



# EarthSave

Healthy People Healthy Planet™

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## Organics: The Blurred Vision of ABC's 20/20

by J. Robert Hatherill, Ph.D, Environmental Studies Program, University of California at Santa Barbara.

A recent segment of ABC's *20/20*, entitled "How Good is Organic Food?" grossly misrepresented the safety and value of organically grown food crops. According to the *20/20* show that aired on February 4, 2000, commercially grown food is superior to organically grown produce because organic food has higher concentrations of bacteria and is "dangerous," and because organic farmers waste land and resources compared to commercial growers.

### An Unbiased Expert?

The organic food critic, Dennis Avery, was identified on the *20/20* show as a former researcher for the USDA and as a leading critic of organic produce. *20/20* failed to disclose Mr. Avery's full credentials. He is presently the Director of the Center for Global Food Issues for the Hudson Institute, and the author of such books as *Saving the Planet with Pesticides and Plastic: The Environmental Triumph of High-Yield Farming*.

Mr. Avery's employer, the Hudson Institute, is a duplicitous, non-profit "watch dog" group that serves as a mouthpiece for big business. Hudson identifies many of its corporate sponsors on its website, including AgrEvo, Dow AgroSciences, Monsanto Company, Novartis Crop Protection, and Zeneca — the very

companies whose bottom lines are most threatened by organic agriculture.

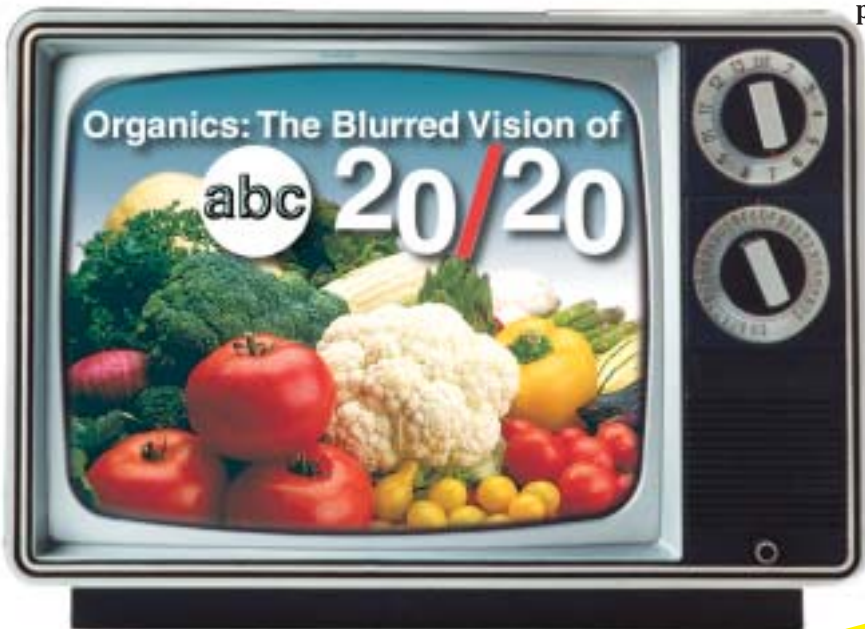
Mr. Avery is also a member of the American Council on Science and Health (ACSH), another chemical, pharmaceutical and food industry-funded PR organization, which specializes in orchestrating media assaults on scientists and activists who take positions contrary to the interests of ACSH funders. ACSH asserts, for example, that trans-fatty acids pose no health risks, and they champion everything from red meat to pesticides and genetically modified foods (GMOs) — even Ritalin and junk food for kids. ACSH tries to debunk the link between the standard American diet and cancer, and claims that global warming doesn't exist or is of no real concern.

In short, *20/20* failed to reveal that the anti-organic "expert" they presented has strong ties to business interests in the organic debate, and a vested interest in promoting the use of herbicides, pesticides and GMOs.

In his 1998 book, *Betrayal of Science and Reason: How Anti-Environmental Rhetoric Threatens Our Future*, celebrated scientist Paul Ehrlich, Bing Professor of Population Studies and Professor of Biological Studies at Stanford University, details the current scheme whereby industry-paid pitchmen promote highly questionable, discredited — or sometimes non-existent — studies to try to minimize the seriousness of environmental problems. Ehrlich cites ACSH and specifically Avery as purveyors of what he terms "brownlash" — the practice of "distorting or misstating research findings" in an attempt to "fuel a backlash against 'green' policies."

Individuals like Avery, "aided by allies in the media, have been surprisingly effective in getting brownlash messages across to the public," Ehrlich writes. "In some cases, the messages simply confuse the issues; in others, they offer a seemingly credible (though generally unfounded) rationale for relaxing or eliminating environmental regulations or forestalling development of new policies to address serious global problems.... [Using science in this way] is anti-science. It sounds authoritative, but it is well known among scientists as a totally incorrect conclusion."<sup>1</sup>

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2500 Gallons All Wet?  
Feature by John Robbins, page 3



# Letter from Board Chair

## Our Mission

EarthSave promotes food choices that are healthy for people and for the planet. We educate, inspire and empower people to shift toward a plant-based diet and to take compassionate action for all life on Earth.

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As evidence mounts about the incredible benefits of an organic, plant-based diet (see article on Caldwell Esselstyn's work, page 13), those whose bottom line is negatively affected by that message are working full-time to confuse and deceive the public into believing otherwise. (See "Organics: The Blurred Vision of ABC's 20/20", page 1.) Food industry PR companies and chemical company-sponsored "think tanks" are desperately trying to reverse the trend toward organic, plant-based diets. And there's good reason for their desperation. It is estimated that, by 2010, nearly 10% of all agricultural foods will be grown organically.

Why are sales of natural foods growing so rapidly? It's simple, really. People recognize that eating in concert with nature is great for our bodies, our environment, and the animals. And the overwhelming evidence being collected on health and the environment supports this belief. (For example, see John Robbins' article on the amazing amount of water "wasted" in the production of meat, page 3).

We have some great projects coming out this quarter that will help spread the message that a plant-based diet is ideal. Our newest and most exciting campaign — the *VEGPLUDGE!*<sup>TM</sup> — (see page 4) will challenge people all over the continent (and beyond) to improve their diets within a 60-day period. This covenant to shift toward a plant-based diet will be taken by thousands in person (at local chapters of EarthSave, through Howard Lyman's speaking engagements, etc.) as well as online at [www.VegPledge.com](http://www.VegPledge.com). And having celebrity Kevin Nealon (of *Saturday Night Live* fame) on the cover of the pledge will help take this campaign out to the masses. A pilot project of the *VEGPLUDGE!*<sup>TM</sup> proved incredibly successful last year at the Taste of Health fair in Louisville, Kentucky. Now we're ready to take this pledge to the world.

As a companion piece to the *VEGPLUDGE!*<sup>TM</sup> (and as a standalone piece as well), we are also introducing *The EarthSave Healthy Beginnings Care Package* — a starter kit and "how-to" guide to plant-based eating. Complete with recipes, current nutritional information, and great transition tips, this wonderful piece will walk you, step-by-healthy-step, toward a plant-based diet.

Finally, this quarter our founder, John Robbins, is working on an incredibly important document entitled *Our Food Our Future*. This piece will undoubtedly be a huge success, just like everything John touches. It will give cutting-edge information on the health, environment and animal compassion issues related to a vegetarian diet.

These EarthSave projects demonstrate how ordinary consumers and activists, working together for a common purpose, can combat even the industry giants who spend millions of dollars trying to convince people that the overwhelming evidence supporting a plant-based diet is really all wrong. Sorry 20/20, Monsanto and industry mouthpiece, Dennis Avery. Spend all the money you want. But that's a line we're never going to buy!

John D. Borders, Jr., J.D.,

Chair, Board of Directors

# 2,500 Gallons All Wet?

By John Robbins

I have been asked recently whether the figures given in *Diet For A New America* for how much water it takes to produce a pound of meat today are still accurate.

The figure of 2,500 gallons to produce a pound of meat that I used in *Diet For A New America* comes from a statement by the renowned scientist Dr. Georg Borgstrom at the 1981 annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in a presentation titled "Impacts On Demand For And Quality Of Land And Water." He was then head of the Food Science and Human Nutrition Department of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University in Lansing, Michigan. Dr. Borgstrom has since passed away (his widow Greta has returned to their native Sweden), but his outstanding books (including *The Food And People Dilemma*, *The Hungry Planet*, *Too Many*, etc.) are still available through used book searches.

It was not only *Diet For A New America* that publicized this particular statement of Dr. Borgstrom's. The tenth anniversary edition of *Diet For A Small Planet* by Frances Moore Lappe states, on page 76, "According to food geographer Georg Borgstrom, to produce a 1-pound steak requires 2,500 gallons of water."

Furthermore, it is not only Dr. Borgstrom that has come to similar conclusions. In their landmark book *Population, Resources, Environment*, Stanford Professors Paul R. and Anne H. Ehrlich stated that the amount of water used to produce one pound of meat ranges from 2,500 to as much as 6,000 gallons. (Dr. Borgstrom, Drs. Ehrlich and I all used the word "meat," to refer specifically to beef.)

## Are These Figures Outdated?

I'm not aware of anything that has changed in the production of modern meat that has made the industry more water efficient. The December, 1999, issue of *Audubon* concurs, stating (page 110), "Nearly half the water consumed in this country...is used for livestock, mostly cattle." There have, however, been interesting developments relative to these figures.

In 1978, Herb Schulbach (Soil and Water Specialist, University of California Agricultural Extension), along with livestock farm advisors Tom Aldrich, Richard E. Johnson, and Ken

Mueller, published extensive research on water use in California agriculture in the journal *Soil and Water* (no. 38, fall 1978). They concluded that the average pound of beef produced in California required 5,214 gallons of water.

The livestock industry took great offense at this. Schulbach told me that they "turned a scientific project into political football." Subsequently, at the behest of the cattlemen, Jim Oltjen and colleagues in the Department of Animal Science at U.C. Davis came out with a very different calculation, asserting the requirements for a pound of beef to be 441 gallons of water.

Jim Oltjen's work, along with similar work by Gerald Ward (Department of Animal Science, Colorado State University) forms the basis for the figures that the National Cattlemen's Beef Association have used ever since to rebut the arguments of environmentalists who point to the enormous waste of water involved in modern beef production. (How identified Jim Oltjen is with the industry can be glimpsed from his official portrait at the University of California, where he wears a cowboy hat.)

When Alan Durning wrote *Worldwatch Paper #103*, "Taking Stock: Animal Farming and the Environment," which was the basis for Worldwatch Editorial Director Ed Ayres' recent major piece in the November 8, 1999 issue of *Time* magazine (in which Ed references 840 gallons per pound of beef), he based his calculations on the cattlemen's own figures. Right after that came out, I discussed the matter with Alan, and asked him why he had used these figures. He said it was because the cattlemen use them, and while the accurate figure is undoubtedly far higher, it seemed better to publish figures the cattlemen couldn't argue with since these figures are damning enough.

## Making Sense of it All

How is the layperson to determine which of these figures is most accurate and up-to-date? A remarkable source of objective information for this question is the Water Education Foundation in Sacramento. This non-profit organization prides itself on being "the only impartial organization to develop and implement educational programs leading to a broader under-

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John Robbins, EarthSave founder and author of *Diet for a New America*.



# Step up to the Plate! Take the VEGPLEDGE!

How often have you heard people say “I’d like to try a healthier/more humane/more sustainable diet...it just seems so hard! How do you do it?” Perhaps you’ve even said that yourself (come on, be honest!). Well, now you have an answer: Take EarthSave’s VEGPLEDGE!<sup>TM</sup>

Many health authorities now recognize that by eating a diet centered on plant-based foods, with less meat and dairy, we can lose excess weight, feel better, and reduce our risk of many chronic degenerative diseases, such as heart attacks and cancer. A plant-based diet is clearly healthier, more humane and more environmentally friendly than a diet centered on meat and dairy.

But we know it’s not always so easy to let go of old habits. Enter EarthSave’s VEGPLEDGE!<sup>TM</sup> Modeled on a successful program pioneered by EarthSave’s Louisville, KY, chapter, the VEGPLEDGE!<sup>TM</sup> encourages people to commit to making dietary changes over a 60-day period and provides them with support materials to help them achieve their goal. Participants can choose from one of three 60-day pledges: The Transition Pledge (gradually reduce the amount of meat and dairy eaten), The Vegetarian Pledge (eat no meat, fish or fowl and gradually reduce the amount of dairy eaten), or The Vegan Pledge (eat no animal foods, including meat, dairy and eggs). Here’s how it works:

- Fill out a VEGPLEDGE!<sup>TM</sup> form (available on-line at [www.VegPledge.com](http://www.VegPledge.com), by calling EarthSave International at (800) 362-3648, or by contacting your local EarthSave Chapter. See p.p. 13-14 of this newsletter for chapter listings). Send the form to EarthSave by hitting the “submit” button or by mailing it to the address on the printed form.

- As soon as we receive your pledge, we’ll send you a VEGPLEDGE!<sup>TM</sup> kit, including the EarthSave Healthy Beginnings Care Package (more below), a free copy of *Vegetarian Times* magazine, and a form on which to record your progress.
- Use the materials in the kit, as well as the on-line support resources available at [www.VegPledge.com](http://www.VegPledge.com), to help you make your dietary transition.
- At the end of your 60-day pledge, fill out the reporting form and send it to EarthSave. In return, we’ll send you a beautiful organic cotton VEGPLEDGE!<sup>TM</sup> T-shirt featuring the art of Charles “Chick” Bragg. In addition, if you decide to join EarthSave at the end of your pledge, you’ll receive a free mini-subscription to *Vegetarian Times*! Remember, there are no “right” or “wrong” answers on the reporting form...we want your honest experience, and you’ll receive your premium(s) regardless of how “successful” you were. All we want is for you to give it a try.

The EarthSave Healthy Beginnings Care Package is the perfect “starter kit” for anyone wanting to make positive dietary changes. This attractive and easy-to-use booklet is packed with information, including shopping and cooking tips, ideas for “transitioning” familiar foods, recipes, nutritional guidelines, and a guide to other resources, including a list of “must-have” cookbooks. It comes free with the VEGPLEDGE!<sup>TM</sup> kit, or you can purchase a copy from EarthSave for \$2 (to cover production costs).

Few people realize the power we have each time we sit down and eat. Through our food choices, we have the power to heal ourselves and our planet and to help create a kinder, gentler world. Join other empowered and adventurous people around the world in making a fresh start...take the VEGPLEDGE!<sup>TM</sup> today! 🌍



## Did you know?

### Organics: The People Have Spoken

*“The people spoke very loudly.... It’s a well known fact that we received an unprecedented 275,603 comments during the first go round....”*

—Dan Glickman, Secretary of US Department of Agriculture, on the new national organic standards, March 7, 2000

### Forget Pills...Eat More Veggies

*Vitamin pills that millions of Americans are taking to ward off disease may do no good, say experts in the field, and in some cases may even increase the risk of illness. The bottom line — supported by a recent statement on antioxidants from the American Heart Association — is that antioxidants are best obtained through food.*

—Boston, March 15

## Book Review

# The Saucy Vegetarian: Quick & Healthful No-Cook Sauces & Dressings, by Joanne Stepaniak

Copyright 2000, by Book Publishing Company, Summertown, TN. ISBN 1-57067-091-9

By Audrey E. Nickel

Cool ranch dressing. Rich, creamy, Hollandaise. Classic Caesar salad. Hot “hero” sandwiches dripping with gooey cheese sauce. All nostalgic no-no’s on your healthy plant-based diet, right?

Think again! With this new book from Joanne Stepaniak, you’ll soon be enjoying healthy versions of these old artery-clogging favorites that are so “real” it’s downright scary! And if your tastes run to more exotic and eclectic fare, don’t worry...there’s plenty here for you too. Maple-Dijon Vinaigrette, anyone? How about Spicy Peanut Sauce for your Chinese noodles or steamed vegetables? Or perhaps a plate of pasta topped with Sun-Dried Tomato and Spinach Pesto? You’ll be amazed at the symphony of flavors you can create with a few simple ingredients and a blender.

*The Saucy Vegetarian* is really three books in one. It is, of course, a cookbook (or rather an “uncook book,” as none of the recipes require cooking), featuring recipes for virtually every kind of savory no-cook sauce and dressing imaginable. It is also a source book for devising imaginative vegetarian meals, as well as a reference for improvising your own special creations. Section headings include: “Planning Vegetarian Meals,” “Perfect Presentation,” “The Six Basic Tastes,” and “Developing Your Own Recipes.” Use each section as an independent manual, or as a means to steer you through the process of preparing grain-centered vegetarian meals and inspired sauces and dressings.

A particularly nice feature of the recipes in this book is that they truly are quick to make, and easy too, even for the beginning cook. While trying recipes to choose one for this review, I was assisted by my seven-year-old daughter, who pointed out several times that “I could do this myself, Mom!” (interspersed with “yum!” and “more please!”). We made two sauces (“Classic Ranch Dressing” and “Heavenly Horseradish Sauce”) in less time than it took to devour the results (about 25 minutes). No matter what your level of cooking expertise, you’ll be a confident gourmet in no time!

Joanne Stepaniak, MEd, is a writer, counselor, educator, and recipe innovator who has been involved with vegetarian-and vegan-related issues for more than three decades. She is the author of *The Vegan Sourcebook*, a comprehensive guide to compassionate vegan living, as well as seven vegan cookbooks, including *Delicious Food for a Healthy Heart*, *Vegan Vittles*, *The Uncheese Cookbook*, *Table for Two*, and *The Nutritional Yeast Cookbook*. In addition, Stepaniak has been a contributing author to a number of books, pamphlets, national publications, and magazines. Visit her website at [www.vegsource.org/joanne](http://www.vegsource.org/joanne). 🌐

## Classic Ranch Dressing

From *The Saucy Vegetarian*, by Joanne Stepaniak. Reprinted by permission.

Makes about ¾ cup

¾ cup crumbled silken tofu \*

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 tablespoon umeboshi plum vinegar \*\*

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

1 tablespoon water

½ teaspoon dried tarragon

¼ teaspoon crushed garlic

¼ teaspoon dill weed

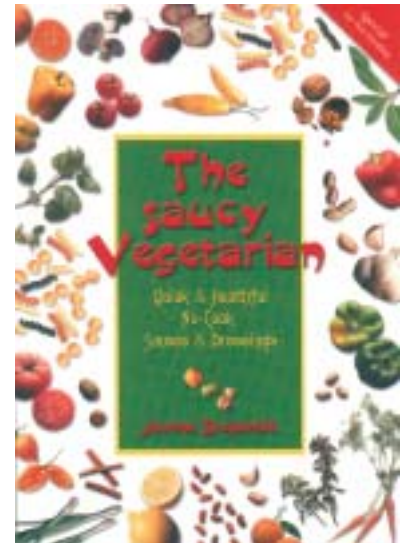
Pinch of dry mustard

Combine all ingredients in a blender or food processor, and process until smooth and creamy.

\* A soft, smooth tofu used for sauces and desserts. Usually found in the Asian food section of your well-stocked supermarket.

\*\* A salty, sour, vinegar made from umeboshi plums. Sometimes called “ume vinegar.” Found in Asian groceries, in most natural foods stores, or in the Asian foods section of your well-stocked supermarket.

Per tablespoon: Calories 32, Protein 1 g., Fat 3 g., Carbohydrates 1 g.



## Did you know? Beans, Beans, Good For Your Heart...

Research presented March 2, 2000, at the American Heart Association's 40th Annual Conference on Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology and Prevention shows that eating beans, soyfoods and dried peas four times a week can help reduce the risk of heart disease.

—Based on data gathered on 11,924 U.S. men and women in the NHANES (National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey) I Epidemiologic Follow-up Study.



## Did you know?

### So Much for Cholesterol Drugs

More than half of people who have high LDL (“bad”) cholesterol levels fail to lower them to target levels suggested by the National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP), despite counseling and drug therapy.

—February 28, 2000, Reuters, New York

### But it couldn't happen here...could it?

Mad Cow disease was detected 2/28 in Denmark, a country which prides itself on strict food hygiene and veterinary control standards.

—February 28, Reuters, Copenhagen

—John Robbins: Continued from page 3 standing of water issues and to resolution of water problems.” The Water Education Foundation currently distributes a comprehensive analysis titled “Water Inputs in California Food Production,” which references the work of both Herb Schulbach and Jim Oltjen, as well as the work of Gerald Ward (the other source for the Cattlemen’s data), and hundreds of other experts in the field. Extraordinarily thorough, this 162-page analysis is uniquely pertinent because it surveys the work in this area done by many of the leading experts representing the livestock industry (including the American Meat Institute), and many others representing public interest and environmental perspectives. Currently distributed by the Water Education Foundation, the study concludes that each pound of California beef requires 2,464 gallons of water — a number virtually identical to the 2,500 gallon figure I use in *Diet For A New America*.

## Western Water Crisis

For further understanding, one can also read authors such as Marc Reisner, former staff writer at the Natural Resources Defense Council and the author of the highly acclaimed *Cadillac Desert*, a history of water and the American West. (PBS made a multi-part documentary series of *Cadillac Desert*.) Writing in the New York Times in 1989, Reisner wrote: “In California, the single biggest consumer of water is not Los Angeles. It is not the oil and chemicals or defense industries. Nor is it the fields of grapes and tomatoes. It is irrigated pasture: grass grown in a near-desert climate for cows. In 1986, irrigated pasture used about 5.3 million acre-feet of water — as much as all 27 million people in the state consumed, including for swimming pools and lawns.... Is California atypical? Only in the sense that agriculture in California, despite all the desert grass and irrigated rice, accounts for proportionately less water use than in most of the other western states. In Colorado, for example, alfalfa to feed cows consumes nearly 30% of all the state’s water, much more than the share taken by Denver.... The West’s water crisis — and many of its environmental problems as well — can be summed up, implausible as this may seem, in a single word: livestock.”

Of course, beef produced in different parts of the country will take different amounts of water. Beef produced in the Southeast takes much less water because you don’t need to irrigate nearly as much thanks to so much more rain during the growing season. Arizona and Colorado beef, on the other hand, take even more water than California’s. Even Jim Oltjen (the author of the lower figure that the cattlemen use) acknowledges that nationwide, half of the grain and hay

that is fed to American beef cattle is grown on irrigated land. Putting this all together, a figure of 2,500 gallons for a national average strikes me as still valid and useful.

(Incidentally, the primary reason more water is used to produce a pound of beef than a pound of pork or chicken is because the pork and poultry industries in the United States are generally concentrated in areas where grain fields need little or no irrigation, and because their feed conversion ratios are more efficient.)

Underestimating water use has hazards. The problem with water, as has often been pointed out, is that the shortfalls don’t show up until the very end. You can go on pumping unsustainably until the day you run out. Then all you have is the recharge flow, which comes from precipitation, and which comes nowhere close to the levels of use you’ve come to take for granted. It’s a bit like driving a car without a fuel gauge. You push down on the gas pedal and the car accelerates, and you conclude that you’ve got plenty of gas — until the moment that you suddenly run out. But it’s even more important with water that we don’t underestimate usage because there are alternatives to oil, such as hydrogen, solar, wind, etc., but there aren’t alternatives to water. If we run out, we can’t grow food nor maintain other essential life functions. If we continue pumping out the Ogallala aquifer at current rates for U.S. beef production, it is only a matter of time before wells in Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Colorado, and New Mexico go dry, and portions of these states become scarcely habitable for human beings.

## The More Things Change...

It’s true that *Diet For A New America* is now twelve years old. Some things have changed in the meantime. For example, the discussion of AIDS, written in 1986, could not possibly have included the enormous developments that have taken place concerning this disease since then. For another example, incidents of E. coli O157:H7 poisoning have become far more frequent — and with USDA scientists now using more sensitive technology that has only recently become available, they will soon be finding this deadly strain of bacteria to be far more prevalent in cattle than anyone had thought. Mad Cow disease had not arisen when the book was written, and so is not mentioned. A great many examples lie in the areas of nutrition, where knowledge has advanced greatly in the past dozen years. But I see no evidence that the amount of water used in the production of beef has declined during this time. Nor do I see any evidence that the disastrous environmental impact and exorbitant waste of natural resources involved in modern meat production has improved in the slightest.

# Stopping Coronary Disease in its Tracks

Medical evidence is mounting that a plant-based diet, consisting of unprocessed grains, legumes (beans, lentils and peas), vegetables and fruits, combined with lipid-lowering drugs, can prevent, arrest and even reverse coronary artery disease.

One of the nation's leading advocates of this approach is Cleveland Clinic surgeon Caldwell B. Esselstyn Jr., M.D. In 1985, frustrated with what he perceived as the lack of serious effort at preventing major illnesses such as heart disease, Dr. Esselstyn recruited 24 patients with triple-vessel coronary artery disease for a research study, originally designed to last five years.

"My goal was to achieve, through plant-based nutrition and cholesterol-lowering drugs, a serum cholesterol level less than 150 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL), as is seen in cultures where coronary artery disease is virtually absent," Dr. Esselstyn explains. "Research shows that people with a total cholesterol that is consistently below 150 mg/dL rarely have coronary disease." Participants were asked to avoid oil, meat, fish, fowl and most dairy product; eat mostly unprocessed grains, legumes, vegetables and fruit; and consume alcohol and caffeine only in moderation. Patients were also given cholesterol-lowering drugs, as appropriate.

## Landmark Results

According to an article in the August 1 issue of *The American Journal of Cardiology*, 18 of the participants were followed for 12 years. Although as a group the participants had a history of 49 coronary events – increasing angina (chest pain), heart attack or bypass surgery – during the eight years prior to the study, all but one had no events since the study began. The exception is a patient who was off the study for two years and experienced angina. He has since resumed the study's diet and medications, following a bypass operation.

The six patients who did not adhere to the diet were released from the study within the first 15 months and returned to standard care. All had further coronary events, 13 during the 12 years of follow-up. One patient who adhered to the program died shortly after the five-year mark from a cardiac arrhythmia, "probably due to damage to the heart caused by his original massive myocardial infarction prior to the start of our study," Dr. Esselstyn notes. Angiograms taken just two months before the patient's death showed reversal of coronary lesions.

Prior to the study, Dr. Esselstyn's group had average total cholesterol levels of 237 mg/dL. The group now averages 145 mg/dL. Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels are around 82 mg/dL. About 70% of the participants have experienced regression of their disease, meaning that the plaques appeared smaller and smaller on successive angiograms.

"These results are particularly important because they show that this therapy stops, rather than just slows, atherosclerosis," Dr. Esselstyn says. "Patients become empowered and feel that they are now in control of the disease that was previously destroying their lives."

Because adherence to the program was key, Dr. Esselstyn used four rather unusual techniques to promote patients' compliance. He conducted a 60-90 minute interview with each patient and the patient's spouse at the start of the study. He monitored patient cholesterol and overall progress with office visits every two weeks for the first five years. Patients learned the results of their blood work by a personal phone call from Dr. Esselstyn the night of their office visit. And several times a year, participants and Dr. Esselstyn gathered at one of their homes to review treatment objectives, exchange menus and socialize.

This and other studies are starting to convince physicians that coronary artery disease can, in fact, be reversed by aggressively lowering cholesterol through a very low fat vegetarian diet and, in many cases, lipid-lowering drugs.

Despite skepticism among medical professionals that patients would be willing and able to stick to this diet, Dr. Esselstyn insists that it is "scientifically and ethically imperative to inform the public what constitutes an optimal diet."

Of note: Dr. Esselstyn follows the same diet as his patients. In 1985, his total cholesterol was around 185 mg/dL. It now hovers around 110.



*Caldwell B. Esselstyn, Jr., MD is a Preventive Cardiology Consultant in the Department of General Surgery at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Cleveland, Ohio. To learn more about Dr. Esselstyn and his work, visit his site at <http://www.HeartAttackProof.com>.*



## Did you know?

### "Beverage of Magnesia," Anyone?

*The National Milk Producers Federation has registered a trade complaint with the federal government, asking the Food and Drug Administration to put a stop to the use of the word "milk" by soybean beverage makers. Milk producers claim that soy-based beverages cannot label their products as "milk" since federal regulatory standards clearly limit the use of the term to the milk coming from dairy cows.*

—CNN, February 14, 2000



# Meet EarthSave Board Member Caryn Hartglass



Caryn Hartglass, EarthSave Board Secretary, was born and raised in New York. After graduating from Bucknell University with Bachelor and Master of Science degrees in chemical engineering, she pursued a career in Photomaskmaking, a specialized area of the semiconductor industry, primarily in California, while actively performing in amateur and semi-professional musical theater companies. She spent four years living in the south of France, studying French, German and music and doing some engineering consulting, as well as giving concerts and competing in vocal competitions. During this time she won two international vocal competitions, one in France and one in South Africa, and recorded a CD with the French company, Ligia Digital. She returned to New York three years ago, and now divides her time between singing, engineering consulting and volunteering for EarthSave. Activities include yoga, running, biking, skiing, swimming, diving and vegan gourmet cooking.

More than 25 years ago, Hartglass, then a child, announced to her family that she wanted to be

a vegetarian. She had suddenly become aware of the unnecessary cruelty involved in eating meat and no longer wanted to be a part of it. There was little information available about vegetarian nutrition at the time and her mother was concerned for her health. They visited the family physician, who insisted eating meat was healthy and was beneficial for animals, because more were given the chance to live. Fortunately, the physician's arrogant and patronizing demeanor was not convincing and Hartglass continued on the path of eating a plant-based diet. Over time, she realized the benefits of improved health and the positive impact of the diet on the environment. Interestingly, persistent stomach ailments, anemia and premenstrual moodiness she had experienced as a child and young teen all disappeared with the plant-based diet.

Her desire to actively promote a plant-based diet and to be an EarthSave volunteer was triggered by the diagnosis of breast cancer and untimely death of one of her best friends. Hartglass has been involved with the core group of EarthSave Long Island for three years and joined the EarthSave International board last April. 🌐

## EarthSave On-line

Looking for a way to connect with other EarthSavers? Join the EarthSave email list. To subscribe, email [majordomo@earthsave.org](mailto:majordomo@earthsave.org). Include in the message: "subscribe esi-list @earthsave.org." You will then get instructions via email on how to confirm your subscription and participate. This is a great way to share information and tips, and to keep up to date on what's happening around the country.

Another useful resource for web surfers is the EarthSave Discussion Board at [www.vegsources.org/earthsave/](http://www.vegsources.org/earthsave/). And don't forget to check our website, [www.earthsave.org](http://www.earthsave.org), frequently for new research and articles of interest!

## Howard Lyman's Speaking Schedule

**Mon Apr 24, 9:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m. - Berkeley, Ca**  
U.C. Berkeley  
510-664-1045; [Dave@EarthWeek2000.org](mailto:Dave@EarthWeek2000.org)

**Wed Apr 26, 7 p.m. - Windsor, Ontario**  
University of Windsor  
519-326-7100; [Bernard@Mnsi.Net](mailto:Bernard@Mnsi.Net)

**Sat Apr 29, 1 p.m. - Bancroft, Ontario**  
613-339-2789

**Sun Apr 30, Noon - Edmonton, Alberta**  
780-469-1448; [Voa@Planet.Eon.Net](mailto:Voa@Planet.Eon.Net)

**June 1-3 - Vancouver, B.C.**  
EarthSave Vancouver Taste of Health  
604-731-5885; [ESCanada@EarthSave.org](mailto:ESCanada@EarthSave.org)

**Sun June 11 - Montreal, Quebec**  
514-367-0964; [Vegnman2@aol.com](mailto:Vegnman2@aol.com)

**Sat June 24 - Virginia Beach, Va**  
[Rscarfe@Nfx.Net](mailto:Rscarfe@Nfx.Net)

**July 10-15 - Toronto**  
International Vegetarian Congress  
416-544-8891, Ext 3; [Foodfair@veg.on.ca](mailto:Foodfair@veg.on.ca)

**Sun July 16 - Miami, Fl**  
Natural Hygiene Conference; [Anhs@Anhs.Org](mailto:Anhs@Anhs.Org)

**Sun July 30 - Los Angeles, Ca**  
World Fest; 619-584-6462;  
[Compassionate@Kari.Net](mailto:Compassionate@Kari.Net)

**Sun Oct 1 - San Diego, Ca**  
World Fest; (Same As Above)



# Mobilizing a Generation for Positive Change

## An Update on Youth for Environmental Sanity (YES!)

By Ocean Robbins, founder

Since I was 16 and started YES! as a project of EarthSave in 1990, we've been educating, inspiring and empowering young people to take positive action for healthy people and a healthy planet. Our national speaking and workshop tour has reached 600,000 students in person through school assembly presentations at 1,200 schools in 43 states with a call to action for food and life choices that will build a better world. YES! has held 54 week-long environmental leadership training camps in seven countries, providing support and skills to empower the next generation of environmental leaders.

Without EarthSave's never-ending aid, YES! would have never come into being. With it, YES! accomplished some extraordinary things. And then, in 1997, we agreed that it was time for YES! to become an organization affiliated with but independent of EarthSave. For the three years since, YES! has focused especially on its summer camp program, and we have generated some extraordinary results.

Our goal at YES! Action Camps is to help young people live with purpose and passion, and to make a positive difference in the world. When they learn the truth about the impact of food on their bodies and their world, huge numbers of youth are eager to bring focus to this remarkable leverage point.

Seventy percent of our camp participants are vegetarian, but many of them routinely feel isolated in their choices and ridiculed by their peers. YES! Action Camps are a place where young people can feel confirmed, supported and empowered to live in alignment with their values, providing an enormous boost of support to countless young activists. Inspired by the persuasive enthusiasm exhibited by their peers, fully 60% of the young people who have come to YES! Action Camps eating meat now eat a plant-based diet.

Since 1997, in tandem with support from EarthSave, 10% of empowered YES! Camp alumni have persuaded their high schools to provide plant-based options in school cafeterias, making vegetarian lunches available to roughly 70,000 students in 45 schools nationwide.

YES! Action Camps create an atmosphere of respect and trust, and help young people to return to their school or work and community with greater confidence, empowerment, and courage. Making healthier food choices and working to build a more compassionate and sustainable society are natural outgrowths of an experience we are eager to share with as many people as possible.

This summer, YES! is holding twelve week-long camps in six states. Guest presenters will include John Robbins (my totally amazing dad!), Marianne Williamson, David Brower, Rosa Parks, Jane Goodall, Alice Walker, and many other leading voices for compassion and a healthy world.

In August, in response to hundreds of requests, YES! is offering its first camp ever that is freely open to all ages 15 and over. "Expanding The Circle" will be co-facilitated by Deo Robbins (my totally amazing mom!) and Ryan Eliason (YES!'s co-founder) with a special guest appearance by John Robbins. Anyone interested in being involved with YES!, or wanting brochures on 2000 camps, can contact:

YES!, 420 Bronco Road, Soquel, CA 95073  
(831) 465-1091  
camps@yesworld.org • www.yesworld.org



*"YES Camp was such a powerful experience! Putting youth on the path toward self-healing and thereby toward healing the planet is some of the most important work in the world.. Teaching the skills they need to do effective work in the social and environmental arenas is even more important. This camp was amazing in that it did both. Keep on rockin'!"*

*—Amanda Bohnson, 23, Student Environmental Action Coalition, Columbia, MO*



*Ocean Robbins,  
YES! founder*

*"I came to YES! Camp as a non-vegetarian, a carnivore, a meat eater, but after learning about where the meat is from I'll never eat a McDonald's hamburger again! This camp helped me look at life in a very positive way. I've seen that there are deep spiritual reasons for respecting all life. I think everyone should come to YES! Camp, no matter where they're from or who they are. They'll have one of the most important experiences of their lives. Guaranteed."*

*—Rameen Choudry, 16,  
La Mesa, CA*



—Organics Continued from page 1

## 20/20's Hack Job

The *20/20* show is a perfect illustration of how groups such as Hudson and ACHS help ensure that the media does not present a balanced account of the facts concerning organic food. The show spotlighted a rather meaningless and flawed study undertaken by ABC reporter and *20/20* host John Stossel, intended to create the impression that organic produce is “dangerous.” Stossel implied that the unscientific study showed organic produce contained higher levels of pathogenic (disease-producing) bacteria than commercially grown produce. In truth, pathogenic bacteria was not specifically measured in the *20/20* study, there was no peer review and no apparent statistical analysis that is typical to a scientific study. In fact, to term it a “study” is anti-science at its best.

Why would a reporter like John Stossel permit himself to be used in this way? An article in the March, 2000, edition of the magazine *Brill's Content* provides some insight.<sup>ii</sup> Entitled *Laissez-Faire TV*, the article exposes Stossel's ties to a number of the same pro-business organizations that Professor Ehrlich cites in his book. According to the article, Stossel is the only correspondent in *20/20's* history to get his own weekly segment, and he has the power at ABC to produce prime-time specials on any topics he chooses. How does he use that power? According to Brill's Content, he often uses it to promote pro-business positions and rail against government regulation. “Once a consumer reporter who rallied against corporations, Stossel has become a friend of big business. He has suggested shrinking the Environmental Protection Agency and boarding up the Food and Drug Administration.” Stossel is described as “enemy No. 1” to Jeff Cohen, who runs Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR). “He's clearly one of the most openly and proudly biased reporters in the business,” says Cohen.

In his *20/20* piece smearing organics, Stossel also interviewed Katherine DiMatteo, the Executive Director of the Organic Trade Association. Before the show was aired, Ms. DiMatteo wrote to *20/20*: “Based on our further in-depth research, we feel Mr. Stossel is misrepresenting the facts from a study *20/20* conducted. Mr. Stossel asked several times if ‘organic food will kill you.’ Numerous questions along these lines were posed to me during the interview, many of which were citing non-existent data or incorrect information. *20/20's* own consumer poll showed that consumers purchase organic products first and foremost because of benefits to the environment. Organic food production is an agricultural system that helps reduce environmental damage. Organic food is not deadly, and to cause consumer alarm

based on the results of one small study would be irresponsible.”

As for Mr. Avery, he has repeatedly gone on the record as he did in the broadcast stating that “people who eat organic and natural foods are eight times as likely as the rest of the population to be attacked by the deadly new strain of E.coli bacteria (O157:H7).” Mr. Avery claims “recent data” compiled by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as the source for this inaccurate statement. The Organic Trade Association, in its mission to protect the organic label and to educate consumers, investigated these claims by contacting the CDC directly. According to Robert Tauxe, M.D., chief of the food-borne and diarrheal diseases branch of the CDC, there is no such data on organic food production in existence at their centers. In fact, Tauxe stated that Avery's claims were “absolutely not true.”

According to Tauxe, “The goal of the CDC is to ensure food is produced using safe and hygienic methods, and that consumers also practice safe and hygienic methods in food preparation, regardless of the source, be it organic, commercial, imported or otherwise.” It would appear that Mr. Avery's remarks, all premised on CDC data, have no foundation. In fact, the disease strain of E.coli (O157:H7) originates from animal-sources.

## Piling It Higher and Deeper

Mr. Avery further states that “organic food is more dangerous than commercially grown produce because organic farmers use manure...”. But manure use is a common agricultural practice for *both* commercial and organic food production. Certified organic farmers, however, must adhere to additional and more strict limitations on the application of manure, as mandated by the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) of 1990. The OFPA prohibits the harvest of organic crops for human consumption for at least 60 days after the application of raw manure. Furthermore, organic certification agencies and OFPA require longer intervals between manure application and harvest if soil or other conditions warrant it.

Mr. Avery claims organic farmers “compound the contamination problem through their reluctance to use antimicrobial preservatives, chemical washes, pasteurization or even chlorinated water to rid their products of dangerous bacteria.” We question how Mr. Avery measures “reluctance” among organic growers. Any organic grower that uses the certified organic label must abide by safe food production standards, and, as with all food producers, must be in compliance with his or herself local and state health standards.

## Did you know?

### Teens at Risk

*Staying away from high-fat, high-cholesterol foods isn't just a warning for adults to heed. A new study of teen-agers found one-third of them had increased their heart disease risk factors with junk food diets that could lead to high blood pressure and clogged arteries as they grow older.*

—CNN, March 15, 2000.

*Based on research by Pacific Health Education Center in Bakersfield, California, and Prevention Concepts, Inc., in Los Angeles, presented at American College of Cardiology, Anaheim, CA.*

### EU to Keep Moratorium on GM Foods

*BRUSSELS, March 9 (Reuters) - The European Union will keep its de facto moratorium on the approval of genetically modified crops in place at least for a further six months.*

### College Veg

*1 out of 4 Stanford students describes herself as vegan or vegetarian.*

—Stanford Magazine February, 2000

The *20/20* segment also falsely claimed that organic farmers waste land and resources. The fact is, organic farming is not low-yield farming. The Rodale Institute of Kutztown, PA, recently completed a 15-year study comparing organic farming methods to commercial agricultural methods. Its findings, published in the November 11, 1998, issue of the journal *Nature*, showed that organic yields equaled commercial agricultural yields after only four years. The study also demonstrated that, in organic farming, the quality of the soil continues to improve; carbon dioxide emissions are reduced; and in periods of drought, organic fields are more resilient and can actually out-perform the yield of commercial farm plots. (Although *20/20* traveled to and interviewed researchers at the Rodale Institute, they were not included in the broadcast.)

Experts have also shown that pesticide application does not guarantee increased crop yields. According to David Pimentel, Professor of Insect Ecology and Agricultural Sciences at Cornell University, "Although pesticides are generally profitable, their use does not always decrease crop losses. For example, even with the 10-fold increase in insecticide use in the United States from 1945 to 1989, total crop losses from insect damage have nearly doubled from 7 percent to 13 percent."

Furthermore, in 1998, the EPA reported that agriculture is the single largest nonpoint polluter of our rivers and streams, fouling more than 173,000 miles of waterways with chemicals, erosion and animal waste runoff from livestock production.<sup>iii</sup> As we can see from the USDA land use figures above, aside from the waste runoff, a good share of this chemical pollution is also the result of growing livestock feed using chemically dependant agriculture.

## Of Pesticides and Sewage Sludge

As media megamergers continue to swallow up smaller news agencies, unbiased news may become a thing of the past. Yet consumers should not be left in the dark while bought-and-paid industry scientists obscure the essential truth of the issue — organically grown food has many benefits that make it safer than commercial produce.

One major difference lies in the use of pesticides and commercial fertilizers. Commercially grown fruits and vegetables will often have multiple pesticide residues. Commercially grown strawberries alone, for example, can contain up to 64 different pesticides. Washing your hands and your veggies is a simple and effective defense against manure. Pesticides, on the other hand, are harder if not impossible to wash off, especially when plants are genetically engineered to express those pesticides in every cell in the active form, like the Bt toxin

found in corn, soybeans and cotton.

Recent studies show that trace levels of multiple pesticides cause increased aggression. It is noteworthy that aggression was triggered with trace combinations of pesticides, but not with exposure to a single pesticide. Specifically, trace pesticide mixtures have induced abnormal thyroid hormone levels. Irritability, aggression and multiple chemical sensitivity are all associated with thyroid hormone levels.<sup>iv</sup>

Also, compounds such as nitrates (which can be converted into cancer-producing chemicals) are more prevalent in commercially grown produce because of the overuse of nitrogen-containing fertilizers.<sup>v</sup>

The *20/20* segment mentioned how a young girl became ill after she ingested lettuce that was contaminated from sewage. Because of the order of presentation, the viewer was falsely led to believe the lettuce was organically grown. The truth is, however, certified organic growers cannot use sewage sludge to amend the soil – but commercial operations can and do.

Unlike organic produce, which is grown using careful stewardship of the soil and time-proven farming techniques, commercially grown crops are often not rotated in different plots, and therefore tend to deplete the nutrient content of the soil. This is why extensive use of commercial fertilizers is required for the growth of these crops. In fact, many water supplies have been contaminated with nitrates because of the over use of commercial fertilizers. Although manure used in organic farming also contains nitrates, it does not migrate to the ground water as quickly as does commercial grade fertilizer.

It is widely known that organic farms have higher concentrations of organic matter in the soils. A soil high in organic matter has improved water-holding capacity and therefore is more drought tolerant and reduces the activity and migration of pesticides. Further, organic matter in soil serves as a repository for select nutrients and assists in keeping these nutrients available.<sup>vi</sup>

While there have been conflicting studies on the superior nutritional value of organic produce – with some studies showing organic food to be far more nutritious than commercially grown, while others showing it to be the same – the jury is still out. Far more research has been directed to aid mechanized, commercial agriculture in producing foods of uniform size and uniform dates of ripening. Commercial agriculture, with its focus on mechanical harvesting and large-scale storage, transport and processing also consumes vast quantities of energy in the form of oil, gas and electricity.<sup>vii</sup>



## Sixteen Healthy Reasons to Eat Organic:

- 1) Less herbicide residue
- 2) Less insecticide residue
- 3) Less fungicide residue
- 4) Less toxic metal contamination
- 5) Less toxic nitrate contamination
- 6) More essential and trace minerals
- 7) No hormones
- 8) No antibiotics
- 9) More healthy agents
- 10) Tastes much better and you can eat the skin
- 11) Better for children. Children receive four times more exposure than adults to at least eight widely used cancer-causing pesticides in food.
- 12) Better for farm workers. A Natural Cancer Institute study found that farmers exposed to herbicides had a greater risk, by a factor of six, than non-farmers of contracting cancer.
- 13) Prevent soil erosion
- 14) Protect water quality
- 15) Help small farmers
- 16) Promote biodiversity



# PCRM Sues Glickman and Shalala

On December 15, 1999, the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM), along with several other individual and group plaintiffs, filed a lawsuit in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia against Dan Glickman, Secretary, Department of Agriculture (USDA), Donna Shalala, Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and Cutberto Garza, Chair of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee for 2000 (the "Committee"), under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA).

The Committee was established by the USDA and DHHS to recommend revisions to the current Dietary Guidelines, last revised in 1995. The Committee's recommendations are given to the secretaries of Agriculture and Health and Human Services, who will review and rely on the recommendations in revising and issuing the Dietary Guidelines in Summer 2000.

The Dietary Guidelines serve as the principal federal policy document, purportedly to assist consumers in making dietary choices for health prevention, although it appears that the underlying purpose is to promote certain agricultural interests. The Guidelines also form the basis for all federal food assistance or nutrition programs, including the School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Food Stamp Program, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

Committee members were to have been appointed based on their scientific knowledge of human nutrition. Out of the 11 members appointed, 6 currently have, or have had in the recent past, financial ties to the meat, dairy, or egg industries. Even the Deputy Undersecretary of Agriculture, who participated in the Committee meetings, has a business relationship with a dairy-product manufacturer (the Dannon Institute).

## The primary goals of the lawsuit were:

1. To encourage the Committee to make recommendations that recognize the role diet plays in contributing to the high toll heart disease, cancer, diabetes, stroke, hypertension, obesity, and lactose intolerance exact among Americans in general (and disproportionately so among people of color) and that promote the healthiest possible diet to help reduce this toll;

2. To encourage the Committee to make recommendations that, through adoption by the USDA and DHHS in the Guidelines, will force a change in the "nutritional" standards of federal food assistance programs;
3. To encourage the Committee to make dairy products optional and in no way superior to other calcium sources in the Dietary Guidelines, and encourage the use of plant-based diets for those who may choose them; and
4. To ensure future compliance with FACA, including the lawful appointment of Committee members free of inappropriate conflicts of interest and in compliance with public disclosure requirements.

On Friday, January 28, 2000, the Court denied the plaintiffs' request for a temporary injunction to halt the release of the Committee's report. Shortly thereafter, the Committee's report was released. (To see the Committee's report and recommendations, go to [www.ars.usda.gov/dgac](http://www.ars.usda.gov/dgac)). The report, which clearly was affected by the pending lawsuit, made *unexpected recommendations favorable to the plaintiffs' position* concerning the role of dairy products and plant foods in the American diet. The Committee recognized that soy-based beverages (soymilk) are on a par with cow's milk as a source of calcium and other bone-strengthening nutrients. The Committee also recognized that the foundation of a healthy diet is plant foods. In light of the Committee's recommendation to raise soymilk's nutritional status to equal the long-standing prominence given to cow's milk, and the recognition of the benefits of plant foods in the diet, PCRM filed a motion to voluntarily dismiss the portion of its bold, groundbreaking lawsuit concerning the composition of the Committee. PCRM's claims concerning the Committee's failure to comply with the public disclosure requirements of FACA remain pending.

Although PCRM is thrilled with these major breakthroughs, significant concerns with the Committee's recommendations exist. Additionally, the USDA and DHHS are not required to adopt any of the Committee's recommendations, including those PCRM supports. In order to make the Dietary Guidelines for 2000 the best they can be, it is imperative that everyone get involved. 🌍

## What You Can Do

- 1) Contact your congressional representatives and ask them to support the Committee's recommendation to include soymilk in the "dairy group"; to support the renaming of the "dairy group" to the "dairy and soymilk group" or the "calcium-rich food group"; and to support inclusion of a fully developed section in the Dietary Guidelines promoting a diet based wholly on vegetables, fruits, grains, and legumes, with meat and dairy products optional. To contact your congresspersons, visit the House of Representatives' website ([www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)) to locate their names, addresses, and e-mail addresses. To contact your senators, visit the Senate's website ([www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)).
- 2) Contact President Clinton and express the same concerns.
- 3) Write a letter to the editor for your local or state newspaper.
- 4) Work with the administrators of any food assistance or nutrition program in which you or your children participate to educate them about these issues.

# Commercial Agriculture: Facts & Figures

by J. Robert Hatherill, Ph.D, *Environmental Studies Program, University of California at Santa Barbara.*

As people settled into established societies many centuries ago, they began looking for ways to protect their crops. Sulfur was used as an insecticide long before 500 BC. Toxic formulations of lead, arsenic and mercury were applied to crops in the 1400s. In the 1600s nicotine compounds were extracted from tobacco leaves and used as insecticides. By the mid 1800s, the heads of chrysanthemum flowers were used to obtain pyrethrum, and rotenone was extracted from the derris plant.

While these so-called first-generation pesticides were derived from plants, the second-generation pesticides such as DDT were formulated in chemistry laboratories. A major chemical industry sprang up after the discovery of the potent insecticidal properties of DDT by entomologist Paul Mueller. The second-generation DDT soon became the planet's most popular pesticide and Mueller received the Nobel prize in 1948.

In the 1930s the crop yields in the United States were comparable to those of India, England, and Argentina. Since the 1950s the use of petroleum-derived pesticides and fertilizers, coupled with a host of governmental policies have vaulted the U.S. into the biggest farming economy in the world. Today, fewer farmers feed more people than ever before in the history of food production.

This farming success, however, has not happened without enormous costs and environmental tradeoffs. Pesticide proponents argue that the benefits far outweigh the harm. After all, pesticides do save lives. Since the late 1940s DDT has prevented millions from contracting malaria, bubonic plague and typhus. Proponents also contend that pesticides work faster and are more effective than the alternatives. Pesticide advocates also point out that the new-generation pesticides are used at very low application rates compared to the older, out-dated products.

One of the problems, however, is that insects breed rapidly and quickly develop resistance to insecticides. In addition, broad-spectrum pesticides kill natural predators that keep pests in check. Use of synthetic pesticides — which include insecticides, rodenticides, fungicides, herbicides, and others — has increased more than 33 fold in the last half century. Ironically, it is estimated that more of the U.S. food supply is lost to pests today (37%) than in the 1940s (31%)<sup>1</sup>. Total crop losses from insect damage

alone have nearly doubled from 7% percent to 13% during that period. Cultivation of four crops — soybeans, wheat, cotton and corn — consumes around 75% of the pesticides in the U.S. Today about 2.5 million tons of pesticides are used worldwide.

In addition, for more than 40 years, ranchers and growers have been feeding low levels of penicillin, tetracycline, and other antibiotics to poultry, cattle, and pigs to speed growth and cut costs. That use accounts for about one third to one half of all antibiotics sold in the U.S. Scientists worldwide have decried the use of antibiotics to promote animal growth because it increases the prevalence of bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics' effects and jeopardizes human health.

Every day the environmental and health consequences of commercial farming become more apparent. The EPA has identified agriculture as the greatest nonpoint source of water pollution.<sup>ii</sup> Pesticides and nitrates from fertilizers and manure have been detected in the groundwater of most states. In fact pollutants from agriculture can be detected in both the north and south poles and in the deepest reaches of the oceans. Commercially grown food we eat contains detectable levels of pesticides and antibiotics. And recent studies have implicated pesticides as the possible culprits in causing Parkinson's Disease, as well as increased aggression in children.<sup>iii</sup>

For reasons such as these and others, sustainable alternatives to intensive, high-chemical input agriculture are gaining in popularity. 🌍

*Dr. Hatherill is a research toxicologist at UCSB, the author of the national bestseller "Eat to Beat Cancer" (Renaissance Books; September 1999), and chief scientific advisor to EarthSave International.*

See our Summer, 2000, issue for Dr. Hatherill's next report: "Organic Agriculture: What's the Difference, Really?"



## End Notes

<sup>i</sup> Pimental, David, et al. 1992. *Environmental and Economic Cost of Pesticide Use*, *BioScience*, Vol. 42, No. 10, 750-60

<sup>ii</sup> Pimental, David and Hugh Lehman, eds. 1993. *The Pesticide Question: Environmental, Economics and Ethics*. New York: Chapman & Hall.

<sup>iii</sup> US Environmental Protection Agency. 1984. *Report to Congress: Nonpoint Source Pollution in the US Office of Water Program Operations*, Water Planning Division. Washington, D.C.

<sup>iv</sup> C. Hertzman and others, "Parkinson's disease: a case-control study of occupational and environmental risk factors," *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF INDUSTRIAL MEDICINE* Vol. 17, No. 3 (1990), pgs. 349-355.

G.P. Sechi, "Acute and persistent parkinsonism after use of diquat," *NEUROLOGY* Vol. 42, No. 1 (Jan. 1992), pgs. 261-263.

K.M. Semchuk and others, "Parkinson's disease and exposure to agricultural work and pesticide chemicals," *NEUROLOGY* Vol. 42, No. 7 (July 1992), pgs. 1328-1335.

# Chapters

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# A New Chapter Grows in The City of Roses

EarthSave Portland-Vancouver achieved full chapter status in late 1999. The group was originally established in 1996 as the Southwest Washington EarthSave "special interest group" by Rick and Linda Sant'Angelo. In late 1998, Carol and Don Merrick became involved, and it was decided that the group would reorganize to include Portland, OR. Founding core group members Charley Korn, Grace Weinstein and a few other volunteers propelled the group to its current level of 60 members.

Activities in 1999 included monthly potlucks, Howard Lyman lectures in May, a meatless Fourth of July Cookout, a First Annual Turkey Free Dinner on Nov. 21, and a core group weekend retreat at the Oregon coast in October. Potlucks drew anywhere from 10 to 30 attendees, the cookout attracted 40, and the Turkey Free Thanksgiving, attended by almost 100 people, included a concert, potluck, and so much Tofurky (donated by Turtle Island Foods) that there was enough to donate to shelters after the event.

The potlucks have featured a variety of speakers, panel discussions, and video presentations. Topics have included community-supported agriculture, raw foods, animal advocacy, vegetarian nutrition, and *Diet for a New America*. A recent panel included representatives of a group working to abolish greyhound racing and Diane Danielson addressing animal experimentation. Danielson is an alumna of YES! (Youth for Environmental Sanity), a youth program founded by Ocean Robbins (see story, page 9). Looking ahead, EarthSave Portland-Vancouver plans to host another prominent speaker, continue its monthly potlucks and expand the 4th of July cookout and the Turkey Free dinner.

## Portland/Vancouver's Core Group:

### Don Merrick, Chair

Don is a retired engineer with 40 years of professional experience in the chemical and nuclear industries with an emphasis on environmental management. He is well versed in the pollution impacts to water and air, pollution prevention practices, and environmental policy and regulatory concerns. His group facilitation expertise has helped the Portland/Vancouver Chapter stay on track.

### Charley Korn, Co-Chair

Charley brings a communications background to EarthSave, including four years of writing and editing for regional and national publica-

tion in research environments, focusing on community efforts to reduce and prevent violence and crime. Charley specializes in presentations, event planning, and photography.

### Linda Sant'Angelo, Treasurer

Linda has been an EarthSave member since 1989 and is a former software developer. She is a busy mom who volunteers her time publishing newsletters for several local community groups. In addition to her EarthSave board efforts, Linda participates in community education as a trained "master composter/recycler", and is involved in assisting with Religious Education at her Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

### Carol Merrick, Secretary

Carol's eclectic background includes medical research and a bachelor's degree in Women's Studies. She spent 8 years in biological technology, medical research, and behavioral research. Carol has researched, collected, and composed articles related to menopause, nutrition, disease, and women's medical issues.

### Rick Sant'Angelo

Rick has been an EarthSave member since 1989, and has worked as a computer network engineer since 1983. He has written several books on networking, including a bestseller. Rick volunteered his time to upgrade and network EarthSave's computer systems after its move to Seattle in 1999. Rick also devotes much of his time working toward preserving open space and controlling growth in Southwest Washington as a board member of Friends of Clark County.

### Grace Weinstein

Grace's strengths as a synthesizer and visionary support the core group's planning efforts. She enjoys the group collaboration and communication process. Her interest in art, especially ceramics, extends 40 years since she completed a bachelor's degree in Art and Social Sciences. Grace's additional interests include her Unitarian fellowship, gardening, and cooking. 🌍



## Southeastern Vegetarian Action Symposium a Rousing Success

More than 200 vegetarians descended on Gainesville, FL, February 18-20 for the First Annual Vegetarian Action Symposium, hosted by EarthSave Miami and Vegetarian Events. Participants from throughout the Southeastern U.S. (even some from as far as Minnesota!), met for a week-end of learning, teaching, networking and socializing and left feeling excited and inspired to raise awareness in their own communities.

“People were thrilled to death that it happened,” says Cynthia Cowen (EarthSave Miami Chair and co-organizer of the event). “They learned that the national organizations are out there to help them.” Attendees had the opportunity to participate in panel discussions and to network with representatives of national vegetarian organizations, as well as listen to inspiring speakers, enjoy outstanding vegan meals provided by the Sheraton Gainesville Hotel (where the event was

located), and browse the exhibit hall. Cowen adds that “the effect radiated” as hotel staff and local businesses were exposed to the participants and their enthusiasm.

Participating organizations included EarthSave International, the American Vegan Society (which brought along an entire bookstore), Animal Protection Institute, Vegetarian Resource Group, Farm Sanctuary, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, United Poultry Concerns, the Vegetarian and Vegan Association and the North American Vegetarian Society, among others. Speakers included Rynn Berry, Robert Cohen, Antonia Demas, Joyce DiBenedetto-Colton, George Eisman, Doug Graham and Sherry Schlueter. “It’s so nice when the world turns vegetarian, if only for a weekend,” Cynthia shared. “I encourage other groups to do this in their areas as well.”

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—Organics continued from page 11

Organic farming does not rely on the intensive use of inputs such as chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Instead, it relies on natural soil builders and biological control of pests. Organic farming uses much less energy than commercial farming, and therefore generates fewer greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide.<sup>viii</sup>

Just about any consumer can note the difference between an organically grown tomato and a commercially grown tomato. The organic tomato has a rich, deep red color that is indicative of the red pigment lycopene, which has been shown to have health-protective properties. Commercial grown tomatoes are often picked green and put in a chamber with sulfur dioxide to force the ripening of the tomato. Tomatoes treated in this manner will often have much lower amounts of health-protecting lycopene. Studies also show that health protective plant chemicals called phytochemicals are higher in organic produce. Many of these phytochemicals such as lycopene (tomatoes) and resveratrol (grapes) have been linked to reduced heart disease and cancer risk. And let's not forget that organically grown produce just *tastes* better!

On March 20, 2000, researchers from the EPA and Population Council announced that a commonly used pesticide, methoxychlor, may interfere with levels of the male hormone testosterone, affecting male fertility. Interestingly, to lessen this risk, the lead researcher advises washing fruits and vegetables thoroughly before eating them - or simply switching to organic produce.<sup>ix</sup>

John Stossel, Dennis Avery, *20/20* – and the corporations behind them, which profit from the sale of pesticides, fertilizers and genetically modified substances – seem to hope we will all forget that the human species has been eating organic food for all but the last 50 years of life on this planet. It is commercial food, the product of chemical farming, that is the real experiment on the health of the public. 🌐

*Dr. Hatherill is a research toxicologist at UCSB, the author of the national bestseller "Eat to Beat Cancer" (Renaissance Books; September 1999), and chief scientific advisor to EarthSave International.*

## End Notes

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