



## Welcome to the new year and new standards!

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COABC, #8A, 100 Kalamalka Lake Rd.  
 Vernon BC V1T 9G1

# What does COABC do?

by Linda Edwards

Welcome to 2002! Whether it's a blessing or a curse, 2002 promises to be an 'interesting' year for COABC and the organic movement in our province. After several years of rapid growth, we have found it necessary to make some changes in the way we do business as an organization – and the end is not yet in sight. We need to make the best of the changing context – growing markets, shrinking government, threats of contamination by GMOs, challenges from imports, increased public sensitivity to environmental issues – and remain true to our basic vision and commitments at the same time.

Two of the changes we have already made are the establishment of the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society (PACS) to undertake certification to export standards (see below) and the Standards Review Committee (see pp. 8-9) to streamline and make more transparent the process of amending the BC Organic Standard. At last, the AGM will not be wholly taken up with endless, frustrating discussion of the minutiae of the Standards! and we will have the opportunity to discuss as an organization exactly how we want to work to fulfill our mandate in the year ahead.

But before I get to what we do (and what we are committed to doing), let's look at who is doing it. Most of the work of the COABC is done by the Board and staff. The Board, of course, is made up of one director from each of the 14 certifying bodies. There are three staff: **Kristen Kane** works 24 hours a week as office coordinator at the COABC office in Vernon. **Janice Casling** works part time as a financial coordinator handling everything from working with the volunteer treasurer to make sure the bills get paid to development of budgets and marketing and sales of COABC Tree Fruit Management Guide. **Paddy Doherty** has for the

past year worked half time as an outreach coordinator and half time on a restructuring plan.

Much of this has been paid for by a one time grant from the provincial government which runs out January 1, 2002. The restructuring money runs out early in the new year. Some Board members are putting in hours which would be hard to distinguish from full time jobs except for the lack of payment. While no one is complaining, it is inevitable – and in fact has already happened – that such people burn out and/or have to make a choice between the COABC and their farms and families. The same is also true of the staff who provide hours and services well over and above what they are paid to do.

The whole situation is quite tenuous and not very sustainable.

If  
our revised fee structure  
does not cover all of our costs,  
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We have been successful in getting money for a number of projects but none of it can be used for core funding. This must come from membership fees. If our revised fee structure does not cover all of our costs, we will either need more volunteers

or we will have to cut back on what we do. Hence the following – what the COABC is supposed to do and what it does do.

## COABC Purposes and Mandate

The purposes or mandate of the COABC as described in its Constitution (Section 1.2.1) are:

**1 To promote organic agriculture and provide public education on organic agriculture and organic foods. See also purpose #7: To provide information to the public on behalf of its members.**

Many activities address both of these objectives so they are combined here. The following are just some of the current and recent activities.

☼ **The office in Vernon was established** (albeit part time because of limited funding) to provide a contact point for anyone wanting more information about organic agriculture and the COABC. It has also become an ongoing source of information and assistance for members. The number of phone calls, emails, letters and faxes to the office each day doubled between 1999 and 2000. Over the past year, it has increased even more. Approximately 50 % of these contacts are from members requesting everything from promotional material and information relating to use of the logo to wanting to know how to kill a particular bug. The other 50% are from non-members – the public – wanting to get information about organic growing, where to buy organic food, where to send a letter supporting organic egg producers and the like.

The office and staff also maintain the records of



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the organization, administer the use of the Checkmark and, along with much more, assist with getting out the BC Organic Grower and handling COABC promotional material.

✧ **Educational/extension services** for both new and established organic growers has received much attention. The Organic Advisory Service was developed to provide mentors for persons wanting to become organic growers or wishing to gain more expertise. In addition to private consultations, there are workshops and a 1-800 number for inquiries which is increasingly busy.

The Board also worked with the provincial government over the past year in regard to obtaining an organic extension worker. While this may not come to pass because of changing government policies, it did take up considerable executive time in meetings, phone calls etc.

A year ago, the outreach coordinator was asked to do fundraising for public information and education about organics. Many avenues were explored, applications submitted and one approved: an exploratory grant from the federal Human Resources Branch to develop a proposal to determine what information is needed by organic farmers to enable them to better pursue their goals, and how best to deliver that information. Rochelle Eisen has completed the survey and submitted a project to meet the needs identified to the Federal government. Elements of this proposal range from development of a North American market intelligence web page listing weekly prices and other market news, to training to help farmers enhance their computer skills. We will learn early in the new year if this is funded.

✧ **Publication of the BC Organic Grower.** Cathleen and Rebecca Kneen edit and publish this quarterly, and various members write articles for it. The BCOG goes to every member plus a number of non-grower subscribers.

✧ **The pamphlet "What is organic farming?"** was prepared by Paddy Doherty. It is used at COABC promotional functions, and given to people wanting to know more about organic production. A short flyer is also being prepared for the same purposes.

✧ **Establishment and maintenance of a web site.** It contains the Standards, lists of individual members, and instructions on how to sign on to the listserv, along with other useful information. There have been over 18,000 visits to the website since January 2000, and usage increases steadily. The listserv is very active, with discussions of practical issues (where to find specific produce or services) and political and philosophical debates.

✧ **Articles in papers and other media.** Some of these are written by COABC members and staff, others are based on interviews given and cover the range from general topics to specific issues affecting organics.

✧ **Events.** The COABC is often called upon to host or participate in a wide variety of events to provide information about organics, such as the BC Tree Fruits Horticultural Forum, Minter Gardens, UBC Apple Fest, events at Capers and the Guelph Organic Trade Show. A display booth has been developed and is used at these events. Last year, the Short Course in Abbotsford contained an organic section with two excellent speakers organized by the COABC. COABC also hosted a lunch presentation with Eliot Coleman in Vancouver in November.

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## BC Organic Grower

is received by all members of organizations belonging to the Certified Organic Association of British Columbia. BC Organic Grower is published quarterly by COABC.



*Editorial Assistance  
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**www.CertifiedOrganic.bc.ca**

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## AGM Dates

# Feb 16-17, 2002

Location

Easter Seal Camp,  
Winfield BC

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The 14th IFOAM Organic World Congress will be taking place in Victoria August 21–28th, with 2000 or more organic producers, growers, scientists etc. expected to attend from all over the world. (see p. 19) COABC has contributed to this financially and individual members have assisted in various aspects of the organizing. Our role at this event will be on the agenda for the AGM.

Board members have also recently hosted groups including 30 + employees from the BCMAFF, a delegation of UBC staff, Korean organic growers and groups of students from local universities.

✧ **Students**, usually in agriculture, frequently contact the Board for information about both specific organic issues and organic production in general.

✧ **COABC has promotional materials** such as plastic bags, stickers, twist ties, and farm gate signs with the checkmark symbol and the phrase “BC Certified Organic – Good For you, Good For the Environment” for members to purchase.

## **2 To represent members in matters relating to the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act.**

The COABC is named as the Administrator of the provincial organic regulations in this Act and is/would always be involved in any issues related to

such. We have also negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding for representation on any body dealing with certification of any other food or produce labels. Certification is about consumer confidence; legislation under the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act and through it, accreditation of our certification process, provides consumers with the security they require. The BC Certified Organic Program also gives organic producers a defense against those who might criticize the credibility of the organic designation as lacking authority or teeth. Only members in good standing who are enrolled in the BC Certified Organic Program have the right to use the phrase “BC Certified Organic” and the program symbol – the checkmark.

The COABC also provides information and guidance to members and the public about the rights and obligations of certified organic. This includes input into provincial and federal initiatives such as the Joint Meeting on Broad Research Priorities for BC Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Agencies and participation in the proposed Federal/Provincial action plan for Canada’s Life Sciences Economy, though attendance at meetings and written submissions.

## **3 To develop and administer an organic certification accreditation program for members.**

The COABC has established and maintained an

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audit committee to oversee this part of the mandate. The committee is chaired by a COABC member and is made up of COABC and non-COABC members plus a government representative. Three Certifying Bodies are randomly selected each year from those not recently audited. The operational procedures of these CBs are audited plus 15% of the membership. Initially, all that was required under COABC regulations was a paper audit. To satisfy ISO 65 requirements, the COABC has taken steps to undertake on-site audits carried out by the government auditor where such are needed.

**4 To grant permission for use of the phrase "BC Certified Organic" and program symbol on agri-cultural product labels.**

This is administered through the COABC office in Vernon. Only members in good standing of a CB receive permission to use the designation. This has to be verified annually by the office with the CBs.

**5 To develop and implement a verification officer training program.**

Our association with the Independent Organic Inspectors Assoc. has provided us with an on-going supply of competent verification officers to carry out the third party inspections.

**6 To facilitate marketing and research activities on behalf of its members.**

✧ When the United Kingdom rejected fruit from two of the COABC's CBs because of lack of **ISO 65 equivalency**, the COABC was able to negotiate that equivalency so that trade could resume. Fortunately, the COABC had already anticipated the problem, some Directors were well informed, and ground work had been done, including an informal meeting with the Premier of the province where this impending situation was discussed. The Premier had agreed to help and when the crisis occurred, a grant to hire someone to do the work needed was speedily made available. Paddy Doherty was hired to undertake the negotiations and was successful in establishing an ISO 65 equivalency agreement with the EU until 2005. Since then, negotiations have been launched with the US to negotiate a similar agreement with them.

Changes in the audit system for those who export had to be undertaken, replacing the previous paper review of files with on-site audits of CB offices and individual farms. It was necessary for the staff hired to become conversant with the new expectations, to write protocols and manuals and to educate members about the changes. Part of the reason for the formation of Pacific Agricultural Certification Society (PACS) was to provide the "competent body" with arms-length certification needed to meet the international requirements for ISO compliant certification.

*continued on page 6...*

# Tentative AGM Agenda

by Linda Edwards, President

*The Agenda has not been finalized. If you have something you think should be discussed, please let me or your Director know, preferably before the Director's conference call on the 15th of January.*

**Reports:**

- The Treasurer's report, discussion, and adoption of a budget for the future with the new sliding fee scale. Also discussion re. core funding and financial activities of the COABC.
- An Audit Committee report of level one and two audits carried out in the past year.
- COABC office report & BCOG
- Agri-Food Futures Trust Fund report
- Reports from each CB including PACS
- IFOAM report (Anne Macey) and discussion of ways the COABC and the CBs can be involved in the Congress.
- Report on plans for Learning Technologies in the Workplace project (if approved)
- A Committee struck to develop protocol on dealing with fraudulent actions will report.

**Discussions:**

- The Future COABC...method of functioning, representation to the Board of Directors.
- A policy to evaluate and/or develop equivalency with other Certifying Bodies. This will also revisit the issue of mandatory vs. voluntary.
- Participation in events...how many, which ones, how much money should we spend.
- Planning re. the Standards Review Committee.
- COABC's relationship with other groups and organizations in the past year and the future.

**Elections**

- Appointment of the 2002 Board of Directors and Standards Committee Representatives

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✧ COABC members have attended a number of **workshops and symposia** to give input about organic research needs and priorities. This year alone, the COABC was represented at a three day workshop at SFU to determine future research directions in regard to genetic engineering, a one day workshop at UBC regarding general research priorities and at least two half day workshops with Agriculture Canada about their research goals. A presentation was also made to the Federal-Provincial-Territories Ministry of Agriculture Agreement in Principle Action Plan for an Agricultural Policy.

✧ As a result of the profile and credibility developed by the COABC, we were awarded one of the **Agri-Food Futures Fund trusts**. This is for a million dollars and can be used to carry out research and development projects for COABC members. A committee is currently overseeing the development of a strategic plan and every COABC member has received a questionnaire and been asked to complete it as to what their needs and priorities are. These will form the basis for allocation of funds for projects.

**7** See #1

**8** To develop and maintain an approved list of materials for use in the production of organic agricultural products by farms certified by members.

Work on Standards has taken an enormous amount COABC's time and effort. When it became apparent a few years ago that the COABC Standards needed an extensive overhaul and updating, various ways of doing this were investigated, and it was decided to join the Organic Materials Review Institute. Membership gave us on-going access to their generic materials list and the right to use material from them, to receive reviews of controversial materials and access to the Brand Names List. Whenever a supplier approaches an organic grower with a new wonder material, OMRI will carry out the review to determine whether or not it is acceptable under organic guidelines. The Board has also reviewed resolutions from the membership each year. Development of new standards – greenhouse,

honey, sprouts etc. as well as maintenance of the crops, livestock and processing standards – have been carried out as needed. These will in future be handled year-round by the new Standards Review Committee. (see also pp 8-9).

**9** To be responsible for incidental matters related to the above referenced activities.

✧ **Restructuring for certifying bodies** which no longer want to carry out and/or be involved in regional, peer review certification came as a request to COABC from two of the larger CBs at the last AGM. Carrying out certification duties for 10-20 people on a volunteer basis is not all that difficult. Trying to do so for 60 or 70 members is. Also, more and more members no longer wish to deal with the perceived and real problems of farmers certifying farmers. To address these concerns a project to restructure was ratified at the last AGM and Paddy Doherty has worked since then at creating a new certifying body – PACS – to not only assist those exporting but also to carry out certification for individuals and certifying bodies who no longer wish to be directly involved with that process. Several of the latter will be sub-contracting with PACS to handle all of their certification needs. There will be further discussion at the AGM about the most effective and democratic method for representation and functioning of the COABC in the future.

✧ **Interaction with other groups and organizations with similar or related purposes.** This is an ever widening and increasingly demanding area. Much of the motivation is to represent organic interests and provide information about such to the public, and could be included under #1 and #7. However, it also includes looking out for the interests of COABC members as they can be or are being affected by the actions of others. The following are a few example of some of the current involvements.

- Ongoing discussion with other organic organizations across Canada regarding the need for of a national organic presence and updating of the Canadian National Standards.
- F.A.R.M. is the body that represents all the smaller agricultural groups on the BC Agricultural Council. COABC has joined this organization in order to have direct input into allocation of agricultural money and policy.
- COABC now has a representative – Bob McCoubrey – on the Investment Agriculture Foundation.
- Discussions with the SPCA and with members of the BC Fruit Growers Association and their Growing with Care staff about areas of common interest.
- Support for a project being vetted by The Land Conservancy
- Representation to Stats Canada to have statis-

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tics collected from organic producers and reported as such

- Presentation to the Federal Government regarding labeling for GMOs
- Discussions towards the establishment of a charitable trust fund which could handle donations for organic agriculture initiatives.

✧ **Advocacy for Certifying Bodies.** The COABC recognizes the autonomy of CBs to develop and carry out plans of action relating to issues affecting them. However, it can also provide support and assistance; for example, when members of three certifying bodies were threatened by the introduction of genetically engineered crops which would have resulted in eventually making it impossible for them to grow organic fruit, the COABC supported their actions by writing a letter to the Minister of Agriculture and obtaining support that played an important role in stopping the project.

In regard to CBs with members in conflict with Marketing Boards, COABC has maintained and promoted the position that certified organic product is distinct and that organic producers in supply management areas have the right to market their products without the purchase of quota from the Marketing Boards. Untold hours have been spent by COABC Board of Directors plus many others over the past few years, in negotiation and meetings with government, letters, interviews supporting this position and the growers affected, lobbying of marketing board officials and participation in mediation hearings. This will continue as requested.

- ✧ Development of a **comprehensive application form** for use by all of the CBs
- ✧ Development of a **procedure to use in cases of possible fraudulent use** of the BC Organic Program
- ✧ There are also many **operational details:** arranging for insurance for members that is affordable and available to directors and officers of all CBs as well as the COABC, preparing budgets, newsletters, personnel requirements, arranging for financial audits and all of the other issues involved in running an organization. These are carried out by Board members and staff.

Enough! As you read the above, please think about what we can do less of, as well as what we should do more of. Remember however, until/unless we change it, we must in some way fulfill our mandate. However, we should reexamine from time to time how we are doing that. Please do not hesitate to call me or your director if you wish to discuss any of the above. There will also be discussion and decision making at the AGM about most if not all of these items. ✓

## Election Alert!

**This year, each Certifying Body needs to select representatives for two positions by the time of the COABC annual meeting February 16-17, 2002.**

### Board Member

Every CB is entitled to a representative to the COABC Board of Directors. All a Director must do is participate in conference calls and attend the annual meeting. To participate meaningfully in these calls and meetings, however, one must from time to time review material and participate in on-line (e-mail) information exchanges. Some Board members also serve as treasurer, secretary or president. The audit committee chair is also usually a Board member.

The most important job of a Director is of course to be the communication link between his/her CB and the COABC Board of Directors. That is why it is important to also appoint an Alternate to fill in for the Director if she/he is unable to participate in a meeting.

Please note that the COABC By-Laws pose a 2-year limit on the term of a Director. (Section 27.2 -3) "A director may be re-appointed to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. After one year's absence from the director's office, a person may again be appointed."

There are a number of alternate systems to ensure turnover in boards. If your CB feels strongly about this, it can be an item for discussion at the annual meeting and possibly changed in the future. In the meantime, this is our legal by-law and we are asking each certifying body to abide by it.

### Standards Review Committee member

Anyone who has attended an AGM in the past few years can attest to the annual ordeal of trying to debate and resolve changes to the Standards in one day at the AGM. As part of the restructuring authorized at the last AGM, the Board has developed another method for Standards reviews and amendments.

A Standards Review Committee consisting of one duly elected representative from each CB will now be responsible for amendments and additions.

The Standards Review Committee already has sub-committees (established at the 2001 AGM) for Crops, Livestock, and Processing; other sub-committees will be established by the Standards Review Committee as needed. Most of the work of the committee will probably be done by teleconferencing and email.

To include all members of the organic movement in Standards review, each CB must have a nomination for this Committee at the AGM, even if the CB's own AGM happens later. ✓

# The Standards Review Committee

by Linda Edwards

*Deciding on changes and amendments to our Standards at the Annual General Meeting is a process which has the appearance of democracy without the reality. We have seen that there is never enough time to do justice to the complex issues on the table; that representatives are sent to the AGM with a mandate to support one point of view and are thus unable to change their vote even when they are presented with new information which their constituents did not have; and that the pressure of time leads to decisions which might not be the wisest ones. After a particularly frustrating experience in 2000 and 2001 AGMs, the following method of Standards Review has been adopted to replace the annual and increasingly less successful method of trying to do it all in one day. This new process is designed to ensure that all members have the opportunity to be involved in changes to the Standards.*

*The following has been written into Sections 5.4 and 5.5. of the COABC Policies and Procedures Manual.*

The COABC will provide and update an Organic Management Standards document for use by its membership. The document will be titled "BC Certified Organic Management Standards" and will be published by the COABC and amended from time to time.

A Standards Review Committee, consisting of one representative from every member certifying body, shall be responsible for amendments and additions to the BC Certified Organic Standard.

Members shall designate their representative to the Standards Review Committee before or during the Annual General Meeting of every year. The Standards Review Committee shall elect a Chair and shall designate sub-committees for Crops, Livestock, Processing and any other commodity, processes, or issue that the committee shall determine.

The Standards Review Committee (and sub-committees) shall meet in person, via teleconference, through electronic mail, or any other procedure determined to be appropriate for the efficient operation of the committee. The Chair shall determine the frequency of meetings according to the workload of the committee.

Proposed amendments or additions to the BC Certified Organic Standards may be directed to the Chair from members, individual operators, the BCMAFF, or interested members of the public.

Proposed amendments or additions must be submitted by September 1st of every year for inclusion in that year's agenda.

The Committee (or sub-committee) shall determine which proposed amendments or additions it shall review and may decline to review proposed amendments or additions if it sees fit.

Amendments or additions, or clarifications to distinct passages of the BC Certified Organic Standard shall be developed by the Standards Review Committee (or sub-committees) according to criteria provided in 5.5. The Chair may contract a private person or company to develop amendments or additions to the standard provided the COABC Board grants permission for such a contract.

## Standards Changes Ratification

Ratification by the COABC to changes in the BC Certified Organic Standard requires three stages of process:

- 1 Amendments or additions will be developed as draft documents for use within the Committee (or sub-committee). A draft document will be circulated within the Committee for one month, during which time the members of the committee are expected to provide constructive input to the further development of the draft document. After one month of review, the committee will have a draft document in place.
- 2 The draft document is then circulated to the licensees (operators in possession of a valid certificate) for review. The Chair will determine the most expedient method of distribution, whether through the BC Organic Grower, electronic mail or website, or direct mailing. This review period will last for six weeks and may not take place during the months of May, June, July or August. The individual licensees are expected to provide creative improvements to the draft document, rather than critical disapproval. The draft document will undergo further amendment (by the author) during this review period.
- 3 Following the six-week review period, the Standards Review Committee will vote to approve or disapprove the draft document. If the Chair feels that consensus will be achieved from further adjustment to the document, the he or she may allow further review within the Standards Review Committee (or subcommittee) before voting. A quorum for voting on standards changes shall be 75% of the members of the Standards Review Committee and a majority shall be 75% of the members present for the vote. The Chair may determine the most expedient method of voting. Members may decline from voting but must not decline for restricting a quorum. Voting results shall be recorded in the minutes of Standards Review Committee meetings, which shall be made available to the COABC Board as soon as practicable.

The standards review process will take place throughout the year, as necessity requires and as determined by the Chair. Ratified changes to



the BC Certified Organic Standard will take effect on January 1st of every year. The Chair will provide the COABC Board with a final version of all ratified changes before December of every year. In exceptional circumstances, the COABC Board may choose to implement standards changes on some other date.

**Criteria for Organic Management Standards**

**Revisions**

When considering amendments to organic management standards, the Standards Review Committee must make their decisions based on the *Principles of Organic Farming* that have been adopted under the BC Certified Organic Program. As much as possible, the Organic Management Standards of the BC Certified Organic Program must conform to the Principles of Organic Farming.

**Criteria Elements**

The following elements should be examined when making any decision on standards changes:

- ❖ Does the proposed addition or amendment comply or conflict with the Principles of Organic Farming?
- ❖ What are the precedents?
  - What are other Certification Bodies doing? We do not have to do what others do. However, we should be aware of other certification standards and use them to evaluate the rigour or lack thereof of our own.

- Have any other producers of the same commodity found an appropriate solution to the problem at issue? E.g. if even one producer has found a way to grow organic transplants, or has found an alternative to chemically treated posts, or a way to control rats without the use of rodenticides, can we justify others not having to adopt the same approach?

- How will making this change affect future decisions? If synthetic pesticide is used in one situation, will this open the door for other such requests? If synthetic pesticide is not allowed, will this close the door for other such requests?

- ❖ What are the consumer perception and consumer ramifications for the proposed addition/amendment?
- ❖ Will the proposed addition/amendment affect national and international trade for BC Certified Organic food?
- ❖ Does the proposed addition/amendment conflict with local, provincial, or federal laws? Does the proposed addition/amendment duplicate any laws in the above jurisdictions?

*The above is only for Standards changes. Members wishing to propose changes to the regulation, the procedures and policy or to the constitution and bylaws of COABC must submit proposals in writing to the COABC at least six weeks before the AGM. Decisions in this area will be made by a majority (75%) vote of Directors at the AGM.*



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# What Happens on Jan. 1st?

by Paddy Doherty

## CCA Posts Prohibited

On January 1st, 2002, new CCA (Copper Chromium Arsenate – the green ones) fence posts becomes a prohibited practice under the BC Certified Organic Program. This means that the use of new CCA treated fence posts (or CCA treated lumber) on certified organic land will move that land's organic status from certified organic to first year transition. In addition, CCA treated material must never be exposed to crop production soil i.e. boxed beds.

Licensees are allowed to use up stockpiles of CCA treated fence posts, but must not replenish these stockpiles after January 1st, 2002. Fence posts erected before January 1st, 2002 do not need to be removed, as disposing of them would cause more environmental harm than leaving them in place. Similarly, they can be recycled around the farm. Use common sense to keep them away from garden spaces and areas of confinement for livestock.

## Non-organic Transplants Prohibited

On January 1st, 2002, the use of non-organic

annual transplants (seedlings) becomes a prohibited practice. You must use certified organic annual transplants for all your annual propagation in 2002 and thereafter.

You may still use non-organic perennial transplants (i.e. strawberries, blueberries) but the crop must go through a one-year transition (from planting date) before a certified crop may be harvested from that planting. This becomes a Regulated practice.

## Treated Seeds Prohibited

On January 1st, 2002, the use of seed treated with prohibited materials becomes a prohibited practice in the BC Certified Organic Program. Previously a regulated practice, the use of pesticide-treated seed is no longer tolerated in organic production.

The use of non-organic seed is still allowed, but is prohibited in organic sprout production.

## Non-organic Bulbs/Tubers Regulated

As of January 1st, 2002, the use of non-organic planting stock (bulbs, tubers, and cuttings) becomes a Regulated practice. You must provide proof of trying to obtain organic planting stock before obtaining non-organic planting stock. ✓

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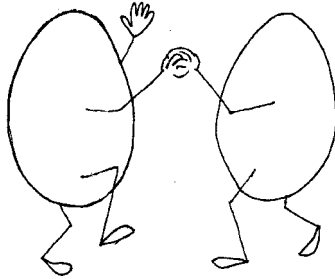
# Egg Marketing Update

A fund-raising dance was held in Vancouver December 7th to help Olera Farms in their legal dispute with the BC Marketing Board, and to protect the future rights of small local organic farms. Entry fee was \$1doz. for adults, and there was a silent auction as well as fiddle music and refreshments.

"A good time was had by all" and \$4,000 was raised for the struggle.

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# Canada-Cuba Farmer to Farmer Project

The Canada-Cuba Farmer to Farmer Project is once more organizing farmer tours of Cuba for January 28th, February 18 or March 11th, 2002. This is a wonderful opportunity for Canadians to learn from a country that is an estimated 10 years ahead of Canada in their understanding of how to produce food without chemicals – on large cooperative farms by literate and capable farmers supported by effective agricultural extension.

The Project intends to lay the seedbed for the development of a new international model for cooperative engagement between farmers in both countries. The first cooperative project will team up Canadian dairy expertise with Cuban farmer ingenuity to see whether we can significantly increase milk production at a large dairy cooperative in Holguin province. In return, we will gain access to a team of Cuban expertise to assist Canadian farmers in establishing a centre of excellence for commercial-scale organic techniques.

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## Democracy in COABC

In the past few years COABC has changed from a small grass roots organization with five member Certifying Bodies (CBs) and a few handfuls of producers, to an organization representing a vast majority of organic producers, processors and handlers (licensees) in BC. This evolution, together with the present move towards more centralized certification for many licensees (through PACS) and the general restructuring effort of COABC, brings with it new challenges in regards to equitable representation and the preservation of democratic rights of the licensees. The following is intended to trigger some discussion of solutions to these challenges.

**Representation at the Board of Directors:** At present CBs with twenty certified members have the same representation on the Board as a CB with two hundred members. With the creation of PACS, some CBs are considering the option of ceasing to certify altogether. It has been suggested that if this happens, we should 'grandfather' existing CBs by giving them each a seat on the board (along with PACS). This would require a new definition of membership in COABC, as they would not in fact be Certifying Bodies.

An alternative might be to completely overhaul the system of representation by electing board members on a regional basis. This would mean allocating positions on the basis of the number of licensees in that region. This process would be somewhat complicated to set up and might cause some problems in regions where there is already more than one CB.

**Direct Democracy:** I would advocate extending the democratic rights of the individual producer, processor and handler to direct involvement at the COABC level (at present, the licensees vote for a Director, who when represents them in all other matters). This will ensure that individuals have a direct voice in the running of the Association, which in turn should result in an increased 'sense of belonging' and hopefully growing support and participation at the grass roots level.

The problem with this is that the majority of licensees are unlikely to be able to attend General meetings, and some allowance will need to be made for voting by mail, or at the very least by proxy, or both.

*A letter from Hans Buchler (edited for space)*



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# My Favourite Varieties

by Paddy Doherty

Most vegetable growers spend a little extra effort every season trying out new varieties. Perhaps they're looking for better yield, better taste, better storage, or better pest resistance. It's hard to find all these attributes in one variety, but when we do, we generally stick with that one. For whatever reasons – soil conditions, climate, culture – it works for us.

A few BC growers have been kind enough to offer their favourite varieties for our interest.

## Helmerts Organic Farm

Doug and Jeanette Helmerts grow potatoes in the Pemberton Valley. Pemberton is a seed potato control area so the Helmerts are restricted to growing certified seed from their area. Consequently, they are beginning to save their own seed.

Doug says that for a mid-season red potato, he likes Red Pontiac, an established variety that grows well for him. For early potatoes, he suggests White Rose. It has good yield, it's easy to grow, and most importantly, it has good taste. He grows Yukon Gold because his customers want them but admits they are difficult to grow and have low production. He recommends Seig Linde for a yellow potato that grows well and has good yield. For a late season russet, he grows Russet Burbank. "We only grow potatoes that taste good," Doug says. "Sometimes a variety will grow and yield well, but if it doesn't have any taste, we won't grow it."

## Herman and Louise Bruns - Wild Flight Farm

Herman and Louise grow market vegetables in Mara



Peppers drying at The Pepper Forest

(in the Shuswap) for their box delivery business.

For winter greens the Bruns like Claytonia, or Miners Lettuce (William Dam). It's very hardy, it's heavy, and it's good tasting. They also grow Corn

Salad (Johnny's) for the same reasons. For lettuce they grow a red butter; Carmona (Johnny's) and a green butter; Ermosa (Johnny's). Butter lettuce has a lovely delicate flavour, but being delicate is a disadvantage for packing and shipping. These varieties are both firm and good tasting.

For onions, they like Copra as it is a good winter keeper. For purple onions, they grow Redwing (Johnny's) - a nice dark purple onion. Vantage Point (Johnny's) is the favourite cabbage. It's not the latest variety but it's big, juicy and sweet and keeps through most of the winter. They are big fans of the Red Meat Radish; a green-skinned storage radish that keep through the winter.

King Richard is their favourite variety of leek. Louise describes

these as long, straight, tender leeks. For broccoli, they prefer Pac Man. They grow a fair amount of celeriac and find that Brilliant (Johnny's) makes a large, smooth (if celeriac is ever smooth) root. For sweet corn, they grow Seneca Arrow SE2.

## Janet Romain - Northern Organic Garden Guild

Janet grows a variety of vegetables for a box delivery business. Fort Fraser does not provide the greatest growing season, but Janet manages to produce a commercial garden regardless.

She wouldn't talk about their dismal potato crop except to say that she really likes All Blue for a specialty potato. For carrots, she recommends Healthmaster. They are large and long and they store well. For a mid-season variety she grows Berlycummer and for an early carrot likes Sweetness.

Green Goliath and Early Dividend are her favourites for broccoli. She grows a lot of radishes and is happy with the Easter Egg Mix because they are pretty and can be picked for three weeks. She grows Chinese Garlic (Saltspring Seeds) and Korean Purple (Saltspring Seeds).

For lettuce she prefers (naturally) Romaine, Paris Island Cos, to be precise. For green leaf she grows Simpson Elite and Great Lake. Janet also grows a lot of spinach - Tyee and Bloomsdale Dark.

She's learned to grow Pak Choi and Bok Choi and



her customers really appreciate it. "Start them as transplants," she says, "and put them out under row cover."

**Jon Allard - Vancouver Island Organic Farms**

Jon says, "I keep it simple," and grows a few crops that do well for him. He sells mostly to wholesale markets.

The red leaf lettuce he uses is called New Red Fire (West Coast). It grows quickly and has a nice head. For green leaf, he likes Simpson Elite (West Coast). Continuity (West Coast) is the red butter lettuce he grows. He says it is the best butter lettuce for taste and for holding up under handling and storage. For an Oak Leaf lettuce, he grows Salad Bowl (West Coast) and for a red oak leaf, he recommends Mascara (West Coast). "It looks terrific," he says.

Jon also grows zucchini, specifically Gold Rush and Space Miser, which he unhesitatingly recommends. Provider (West Coast) is Jon's variety for bush beans, which he says, "carry on yielding". He grows Winter Bor kale, Scarlet Globe and Round Red radish, all from West Coast. For a commercial variety of basil, Jon has found Genevieve (West Coast) to be the best.

**Janet Allen and Murray Boal - Dragon Mountain Farm**

Janet and Murray grow a large market garden for a box delivery business in the Cariboo. The advantage of the box scheme is the ready market and good prices, the disadvantage is having to grow just about everything.

Murray grows a lot of greenhouse tomatoes and has found Cobra (William Dam) to be the best yielding and best flavoured greenhouse tomato. He also grows Sweet 100's for cherry tomatoes. He grows Holland Hybrid long english cucumbers - a great tasting cucumber, very popular with customers and very high production.

Janet grows Nantes Bolera carrots because they are smooth, tasty and they keep well. For peas, she grows Oregon Sugar Pod (an edible pod variety) and Knight, for a garden pea variety. She says she's still looking for the perfect garden pea - one that will ripen uniformly.

For broccoli they prefer Green Goliath and for Cauliflower they like Amazing (William Dam). First Edition (West Coast) is their choice for storage onions. They are large, well-shaped and medium-mild onions. They store well and mature early enough in the season when there is still hot weather for drying. Murray also likes Kelsie Giants for summer onions when he can get the seed and Ailsa Craig (William Dam) when he can't. They are very happy with Hilde butter lettuce (William Dam).

Murray grows peppers and cantaloupes under plastic row tunnels. Ace (William Dam) is his favourite

*continued on page 15...*

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pepper and Early Sweet is his favourite cantaloupe. Janet recommends "Spooktacular" for a nicely shaped miniature pumpkin that fits into delivery boxes.

**Olera Farms**

Fred Reid and Sharmin Gamiet grow some commercial garden crops in the Abbotsford area. Like Jon Allard, Fred has discovered a few crops that he can grow well. He sticks to these - keeps his costs down and his production up.

Fred's major crop is raspberries and he has found that Tullameen produces a big juicy berry - great for fresh market and for juicing, but not for bakery use.

For fresh market broccoli, he likes Pac Man (West Coast). He's tried higher yielding varieties, but if the crown is too large, customers don't want it. For green onions he likes White Lisbon (West Coast) and Tokyo (West Coast). For sweet corn he grows Golden Jubilee (West Coast) and mentions that he has no use for "Peaches and Cream" varieties.

Fred grows commercial basil (Genevieve, West Coast), and Onions (Copra, West Coast). He suggests Delicata is the best variety of winter squash. It's small, tasty, and attractive - this is what customers are looking for.



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# Rochelle Goes Shopping

by Rochelle Eisen

Have you looked at food labels lately? Have you had any time to spend looking at the new products on the shelves and their labels? Very weird things are happening out there! Brian, my partner, won't let me go shopping with him at all, because I spend all my time reading labels and spewing off at the poor clerks in the stores and sometimes, I must confess, at him. (Using an alternative purchasing format, e.g. box deliveries, CSA, or participation in a Co-operative is no solution, as labels are everywhere, no matter the venue.)

The point is, everyone's head is cluttered with millions of facts (and possibly fiction) on what is economically, spiritually, physically, environmentally important to consider when making a trouble-free sustenance purchase. And we, my friends, the organic industry, are not making it any easier.

The items that inspired this commentary were a jar of mustard that Brian thought was an excellent certified organic score, and a box of mandarin oranges. As far as I could tell upon first inspection, the mustard did not claim to be certified organic, just organic, and I was pretty sure, with my comprehensive and sophisticated background, that this product, not having the phrase certified organic on the front panel, was not certified organic. Okay, I was curious why it did not meet certified organic labelling standards and continued to read the label from stem to stern.

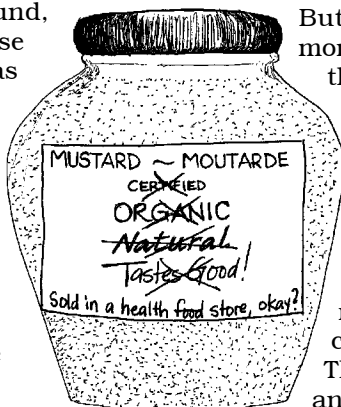
The front panel read "X Brand — Organic — Dijon — Prepared Mustard". Then I looked at the side panel and the ingredient list was quite short: "organic apple cider vinegar, organic mustard seed, white wine, salt and spices". Now I understood; the white wine and spices were not organic and under the new USA's National Organic Program rule, to make a certified organic claim 100% of all the ingredients must be certified organic minus salt, water and air, even if the non organic ingredients compose less than 5% of the total makeup of the product. I was initially impressed to see the organic rule/principles were maintained. But then, looming below the ingredient panel was a certification logo (which will remain nameless), followed by the phrase 'certified organic' right below the logo. But that was not the worst part. To top it off, right below that was this catchall phrase: "Certified Organic under California Organic Foods Act 1990". At this point I hope some bells are going off in your head, and you are asking as I did, "excuse me, what is certified organic in/on this product?" Or more accurately, why was the phrase "certified organic" anywhere on the label, beyond

possibly describing the two certified organic ingredients?

Let's get real here, if you or I can't figure it out, can the average consumer? I mean maybe the label was trying to inform the customer that the company that manufactured the product was a certified organic entity. This is a good thing, but that is not what the label said. Okay, maybe the label was trying to say that the formulation was accurate and had been verified by the named Certification Agency. Well yes, this also is a very informative piece of information, but again that is not what the label said. Or was the label trying to say that the two main ingredients prefixed by the word "organic" were certified? I mean I honestly do not know the answer. I personally feel this label is misleading as the nowhere on that label except as descriptors of the compliant ingredients should the phrase certified organic have been included on the label unless modified by some appropriate phrase e.g. verified by. Get my drift?

Then we looked in the box of mandarins that Brian brought home the same day. He told me that the clerk told him they were supersweet and delicious. But beyond quality lets go straight to the label. There is a lovely insert in the box that starts off "5 to 10 day a day are you getting enough?" Well of course, my first thought was, enough what?

But we won't go there, because there was more to enjoy as the rhetoric continued with the following information "These oranges are growing in natural environment. No chemical fertilizer is used to stimulate the crops growth. Only organic and natural method are used to produce the best results. Occasionally a little green on skin? No problem! They are not because or premature. It is original natural color. To ensure highest quality, artificially dye or using stimulant is refused. They are just sweet, juicy with rich aromas and flavours as they should be. They are real natural grown fruits!"



Overlooking the translation problems, the information on this insert, assuming it is accurate, does convey quite a bit of information to the purchaser. What is weird here is the box does not really carry the same message, as the only claim on the outside of the box is the inclusion of the phrase "naturally grown" with no certification information anywhere. Are these mandarins organic, who knows? Is there any way to check? I don't know, maybe we should ask the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to check it out. But would it matter? We do not have a mandatory organic labelling rule in this country, and they did not claim the mandarins were certified organic, so why would we send the Feds in on this?

What I hope you find amusing is I almost think the mandarin information was easier to understand

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than the mustard label. Go figure, eh? The mandarin insert dealt with most of the concerns expressed by the average consumer. The certification misinformation on the mustard would surely confuse anyone.

Maybe what is really bugging me is the organic movement sometimes cannot even agree on what qualifies to be considered a certified organic product (do I need to mention, aquaculture and greenhouses?). My point is, everyone has their own opinion, and everyone should be respectful as we work towards a brighter and healthier future, but do not to overlook the fundamentals of good communication with the consuming public. When you are creating labels, think of Brian, trying to shop, always doing his best and then me looking at every label. I think it could only help your sales.



## Moving your Greenhouse

By Hermann Bruns

Greenhouses can arguably be considered an essential component for market gardens. Ten years ago we started off with a simple 10'x12' homemade greenhouse for starting our transplants. We now have 6 commercially built, steel framed houses (12,500 sq.ft. in total) with another 30'x96' poly covered steel structure planned for early next spring.

At present, we only heat half of one 20'x96' greenhouse in the spring for transplant production. The rest of them are used as "cold frames" for summer heat-loving crops (tomatoes, peppers, long english cucumbers) and extending the season into early spring and late fall for a whole host of other vegetables — everything from radishes and spinach to carrots, beets and even potatoes.

It seemed that we never had enough space to grow the variety of crops we wanted, particularly for the early spring market. And yet several of our cold frames were empty for a good part of the growing season. The problem was that if we planted a house with an early spring crop of lettuce, carrots and beets for instance, by the time those crops were harvested it would be too late to plant the peppers. Conversely, as the tomatoes were being harvested



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# Fair Weather Friends

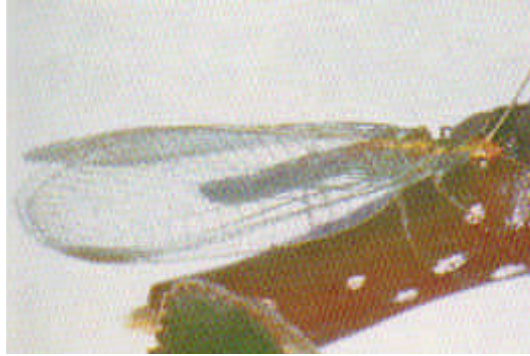
by Linda Edwards

## Green Lace Wings (*Chrysoperla cernea* and *Chrysoperla nigricornis*)

Green lacewings are very good predators but don't rely on them to be effective until early summer. There are two main species in BC. Adults of both feed on aphid honeydew and plant fluids. *C. nigricornis* adults and the immature larvae of both are also predaceous. Aphids are preferred but they will also eat psylla, mites, leafhoppers, thrips and small caterpillars.

The adults are one of the most beautiful insects - large membranous wings, green bodies and red or gold iridescent eyes and long fine antennae. They are nocturnal and are often attracted to lights at night. The oval eggs on slender stalks are laid mainly on leaves. They are white at first but turn grey just before hatching. The larvae are mottled yellow, grey or brown and look like little alligators. They are very active and voracious predators. The larvae form

green pupae inside a spherical white cocoon in foliage when they complete their cycle. Egg to adult takes about 30-40 days and there are two generations a year.



They over winter either in the pupae form or as adults in litter, buildings or under bark. There are relatively few early in the spring so they are not very effective then. The over wintering adults are present but the females do not start laying until night temperatures are warm - usually mid to late June.

Lacewings can be purchased from insectaries. However, research has shown that this almost never increases local population. Most of the time, the lacewings arrive as eggs (without their stalks) glued to cardboard. This is the most inexpensive method. However, research and careful observations have shown that the first larva to hatch eats most or all of the other eggs on the cardboard. There are better survival rates from eggs mixed with materials like vermiculite although at least a third are crushed during the mixing and handling. Larva in individual holders can also be purchased but they are very expensive. Adults are unsuitable because like ladybugs, they tend to fly up to 4 kilometers as soon as they are released.



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- ! You can sell your products at the Organic World Exhibition! Stalls are available for growers, or groups of growers to market their BC Organic products in downtown Victoria on the weekend of August 24th, 25th. You don't have to miss organic sales just because you're going to IFOAM 2002!
- ! You'll never get such an opportunity to participate in one of the most dynamic movements in the world!

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- ! Cultivating Communities is for all sizes of communities. This congress is not just for large farms and large institutions. There will be something of interest for everyone in the organic movement!
- ! You can make new friends, learn about organic agriculture, and party at the same time!

Plan now to attend IFOAM 2002. BC is hosting the world organic community and we need your participation to ensure BC makes the best impression to the rest of the world!

If you plan now, you can do it in August! The effort now will be repaid many times over by the enthusiasm you will bring home from Victoria!



# Up Dawson Creek with an Engineered Paddle

by Brewster Kneen

How many times have you read that a meeting or a conference was a success? What made it a success, other than the fact that the organizers actually pulled off the event as planned?

I would say we had highly successful meetings/workshops in Dawson Creek and Grand Prairie over the weekend of Dec 7-9. We had excellent presentations and fully engaged discussions on the difficult subject of genetic engineering in both locations, with a mixed group of farmers organic and non and other citizens who really wanted to learn about the science of biotech from a real scientist, bio-chemist/molecular biologist (Dr. Ingrid Northwood of Simon Fraser University) and an expert on the precautionary principle, risk analysis and the strange notion of substantial equivalence (Dr. Katherine Barrett of the University of Victoria). I contributed a discussion of the culture of biotech and Cathleen lightened the afternoon session with her cartoons. Local organizing was in the capable hands of organic inspector Marina Buchan, who also commented on genetic engineering from a farmer's perspective, pointing out the perceived potential benefits for farmers scrambling to get a crop in a difficult climate.

## Genetic Engineering Is Radically Different

Ingrid emphasized that the horizontal gene movement of genetic engineering is radically different than the traditional vertical gene flow of evolution which includes a variety of methods to transfer genetic information within a species, including artificial insemination and maristem culture. When we are told that genetic engineering is just 'modern biotechnology' and that farmers selecting seeds are engaged in the same activity as Monsanto's technicians, we are simply being lied to.

DNA, she explained, is made up of the same four "letters" and the same 20 amino acids in every organism, which is why organisms have gone to

great length to protect their boundaries. (Otherwise you might become a corn plant!) Species boundaries, in nature, can be violated only by viruses and some bacteria, and the outcome is never positive for the host organism (think of Ebola, AIDS). Unlike bacteria, which are complete organisms quite capable of replicating themselves, viruses are incomplete and rely on the host they invade to provide the means for their replication. It is this characteristic of viruses which is used by genetic engineers to move genetic material horizontally, using an engineered virus to penetrate the target organism: the engineers make a 'construct' which includes the "genetic material of interest" along with a promoter, antibiotic resistance marker, etc., and the virus which enables the 'construct' to get into the nucleus of the cell.

## Antibiotic Resistance In Every Transgenic Plant

Antibiotic resistance can be found in every transgenic plant, she pointed out, since this is the universal marker used to select the one in 10,000 successful transformation events in every attempted insertion. A gene gun is used to fire the chosen DNA, attached to a viral promoter along with an antibiotic resistant 'marker' gene, into the genome of the cells to be transformed. Selection of the gene to be inserted may be precise, but insertion itself is utterly random. Unforeseen consequences and "side effects," plus long-term consequences that may result, are therefore an aspect of the process itself. After all, the whole point of the exercise is to destabilize the recipient genome and trick or force it into accepting alien DNA. All

of which, Ingrid pointed out, does not mean that genetic engineering in and of itself is bad she described how she does it herself in her lab but it does mean that we need to know a great deal more before we distribute the products of genetic engineering freely in the environment.

## It All Depends on Context

What a gene does all depends on its context, and I followed Ingrid to address the cultural context of genetic engineering. I situated it in the context of a culture that regards nature as alien and hostile, a power to be overcome or a force to be manipulated to serve the interests of the wealthy elite. This is

### Class Action Suit

The Saskatchewan Organic Directorate is actively working towards launching a class action suit, claiming that "the organic market depends on being able to supply food that is produced without, among other things, genetic engineering. If we cannot guarantee a product free of contamination, we are not able to service those markets, resulting in a loss of our ability to be financially sustainable. . . Without guarantees that we can grow and market a non-GMO contaminated crop, we risk losing our certification and our livelihoods." They have created an Organic Agriculture Protection Fund to support their legal action, which will seek compensation from those responsible for the damage caused to organic farmers of Saskatchewan caused by the introduction of GE canola into the rural environment of Saskatchewan.



Donations can be sent to SOD, Box 1, Lisieux, SK S0H 2R0

also a culture that believes that technology, or whatever gets defined as a technology, such as biotechnology, is simply a tool, a means of Progress in a linear history heading for perfection. I was careful to point out that this is our culture. If we do not like where it is headed, or the means used to get where it is headed, then we cannot blame others, but must first change our own attitude and practices.

### Risk Assessment Versus Precaution

Katherine followed this by pointing out that Canada has had an a priori commitment to technology as the solution to economic problems since the 1980s. This has led to the establishment of regulation based on Risk Assessment and the notion of 'substantial equivalence' which, as she pointed out, is a vague, utterly unscientific idea.

In contrast to the closed system of Risk Assessment used by the Canadian Government, which depends on accepting an unknown but presumed amount of harm, Katherine presented the Precautionary Principle. According to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, 2000, the precautionary principle, which is part of several international agreements Canada has signed, states that: "lack of scientific certainty due to insufficient relevant scientific information and knowledge ... shall not prevent parties from

taking decisions that aim to avoid or minimize adverse effects".

The risk-based policy process, by contrast is based on an exclusive decision-making process, which assesses the short-term, direct risks of a new technology and adopts or rejects it on the basis of "acceptable" risk, then informs the public of the decision. Decisions, she noted, can be changed on the basis of new evidence, but Canada relies on the corporations selling the technology to provide this new evidence that their product is causing harm.

The Precautionary Principle, as recommended by (among others) the Expert Panel of the Royal Society of Canada, starts at the other end, with an open, inclusive decision-making process which begins by setting goals (what kind of food and agriculture do we want?) and considering alternatives (organic and low-input farming as well as biotech). The analysis of harms and benefits includes long-term ecological and health impacts, social and ethical issues, and the key concept of uncertainty. Decisions are made publicly and are flexible.

On the basis of the Precautionary Principle Katherine emphasized that this is an untested technology, the products of which cannot be recalled if and when we find out what harm they are causing.



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# A State-of-the-Art Fitness Facility

by John Pottinger



Salt Spring Island (where I live) is about 20 miles long and averages 5 or 6 miles across. The island is neatly divided - both geographically and culturally - into two distinct parts. The "south end" is rural, laid back, and happily stuck in the sixties. The "north end" is more upscale, up-to-date, and uptight. A few years ago, a private fitness facility opened on the island (located in the north end, of course).

Luckily for us "southenders", a new fitness facility recently opened at the South End. Located on Heidi Place (which is waaayyy south end - off Stevens Road, off King Road, off Beaver Point Road), this new facility is the brainchild of Harry Burton. The setting couldn't be more beautiful - nor more typically south end Salt Spring - situated on the grounds of Harry and Debbie's Farm (Apple Luscious Organic Orchard). Harry has incorporated a whole new generation of equipment, along with the very latest knowledge of exercise principles and techniques, to come up with a world-class advanced holistic fitness facility. Employing the latest studies and recommendations from the World Organisation for Restorative Knowledge, Harry is taking a bold step in attempting to change our view of exercise.

At South End Fitness, you won't find the traditional machines that you would see in a typical fitness facility. Stair climbers, for instance, have been replaced by fixed vertical climbing devices. This ingenious, lightweight, portable apparatus can be carried and placed anywhere in the orchard. Once set in place, the user then simply climbs up and down the twelve steps repeatedly. Here's where the holistic training approach comes in: the step-climbing device includes a piece of equipment called a Systemic Activity Container. This container is mounted on a strap that one slings over one's shoulder. Prior to beginning the climbing exercise, the user selects two containers and places one over each shoulder (mounted crosswise so they won't slip off during the workout). When the user reaches the top step, they then begin a stretching exercise known as Precision Individual Kinetics. This involves alternately reaching out as far as one can with each arm and retrieving small roundish objects, tens of thousands of which have been randomly placed throughout the facility (by God knows who, but Harry swears it wasn't him). Once the Systemic Activity Containers are full, the user steps back down the vertical climbing device (using a whole different set of muscles than were used for the climb up).

At this point in a typical program (the programs are

custom designed for each client after a short interview), Harry melds an aerobic walking exercise with a free-weight workout. The Systemic Activity Containers now weigh about 20 kilos each.

According to Harry, this added weight provides an additional cardio-vascular benefit of approximately 65% to this exercise. The circuit takes the person from the base of the climber, along a well-designed track where balance testing obstructions have been placed at very precise intervals - similar to the tires you've seen in the movies, strewn around the ground on those Army obstacle courses. At the far end of the course, the user sets down the full containers, picks up two empty ones, then retraces their steps back to the climbing device. Because the containers are empty for this part of the exercise, participants are encouraged to run this portion.

Harry says he's amazed at the progress of his first customers. "So far, I've tried to find customers who've never been to a fitness facility before, so I can be the first to teach them just how beneficial regular exercise can be. Some of these people are actually carrying 3 - or even in one case, 4 - Strategic Activity Containers during their workout.

Believe it or not, Harry is only charging \$50 per month for his first 30 customers, so if you want to get in shape, give him a call.



## Classifieds

**Organic lease** on Bowen Island for 6 acres of CLI class 3. Accommodation onsite. Call Marion 604-739-8531 or e-mail [mjamieson@shaw.ca](mailto:mjamieson@shaw.ca).

**Organically grown Potato onion** (*Allium cepa*, *Aggregatum*) sets for sale. Resemble giant shallots. \$5/4 oz. Shipping is expensive - try group buying! Edible Landscapes, 1732 Pell Road, Roberts Creek, BC, V0N 2W1

**4.05 acre organic farm** just 5 min. to Victoria. Two large poly-tunnels, drive-by store, fruit trees, one acre could convert for horses. Renovated character home with gleaming wood floors, fresh paint, new moldings, updated bathrooms and a recent furnace. \$599,000. Jon and Suki Allard, 250-479-2454.

**Sudoa Farm** is seeking individuals to further work, develop and invest in their 126 acre mixed certified organic farm in the South Shuswap. Sudoa has a small herd of highland-cross beef cattle, pastures, woods, and primarily, 20+ acres in vegetable and cover crop rotation. They are well set up with equipment, irrigation etc. and stable markets. They are now interested in exploring a wider vision for the farm including independent farming activity or a shared endeavour. Possibilities include seed production, legumes, sheep, storage vegetables, value added (dehydration, freezing), apiary. If you are excited by this opportunity, contact Susan Moore and Anne Warren RR#1 S-12 C-12 Sorrento, B.C. V0E 2W0 [sudoa@jetstream.net](mailto:sudoa@jetstream.net)



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