



Ecological Farming in Ontario

EFAO News
March-April 2005
Volume 26 Number 2
Single copy price \$4.50



Homeopathy for the Herd
Ontario's Organic Sector
Where is Your Plan for Success?

Buying Quota for Certified Organic Small Scale Chicken Flocks
and much more . . .

Terminator Returns
Meet the EFAO Board
EFO Calls the Farm



Ecological Farming in Ontario

EFAO News
March-April 2005
Volume 26 Number 2

Table of Contents

EFAO News

Books donated by Alvin Filsinger	6
President's Message	9
Events	10
Board Members Introduce Themselves	12
EFAO Member Gerald Poechmann Elected to CFFO ..	12
President Writes to PM About Terminator	13
EFAO Meets with Ontario Ministry of Agriculture ..	14
Food for Thought – A Classroom Guide to Agriculture	14
From the Past: Worth Saying Again	15
Update on Chicken Quota Exemption Request	18
Stock Exchange	21

A Note from your Editor

Dr. Ed Sheaffer's first visit to Canada, with workshops in Alfred and in Milverton sponsored by EFAO, is the big news in this issue.

We are also pleased with the generally positive response to our new format, with some excellent suggestions for improvement. We have tried to accommodate as many of those suggestions as we can. Please note that in the text we refer to this magazine as EFO: Ecological Farming in Ontario, the new name for your EFAO News.

Now it's your turn. We need more photographs, more news of EFAO members and others interested in Ecological Farming in Ontario, a bigger circulation, and more advertising, to help pay the bills. Share the magazine with your friends and neighbours, send photos and ads, and help us to bring you an interesting magazine that informs and educates.

Colin Isaacs

Feature Articles

Homeopathy for the Herd in Practice	3
A Look at Ontario's Organic Sector	4
Where is Your Plan for Success?	5
EFO Calls the Farm	17
Buying Quota for Certified Organic Chicken Flock ..	18

News and Opinions

National Organic Initiative	4
What Do Consumers Want?	7
Canada Pushes to Endorse Terminator Technology ...	7
Earth to Fork Eco-Notes	8
Winter Table Talks Report	13
Monsanto Buys Seminis Vegetable Seeds	15
Feast of Fields Vineyard - St. Catherines	16
Bill Barkley Pruning Workshop Report	16
Sustainable Agriculture: Family Organic Farms	19



Cover picture: EFAO member Karl Schibli demonstrates homeopathic medicine for his cows.

See our cover story on page 3

Homeopathy for the Herd in Practice

An Ecological Farming in Ontario Cover Story

by Heide Ciplin Isaacs

Dr. Ed Sheaffer, author of *Homeopathy for the Herd*, will be speaking on April 4, 2005 at the preconference to the Conference on Organic Dairying and Dairy Research at Guelph University's Alfred College. He will also be speaking in Milverton, Western Region, on April 7th. Both events are sponsored by EFAO. [see separate listing].

EFO talked to Karl Schibli, organic dairy farmer near Villa Nova in Norfolk County, who practices homeopathy on his herd of Brown Swiss cows.

Karl has other homeopathy books but relies most on Dr. Sheaffer's book because it is easy to use and because it covers a full range of the problems a dairy farmer might encounter, including worms, teat injuries, and different kinds of mastitis. The first part of the book provides principles and approaches, and is for reading all the way through, while the second part is for looking up specific conditions and solutions. In general, the advice includes the set of

"I won't tell you that homeopathy saves 100% of the cows but I lost more cows using antibiotics than I do now."

EFAO member Karl Schibli

symptoms such as dry nose, fever and/or diarrhea, type of remedies such as herbal tinctures, the dosage, when to check again for changes or improvement, adjustment of the treatment for different changes, and, if the patient's conditions worsen, when to call the vet. For example, for bloat, the remedy includes a homeopathic remedy as well as physical treatment. The farmer puts a heavy piece of rope in the cow's mouth to increase saliva which in turn encourages belching to get rid of the excess gas. The farmer also helps to keep the cow's head up by propping it on a bale.

Karl, like all dairymen, is required to attend a licensing session conducted by a veterinarian on drug use particularly antibiotics. He thought it would be a waste of time because he doesn't use drugs and hardly uses injections except for the occasional calf which might need a shot of Vitamin C or selenium because his soils are low in selenium. Most of the

the remedy is swallowed as shown in the picture here. Having been both a conventional farmer and now an organic farmer, he says he doesn't claim that homeopathy works 100% of the time but he has lost more cows with antibiotics than he does now.

So, reluctantly Karl attended the workshop. When the session began the vet asked the first question of the day, "How do you keep antibiotics out of your milk tank". When he pointed to Karl, Karl said that there was no risk of that on his farm because there weren't any antibiotics there. He thought to himself that he was going to get a lecture from this conventional vet, but the rest of the day, whenever the vet asked a question, he would get an answer from a conventional dairyman and then point to Karl and ask again, "And how would you do it?" At the end of the day, the vet and he had a long chat about alternative ways of treating animals avoiding antibiotic resistance, saving time and money. Apparently the vet's wife, a nurse, buys organic and tells her husband that treating livestock with drugs is doing it all wrong. So the day turned out not to be all that boring or wasteful after all.

Although Dr. Sheaffer's book is very useful, Karl is planning on attending one of the two workshops in April (see page 10 for details) to ask Dr. Sheaffer some questions. For example, the book uses terms such as "tender over the liver" and Karl would like to know what to look for, to see and to feel on the cow in order to better understand this condition.



Sometimes the cow needs a bit of help to take the

A Look at Ontario's Organic Sector by Ann Slater

Although there is not sufficient data to fully outline Ontario's organic sector, the following information may be of interest.

There were 487 certified organic farms in Ontario in 2003 (Ann Macey). This number indicates a decrease from 2001 and 2002 when close to 600 Ontario farms were certified organic. In the report of the Ontario Organic Research Advisory Committee, 2004, Hugh Martin notes several possible factors for this decrease including retirement, organic producers foregoing certification and production and marketing challenges.

The most important organic crops in Ontario, in terms of acreage and farm gate value, are spelt and soybeans. Other significant certified organic farm products in Ontario include corn, hemp, mixed grains, wheat, vegetables, fruits, beef and dairy (Macey). The total value of organic produce at the farmgate is estimated to be approximately \$40 million (Martin, 2004).

There are over 40 certified organic processors, seed companies, fruit/vegetable packers, feed mills and distributors. There are over 300 mainstream grocery stores selling organic products and a similar number of other retail outlets, like health food stores (Macey). The value of this contribution has not been estimated.

The organic food market is growing at about 20% per year globally (Nature, Vol 428). Most of the organic food grown in Ontario is exported to the U.S., Europe or Japan. Some of it is processed and brought back into Ontario. It is estimated that 85 - 90% of the organic product sold in Canada is imported from the United States or other countries (Martin, 2003).

National Organic Initiative by Ann Slater

This is a brief update on some of the ongoing national initiatives in the organic community.

National Organic Regulation: The Organic Regulatory Committee (ORC), made up of representatives from across the organic community and across the country, continues to work on the development and implementation of a national organic regulatory system.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has named an Organic Task Force (OTF) to work on the national organic regulations from the government end. The head of the OTF is Joe Southall. The Task Force will examine the current state of organic agriculture in Canada and make recommendations to senior staff and the Deputy Minister in Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and CFIA.

The ORC has established a sub-committee to work more closely with the OTF as the organic regulation moves ahead. Hopefully good communication will continue so that the national organic regulation meets the needs of the Canadian organic community, including organic farmers of all sizes.

The OTF wants to hear from the organic sector. If you have queries, comments, criticisms or conundrums contact the CFIA Organic Task Force at OrganicTF@inspection.gc.ca.

Organic Standard: The Canadian Organic Standard is in the process of being updated through the Canadian General Standards Board. This process has taken quite a long time but is hopefully nearing completion. EFAO has not been involved in this process and is not a voting organization on the standard.

Canadian Organic Partnership Project: This is an initiative to develop a representative organization for the Canadian organic sector to help the organic sector speak with a united voice on various issues. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada will help find funding for a consultation and implementation project. This initiative is being led by Laura Telford from the Canadian Organic Growers and Anita Stanger from AAFC.

Organic Research through OACC: The Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada continues to advance organic

poechman Family Farms
OCPP
Certified Organic
~ ISA Brown Pullets
~ Alfalfa Pellets ~ Hairy Vetch Seed
~ Custom Poultry Rations
LOOKING FOR EGG PRODUCERS

Where is Your Plan for Success?

By Hugh Martin

OMAF Organic Crop Production Program Lead

It has been said that if you fail to plan, then you plan to fail. Winter is a time to reflect on what happened last year, what you have learned since then, and to make plans on how to improve in the new year. Most farmers spend time in January and February reviewing last year's field records and financial records. Partly this is for income tax purposes, but mostly it should be for self-improvement on the farm.

If a field of soybeans, for example, yielded poorly, ask **WHY?** Was it due to weeds? Was the field prepared by having a good rotation or were the weeds due to having several field crops in a row in that field. Was the mechanical weed control done in a timely manner or was it delayed? Was the delay due to weather or due to the farmer having too much to do during a very busy month of June? Should you plan for more labour, for more equipment or for better weather? Which factors can you control? If you had poor emergence, should you use a better seed source? If the crop was full of weed seeds at harvest, should you purchase or arrange for a seed cleaner prior to storage? These are all questions of management and having a good plan for the crop. I find time management is one of the greatest skills of successful organic farmers.

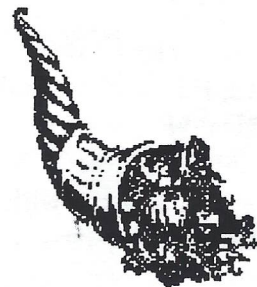
Organic farmers need to complete a farm management plan for their certification body. This is a lot of work and, depending on your operation, it can take many hours to complete. Make that time productive for your farm. As you fill out the many pages of the form, question what you are doing and why? Is there a better way or is that just the way you done it last year, or the way you think they want it to read. Make that production plan be your guide on how to manage each field. Each field has its own character of soil factors and weeds or other pests issues. Each field wants tender loving care, but for convenience we want to have the same strategy for the whole farm. How can you merge these two objectives to achieve a successful outcome?

In food safety plans, they have a phrase: Have a written plan, follow that plan, keep records to show you are following that plan. Make sure you keep a copy of your production plan. Keep it up to date, showing your progress and an accurate record of your daily activities. Any kind of notebook or computer system can do a good job as long as

come knocking to see what you may have done. Your plan and your record of what you did will be very important to determine if you were at fault. In your certification production plan you will indicate which input materials you plan to use. If you change the input materials for any reason, make sure the Certification Body is in agreement. Using an input material that is not approved for use in organic can be VERY costly for your operation.

Plans, plans, everywhere plans. Certification plans, business plans, nutrient management plans, environmental farm plans, food safety plans – make them work for you. They are tools to help you analyze your farm and to show you opportunities for improvement.

Canadian Organic Growers



*Uniting, educating and
inspiring Canadians
organically for almost 30
years!*

*Become a member and
receive our quarterly national
magazine...Eco Farm and
Garden!!!!*

www.cog.ca

1-877-677-6055

Books Donated by Alvin Filsinger

We invite members to look over the partial list of donations received from Alvin Filsinger as mentioned in the last issue and choose a title to read and if you feel so inclined, to review. Just let the EFAO office know which book you would like sent to you! Alvin, as those of you know who have read the booklet outlining the first 25 years of EFAO's history, has been a stalwart of the ecological farming movement since the '50s. He still operates Filsinger's Natural Foods & Orchards, located near Mount Forest in EFAO's western region. Many, many thanks, Alvin!

Among the titles are:

The Illustrated Herbal Handbook for Everyone, by Juliette de Bairacli, illustrated by Heather Wood. Faber & Faber, London, 1991

All Nature is My Bride: Henry David Thoreau, Passages from the Journals Arranged as Poetry, by William M. White, illus. by Mary Lee Herbster. Chatham Press, Old Greenwich, CT, 1975

The Miracle of Organic Vitamins for Better Health, by Carlson Wade. Parker Publishing, NY, 1974, 1st edition

Tree Crops: A Permanent Agriculture, by J. Russell Smith, with b/w photos. Devin-Adair, Old Greenwich, CT, 1977

Companion Plants and How to Use Them, by Helen Philbrick and Richard Gregg. Devin-Adair, Old Greenwich, CT, 1970

Biological Pest Control: The Glasshouse Experience, N.W. Hussey and N. Scopes, Eds. Colour and b/w photos. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 1985

Good Husbandry, by H.I. Moore, with b/w photos. George Allen & Unwin, London, 1946, 1st edition

The Art of Natural Farming and Gardening, by Ralph & Rita Engelken, with b/w photos and graphics. Barrington Hall Press, Greeley, IW, 1981

Soil Fertility and Animal Health, by William A. Albrecht, with b/w photos and graphics. Fred Hahne Printing, Webster City, IW, 1958, 1st edition

The One Straw Revolution: An Introduction to Natural Farming, by Masanobu Fukuoka, with b/w photos and graphics. Rodale Press, Emmaus, PA, 1978

Tuning in to Nature: Solar Energy, Infrared Radiation and the Insect Communication System, by Philip S. Callahan, with line drawings by James Brogdon. Devin-Adair, Old Greenwich, CT, 1975, 1st edition

Pleasant Valley, by Louis Bromfield, illustrated by Kate Lord. Harper, NY, 1945

March 15, 1852

This afternoon I throw off my outside coat.

A mild spring day.

I must hie to the Great Meadows.

The air is full of bluebirds.

The ground almost entirely bare.

The villagers are out in the sun,

And every man is happy

Whose work takes him outdoors.

I go by Sleepy Hollow toward the Great Fields.

I lean over a rail to hear what is in the air,

Liquid with the bluebirds' warble.

My life partakes of infinity.

From *All Nature is My Bride*
by Henry David Thoreau

What do Consumers Want?

By Ann Slater

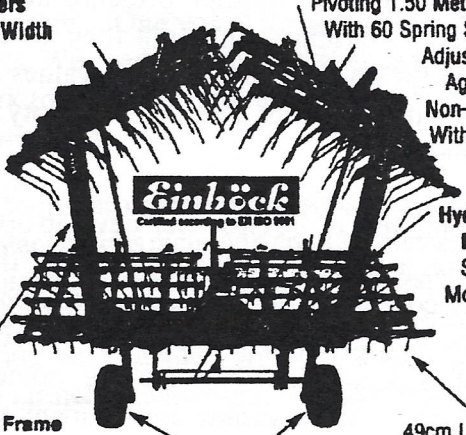
Kathryn Cooper VP Market Development & Client Services at the Guelph Food Technology Centre spoke on Value Added On-Farm Processing at an NFU Local 301 meeting in Delhi, January 11.

According to Ms. Cooper food consumers want:

- taste,
- convenience,
- health & wellness
- environmental & social accountability (locally, grown produce, organic, 'the right thing to do')

She noted price is not on this list. Price is the most important factor for retailers. Therefore if you are selling to retailers, price will be key but price is less important for consumers than the factors listed above. This information on what consumers want will not be a surprise to EFAO members but it is helpful to have our experience backed up by mainstream research.

HWE SOLVES YOUR WEED PROBLEMS TINE WEEDER



Tine Weeder
With Working Width

1.50	Meter
1.80	Meter
2.10	Meter
3.00	Meter
4.50	Meter
6.00	Meter
9.00	Meter
12.00	Meter
15.00	Meter

Larger? Upon Request

Strong, Quality Steel Frame

Adjustable Gauge Wheels
Our Tine Weeder are used in all fields Vegetable, Potatoes, Cash Crop, Pastures, ETC.

Pivoting 1.50 Meter Sections
With 60 Spring Steel Tines, Adjustable From Aggressive to Non-Aggressive With One Lever

Hydraulic Fold Main Frame
Standard On Models 4.50m To 15.00m

49cm Long Spring Steel Tines 7mm in diameter

To Convert
7mm ≈ 1/4 Inch
49cm ≈ 19 Inches
1.50m ≈ 5 Feet

Importer for North America

HWE Agricultural Technology Ltd.

B.P. 1515

CDN-Embrun, ON. K0A 1W0

Canada Pushes to Endorse Terminator Technology

Canada's position at a recent technical experts meeting of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity CBD which met in Bangkok February 7-11, 2005 is earning a heap of criticism. The intent of the Convention is to protect global biodiversity including agricultural biodiversity.

An expert working group, which advises the 150 countries which have signed on to the Convention, planned to recommend that a moratorium be continued on commercialization and field trials of the genetic engineering which would insert sterility genes. Called Genetic Use Restriction Technologies GURTs by the Convention, the genetic engineering is more commonly known by the name given to it by its 'inventors' at the US Department of Agriculture, Terminator. It was developed to ensure plant patent protection but there is fear that it could spread into the natural environment and that people especially the poor in developing countries would become wholly dependent on big biotech firms for seed to grow their own food. The experts also asked that legislation be passed to ban GURTs and the potential impact of GURTs on the environment, farmers, Farmers Rights to preserve seeds, indigenous and local communities be studied. This data and information should be broadly available in a transparent way to ensure a proper risk assessment is done.

Only three countries out of the 133 countries attending, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, stood against a consensus document. An industry representative also said GURTs should not be considered any different from other biotechnologies. Amendments suggested by a number of other countries eventually led to a agreement which did retain the moratorium on GURTs for now but left open future consideration. Critics say that Canada is pushing to open the door to a technology which is a biohazard.

Earth Negotiations Bulletin. SBT TA-10 highlights. February 9, 2005.

Winnipeg, MB: International Institute for Sustainable Development IISD.

<http://www.iisd.ca/vol09/enb09303e.html>

(See page 13 for a letter sent by EFAO President Ann Slater to Prime Minister Paul Martin on this issue.)

Earth to Fork Eco-Notes
by Heide Ciplin Isaacs

Local Food Map in Waterloo Region

Region of Waterloo Public Health and Foodlink Waterloo Region have been publishing a Buy Local! Buy Fresh! Map since 2002. The map is a consumer guide to food products grown or raised on farms in Waterloo Region. An evaluation report published March 7, 2005 indicates that more farmers, now numbering 76, are participating. Farmers say the Map is the third most successful food marketing tool out of nine for improved sales and number of visitors to the farm. The top two marketing tools are roadside signs and referrals from customers or word-of-mouth. Fifty thousand copies of the Map are published each year and public demand exceeds supply.

The full report Xuereb, Marc. Promoting Local Farms in Waterloo Region: an evaluation of the Buy Local! Buy Fresh! Map. Published by Region of Waterloo Public Health. March 2005. at www.region.waterloo.on.ca/ph (go to Resources and select Reports and Facts Sheets).

Guelph U. New Major B.Sc(Agr) Organic Agriculture

Guelph University has become the first Canadian university to offer a Major in Organic Agriculture as part of the B.Sc(Agr) degree. Five new courses designed for the Major as well as existing courses will be offered. At Alfred College, courses will include organic animal production, biodynamic production, organic fertilization and organic plant production. For those studying in French, Alfred College provides courses in French. The dairy herd at Alfred College is transitioning to organic.

Guelph University. Organic Courses.
<http://www.organicag.uoguelph.ca/courses/>

Organic Communications

Organic education includes formal courses, workshops, education sessions and much more according to Rob Wallbridge, EFAO Member & Member Relations Manager, East OntarBio Organic Farmers Cooperative. He wrote a special to the Eastern Ontario AgriNews in February about the growing expertise and information about organic farming. He recently attended the Guelph Organic Conference, which he found "energizing, inspiring and educational" and "What is also often true is that I gain as much knowledge and enthusiasm by talking to fellow

He suggests that farmers considering converting to organic attend events such as the Canadian Organic Growers Eco-Farm day and EFAO's Table Talk meetings. The combination of research, experience and first contact with organic farmers can make transition to organic much easier.

"Organic farming is an incredibly knowledge-intensive proposition."
Rob Wallbridge

Wallbridge, Rob. Special to Eastern Ontario AgriNews: Organic essentials: learning opportunities. February 2005
<http://www.agrinewsinteractive.com/fullstory.htm?ArticleID=6523&ShowSection=News>

Toronto Food Policy Council Approves of Greenbelt Legislation

Wayne Roberts, Project Coordinator for the Toronto Food Policy Council reports that the new Ontario Greenbelt legislation is seen as a big success for foodies (those who support organic, local food, sustainable agriculture, etc). Protecting agricultural land in the Golden Horseshoe area around the Greater Toronto Area creates opportunities and addresses issues for agriculture. Some farmers have concerns about property rights and yet another pressure affecting the ability to keep on farming. Although they have asked for compensation for possible reduced land values because of the controls on development, Premier McGuinty has said no to such payments.

To help people living in the Greenbelt develop opportunities through more localized food production, the Council promotes the concept of foodsheds as discussed by Robert Feagan from Wilfrid Laurier University. He suggests the elements of a local foodshed include home garden, restaurants serving local cuisine, agri-tourism, native food initiatives, farm markets, farm gate sales and fair trade networks.

For the foodshed concept see Feagan, Robert and Karla Krug. Towards a Sustainable Niagara Foodshed: Learning from Experience. Leading Edge 2004: The Working Biosphere. 2004.
http://www.escarpment.org/leading_edge/LE04/papers/Feagan.Krug.pdf



EFAO News

March/April 2005

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

When I was at university, the courses that spoke to me revolved around the study of ecology - the study of the interactions between organisms and their environment or the study of ecosystems.

One of the concepts that sticks in my head, and makes sense to us as ecological farmers, is that a more diverse ecosystem is more stable. In an ecosystem with few parts when one part is damaged or wiped out by a catastrophic event (e.g. disease or flood) then the other parts of the ecosystem are at risk, as well. By creating diverse farms, we become more stable economically and environmentally.

The mainstream farm community and much of the farm press in Ontario this winter, seems to be consumed with the idea of 'one voice' for agriculture. The common refrain is government will not listen to us and support farmers if we do not go to them with one voice. In the organic movement, we are not immune to this call for one voice. We use the same refrain that we must show government, we have one united voice for them to notice and support the organic sector.

Nature has shown us that diversity brings strength. As an organic community and as a farm community we should heed the advice of nature. 'One voice' for agriculture or 'one voice' for organic can leave us vulnerable, like any ecosystem with limited parts. We need to come together as the organic community, or the farm community, to talk, to learn from each other and to work together - to interact. However, we need to be sure that coming together is for our benefit, not just to try and satisfy government.

Last year Monsanto made a decision to stop the development and commercialization of GE wheat for the time being. Diverse organizations including environmental groups like Greenpeace, organic grower groups like EFAO and COG, general farm organizations like the NFU, and citizen groups like the Council of Canadians worked together to pressure Monsanto and the Canadian government to stop the release of GE wheat. By working and speaking out on our own, and by acting and speaking out together, we were able to build the strong, powerful message that the release of GE wheat could be harmful to farmers, consumers, the agri-food sector and the environment.

Just like an ecosystem, a community is strengthened by diversity. Different parts - organizations, people, businesses - bring different thoughts, different ideas, different ways of expressing ideas to the table and to the wider community. If we want to have a strong, stable organic community or a strong, stable farm community we need the strength and the ability to withstand the forces acting against us. We need the strength and stability that comes from diversity, from respecting each other, from interacting with each other, from using our strengths to make each other stronger and from reaching out to new and diverse groups of people.

Ann Slater

EFAO EVENTS

EFAO ONTARIO WIDE

Homeopathy for the Herd - with Dr. Ed Sheaffer

Monday April 4th, Collège D'Alfred, Alfred, Ontario, in English with simultaneous translation into French

Thursday April 7th, Perth East Recreation Complex, 40 Temperance, Milverton

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

EFAO will be hosting a series of two talks given by Dr. Ed Sheaffer, a holistic veterinarian from Pennsylvania and author of the book "Homeopathy for the Herd". Dr. Sheaffer is a regular contributor to "Acres USA" magazine and the foremost authority on livestock homeopathy.

Topics to be covered:

- Holistic concepts
- Natural farming practices
- Other types of medicine and why
- Commonly used homeopathic remedies
- specific issues such as mastitis, high SCC, metritis, etc.

This is the first time Dr. Sheaffer will be coming to speak in Canada. It will be a great opportunity for us to learn more about homeopathy and cattle care. Invite your neighbours and even your veterinarian to join you.

The cost is \$65 per person and \$35 per additional person from the same farm. Lunch is included.

Contact: Michael Krol R.R.2 Williamstown, ON K0C 2J0 michael.krol@efao.ca tel 613 347-7561

Ann Slater, 519 349-2448 for Milverton registration. Also see page 2 for registration for Collège Alfred.

Introduction to Ecological Agriculture – two day course

Dates: March 19 and 20, 8:30 to 4:30 pm

Location: Inn at Creemore Hills, Creemore. Complementary lunch provided by Creemore Picnic.

Sponsored by EFAO Simcoe Region.

This course is taught by experienced organic farmers and covers ecological methods of crop rotation, weed management, livestock health, composting and soil fertility. A course manual and snack are included. Price: \$100 per person or \$150 per farm couple. The Canadian Organic Growers "Organic Field Crop Handbook" is recommended. Books will be available for sale or to borrow at the course. Pre-registration is required. To find out more contact: Annette Verhagen at (519) 335-6566 or efao@wightman.ca.

CENTRAL REGION

Organic Gardening & Poultry Management

Tour in Prince Edward County at Certified Organic Farms
Sunday July 10, 2005 10 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Contact: Ken Marisett (613) 476 5758

10 a.m. Spend "Time in the Garden" with Joan & Christian at Maple Brae Farm. 572 County Road #11 Directions: From Picton, go south on Lake St (County Rd. 10) at LCBO, Main St West in Picton, proceed 5 km, turn right(west) onto East Lake Road (County Road #11) proceed 3 km to 572.

12:30 p.m. Gather at Lake on the Mountain Park for picnic lunch with organic hamburgers provided. Contribution to cover expenses would be appreciated. Directions: 8 km south east of Picton on County Rd. 7. Take Hwy 33 south east from Picton to Lake on the Mountain sign.

2:00 p.m. Meet at Reachview Farm at 2130 County Road about 10 minute drive east from the Park for some quality time with Achim and Ute and their variety of poultry and sheep.

Corn Seed Production Farm Tour

Sunday August 20, 2005 10 a.m.

At the bio-dynamic farm of Dave Harry, 207 Carmel Road Stirling. Barbecue following.

For information, call 613 395-2653.

Central Region Annual Meeting

Sunday September 18, 2005

Details to be announced later.

For information, call Judy at 613 395-4029.

EASTERN REGION

Composting

Tuesday April 12, 2005

At the home of Bruce and Janet Duncan. Directions: From Hwy 417 going west take Exit 155, March Rd, Carp, Almonte to Hwy 49 (March Rd). Turn left go approx 13 km. and turn left onto Appleton Side Rd (Cty. Rd 17). We are at 4900. From the south take Dwyer Hill Rd to the first turn past Hwy 7. Turn left and follow to the T junction. Turn right onto the Appleton Side Road. We are at 4900. Soup, tea and coffee are provided - bring anything else you wish to eat. \$5.00/person. Events run from 10.00 am to 3.30 pm.

For information call Janet or Bruce at 613-256-2933

SIMCOE COUNTY REGION

"How to Transition to Organic and Where is Farming Going in Ontario"

Thursday, March 31, 2005 - 7:30 pm

Speaker: Gerald Poechman of Poechman Family Farms, OCPP Certified Organic Eggs, Pullets, Feed and more.

Location: White Pine Board Room, Midhurst Nursery, Midhurst, Ontario. (OMAF and MNR offices). Hwy 26, turn right on Nursery Rd.

For more information: 705-527-7807.

Market Garden Crop Rotation Workshop.

Date: April 9, 2005, 10-3pm - \$25/person

Location: Inn at Creemore Hills, Creemore.

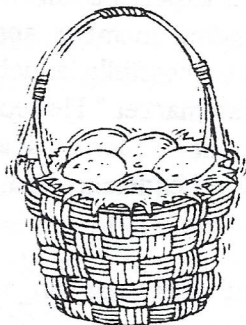
Facilitated by Ann Slater.

Complementary lunch provided by Creemore Picnic.

Registration and Information: EFAO (519) 335-6566.

Ecofarmers Market at Hempola

Ecological farmers interested in being vendors at the Friday Ecofarmers Market this summer at Hempola are invited to contact Julie DeBruin 734-2846 (the latest vendors meeting was held on Sunday, March 13 at 2:00 pm at Hempola (Hwy 400 and Dalston).



WESTERN REGION

Rare Breed Sheep as a Niche Market

Wednesday, March 23, 2005 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

At Nancy Hislop's farm in Auburn. Rare breeds are not just for show but can be profitable. Our Navajo Churro sheep are fitting in our market plans and are a valuable asset to our farm. Our shearer Chris Hoskins will be here to shear a few and answer any questions or give tips. I have three breeds here to show and discuss. We can also discuss how different breeds produce different fleeces for any handspinners that are interested. Soup will be provided for lunch. Please pre-register. Nancy Hislop 519 526-1024 or email hislop@hurontel.on.ca.

Advanced Field Crop Rotation Course

Friday April 1, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Facilitated by Ken Laing, Wroxeter

Call (519) 335-6566 to register. \$25

Western Region Committee Meeting

Tuesday April 5, 6:30 pm.

at Larry Plaetzer's between Blyth and Auburn.

Potluck at Larry Plaetzer's.

Call Larry at (519) 526-7121

Sunholm Holsteins Tour

July 9, 1 p.m. Grant and Pamela Martin. A transitional farm with 250 acres and milking 50 cows. R.R. 1 Ethel, #44522 Brandon Rd at Molesworth Line.

Tyler and Summer Papple's Farm Tour

July 23, 2 p.m. Specialized market garden equipment, greenhouses for bedding plants, vegetable crops and local marketing featured.

EFAO Regional Contacts

Central Region

Ken Marisett 613 476-5758 ken.marisett@efao.ca and
Judy Denham 613 395-4029 judy.denham@efao.ca

Eastern Region

Michael Krol 613 347-7561 michael.krol@efao.ca

Simcoe

Chris Litster chris.litster@efao.ca

Western Region

Nancy Hislop 519-526-1024, nancy.hislop@efao.ca
Counties: Perth, Huron, Waterloo, Wellington, Grey,
Bruce, Oxford, Middlesex, Elgin

EFAO Board Members Introduce Themselves

Achim Mohssen-Beyk: I am operating a 140 acres diversified, certified organic farm in Picton, Prince Edward County, Central Region. We raise sheep, goats, rabbits, ducks, geese and quail and grow cash crops.

Fran McQuail: I farm in Northern Huron County (Western Region) with my husband, Tony, on a mixed livestock farm. We have been farming since 1973 and sell organic freezer meats primarily direct to the consumer.

Judy Denham: I farm 37 acres near Stirling which is close to Belleville in the Central Region. I have a small herd of rare breed cows which are producing organic grass fed beef for me. I also raise my own breed of black egg laying chickens.

Dave Harry from the Stirling area in Central Region is a cash crop farmer with an emphasis on biodynamic methods and remineralization. His crops include soybeans, hemp, buckwheat, rye, red clover, spelt and corn for grain, fibre and seed.

Michael Krol: I am from the Eastern region and married to Heidi. We have nine children and operate an organic dairy farm east of Cornwall, near Williamstown.

Kathie Groenewegen: Together with husband Francis and two teenage children we are certified organic dairy farmers in the Kingston area shipping our milk to Organic Meadow. We raise organic beef, turkey, eggs, and horses. Member of NFU, EFAO and COG.

Debbie DeCooman operates Connaught Acres near Chesterville. We have an organic market garden along with ducks, turkeys, a donkey and goats. Produce is sold at the Ottawa Organic Market, a Community Shared Agriculture program and through Home Delivery and Pickup. This year we will be participating in the Agri-Tour of farms and markets in Prescott-Russell/North Dundas.

Ann Slater: I am a small-scale cash cropper near St. Marys, in western region. The produce from my 1 1/2 acre certified organic market garden is sold direct to consumers at a farmers' market and through a CSA.

Bruce Gillies, Pat File and their sons run Sage Pastures Farm near Wyebridge in Simcoe County. Their mixed farm includes sheep and a CSA garden with farm produce sold from the farm and at the Eco Farmers' Market near Barrie.

EFAO Board of Directors - 2005

Ann Slater, R.R. 1 Lakeside, ON N0M 2G
President (519) 349-2448
aslater@quadro.net

Fran McQuail R.R. 1 Lucknow, ON N0G 2H
Treasurer (519) 528-2493
mcqufarm@hurontel.on.ca

Kathie Groenewegen R.R. 1 Elginburg, ON K0H 1M
Secretary (613) 545-9214
info@limestonestables.com

Michael Krol R.R. 2 Williamstown, ON K0C 2J0
krolmh@glen-net.ca (613) 347-7561

Dave Harry R.R. 3 Stirling, ON K0K 3E0
h.harry@sympatico.ca (613) 395-2653

Bruce Gillies R.R. 1 Wyebridge, ON L0K 2H
bgillies@bconnex.net (705) 527-7807

Judy Denham R.R. 3 Stirling, ON K0K 3E0
pw.denham@sympatico.ca (613) 395-4029

Debbie DeCooman R.R. 3 Chesterville, ON K0C 1
debbied@magma.ca (613) 448-3540

Achim Mohssen-Beyk
1329 Cty. Rd. 7, Picton, ON K0K 2T0
mobeyk@reach.net (613) 476-0158

EFAO Member Gerald Poechman Elected to Executive Board

Gerald Poechman was elected to his third term on Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario's board in February. He is a an egg, beef and cash crop farmer near Walkerton. The press release announcing his election noted "Poechman has wide experience in promoting ecological farming, was a founding member and past president of OntarBio Co-op and successfully launched certified organic eggs into the Canadian market." He received an agricultural diploma from Centralia College, is an Alumnus of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program and farms with his wife Marlene.

http://www.christianfarmers.org/sub_news_comments/sub2_news_com_news_releases/nr_05_01_new_directories.pdf

EFAO President Writes to PM About Terminator

On behalf of EFAO, Ann Slater wrote a letter to Prime Minister Martin expressing the Association's deep concern about Canada's support for the field testing and commercialization of terminator genes. It looks like an issue which may need to put back out in the public now that the debate and push for terminator has been reopened.

Right Hon. Paul Martin
Prime Minister of Canada

Dear Mr. Martin:

I am writing to ask that the Canadian Government continue to support the international ban on Terminator Technology, officially known as Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTS).

The membership of the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario (EFAO) is made up of over 400 families who operate both commercial-scale and smaller diversified organic or ecological farms, as well as, researchers, journalists, academics and consumers.

Our 2003 policy around genetically modified organisms includes the following request to governments:

Ban agreements and technology (e.g. Terminator type genes) which restrict farmers' right to save, trade and reuse seeds.

Our organization has been informed that, according to leaked documents, the Canadian delegation at SBSTTA 10 (a scientific advisory body to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity) in Bangkok, Thailand, will ask governments to accept the field testing and commercialization of GURTS varieties. This action will undermine an official UN report recommending that governments seek prohibitions on GURTS technology.

Farmers must continue to have the right to save, re-use and exchange seed, as they have done for generations. The lifting of the moratorium on GURTS would effectively end farmers' rights to save seed and would pose a serious threat to food sovereignty.

The only beneficiaries of the lifting of the moratorium on GURTS are a handful of multinational seed companies supported by the US government. It is appalling that the Canadian government is standing against farmers and the

In the interests of farmers in Canada and around the world, I urge you, as Prime Minister, to immediately take action on this critical issue and direct the Canadian delegation to support the moratorium on GURTS.

Your sincerely,

Ann Slater
President, Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario
R.R. 1 Lakeside, ON
N0M 2G0
(519) 349-2448
aslater@quadro.net

c.c. Hon Andy Mitchell, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
F.B. Fadden, President, Canadian Food Inspection Agency
Diane Finley, Conservative Agriculture Critic
Charlie Angus, NDP Agriculture Critic

Winter Table Talks - Central Region by Ken Marisett

Information-Fellowship & Great Food at EFAO Central; hey, that's just the way it is at EFAO Central Region—we sure like our pot luck dinner. Sometimes we call them Table Talks.

Our January 9th, 2005 crop rotation session facilitated by Garry Lean at the Marisett home was a capacity crowd of farmers and gardeners with lots of information and discussion. It's not difficult at these events to learn how to improve soil health thereby improving both the quality and quantity of the food produced, but, and the Big But is learning how to effectively deal with those persistent unwelcome plants such as Canada thistle but I am sure we will find a way if we keep at it.

Our February 12th fencing workshop at the Ellenbergers was equally fulfilling, both at the dinner table (Oh, I love good food!) and at the fencing discussion after. It never ceases to amaze me the amount of information farmers possess and the willingness to share at these events. The one thing that came out loud and clear at this workshop was the advantage of electric fencing strung in conjunction with all conventional fencing to prevent the animals from attempting to crawl through and ultimately severely or destroying the fences.

PS Joan asks "How much weight have you put on this winter anyhow? Uh-oh.

EFAO Meets with Ontario Ministry of Agriculture

by Ann Slater

On January 22, members of the Ontario organic community met with representatives from the Minister of Agriculture's office at the Guelph Organic Conference. Hon. Steve Peters, the Minister of Agriculture, had expected to attend the meeting but cancelled due to poor driving conditions. Instead, we met with Frank Ingratta, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and two Senior Policy Advisors from the Minister's office - Jim Clark and Sara Zippin and Hugh Martin, OMAF's organic lead.

Representing the organic community at the meeting were Larry Lendhardt, OCPP; Ralph Martin, Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada; Tom Manley, Homestead Organics and COG; Terry Ackerman, Organic Meadow and Ontarbio; Roger Rivest, Great Lakes Organics and myself, representing EFAO.

The minister's representatives heard about the difficulties processors have in sourcing Ontario organic produce, like grains and soybeans, and in filling the growing demand for organic food, like eggs and milk. It was pointed out there is tremendous potential for growth in organic agriculture in Ontario, and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture can help by coming onside with public support for the organic sector. The organic community representatives stressed that support does not necessarily mean dollars. They tried to impress upon the Ministry representatives the importance of ongoing, sincere, public recognition of the value of organic as a realistic option for farmers in Ontario.

EFAO presented a written brief to the ministry representatives. Points raised in the brief and discussion included:

- the potential to replace imported organic products with Ontario grown and processed organic food;
- so that they can continue to continue direct market meat, ecological farmers would like the government to follow through on two of the recommendations of the Haines Review of the meat inspection system - (1) support to upgrade small, local abattoirs and (2) work with groups like EFAO, COG and NFU to develop an Ontario On-Farm Food Safety program for small, mixed farmers that is consistent with organic standards and workable in a local food system;
- organic certification, with third-party inspection, insures that organic food is produced in a manner that is safe, nutritious and environmentally friendly. This is the type of

• initiatives to bring Ontario consumers in direct contact with Ontario produce and Ontario farmers provide benefits for consumers through more nutrient-rich food and to environment by cutting down on transportation;

• organic practices help protect the environment. Incentive programs to help farmers make the transition to organic; public research dollars allocated to the organic value chain will lead to more organic farming;

• the Ontario Organic Roundtable needs support to strengthen the organic sector in Ontario; and

• OMAF should continue to seek alternative agricultural voices and invite the organic community to discussions about the future of the agri-food sector in Ontario.

Other topics discussed at the meeting include the progress of the national organic regulation, crop insurance for organic and transitional farmers and directing checkoff funds from organic farmers to organic research and promotion. An article in the February 8 edition of the Ontario Farmer about organic field crops in Ontario, highlighted a number of issues raised during the meeting with OMAF representatives.

Food for Thought - A Classroom Guide to Agriculture

The Western region committee and Asterio Kalogeropoulos from the JCP program, put together a resource kit on ecological agriculture. This kit has activities and resource material that can be used from kindergarten to grade 12.

The questions and materials in the book can be applied to different courses throughout the curriculum. A copy has been sent to each of the school boards in Ontario. A copy is available to any EFAO member that homeschools.

We have had a good response from a number of school boards who would like more copies for each of their schools. This positive response, however, has become problematic. We cannot afford to reprint the number of copies required to send to these school boards and cannot afford to pay the \$10.00 fee for each copy. We told them they can copy the book, but the boards I talked to feel this is not an option for them. We have tried to contact a number of businesses or groups who could sponsor or partner with us in this expense, but so far I have not received any positive feedback.

For more information simply contact Annette Verhagen at the EFAO office or Nancy Hislop (hislop@hurontel.on.ca or 519-526-1024).

Monsanto Buys Seminis Vegetable Seeds

by Ann Slater

In January, 2005, Monsanto announced the acquisition of Seminis Vegetable Seeds for \$1.4 billion plus assumed debt of around \$400 million. Suddenly, as a vegetable grower I was faced with the realization I am now contributing to the profits of Monsanto. At the same time I was left with the question of whether or not GM vegetable seed varieties are on the immediate horizon.

Seminis is the largest vegetable and fruit seed company in the world, with around 25% of the market and 3,500 seed varieties. About 75% of Seminis seed varieties are hybrids, but they also have 350 varieties protected under plant variety protection laws and have 140 patents owned or pending.

As vegetable growers, we purchase seeds from seed retailers and often do not consider who is supplying those seeds to the retailers. We may not have heard of Seminis even though we are using their seeds. Some varieties developed and marketed by Seminis include Fairytale eggplant (new and highlighted in many seed catalogues this winter); Papaya Pear, Gold Rush and Ambassador summer squash; Sun Sugar, Big Beef, Early Cascade and Celebrity tomatoes; Tiger Baby watermelon; Melody spinach; Sweet Success, Salad Bush and Sweet Slice cucumbers; Strike and Gold Rush beans; and Bush Delicata, Pasta, Early Butternut, Table Ace and Ambercup winter squash. Early Cascade, a hybrid, is now available as organic seed.

Seminis itself was established in 1994 and expanded by buying seed companies like Asgrow, Petoseed, Seneca and Royal Sluis. It has technology alliances with more than 100 public and private organizations like Cornell University and the University of California, Davis. Its seed line also includes vegetables like sweet corn, peppers, onions and brassicas.

Monsanto's seed focus has been on field crops with genetic traits, like corn, soybeans and cotton. Why Monsanto's new interest in a vegetable seeds? Syngenta, one of Monsanto's main competitors, GE seed developer and third largest global seed company, is already in the vegetable seed business through Rogers seeds. Popular vegetables varieties sold by Rogers include Jade, Indy Gold and Roma II beans and Spineless Beauty, Starship, Sunburst and

This may be a new diversification strategy for Monsanto. The purchase of Seminis, also moves Monsanto to number one in global seed and trait revenue. High quality vegetable seed germplasm is expensive and rare. This purchase gives Monsanto access to vegetable germplasm. There is also larger revenue growth potential in vegetable seed.

Is Monsanto likely to incorporate current GE traits into Seminis vegetable lines? Monsanto says it is not in their immediate plans to develop GE traits in vegetables and fruit but they do not rule out the possibility in the future. Instead, they say they plan to use the Monsanto advantage in genetic mapping to create better hybrids.

There are reasons to back up their statement on not developing GM vegetable varieties at this time. The first is the reluctance of consumers to accept GE foods, like vegetables, that are not processed. This could change if varieties offering specific benefits to consumers are developed. Vegetable varieties are rarely planted over the same number of acres as field crops, therefore, it can be difficult for a company to recoup the large research and development costs associated with developing a single vegetable variety with GE traits.

With information from "Monsanto Acquires Seminis: A New Diversification Strategy", January 31, 2005 by the Polaris Institute, Ottawa, (613) 237-1717.

From the Past: Worth Saying Again

At the EFAO Annual Meeting in the fall of 1990, then President Lawrence Andres advised those converting to organic agriculture not to jump too far ahead too quickly especially if they farm a large acreage. It's wise to grow into this method of farming to avoid costly mistakes. He also noted that it takes only one or two failures to draw unfavorable comments about organic farming in total.

In outlining the goals and policies of the ecological farming and the association, he noted that "the soil is a finely tuned organism that can look after itself as long as we don't work against it. We must constantly be aware of what we are doing to the soil and always ask ourselves the question of whether this or that cultivation is best for it."

*Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario Newsletter
Winter 1990. p 3*

Feast of Fields Organic Vineyard – St. Catharines **Farm Tour Report by Bruce Penfound**

September 26, 2004 was a gorgeous day for a tour with Laura Sabourin on her Feast of the Fields Organic Vineyard near the village of Jordan in the St. Catharines area.

The vineyard is the only one in Ontario certified to Demeter standards., which as well as being organic has practices linked to natural harmonies and whole farm self-sufficiency. To some, Demeter standards or biodynamic standards are stricter than organic standards because of requirements on converting the whole farm and on greater restrictions on inputs brought from off-farm.



Focussing on premium fruit for wine-making, the vineyard uses good vineyard management practices along with aerobic compost tea to reduce the need for fungicides such as sulphur and copper. We saw her mixing vessel running which makes compost tea to spray in the vineyard. Air is pumped in as it mixes. The compost is made from the bedding of her small herd of Dexter cattle, to which biodynamic preparations are added. The vineyard is manufacturing and distributing ecologically friendly tools and equipment, soil amendments, aerobic compost tea Acadian Kelp and other certified organic products. (<http://www.feast-of-fields.ca/>).

Variety selection is not easy. Laura explained that certain varieties of grapes such as Himrod did not work well with organic production. Of the eleven original varieties planted beginning in 1997, three have had to be replaced. The replacements are Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Pinot Noir.

The harvester was working that day, while the customerSfrom New York State waited. They were grape growers and wine makers in the Finger Lakes area and they needed more organic grapes to continue wine production. The harvester must be adjusted to shake the vines enough to have the good grapes fall off while leaving the immature grapes from falling in. We ate some grapes missed by the harvest that had become extra sweet!

There were taped bird cries, bird balloons and propane cannons operating to keep bird damage down. Laura showed

Vines were hilled with soil to cover the graft union to protect from winter damage. This is a fall practice and the soil must be removed from the vines in the spring. Some growers have stopped this practice but severe winter temperatures have resulted in many lost acres of vines. At a start up cost of \$5,000 an acre, this can be devastating to a vineyard.

Thank you Laura for a fine tour!

Bill Barkley Pruning Workshop by Debbie DeCooman

Thank you to Bill Barkley from Barkley's Apple Orchard demonstrating and discussing pruning techniques at the Eastern Region's Apple Tree Pruning Workshop. Barkley's Apple Orchard is located near Morrisburg. The orchard ships about a thousand bushels of apples each year. The orchard is where in 1811, John MacIntosh discovered the apple named MacIntosh now the most common variety of apple in Canada. Bill has some fame of his own. In 2000, he won a \$1000 award from the Environmental Farm Plan for a home built dryer with a three bushel capacity costing less than \$200 in materials and using waste heat from the cold room compressor. Without any additional use of energy, he is able to dry fruit, grown and processed on the farm. Pruning plans for the 3-bushel dryer are available on the orchard web site for \$3.00
<http://www.magma.ca/~barkhm5/orderCan.htm>.

Bill started with some branches cut from our apple trees and identified the growth of different years on each branch, showing us the fruit buds and what should be trimmed back. Trimming back may mean the tree produces less fruit but it allows the tree to use its limited energy to produce good quality fruit. As many of our trees are very old, we were told to prune no more than 30% and not to be too aggressive. Too much pruning can lead to weak growth more prone to winter and other damage.

We pruned out two older trees in the sub-zero weather with a wind chill of about -20 degrees C. BBBRRRRR! I saw a person took a turn at using the pruning knife. We removed the crossed branches which are those which physically rub against each other which could rub which may wound the branch allowing in diseases and insects. And we removed thick growth in the center of the trees to let the light in. Flowers and therefore fruit are formed on short spurs and the sunlight needs to get to the center of the tree in order to produce fruit.

EFO Calls the Farm

In this new column, Ecological Farming in Ontario looks at what EFAO members and others are doing to benefit the farm and rural community. This issue we talk to Ken Marisett.

Ken was a spokesperson for the successful campaign against Roundup Ready Wheat. He, Dave Harry and Gayl Creutzberg, were EFAO representatives to the Organic Priorities Research Meeting organized by Hugh Martin, OMAF's organic lead, in 2004. He produces grains on 300 acres and in 2003 began to grow vegetables.

On the Guelph Organic Conference

Ken did not go to the Guelph Organic Conference until 2001. Now when he looks over the program, his wife says, "You might as well register for the whole thing because you know you are going to stay for all of it in the end." He enjoys the chance to meet other people and discuss what's happening. He viewed this year's conference as very positive. Keynote speaker John Ikerd said "all the things we need to be thinking about."

Ken found particularly useful the Global Trade in Organic Food session on Sunday morning, January 23 which had a large attendance discussing how the process of organic standard development and acceptance internationally works, why it takes so long and other insights.

He also found excellent the Second Annual Conference for Social Research in Organic Agriculture, chaired by Dr. Jennifer Sumner of the University of Guelph and Dr. Veronika Mogyorodý of the University of Windsor. This examined social justice in relation to public policies such as organic seed production, meat inspection, food security and safety, chicken and egg marketing, and environmental sustainability. A CD of this sessions costs \$24 and can be purchased from Conference, Box 116, Collingwood, ON L9Y 3Z4 tel: 705 444-0923 email organix@georgian.net. CDs are also available for other Guelph organic conference sessions.

On Linking EFAO's Central Region with Social Research on the Organic Farms

Dr. Jennifer Sumner, postdoctoral Fellow at the University

farmers and rural communities. She is researching the role of organic farming in helping to maintain the family farm, which she suggests is making a come-back in Ontario due to the rising consumer demand of organic food products. The smaller-scale organic farms tend to be beneficial for the rural community because they buy from local businesses, use local services, and the farm family participates in and supports community priorities which add dimension and value to the local economy and environment as well as the quality of life. Dr. Sumner suggests that understanding the effects of organic farms on rural communities can improve the sustainability of farm and non-farm communities across Canada.

See more at Sumner, Jennifer. Rural Communities and the Return of the Family Farm.

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/organics/research/index.html>

Alternatives for Wastewater Treatment Plant

Ken and about 35 other citizens attended the Environmental Assessment public meeting of a proposed new sewage treatment plant for Picton. One of Ken's concerns was the loss of agricultural land. Another was that technology options have not been properly studied. Some people in the audience encouraged reconsideration of an option the consultants had already rejected: use of an engineered wetland for wastewater treatment. A third concern was the spreading of sewage sludge on farmland. Organic farms do not use sewage sludge but the whole community is affected by potential pollution to air, water and soil. Ken says he just keeps chipping away at the status quo. He values making positive even if small steps forward and supporting research and evaluation of alternatives such as living machine technology.

**CITIZENS
RENEWABLE**



**FOR
ENERGY**

A non-profit information-sharing and advocacy organization
Our goal

To accelerate the introduction and use of clean, renewable energy, thereby speeding up the phaseout of polluting fossil and nuclear energy production.

S.(Ziggy) Kleinau, Coordinator ph/fax- (519) 795-7725
R.R. 4 Lions Head email: cfre@web.ca

Buying Quota for Certified Organic Small Scale Organic Chicken Flock

At least one EFAO member has been able to obtain quota for small scale organic chicken production. We are not including the name of the member because there is so much interest in this topic that they are getting more phone calls than they can handle while still doing their farm work, so please don't start calling around to find out who it might be. However EFO has spoken to the member and the following information comes directly from them.

The farm family wanted to be able to sell a small number of chickens legally because they see the consumer demand for organic chicken. Another farmer they knew had lobbied Chicken Farmers of Ontario to let him buy a small quota instead of the 14,000 unit minimum normally required.

They followed that man's steps for the same amount, 275 units, and found the CFO cooperative and helpful. They had to find someone willing to sell them quota and found a feed company, which intended to sell only large amounts but didn't mind selling them the quota required. The farm produces fryers in the summer and roasters in the fall but no meat chickens in the winter so the CFO collapsed the calendar production weeks to accommodate their seasonal production. The chicken production even on the small scale has to meet all the requirements of the large scale, food safety such as HACCP, filling out long forms when transferring chickens from the farm with details such as the names of the chicken catchers, licensed trucks and so on. They find the CFO field representative helpful and thinks the rules are fair.

While most chicken producers sell to a processor, they are themselves the processor, at least in name, although the chickens are processed at a licensed government facility so they can sell not only at the farm gate but also wholesale such as to health food stores or other retailers.

Economically the investment is paying for itself. They only have to buy the quota once and own it. The premium they receive for organic meat chickens is helping to pay off the quota investment.

The CFO will only consider providing the small-scale quota to farmers raising certified organic chickens so those who want to be legal but who are not certified organic cannot use this option.

Update on Chicken Quota Exemption Request by Ann Slater

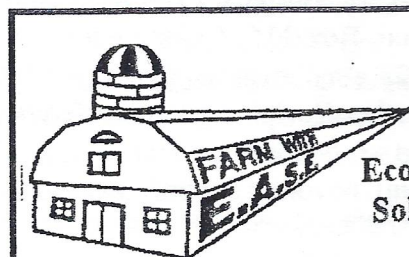
On March 8, representatives of EFAO and the National Farmers Union (NFU) met with the executive, general manager and director of operations of the Chicken Farmers of Ontario (CFO) to discuss the request, from both organizations, for an exemption from holding quota for farmers selling 2000 or less birds per year direct to consumers.

I think the meeting was worthwhile. The CFO representatives seemed to listen to our point of view and indicated a willingness to find common ground and a resolution to the issue. We need to be open to negotiation on our position as well.

I stressed many of our members have been under the impression they can raise up to 300 chickens without quota and would like to be able to continue to raise small flocks for the direct market, on mixed farms, without purchasing quota. A number of our members had been visited in the past year and told to quit selling chicken or buy quota. An exemption allowing farmers to keep up to 100 hens with quota was noted as a workable situation for small, mixed farms within a supply managed commodity in Ontario.

Last year small flock chicken growers were only able to purchase 100 chicks for personal use. This year it will be possible to buy 306 chicks, but the understanding is that this will be raised for personal use only.

Some organic growers have been able to work through the CFO to purchase small amounts of quota, as small as 275 units, and more have asked CFO for information on small quota purchases this winter. At the end of the meeting, one of the CFO representatives noted they have been receiving a number of letters from our members supporting our request for a quota exemption for small flocks of direct market chicken.



Gary Skillen

Ecological Agricultural
Solutions & Energies

Box 580, Maxville, Ontario K0C 1T0
Tel-Fax: (613) 527-3060 / 1-800-893-7645 / Res.: (613) 826-0599

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY SOIL FERTILITY MANAGEMENT

Sustainable Agriculture: Family Organic Farms

When John Ikerd, agricultural economist at the University of Missouri, was advising on farm policy in the 1960s and 70s, he advised farmers to farm for the bottom line, go where the markets are, profit is king, and get bigger or get out. These were what he called the good farmers. Then when the economy turned down in the 1980s, the "good" farmers went broke. These were the ones who did what he advised, treat the farm like a factory, the livestock as part of the assembly plant. The farmers he had called poor farmers who were diversified withstood the economic bad times. They treated their farms not as a machines but as a living system. Sustainable agriculture and specifically organic farming is more than not using chemicals or reducing health risks, it is a philosophy about how to relate to nature.

In the keynote speech as the Guelph Organic Conference in January, he spoke about what is wrong with the agricultural system he helped to create. The best farm land is being paved over due to poor planning; each acre is one acre irretrievably lost. We are putting our land at risk. Although for many of us it is more indirect, we are still as dependent on the land for our survival as we were in the past. Standardization, economic efficiency, even organic

certification, are a way to reduce diversity so we can move stuff more freely around the world. In too many cases, farmers aren't even making the decisions anymore; the decisions about crops are made in corporate boardrooms and farmers just work for the company.

He said that consumers are looking for answers about where the food comes from, who produced it and how it was produced. Family farms especially organic farms can integrate philosophy, ethics, community viability and are key to saving the land.

"Farming isn't just about minimizing costs or maximizing profits; it's about nurturing and caring for living things... The family nurtures the farm and the farm nurtures the family, and the family nurtures, and is nurtured by, the biological and social community." John Ikerd

For more information, check out Dr. Ikerd's web site including papers such as Farming in the Future: the Triple Bottom Line.
<http://www.ssu.missouri.edu/faculty/jikerd/papers/PA-Tro y-Triple-Bottom-Line.htm>

Membership Application for Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario

Please Print

Name:.....

Farm Name:.....

Address:.....

Town:.....Postal Code:.....

County:.....

Phone Number...(.....)

Email Address:.....

☐ Renewal

☐ New Member

Please check the category that fits you best:

☐ Full Time Farmer

☐ Part Time Farmer

☐ Educator

☐ Media

☐ Other

For Farmers (Optional Questions)

Number of Acres farmed.....

List of Crops.....

Livestock (type & number).....

Do you farm organically?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how many years.....

If no, are you trying to move in that direction?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Membership is \$30 per year or \$75 for three years. Membership runs from Feb 1st to Jan 31st. Members receive the newsletter and can attend any workshops, meetings and farm tours.

Mail this form with payment to:

Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario
c/o Fran McQuail,
R.R. 1, Lucknow, ON N0G 2H0

Please include me in the Internal Members Directory.

☐ Yes ☐ No

I wish to make a donation to EFAO. Amount \$.....

EFAO is a Registered Charity #88074 6532 RR0001. Receipts will be issued for donations of \$25 or more over the membership fee. Privacy Commitment: EFAO is committed to protecting the privacy of our members and donors. We do not make our mailing lists available to any other organizations. If you have concerns about your privacy, please contact Annette Verhagen at the EFAO Office.

STOCK EXCHANGE

For Sale: Navin Hull-less oat seed and AC Parkhill barley certified CSGA and certified organic. Also certified organic flax seed, green pea seed, buckwheat, and barley, oat pea seed mix. Call Francis or Tom Hartman at 519-237-3295 or 519-237-3370. (1215-2)

For Sale: Certified 1st-cut hay, no rain, small squares and bales. Sunflower seeds, large, striped. Muscovy chickens. Chicken equipment: brooders, waterers, etc. Contact Harold Saunders, 519 666-0705 or saunders@saundersorganics.com. (1255-1-2)

For Sale: Certified Organic Spelt and Rye seed, feed grade, dehulled Spelt and custom Spelt dehulling. Call Joan Fischer, Maple Woods Organics, 519 666-1678 (1065-1-2)

For Sale: Certified Organic Hybrid Seed Corn 2450-3300 L.U. Call Doug Shirray at 519 655-2570. (1275-1-2)

For Sale: Navan Hulless Oats certified seed, alfalfa hay small 3x3 bales and oat straw 3x3 bales all certified organic. Dave Salenbien 519 351-1460 (1285-1-2)

For Sale: Certified organic oat seed. Three varieties available of which one is a heritage seed. Ross Wilhelm 519 625-8601 in Stratford area. (1325-2)

For Sale: Einbock Tine Weeder, 9 meters. Call Keith Williamson 519 887-9102 (1295-2)

For Sale: Organic garlic for sale in farm store. Organic hard red wheat seed and organic barley seed. Alvin Filsinger, 519 665-7763. (1315-2)

For Sale: Organic Farm for Sale in the pristine Bruce Peninsula. Selling due to failing health - 100 acre mixed farm. Approx. 50 acres hardwood bush, 35 acres in forage crop, 15 acres rough pasture. Century old log home with new addition. Wind and solar hybrid system supplies electricity. Open to offers. Call 519-795-7725. (1305-2)

Farm Workshops: Isn't it time you make your farm more sustainable? Learn how to farm with draft horses. HORSE LOGGING one-day workshop Feb. 12. Three day BEGINNERS WORKSHOPS: April 21-23; May 12-14; June 2-4; July 7-9; August 18-20 and Sept. 29- Oct. 1. One day PLOWING WORKSHOP August 13. Southern Ontario Draft Horse Workshops - for more information contact Ken and Martha Laing 519-775-2670 e-mail kmlaing@exculink.com (1195-1-3)

Farm Workshop: SUFFOLK PUNCH draft horse open house, Saturday, September 3, 1-5 pm. This is your opportunity to meet this very rare breed of draft horse in the flesh. See the foals - see the teams at work in the fields. No charge. 45415 Fruit Ridge Line. South and East of St. Thomas near the village of Sparta. Ken and Martha Laing 519-775-2670 (120-1-3)

ABOUT STOCK EXCHANGE ADS

For Stock Exchange ads, please send your ad and pre-payment by cheque made payable to EFAO for \$5.00 per insertion per issue (e.g. \$20 for the four issues of each year) to EFAO c/o Annette Verhagen Box 127 Wroxeter, ON N0G 2X0 efao@wightman.ca.

Items For Sale must be from your farm as this service is a benefit of membership. EFAO News also thanks you for your support. Advisory: With our limited time and resources, the EFAO is not able to verify the details or claim e.g. certified seed or registered stock made in the following advertisements. Please check these details yourself before buying.

The Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario was established in 1979:

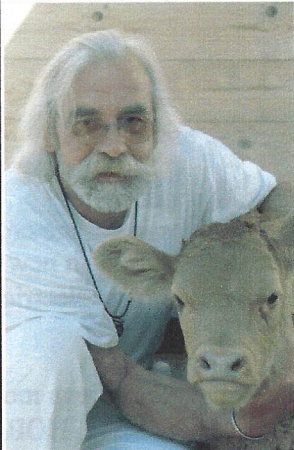
1. To develop and provide programs promoting the practice and advancement of ecological agriculture which maintains and enhances the health of the soil, water, crops, livestock, and the diversity of the environment.

2. To educate and increase the public's understanding of ecological agricultural methods like soil tillage, green manures, cover crops, composting, crop rotations, soil erosion control, and conservation practices by offering courses, seminars, conferences, farm tours, meetings, and publishing a newsletter and by collecting, researching, and disseminating information on this topic to the general public.

3. To bring together people who are concerned about ecological agriculture so they can share experiences, support each other and create community.

Activities: Conferences, courses and workshops on ecological farming methods, farm tours, newsletters, farm consulting, seed and stock exchange, and good fellowship.

Contact information: EFAO, Box 127, Wroxeter, Ontario, N0G 2X0
Tel: 519 335-6566 Email: efao@wightman.ca <http://www.efao.ca>

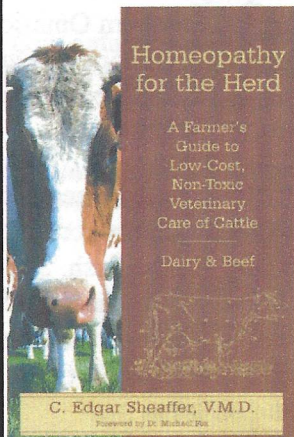


Dr. Jörg Spranger

Conference on Organic Dairying and Dairy Research

April 5th, 2005

Keynote Speaker on April 5th: Dr. Jörg Spranger, Director,
Animal Health Division, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture
(FiBL), Switzerland



Pre-conference Homeopathic Workshop with Dr. C. Edgar Sheaffer

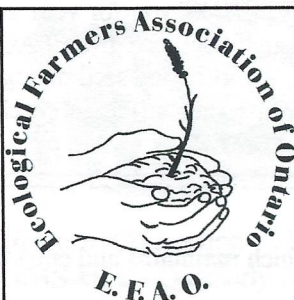
April 4th 2005 in Alfred (Eastern Region)
repeated April 7th in Milverton (Western Region)

Dr. Sheaffer is a holistic veterinarian from Pennsylvania and the author of *Homeopathy for the Herd*

For details of both events see page 2 of this issue
Homeopathic Workshop details are also on page 10.

"Agriculture has become the number one non-point source of stream pollution in the US and a growing "dead zone" in the Gulf of Mexico is attributed largely to agricultural pollution sources."

John Ikerd



PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40034768
RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO
ECOLOGICAL FARMERS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO
OFFICE
BOX 127, WROXETER, ONTARIO, N0G 2X0

