” They said:

Our magnificent Great Lakes are under siege. Containing over 90 percent of America’s surface fresh water, the lakes sustain millions of people and diverse wildlife. The lakes are vital to the region’s economy and way of life. But we have contaminated the water, sediments and fish; we have introduced alien invasive species that are destroying the Lakes’ natural ecology. To save our national treasure, governments, businesses and citizens need to cooperate now in protecting and restoring the Great Lakes.

To restore the Great Lakes, they identified three priority threats and called for federal government leadership to take the lead in addressing them:

1. WATER QUALITY: Great Lakes restoration and protection strategies must be designed and implemented to address the whole integrated ecosystem. We must insure that the waters are safe for drinking and swimming, the fish are safe to eat, native fish are healthy and reproducing, and the system supports a vibrant economy. The federal government must take a leading role to focus federal agencies on the agenda at hand.

2. INVASIVE AND EXOTIC SPECIES: Invasive species in the Great Lakes are destroying our environment and economy. Immediate actions need to be taken to prevent the introduction of new invasive species and remediate the problems caused by those already here. These steps require the federal government to establish accountability, authority and adequate funding. Without their action, the Great Lakes’ ecosystem will crash.

3. CLEANUP CONCENTRATED TOXIC POLLUTION: The health of people, fish and wildlife and our economy are adversely affected daily by a legacy of toxic pollution sites throughout the Great Lakes. Seventeen years ago the U.S. Government identified 31 U.S. areas of concern and to date none have been cleaned up and restored. Federal actions to deal with their restoration and the restoration of other toxic hot spots have failed because they have not been well directed or adequately funded.

Detailed recommendations for the federal role in addressing these threats were developed by the experts and included in

Healing Our Waters: An Agenda for Great Lakes Restoration.

Finally, and perhaps most important, the experts called for a new coordinated effort among environmental groups to enhance awareness of the Great Lakes – among residents of the region and elsewhere – and to build a national constituency for federal action to restore the lakes.

Responding to this challenge, over 50 national, regional, state and local environmental groups have launched the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes (HOW-GL) coalition. Funded by a five-year, \$5 million grant by the Wege Foundation, the coalition is loosely modeled on other successful environmental coalitions such as the Everglades Coalition and the Clean Water Network. According to Coalition Regional Co-Chair Andy Buchsbaum, director of National Wildlife Federation's Great Lakes office, "the coalition is an expression of the public's will to protect and restore the defining feature of the region, our Great Lakes. It's the driving force in shaping the restoration plan and in securing the necessary resources from Congress and the states to get it done." National Co-chair Tom Kiernan, President of National Parks Conservation Association, was extensively involved in developing and securing congressional approval of the comprehensive Everglades restoration plan. The Coalition's 15-member steering committee develops an annual workplan based on which the Wege Foundation funds are distributed to member groups for specific tasks, including public opinion research, grassroots organizing, public education and staffing the Coalition.

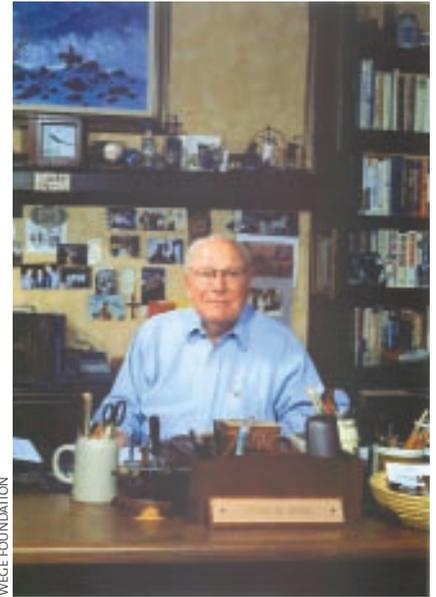
The Coalition has played a critical role working with a new federal task force to develop an ambitious \$20 billion draft

restoration plan for the Great Lakes. The interagency task force was created in 2004 by a presidential executive order and is chaired by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In addition to other federal agencies, the task force involves the Council of Great Lakes Governors, Great Lakes tribes, the Great Lakes Cities Initiative, the Great Lakes Congressional Task Force and representatives of various stakeholders, including member environmental groups of the new HOW-GL Coalition. The resulting restoration plan for the Great Lakes was endorsed by federal, state and local officials at a December 2005 press conference in Chicago. It's an ambitious plan, but one that would leave our children healthy Great Lakes if only it's fully implemented. And there's the challenge.

Now, the Healing Our Waters – Great Lakes Coalition is turning its attention to broad public outreach. Unless citizens across the country who love their home watersheds appreciate the significance of the Great Lakes, members of Congress from outside the region are unlikely to support the federal resources required for restoration. Building on Great Lakes congressional leaders like U.S. Rep. Vernon Ehlers of West Michigan, we must introduce all members of Congress to the Great Lakes and convince them that restoring the Lakes is a national priority.

We all want to leave a legacy of clean water, healthy habitat and flourishing wildlife. With the pending restoration plans, we have an historic opportunity to join our voices to achieve this goal through the restoration plans for the Great Lakes and other great waters.

More information on the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition and the restoration plan is available at www.restorationlakes.org **WK**



WEGE FOUNDATION

Peter M. Wege

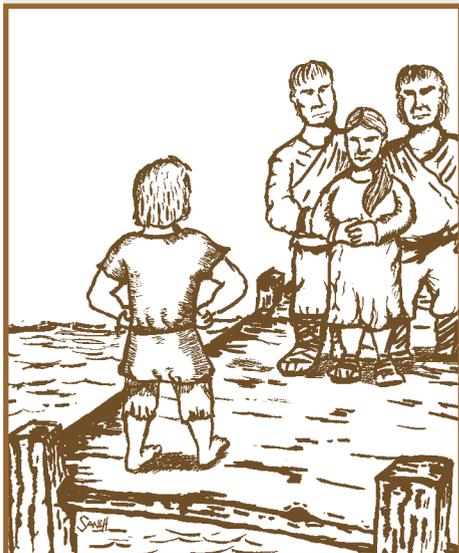
Peter M. Wege is the founder and a trustee of the Wege Foundation. He is also author of *Economicology: The Eleventh Commandment*.



CHAPTER TWO:

Kai Stands
His Ground

By Rebecca Northan



Kai and his family, and the members of their village, stood on the dock overlooking the Great River and watched helplessly as a thick, oily sludge, carried by the current, dirtied the water that was their livelihood. No one spoke; they all simply stared in confusion and disbelief. They had never seen anything like it. The river grew cloudy and dark, and along the banks a sticky, black tar began collecting in the reeds. It was no wonder the men's fishing nets had come back empty that morning – NOTHING could live in such poisoned water.

Noni, Kai's grandmother, put her arms around him, her face pale and serious. "This is not natural.

Something's not right," she said.

The silence broken, everyone began speaking at once: "What will we do?" "How will we eat?" "What will we drink?" "What IS this?!"

Kai looked to his father who stepped forward and raised his hand.

"Let's not panic. I'm sure there is an explanation for...whatever is happening to the Great River." He stopped suddenly and turned his head towards the sound of hoof beats charging through the forest. A man on horseback appeared, jumped off his mount and strode towards the dock where everyone was gathered. Kai recognized him instantly. It was his father's cousin Thom, from the village of Apsu, a three-day ride up river from Kai's village.

"Cousin Thom!" Kai exclaimed as he broke free of Noni's embrace and ran to throw his arms around the tall, blond man.

"Happy Birthday little man, I wish your manhood ceremony were the only reason for my visit – but I bring grave news from up river," said Cousin Thom, his blue eyes meeting Kai's father's. "Is there somewhere we can talk cousin?"

"We can speak here, openly, Thom. If you have news of what it is that's poisoning the Great River, we all want to hear it," said Kai's father.

Everyone gathered around Cousin Thom as he began to speak. "I'm sorry I don't have anything

definite to share with you. The people of Apsu woke up three days ago to the same nightmare you see in the waters of the Great River here today. No fish, no drinking water, no explanation. I was sent down river to see if I might be able to get ahead of this black tide and at least bring some fish back with me – but it's moving too fast. If I wasn't back in two days, the people of Apsu were going to pack up and move inland to the Great Lake in the hopes that they might find food and water there."

Kai's father thought for a moment. "We'll do the same then. We will collect ourselves and join the people of Apsu on the shores of the Great Lake. We can't afford to stay here if there is no fish to be had. Our food stores will only last so long. The Great Lake is fed by an underground spring so chances are good that whatever poisons the Great River will not have tainted her waters. Let us go."

Kai's father made a move in the direction of the village when Noni spoke up, stopping him. "What about the river? Someone needs to get word to the Waterkeeper."

Kai's ears perked up. He had heard stories of the Waterkeeper but he thought they were only legends, make believe. "I didn't think the Waterkeeper was real Noni," Kai blurted. "I thought those were just bedtime stories."

All eyes were on Noni now. "No Kai, the Waterkeeper is real enough. Water is so precious and vital to our lives that long ago the Old Ones, in their wisdom, invited clever, concerned people to step forward and become the Waterkeeper for their river, bay, lake or shoreline's safety. And so the Waterkeepers were born. Our waters have been safe and clean ever since... well, until today. I fear that something has happened to our Waterkeeper for the Great River to be in such sorry a state."

"You may be right Noni," Kai's father interrupted, "but our greatest concern is having access to clean water to drink and to fish in. Someone else will have to worry about the Waterkeeper for now. We must pack our belongings and leave right away. There's no time to lose."

Everyone nodded in agreement and moved towards the village. Kai stood his ground. "I'm not going," he announced to everyone's surprise, "I'm going to find the Waterkeeper!" **WKK**

This is the second installment of Toronto-based author, actor and director Rebecca Northan's continuing saga. "Fiction can provide the best means – especially for young people – to understand the world," she says. You can find Chapter 1: A Big Day in the winter 2006 issue of Waterkeeper.

WATERKEEPER KIDS



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Old McDonald has a farm,

eeieeio

And on this farm he helps the earth,

eeieeio

With some compost here, and clean water there,

Here some worms, there some mulch, everywhere are healthy crops,

Old McDonald has a farm,

eeieeio.

Old McDonald has a farm,

eeieeio

And on this farm he grows good food,

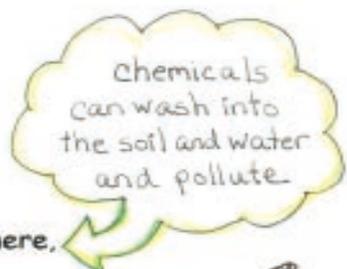
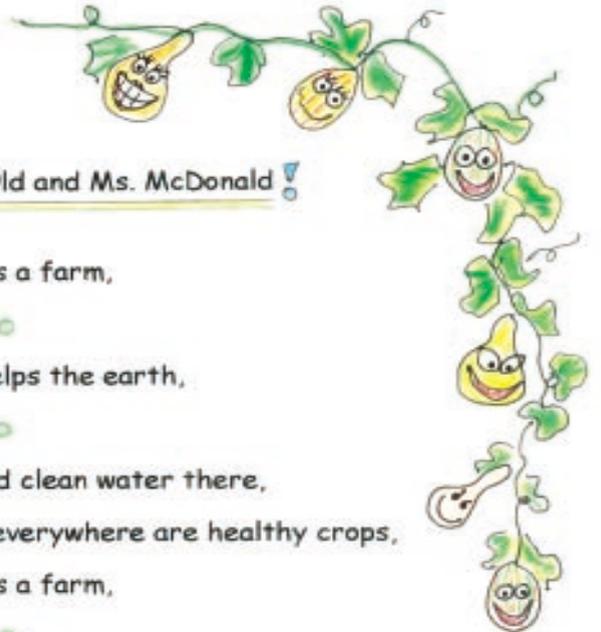
eeieeio

With no chemicals here, and no pesticides there,

Here some worms, there some mulch, everywhere are healthy crops,

Old McDonald helps us all,

eeieeio!



TRY THIS! Shop at Farmer's Markets or through a CSA - Community Supported Agriculture (www.localharvest.org or www.csacenter.org) or ... grow your own if you have some space!

The Spirit Of Activism In Film

By John Farr

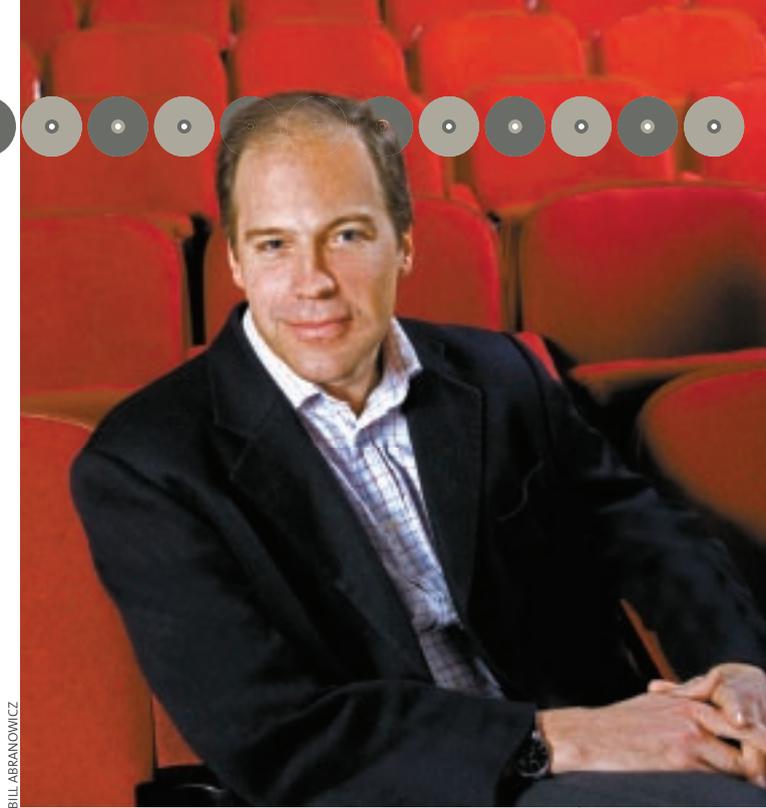
Those of us alarmed by the federal government's recurring missteps can take some comfort in our fundamental right to expose and challenge injustice, corruption and bad policy. But exercising free speech alone is not enough; concerted action is required to accomplish positive change.

Not surprisingly, many outstanding films have shown just what this spirit of activism can achieve. These films make inspiring David and Goliath stories, where average citizens take on the fat cats via the press, courts or labor unions.

Case in point: the landmark "Salt Of The Earth" (1954). Filmed independently on a shoestring by blacklisted director Herbert Biberman, it too was blacklisted on release – the only movie in our country's history to earn that distinction. Using mainly non-actors, "Earth" portrays the indigent lives of workers at a zinc mine in New Mexico, focusing on Ramon and Esperanza Quintero (Juan Chacon and Rosaura Revueltas). When Ramon, backed by the Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, leads a walkout against the Empire Zinc Company, reprisals follow. The company eventually produces an injunction forcing the men off the picket line. Their wives then step in and take over for them. Shot with documentary-style immediacy, this historic effort still makes for stark, powerful cinema. (Note: blacklisted actor Will Geer, later Grandpa in "The Waltons", plays the sheriff).

Fast-forward 25 years to Sally Field's Oscar-winning turn in "Norma Rae". After hearing New York-based union organizer Reuben (Ron Leibman) deliver a speech at the Southern textile mill where she works, Norma Rae (Field) joins the effort to organize workers. Butting heads with management, and alienating husband Sonny (Bridges) with her new activism, Norma Rae evolves from pliant employee to impassioned agitator for workers' rights. The interplay between Norma Rae and unlikely ally Reuben (Leibman) is interesting to watch, but ultimately it's the emergence of Norma Rae's righteous fire that's most memorable. The diminutive but plucky Field is triumphant in her breakout role.

Director Mike Nichols would bring a chilling true story to life with "Silkwood" (1983). Starring the gifted Meryl Streep as Karen Silkwood, an employee at a plutonium plant outraged at her management's blatant disregard for proper safety procedures, and the resulting risk of radioactive contamination. On her way to meet a journalist in November 1974, Karen disappeared, never to be seen again. Streep's nuanced portrayal shows an ordinary woman who, through fate, circumstance and a streak of raw defiance, risks her life to attempt something extraordinary. Kurt Russell executes one of his more interesting roles as Karen's boyfriend Drew, and the talented Cher sheds all her glamour to play Karen's friend Dolly. Direc-



BILL ABRANOWICZ

tor Nichols builds a gradual sense of dread, culminating in a nerve-jangling conclusion. Don't miss this disturbing cautionary tale.

One of the best films of the 1980's, John Sayles's brilliant "Matewan" (1987) takes us back to the 1920s, and the primitive, perilous lives of coal miners in West Virginia. United Mine Workers union rep Joe Kenehan (Chris Cooper) has his hands full organizing this group, as they comprise white, black and Italian factions unaccustomed to interacting outside the pit. Joe's simple message: there is strength in numbers. Flavorful, meticulous recreation of time and place is enhanced by powerful performances, particularly from Cooper and a majestic James Earl Jones playing a miner called "Few Clothes" Johnson. This may well be Sayles's finest hour.

Barbara Kopple's riveting documentary "American Dream" (1989) follows a contentious 1987 meatpackers' strike at a Hormel plant in Minnesota. In the wake of a proposed pay-cut for doing one of the world's least pleasant jobs, we witness a torturous, mind-numbing process as organizers struggle to diffuse friction among angry strikers, who differ on what strategy to employ against Hormel. With the director's fly-on-the-wall approach, we experience all the mounting tension and frustration, as ensuing events seem to call the organizers' judgment into question. Kopple's unblinking chronicle of this painful, divisive episode reflects documentary-film-making at its very best.

Switching back to feature films, in the fact-based "A Civil Action" (1999), John Travolta stars as Jan Schlichtmann, a personal injury attorney who pursues a negligence suit against corporate titans W.R. Grace and Beatrice Foods. The companies have a joint interest in a leather production facility in Woburn, Massachusetts, whose illegal dumping of toxic waste may have led to the deaths of several local children. Anne Anderson (Kathleen Quinlan), the mother of one victim, decides to sue. Jan immerses himself in this high-stakes battle, wagering everything he has on a positive outcome. Gripping and literate, "Action" features a stellar cast, notably John Lithgow as the trial judge, and Robert Duvall as Jerome Facher, the formidable opposing counsel. This absorbing courtroom drama grabs you by the throat and never lets go.

Each of these intense, authentic films underscores the importance of taking a stand, however daunting, when accepting the status quo is simply not an option. **WK**

MY FACTORY FARM

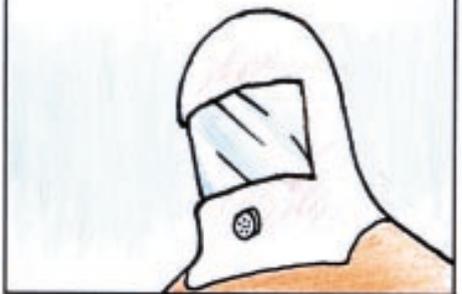


"HOWDY FOLKS. I'M FARMER JONES AND THIS HERE IS THE BIG 'LIL PIG FARM WHERE I WORK."

"WE BORROWED THIS PIG SO YOU COULD SEE WHAT OUR MODERN FACTORY PIGS LOOK LIKE... SORT OF."



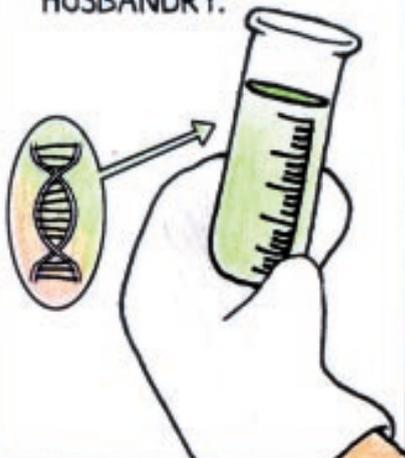
"I'D TAKE Y'ALL INSIDE AND INTRODUCE YA' TO OUR PIGS BUT THAT'D VIOLATE THEIR PRIVACY. YA' SEE."



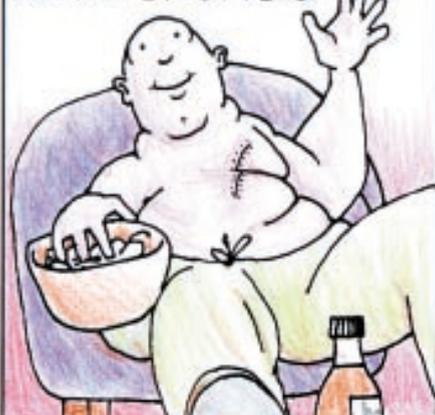
"WITH SO MANY PIGS WE GENERATE A LOT OF ALL-NATURAL ORGANIC MATTER THAT WE MAKE AVAILABLE TO OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS FREE OF CHARGE."



"BECAUSE WE'RE A MODERN FACTORY FARM, WE LEAD THE WAY IN MERGING SCIENCE WITH ANIMAL HUSBANDRY."



"FOR INSTANCE, BY BLENDING HUMAN AND PIG DNA, WE CAN OFFER FOLKS GRADE-A PIG HEARTS SO THEY CAN RESUME THEIR ACTIVE LIFESTYLES."



"WHICH IS WHY I HAVE ALWAYS SAID THAT MODERN FACTORY FARMING IS THE WAY OF THE FUTURE."



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On The Water

Jason Houston

How we feed ourselves is one of the most critical and universally relevant considerations we face. Six years ago, Jason Houston began photographing the farms and farmers in western New England. His goal, promote a food system where accountability, respect and relationship transcend anonymity, plastic wrapping and labels. The Good Food feature draws heavily from Houston's "FARMER: A collection of photographs." This photo is from his "Carts" collection.

Houston's images of farmers and farm hands have appeared in The New York Times Magazine, TIME, Orion, The Wall Street Journal, Organic Gardener and will be on exhibit at Yale University in New Haven, CT, April 12–30, 2006 and at Spike Gallery in New York, NY, June 14–July 29, 2006. Visit www.jasonhouston.com



(((Beating Around the Bush)))

When it rains it pours: EPA allows mixing dirty with clean... hands over enforcement of toxic runoff to industrial polluters.

EPA'S NEW SEWAGE BLENDING POLICY: CLEAN WATER + DIRTY WATER = DIRTY WATER

On January 23, 2006, Waterkeeper Alliance and 60 local Waterkeepers submitted comments to U.S. EPA opposing their new proposed "blending" policy as a needless, unjustified and flawed policy.

Sewage treatment typically involves at least two stages – primary treatment, which removes solid waste material, and biological or secondary treatment, which eliminates harmful pathogens. EPA's policy essentially grants the permitting agency (usually the state) the right to allow industrial and municipal treatment plants to bypass secondary treatment during certain peak wet weather conditions. This pathogen-laden wastewater would then be "blended" with the fully treated wastewater and released directly into our bays, rivers and lakes. EPA's policy interprets current regulations to mean that blending is acceptable when there are "no feasible alternatives." But EPA neglects to define what "feasible" means – leaving a wide loophole for polluters. Waterkeeper Alliance believes there is no need for EPA to reinterpret current regulations. Wastewater should be cleaned up before it is dumped into our waters. This new guidance would impede progress in updating and upgrading sewage treatment facilities. Instead of requiring improvements to sewer systems, it legitimizes the illegal practice of "bypassing" or dumping untreated wastewater into our nations waterways.



EPA RELEASES 'SELF-ENFORCEMENT' PLAN FOR TOXIC RUNOFF FROM INDUSTRIAL PLANTS

In December 2005, EPA released the latest in its regulatory "reforms" to the Clean Water Act regulations that are supposed to limit the flow of pollutants carried in stormwater runoff from a wide range of industrial facilities. These facilities include various manufacturing and chemical facilities, mining operations, oil refineries, landfills, salvage yards, power plants and a range of other industrial categories. Uncontrolled runoff from these operations can carry nutrients, heavy metals and organic chemicals that are dangerous to both human health and the environment.

Essentially, the new rules call for factory operators to monitor their stormwater dis-

charges quarterly, compare them to water quality benchmarks and report discharges that exceeded the benchmarks. In practice, this means that no one – not EPA, not the state environment agency, not the public – will review the facility's stormwater control plan or ensure that the plan successfully prevents pollution from washing from their facility into our waters. In addition to setting up a flawed "self-enforcement" mechanism, the rule would do nothing to prevent pollution from runoff into waters that had been designated as having exceptional value, or runoff that would add pollutants to waters that are already impaired by excessive levels of these contaminants.

Waterkeeper Alliance, NRDC and the Conservation Law Foundation filed joint comments opposing this proposal. **WK**

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by DOUGLAS LOVE



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