

Meanwhile Back at the Farm...April 11, 2001

Howdy Folks,

Thanks to everyone who called with support about my sister and her cancer. The doctors think they got it all and are somewhat optimistic. In the last week I have encountered countless stories about people developing cancer in their forties. It seems to me and others that not too long ago most of the stories you'd hear about cancer applied to people in their 60's and that younger people getting cancer was still pretty unusual. Maybe its just a perception issue and that its been this way a long time and now that I am in my forties I am more sensitive to the issue. Still it seems to me that its somehow become common to hear of young people being struck down only recently.

This week I have been working hard as an activist.

Yesterday I did two radio shows and then gave a talk to young people at Bay Area Action last night for three hours. This Friday I will be giving a talk on the Glassy Winged Sharpshooter at New College in San Francisco. As we move firmly into Spring and the weather warms up (if it ever does), we will see the Ag Commissioners start pushing their forced spray programs around the state. I am still trying to stop the forced spraying of citizen's homes with pesticides just so the wine industry doesn't have to quarantine Southern California grapes. It's been one thing during the Winter to talk about the problem but now that its Spring the rubber is about to meet the road.

I wish more counties were as organized as Sonoma county which is fully prepared for civil war in the streets to stop the spray trucks from rolling into neighborhoods. We are hoping that the New College event will give us a core of volunteers to help fight off the fascists in the Bay Area counties. Its not just a rural problem. The Department of Food and Agriculture is just as deadly serious about spraying San Francisco backyards if any GWSS are found there. Just to make things clear, this is not going to be a one time event like the Medfly. They know that they will be spraying multiple times if they spray even once and this program is already guaranteed funding for SIX YEARS OF SPRAYING. This spraying of your property will become an annual ritual if we let it start. Come to New College Friday night to see how you can help.

The main farm looks really beautiful right now with all the neat, tilled beds, showing off their dark rich soil. We found so many worms this year demonstrating the fertility and living breathing nature of the soil. We should have the whole place planted by next week and then its simply a matter of watching it all set itself into motion. We'll be far more aware than usual of the cyclic nature of farming

since we will have virtually all the land on the main farm on one last turn around the wheel.

Our greenhouse ponds are writhing with tadpoles. All that toad singing we were treated to over the last few weeks has resulted in thousands upon thousands of tadpoles. I've never seen so many here. Let's have a little fun speculating about this. Since we know that, on average, toads eat 167 bugs per night, times, let's say, 11,667 toads; that yields 1,948,389 bugs eaten each day. Now if we guess that toads poop every time they finish eating 8 bugs then the toads will be spreading 243,549 deposits of fertilizer around the farm each day. If we guess that each of the poops weighs a quarter of a gram then we have about 2,175 ounces or 136 pounds of fertilizer being spread every day all over the main farm. That doesn't sound like too much but, if they do that for 6 months they will have converted bugs into about 24,480 pounds of fertilizer. Ohmigod!

The Land Search Continues

Steve Karlin of Wildlife Associates, the owner of the land in Half Moon Bay, came for a visit to the main farm here in Woodside. I could tell he was impressed. He is urging me to get a proposal to him next week for his board to consider. This is great. They are serious about having us partner up with them.

I will be looking at another piece of land in Half Moon Bay this evening after the harvest.

Special Farm Tour April 29th

If it's been a long time since you've toured here or if you always meant to get out to the farm for a tour we'd like to really encourage you to come on this date. My friend from New York, David Douglin will be filming this tour to be made into a video about Our Farm and Permaculture. I'd like to have a nice sized tour group here and it would be great if he could interview a few members as well. Bring your friends too.

Renewal Time- Season Ends Soon

Thanks to those who did the Earlybird Renewal. We appreciate your sending in your money early. The season ends for most people with the May 3rd delivery. We always try to keep up with the reminders as we approach the end so you can put aside some money for your renewal. Otherwise it comes as a shock to the budget for many people.

The Food

Broccoli: From another farm

Arugula flowers: Use the flowers and buds in your salads or stir-fry

Spinach: This stuff grew over the winter under tough conditions. We have recently planted gobs of spinach which should be harvestable in about 5 weeks.

Onions: Spring Onions- They are just starting their bulbing and are chock full of sugar. Over the next few weeks you'll watch them progress.

Red Chard: Another winter survivor

Carrots: from another farm.

Green Mustard: From Matadero

Beets: Our beets are still a month away so I thought you might like to have a few from another farm.