



*Notes  
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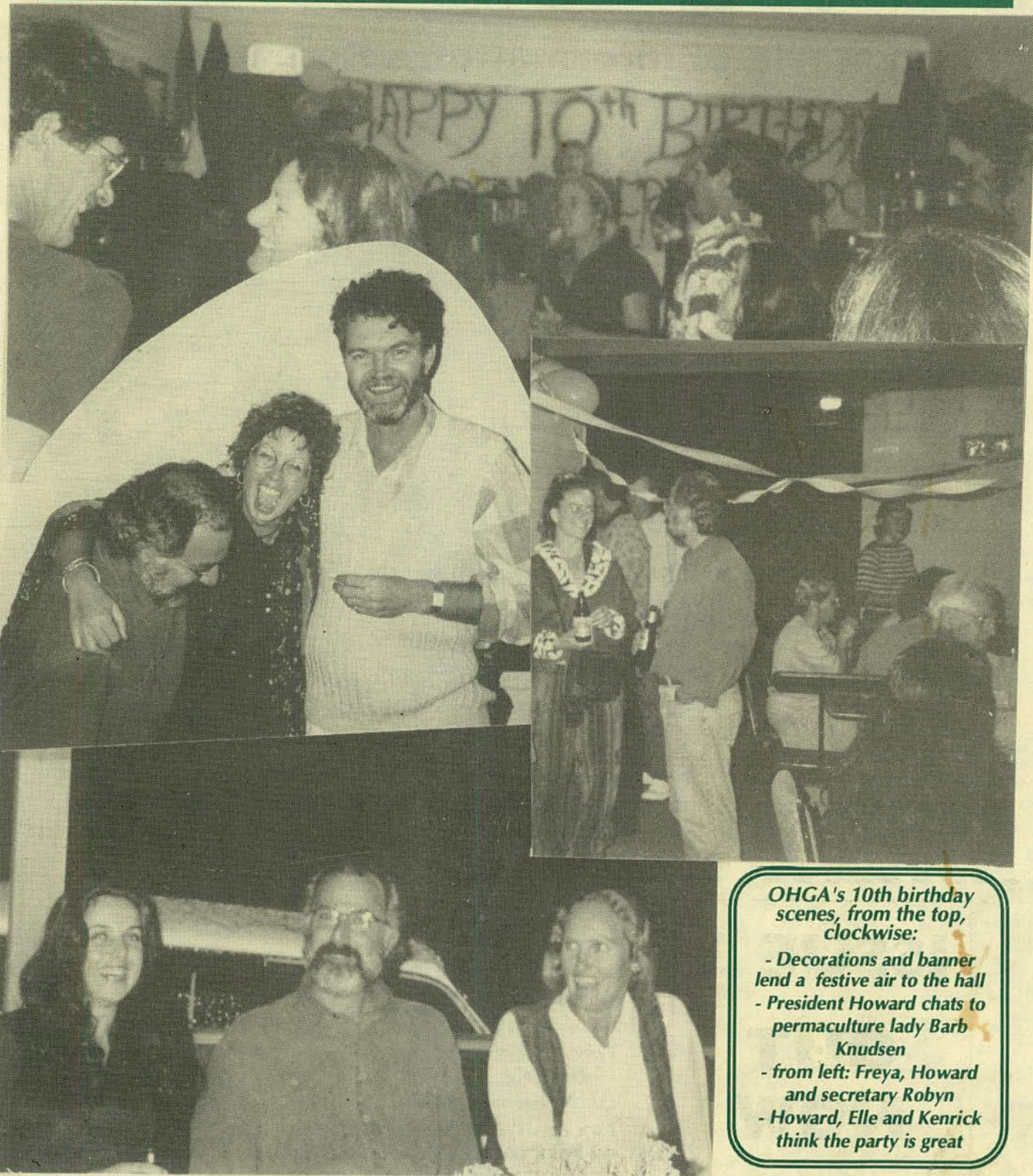
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# HERB GROWER

Published bi-monthly by the ORGANIC HERB GROWERS OF AUSTRALIA INC.



**OHGA's 10th birthday  
scenes, from the top,  
clockwise:**

- Decorations and banner  
lend a festive air to the hall
- President Howard chats to  
permaculture lady Barb  
Knudsen
- from left: Freya, Howard  
and secretary Robyn
- Howard, Elle and Kenrick  
think the party is great



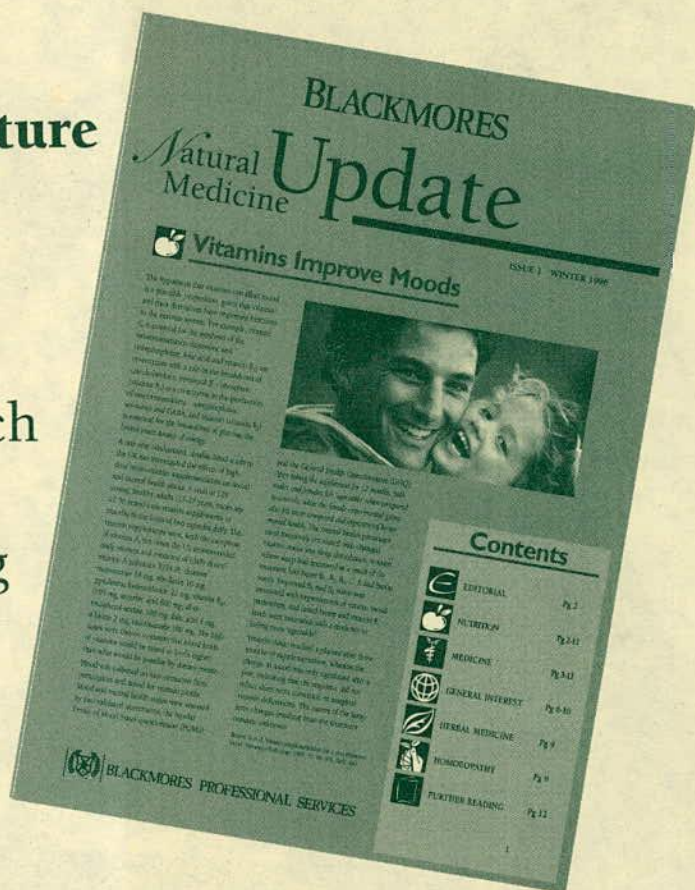
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# EDITORIAL



Hi all! Hope you're keeping warm. Here in the Northern Rivers it's a cold and wet winter so far. Not good for the old gardening bones. I recommend plenty of hot chai, with a shot of brandy now and again. There are a few issues which I have to deal with on this page, there not being room elsewhere in the mag.

Membership renewal time is here again. Please send in the form with your cheque a.s.a.p.

Organic Inspectors are needed for Victoria and the Newcastle to Sydney area. RIRDC has given NASAA a grant to bring an American over to run a workshop for organic inspectors to international standards. Bob will be attending and it would be a good opportunity for us to have other OTGA inspectors trained. It is held near Mildura in the first week of August, and costs \$55 for already working inspectors. There is an introductory course at no cost for new inspectors, for whom the advanced course will cost \$150. Transport and acc. are the responsibility of the individual, but shared on-site cabins at a caravan park have been reserved. Applicants need to provide a C.V., numbers are limited. Call Doug at the office if you're interested. We are now using so-called independent inspectors, who work for NASAA and BFA as well, but we have quite a few people interested in switching over to OTGA, and we do really need our own inspectors.

The Interim Organic Council saga continues unabated. We had a few members objecting to our giving out the membership list to the consultants for the survey they said they were sending out. Then we received one copy of this survey from them with the instructions to photocopy it and send it out ourselves to all members! It was a four page survey, which they wanted returned by the middle of June, so there was no opportunity to include it with the mag. We told them we'd do it, if they'd pay all the costs which we estimated to be around \$700. After all they received a grant of \$35,000 for this procedure. The consultants then told us that that money was for putting the questionnaire together (it's almost identical to a survey done by Hassell and Ass. in 1995) and for organising a conference, but said they'd pay us \$300. The OTGA committee then decided to follow the BDRI (Demeter) lead and not to go ahead with the whole thing. I wrote a letter to the Minister for Primary Industries, which I reprinted for you to read on the "Letters" pages.

The above mentioned conference takes place in Sydney this weekend 21-22 June. It was decided that Howard has to attend just to see what's happening and to put OTGA's point of view. Again we were told we had to pay for that ourselves. So this weekend isn't only lost to Howard, who really treasures his little time off, but is costing OTGA over \$500! Being a consultant certainly pays better than herb farming!!

Howard has phoned in to report at the end of the do: the outcome isn't too bad at all. The IOIC has been disbanded and a body has been set up with the purpose of organic promotion and R & D. It's called The Organic Federation of Australia. It will consist of 3 certified growers, 2 representatives of the certifying bodies, 1 wholesaler, 1 rep of the Consumer Association, 1 organic manufacturer etc. There'll be a full report on the meeting in the next issue.

Howard also heard that Uncle Toby's is dropping the Organic Vitabrits. He had long meetings and dinner with Jan Denham and Rod May of NASAA and cooperation between our two organisations was reaffirmed.

In this issue you'll find a really useful bio-dynamic article on the famous "peppering" and the making of homeopathic potencies for weed and pest control. I'm definitively going to give these methods a go. Also, I've been sitting on this good article on herbs for cancer for a while. There were always other, more pressing matters to include, but I think that secretly I found the subject a bit too morbid. Still, so many people get cancer these days. Some years ago I lost my oldest brother to the disease, and I've lost count of all the others I know who contracted cancer. Fortunately not all died, some have quite recovered. Maybe you have a success story you'd want to share with us? That would be really good.

Absolute copy deadline (for ads, letters, articles etc.)  
for the Sept/Oct issue is July 31st.





## ORGANIC HERB GROWERS OF AUSTRALIA Inc.

P O Box 6171, South Lismore 2480

Office: 1/ 68 Magellan Street, Lismore  
Ph. (066) 220100

Executive Officer: Doug Andrews  
e-mail address: herbs@om.com.au

### Member of IFOAM

1996/1997 committee:

President:	Howard Rubin	066-291057
Secretary:	Robyn Andrews	066-895441
Treasurer:	Pam Morrow	066- 847497
Vice President	Deborah Chard	066-884107
Committee:	Liz McIntyre	066-888124
	Freya Rubin	066-291057
	Don Scholten	066-878479
Editor:	Elle Fikke-Rubin	
	ph/fax	066-291057
Certification:	Bob McIntyre	066-888124

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This issue of HERB GROWER is printed  
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### Contributions to the HERB GROWER are always very welcome.

However, when you do send in an article for  
publication, and we decide to print it, please  
stick to writing about your own experiences,  
observations, interests.

If you quote another author, make that quite  
clear and state your reference material, eg  
books or articles by others, at the end of your  
article. Quote the source and the author.

Kim Fletcher, who has written quite a few  
books and who has been an OHGA member for  
years, wrote to us after reading the Motherwort  
article in the last issue. She said that the  
"author" of the article, Brian Shepherd, copied it  
out of one of her books.

You'll understand that this is very embarrassing  
for everyone involved, and I hope that this  
never happens again.

### APOLOGY

I can neither confirm nor deny Kim  
Fletcher's claim of plagiarism regarding the  
article I put together on Motherwort as  
appeared in HERB GROWER page 12,  
last issue.

As I do not have any books by Kim Fletcher,  
but reams of hand-written notes on  
numerous herbs, this portion could have  
been gleaned from her book long ago,  
and I neglected to acknowledge in my notes  
where this portion came from.

For this I unreservedly apologise to Kim  
Fletcher and any distress this may have  
caused.

*Brian Shepherd*

THE NATIONAL STANDARD FOR  
ORGANIC AND BIO-DYNAMIC PRODUCE  
has been finalised by OPAC.

We recommend you get a copy  
from the OHGA office.

The book costs \$10.

Send a cheque for that amount to  
P O Box 6171,  
South Lismore 2480







## OHGA's mail

Dear Robyn,

I am horrified that you would hand over your membership list, particularly my name, to a set of consultants. I can only hope that you have cast iron guarantees about the use the list will be put to.

The only list of names I have known to be handed to an outsider was the accounting society and the person misused the knowledge.

Yours, Anne Burhop, ACT

Dear Anne,

*We did receive an assurance from Macarthur Consulting that the membership list would not be passed on to anyone. In the meantime we have asked for, and received back, the OHGA membership list. (see letter to Minister)*

Dear OHGA, readers and contributors,

Having read Caroline Howell's letter in the May/June issue (I too will have the joy of the one year old/study combo next year, Aaargh!) I'm prompted to write for info on herb quantities and water ratio for disinfectant Nappy Buster Concoction.

The goal is scents without the cents. I have a few recipes for essential oil and metho mixes, but it's rather expensive. As I write, our rug rat is on the grass, being 'aired' and 'UV zapped' in defence against the dreaded nappy rash. He's taught us much since his January arrival, yet despite threats to withhold the rattle, he refuses to divulge the secret of the nappy wash (one that doesn't smell like vinegar).

The recipe we have involves simmering 'some' of the main disinfectant herbs with 'some' water.

Questions:

- 1) How much is 'some'?
- 2) Does this mean a combo or single herb use?
- 3) Which species of Eucalypt should be used?
- 4) Is there another preservation method aside from refrigeration?

My faith forwards premature thanx to those who write offering any clues.

Much love and Good Vibes,

Amanda O'Shea

Mahogano Rd, New Italy 2472

*Great question? Would those who know please write us promptly, before the nappyrash is a thing of the past?*

Dear OHGA,

Just a note to put forward an idea that might make a great magazine even greater!! How about a "problem page"? Readers could write in with their various problems (in the organic herb growing field ... I hope) and between you and other readers maybe solutions could be found. Maybe I could be the first person to write to the problem page.

Hope that you think this a good idea. Sincerely yours, Jennifer, Portland.

*A great idea Jennifer, although you're not the first to suggest it. We have started a problem page (puzzle corner) before, but it withered after one issue. But hey, let's try it again! There may be lots of new members who're right into it. Your problem's on the page, soon to be solved we hope.*

To The Honourable John Anderson  
Minister of Primary Industries and Energy  
Edmund Barton Building  
BARTON ACT 2600

May 29, 1997

Dear Mr. Anderson,

### **Re: Interim Organic Industry Council and McArthur Consulting**

I am writing on behalf of The Organic Herb Growers of Australia Inc. (OHGA), one of the five AQIS accredited certifying organisations in Australia. Our office is based in Lismore in Northern New South Wales. We have a membership of 400 growers Australia wide. We are a member of The Organic Produce Advisory Committee (OPAC).

As you may be aware, a year ago RIRDC, without any industry consultation, financed a meeting in Canberra of some of the organisations and individuals involved in the organic industry. The outcome of that meeting was that an Interim Organic Industry Council (IOIC) was established. Although it was portrayed at that time that all the delegates at the meeting were unanimous in the decision to set up this council, this was most certainly not the case. We, of OHGA, saw no advantage in, nor need for, establishing this body, and made that position quite clear, both at the meeting and thereafter.

The IOIC was charged with the task of consulting with the organic industry to determine what future direction to take. However, the IOIC did not consult, but rather engaged Macarthur Consulting, of Brisbane, to do this work. RIRDC has granted Macarthur Consulting \$35,000 to consult with the industry and to compile a questionnaire which is to be sent out to the organic industry members. We of OHGA were asked to present them with our membership list. Although many of our members felt





uneasy about having their name passed around, the OHGA committee decided to comply with the request, under the assumption that Macarthur would be sending out the questionnaires. We felt that this would give our members the opportunity to have their say about where they wanted organics to go.

Unfortunately we were given the wrong impression about this process, as Macarthur Consulting then sent us one sample of this questionnaire and told us to copy it and send it out ourselves, as it was not in their brief to do all the work, leaving us to wonder what the \$35,000 are to be used for and why they wanted our membership list in the first place. The OHGA committee has now unanimously decided to terminate any cooperation and have requested that Macarthur return the membership list, which they have done.

There are several reasons why we have decided against further cooperation:

1) Even though this has been labeled as a "consultation process", we have at no point been consulted, or even asked for input into the contents of the questionnaire. The questionnaire goes over much the same ground as the survey of Hassell and Associates some years back, also financed by RIRDC, in which we did participate. As well, there have been two search conferences financed by RIRDC which have dealt with the exact same issues. We feel that nothing new will be gained, and do not wish to finance the circulation of this questionnaire.

2) We do not understand the nature of, nor the need for, the whole project. We have no idea as to the objectives or the purpose of the project. We have continually asked for information regarding the need and purpose for an Australian Organic Council. We of OHGA certainly do not see any such need.

3) Our organisation takes pride in its efficiency, integrity and independence. We have often been held up as an example of a well run organisation. We recently celebrated our tenth anniversary. During the ten years we have seen a steady growth in our membership, now at 400. We publish a bi-monthly herb and organic industry magazine; we run an office with a friendly and efficient office manager in Lismore. From there we answer numerous phone calls from farmers regarding herb growing and organics. We take part in ag-shows and organise field days and are continually involved in public education regarding herbs and organics.

We do all this without ever having received any government grant or other assistance. Our loyal membership makes these activities possible.

4) We have no interest in becoming a "subsidiary" of a greater organic body in Australia. Nor do we wish to finance such a body. Most of our growers are small. Through their own hard work they have established an organic business. We differ

from NASAA and BFA in one important aspect: we do not charge any levies on OHGA labeled organic sales. We consider the levy system to be a direct conflict of interest for an organic certification body. Consequently we do not have a large bank account, but keep our expenses to a minimum. We pay our equal share of the Organic Industry contribution and AQIS Accreditation fees, but would most strenuously protest any forced contribution to a possible future umbrella organisation for which the need has not been made clear to us.

5) We are of the opinion that OPAC, with some reorganisation, would suffice as a meeting ground of the various organic interests in Australia. We do not deny that there could be more and better coordination and cooperation in the organic industry, but why not improve the already existing OPAC? OPAC was established as a ministerial advisory committee and yet we have no contact from your office. The organic industry bodies fund all OPAC activities, including our meeting expenses. Yet the OPAC committee has already produced a world standard document in The National Standard for Organic and Bio-Dynamic Produce.

We would be happy to share our ideas to bring about an improved OPAC, if you're interested.

Sincerely yours,  
Elle Fikke-Rubin  
for OHGA

*The following letter is from Julie and Tom Walsh who took care of a combined Herb Pharm /OHGA stall at the Yarra Valley Expo in Victoria.*

Dear Doug,

Well, the weekend has been. It was also, I believe, a success. I will admit that my experience is limited, but I think the OHGA stall achieved the desired ends. Financially a dud, but the dissemination of information about organic herb growing was definitely very fruitful. You may, and I hope so, be inundated with calls, memberships and cries for certification.

So many people interested. But generally the OHGA is little known or understood. The absence in general use or commerce of a OHGA specific logo causes much confusion. "Can OHGA certify my block/farm/chooks etc.?" was asked. "What does the OHGA logo look like?" another often asked question. The organising body of the event seemed a little peeved that OHGA did not have a logo on the promotional material prepared for the event. I admit that I found it strange. OHGA must have an up-front logo, with Certification Classification? The trade, the industry, the public must be able to recognise OHGA certified produce at a glance, not see hand written labels, that may or may not mean anything. The other





certification bodies (as I know you are well aware of) have very clear distinct labeling, we need an equal. Something to discuss at the next committee meeting.

OHGA needs more certification officers, how many do we have nationally & locally? What is involved in becoming a cert. officer. We both are interested.

The stall was commented on by many of the other participants, they were pleased to see us there "showing the flag" for OHGA and HerbPharm.

We, OHGA/HerbPharm, did not manage to cover costs, but we had a very successful weekend, overall. We met lots of people and spread the word that "WE" are here, OHGA and HerbPharm both. I am certain that the longterm P R work will be worth the effort.

The bits and pieces will be on their way very soon. I wish we could have made OHGA more money, at least expenses. Perhaps OHGA could do booklets on organic herb growing, organic principles and practices, crop specific cultural notes etc. These we could market to members firstly and the public as well. This could possibly raise some revenue generally and have more on hand to sell at Expo's etc. More OHGA printed information is what the public wants, the mags selling as they did shows that they are even willing to pay for more information. Another topic the committee might consider.

Enough for now. Thank you for the faith in us, we hope our efforts have been satisfactory or more, and many thanks for the chance to do the Expo, the exposure to the public was excellent. We shall be in touch.

Stay safe, happy herbing, Julie and Tom Walsh.  
HerbPharm, Maidstone, Vic.



*We do have a logo, of course, and a nice one too. (see above.) I guess the reason why it's not widely known, is that most of our herbs, with logo sticker, go to the wholesale markets. But anyone who is OHGA certified Grade A can print it up themselves, or buy stickers from the office and use it on their produce or product.*

*About other saleable items, you're quite right. What we need is someone who has the time to put these notes together though. Unlike the other certifying groups we have only one paid person in the office. But it will be discussed for sure. - Elle*

Dear Elle,

My wife and I are specialist herb growers with probably the widest range of plants in East Anglia.

We are constantly on the lookout for different herbs and import small quantities on a regular basis.

We are coming to South Australia for several weeks during December and January and would be interested in making contact with seed suppliers

nationally, and local S.A. growers. Is there any way in which your magazine can help?

We came two years ago and spent some time in Victoria where we met several good nurserymen but didn't really plan our trip properly so wasted much time.

We are always pleased to see herb fanatics if any of your members are ever in the Norwich area of England.

Yours sincerely, Maurice Elliott, Old Hall Plants, The Old Hall, Barsham, Beccles, Suffolk NR348 HB, England. Ph. ++ (0)1502 717475.

*Are there any S.A. members who would like to show Maurice their garden/nursery/herb business?*

**From: The Dept. of Primary Industries and Energy,  
Australian Plague Locust Commission  
to: Howard Rubin, OHGA**

April 17, 1997

**The Australian Plague Locust Commission (APLC)** is part of the Dept of Primary Industries and Energy, and is responsible for the monitoring and control of locust populations across two million square kilometres of eastern Australia, incorporating Queensland, NSW, Victoria and SA. Populations of the Australian plague locust, *Chortoicetes terminifera*, spurthroated locust, *Austracris guttulosa*, and migratory locust, *Locusta migratoria*, are monitored within the APLC's area of responsibility and if populations warrant control, ultra low volumes (ULV) of the organophosphorus insecticide fenitrothion are applied aerially.

Locust control by the APLC is undertaken in the most environmentally benign manner possible. To increase the efficacy of locust control operations the APLC is developing a decision support system (DSS) using geographic information system software. It should be stressed that this system is for the exclusive of the APLC and no other organisation will have access to any data within the DSS unless otherwise agreed to by both the APLC and the organisation contributing the information concerned.

The APLC currently undertakes its operations within both legislative and self imposed environmental guidelines, self imposed guidelines being a result of a continuing environmental research program. We wish to incorporate into the DSS information concerning the location of organic farming enterprises so as to be aware of sensitive areas prior to a locust control campaign. These areas will then remain free of insecticide application or any spray drift.

The Organic Farming Advisory Committee has suggested you can help the APLC by supplying essential information that would enable the APLC to incorporate organic farm locations into its decision support system and ensure fenitrothion applied by the APLC for locust control does not threaten organic farms.

*Cont'd on page 22*



*But if you're very busy, or forgetful .....*



# DISEASE, PEST AND WEED CONTROL THE BIO-DYNAMIC WAY

BY DAVID WRIGHT, GRAHAME HARRIS AND NORRIE PEARCE

Bio-Dynamic farms use very little in the way of sprays for plant pest and disease control. Under the BFA-BD standards, licensed growers can use just a few traditional sprays, such as copper and sulphur, and a few other naturally occurring materials such as pyrethrum.

The reasons for this are not hard to understand. Bio-Dynamic farming relies on the biological environment that plants need. The nutrients that they take up are not supplied in water soluble form through mineral fertilisers, but are the products of living processes, such as those of earthworms, fungi and bacteria in the soil. So Bio-Dynamic farmers strictly limit their use of any materials that might be detrimental to living things.

Insects may cease to be a serious problem when the sprays that are killing their natural predators are discontinued, but there may still be times when materials with some insecticidal effect are needed. At such times Bio-Dynamic growers use the materials that are generally accepted by organic standards authorities world wide. For example, the Demeter Standards, the EEC Organic Standards, the BFA Organic & Bio-Dynamic Standards and the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) Basic Guidelines all allow the use of natural materials such as pyrethrum when need is established. Homeopathic materials are also allowed by most organic standards.

## Guidelines for Plant and Animal Health

1. Naturally build up soil fertility, especially through composting and the use of leguminous crops for green manure.
2. Use the Bio-Dynamic Preparations on a regular basis.
3. Look for and use genetically superior plant strains that are truer to the primary plant species.
4. Wisely rotate the various crops of grains, vegetables and other plant species.
5. Develop multi-plant species pastures for greater animal health.
6. Use only *biological* controls when control is necessary.

7. Implement companion planting for greater plant health.
8. Provide habitat for predators.

## Peppering for Weed, Insect and Animal Pests

### Weeds:

Collect ripe seed heads from the weed. If the weed covers a large area of land, take samplings from different places. Dry for a few days, then burn in a hot wood fire. Full moon seems to be a popular time for burning. The resulting ash is then scattered over the weed infested ground, if possible before the next germination takes place. The ash may be diluted with lime or rock dust or anything else which may be being spread at the same time. One kilogram of ash will do approximately 100 acres. In order to help bulk out the ash, some of the whole plants, roots and all, can be added to the fire.

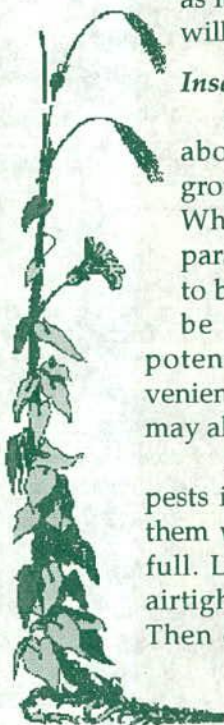
The ash may also be potentised, i.e. made into a homoeopathic potency and diluted with water for spraying on. In this case very little seed is required and the fire need only be small as long as it is hot. The method of potentising will follow later in this section.

### Insect Pests:

Collect the insects, burn them as above and scatter the ash over the ground. They can also be potentised. When treating animals for internal parasites, the ground not only needs to be treated, but the animals need to be drenched. In this case the potentised solution is the most convenient to use. For fly strike, the animal may also need to be sprayed externally.

Another method to control insect pests is to collect 20 or 30 and to blend them with luke warm water, say 2 cups full. Leave this brew, covered but not airtight, in a warm place for 48 hours. Then dilute by stirring into 4 litres of water and spray on infested plants or animals.

A drench that can be used to help control internal parasites in animals, is a mixture of half juiced up garlic and half apple cider vinegar. To this may be added other herbs either as a strong tea, fluid extract or tincture (as described under "potentisation"). Black walnut, sage, chamomile, thyme and tansy are all good, but tansy causes abortions. Empty out the





animals overnight and give 5 mls per small animal and 20 mls per large one. Keep off food for a further 4 hours.

Control of cattle ticks has been effected with a homoeopathic potentisation of 30c, made from the ticks themselves. Cattle are drenched daily for two weeks and after this, once a week.

Dips and sprays to help control external parasites can be made from ordinary tea, miro, pennyroyal, black alder bark, thyme and black walnut.

#### **Animal pests:**

First, catch your animal. Skin it and when the planet Venus is in the constellation of Scorpio, burn skins in a hot fire (or the whole animal - preferably a sexually mature male). It seems that whereas the moon affects plants, Venus affects animals and Scorpio is the constellation that rules the reproductory ability. Spread the ash, or potentise and spray around.

The effect usually lasts for about six months. As Venus is in Scorpio for only one month out of every year, usually around November or December (*I checked the ephemeris on this, and the period this year is from Sept 13 to Oct 8 - Elle*), ash needs to be kept for another application. If the problem is acute and no ash is available, it is worth trying burning at any time rather than letting the orchard get over run with rats. Astro-Calendars for calculating these times are available from the BDFGAA.

#### **How to make a Homoeopathic Potency**

The first stage for potentisation involves the preparation of a liquid 'mother tincture'. These tinctures are usually prepared by crushing the appropriate substance and steeping it in alcohol for periods of up to three weeks treating it to a vigorous shake every so often. The mixture is then filtered and will keep indefinitely. Basically the alcohol is used only as a preservative to stop the mixture from fermenting. Successful preparations have been made without going through the time consuming period of steeping the substance for any length of time. Here the substance to be potentised is simply finely ground with a mortar and pestle, mixed with a little water and given a vigorous shake to mix it well, then filtered and diluted immediately. All soluble substances such as crushed insects or plants can be treated in this way, using either alcohol or water. Usually the insects or plant seeds are burnt to an ash first, finely ground and then mixed with the liquid. The dilutions, or potencies as they are commonly called, are then made from the mother tincture using either the

centesimal scale or the decimal scale.

The first potency on the decimal scale, 1D (also known as 1x) is made by adding one part of the mother tincture to 9 parts of alcohol or water.

The mixture is then succussed, that is shaken vigorously, and is then left for a minute to rest.

The second potency, 2D, is made by adding one part of the first potency to 9 parts of fresh alcohol or water, which is then succussed and rested in its turn.

The same bottle can be used. And so they go on, until the desired potency is reached. The centesimal potencies, 1c, 2c, 3c etc., are made in the same way, only taking one part of the mother tincture and mixing it with 99 parts of liquid.

One very simple way of making a potency is to fill a bottle with the mother tincture, shake well and then to pour it all out. There will always be a certain amount left in the bottle clinging to the glass. Now fill the same bottle up with water or alcohol, shake vigorously again and you have the first potency. If more are needed, just keep on repeating the process.

To use these potencies, one or two drops are taken from the desired potency and put into an appropriate amount of water, whether one tablespoon or 100 gallons, however it is to be used. This final dilution does not constitute another potency. The mother tincture may be used as well as the first mixture containing the ash before it is filtered to make further potencies from.

The potencies used so far in Bio-Dynamics on animal and weed pests have been mostly in the strengths of 6D and 8D, but a great deal more experimentation needs to be done yet to find the best ones. Maria Thun from Germany has suggested that different plants may respond better to some potencies than others. The same may be inferred for insects. A 6c potency has also worked well on thistles.

Insoluble substances may be mixed with sugar of milk (lactose) in order to obtain the potencies. One part of the mineral is added to 9 (or 99) parts of lactose and then finely ground to make the first potency and the process is repeated. This process is called trituration, and the desired potency is easily added to ointments and creams for final use. After the third potency, however, it is possible to transfer the dilution process to alcohol or finish it off as the mineral should have become soluble by that time.

Liquid potencies using alcohol appear to have an indefinite shelf life. In order to conserve alcohol when making the potencies, water may be used for all the in between dilutions and the



*Remember: to have a valid organic certification .....*



alcohol reserved just for the one, or ones to be kept. It is most important to shake a liquid potency before use to reactivate if it has been sitting for a while, or it will not work. Store all remedies in a cool dark cupboard, away from essential oils.

Theories as to how potencies work are all speculative, however the most reasonable explanation seems to rest with energy fields such as electro-magnetism. At the moment it seems we have to be content with the fact that they work.

*Reprinted, with permission, from the Bio-Dynamic Resource Manual, compiled by Alan Johnstone, BDFGAA, P O Box 54, Bellingen 2454*

### AROMATHERAPY FOR ANXIETY RELIEF

I found the following article in one of the many mags which How presented me with on his return from the healthfood fair in LA a couple of months ago. I'm slowly working my way through them and found the following useful little article in the *Alternative Medicine Digest*, issue 15. Not that we, organic herb growers, have anything to be anxious about of course, what with the constant perfect weather, excellent harvesting conditions and absence of pests.... ha! If only ....  
Anyway, here goes:

Chronic anxiety can contribute to many health problems, but aromatherapy has a quick and simple method for reducing it, according to aromatherapist Valery Ann Worwood in her new guide, *The Fragrant Mind*. Aromatherapy works with the essential oils of plants, prepared in any of the following ways, says Worwood: blend with 30 ml of base oil to make a massage oil; add to bath water; gently heat in a room diffuser; or inhale from a tissue.

\* **Tense Anxiety** - symptoms include bodily tension, muscle pains, aches and a generalised soreness. Mix clary sage (10 drops), lavender (15 drops) and Roman chamomile (5 drops).

\* **Restless Anxiety** - here one feels dizzy, sweaty, overactive with palpitations, the sense of a lump in the throat, frequent urination, diarrhea or upset stomach. Mix vetiver (5 drops), juniper (10 drops) and cedarwood (15 drops).

\* **Apprehensive Anxiety** - symptoms generally include worrying, brooding, unease, a sense of foreboding, even paranoia. For relief of this emotional state, try mixing bergamot (15 drops), lavender (5 drops) and geranium (10 drops).

\* **Repressed Anxiety** - This variant of anxiety involves feeling on edge, concentration difficulties, irritability, insomnia or a sense of chronic exhaustion. Mix a blend of neroli (10 drops), rose otto (10 drops) and bergamot (10 drops).

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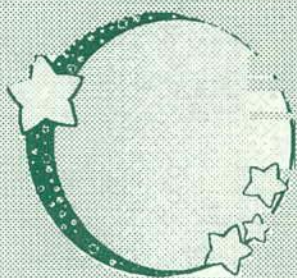
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# GARDENING BY THE MOON

by  
Elle Fikke-Rubin



## JULY

**14-19** All this week, but especially Monday and Tuesday when the Moon's in the fertile watery sign of Scorpio, is good for planting or sowing seedbearing annuals and flowers. Broad beans, peas, coriander, dill, anise, tomatoes etc, whatever your climate allows. In winter the best mulching material is compost if you have it, as hay or straw may keep the soil too cold.

Watering should only be done in the morning now, and sparsely, especially if you're in a frost-prone area.

### **20 Full Moon.**

**21-26** A week to plant deciduous fruit trees and bushes, also most natives, most herbs, and rootcrops such as potatoes, carrots, onions, parsnips, salsify, rhubarb and asparagus crowns. This is also a good month to start off mushrooms. I once bought bags of spent mushroom medium to use as a mulch. It was great stuff, broke down beautifully and, best of all, gave us months and months of very tasty oyster mushrooms.

### **27 Last Quarter.**

**28-31** Time to look after the compost heap, the worm farm, the mulch and other important jobs that'll keep your plot healthy. Roses can be pruned, as well as stone fruits, and sprayed with white oil or lime-sulphur against fungi and the dreaded leaf curl.

## AUGUST

**1-2** Two more days for those essential jobs that keep your garden looking good and producing. This really is a good time to take stock of your compost heap or, if you don't have one yet, to start one. There is so much said and written about compost heaps these days, that I don't have to write too much about it. But I'd like to give you some info on animal manures, as these are great additions to any compost heap. It shouldn't be too difficult to find fresh manures once you put your mind to it. They are great sources of organic matter and nutrients for your soil, but

they do need composting down. This is to break down any questionable substances they may contain, and also because fresh manure would burn your plants. It may also be possible to buy dried manures, some nurseries and garden stores sell them. The dried form contains lots more nutrients. Dried cattle manure is quite high in nitrogen, while quite low in its fresh form. Poultry manure has an out of proportion ration of nitrogen (for leaf growth) to the other important elements phosphorus (for root growth) and potassium (for fruit and flowers). These make up the famous NPK. So it follows that poultry manure is good for green leafy veges, but not so good for cauliflowers or other fruiting ones. Cow manure really is quite a balanced manure, and should not be too hard to get hold of.

If you find it impossible to obtain animal manures, you have a very good other option in comfrey. It is a truly wonderful plant and if you're an organic gardener, or aiming to be one, you simply must grow comfrey. You can use the leaves to heat up the compost heap by burying them in it, here and there; you can use them as a mulch on your beds; or you can turn them into a liquid manure, great stuff for all your plants, but extremely smelly. After soaking shredded leaves in water for two weeks the liquid stinks like a cesspit! An amazing transformation, but your plants and soil will love the stuff.

### **3 New Moon.**

**4-10** Days to plant leafy annuals: lettuces, cabbages, dill, basil if not too cold.

### **11 First Quarter.**

**12-17** Time for seedbearing and flowering annuals: zucchini's, peas and beans, cauli's, sweet corn, cucumbers, capsicums etc. You could sow or plant sunflowers, marigolds, petunias and other flowers.

### **18 Full Moon.**

**19-24** Days to sow or plant perennials (most herbs, shrubs, trees) and rootcrops. Now most rootcrops don't like a freshly fertilised soil, although they like a fertile soil. So add good





compost to the bed. But how to achieve this if you don't have that compost just yet? You can accommodate your rootcrops, although not immediately, by preparing a bed about a month in advance. Dig it over, add some Organic Life, blood and bone or lots of comfrey leaves, some dolomite as well, cover it with newspaper and hay or straw. Water this bed every other day. After a month or so it should be ready to plant your rootcrops into it. If you're into echinacea growing, this would be a good time to start your seeds.

#### **25 Last Quarter.**

**26-31** Days for gardening jobs other than planting and sowing. It happens sometimes that your soil looks really good but plants still will not thrive. It could be due to a too low or too high pH. Most plants like a pH of around 7, which is neutral. Below 7 is acidic, above alkaline. You can determine the pH in your garden beds with an easy to obtain pH tester. Unfortunately some plants are quite fussy. If, for instance, your basil is a continual failure, that could be due to the fact that it wants a slightly acidic soil. That's a real bummer too, because a lot of us herb growers strive continuously to upgrade our soil, and here's a crop that wants acidity (5.5-6.5). What to do? One recommended remedy is Flowers of Sulphur; or there's peat that can be forked into your bed. It's not very environmentally aware to use it, but if it'll give you good basil at least it's put to good use. Dried blood, which is full of nitrogen which it releases quite quickly into the soil (good for basil), actually acidifies your soil too. So if you have an abattoir in the area, knock on their door and give blood a go.

### **SEPTEMBER**

**1-2** Two more days for cleaning, compost turning, planning your next move in the garden.

**3-9** Spring, and planting and sowing becomes serious now. Get in your green vegies, basil, coriander, dill and other annuals.

#### **10 First Quarter.**

**11-16** Time to plant and sow annual flowers, such as chamomile, calendulas, tagetes, nasturtiums, poppies, petunias and whatever else you fancy. Also flowering and seed bearing annual vegetables like beans, peas, capsicums, cucumbers, zucchini's, tomatoes, squashes etc.

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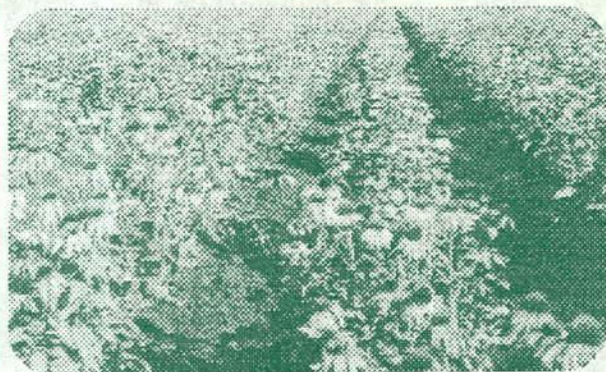
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## ***Cows with guns bring horses with holsters***

A FEW weeks ago, the matter of horses was again on my mind. I rarely ride now. But I was about to wander up for a weekend at the Warwick polocrosse carvinal — which brings together some of Australia's best horses.

Plus, we had been discussing the idea of running a few horses to keep down our record fallow pasture crop. (Read: *'overgrown grass after destocking for rejuvenation'*.) Cattle are out for the time being. They have no respect for young cabinet timber trees!

So, it was with horses on my mind that I dropped off to sleep. But my dreams turned to nightmares which — with apologies to "Cows With Guns" — went something like this:

### **Horses in Clover**

Big and bulky, in harness or trace  
Small and dainty, in costume or lace  
Down through the ages, the horses have toiled  
No wages, no pension — end up being boiled!

### **Horses in Chains**

Great unicorns, Phar Lap and Pegasus' wings  
"The donkey got Jesus but we carried Kings."  
Godiva, Revere and St Joan they could boast  
Or Lancelot shining dressed up for a joust

### **Horses in Drag**

A mare in the mob said: "Enough is enough  
"My foal has no future. I'm sick of this stuff!"  
She rallied the stallions and lobbied the mob  
Then horses all over, trotted off from their job

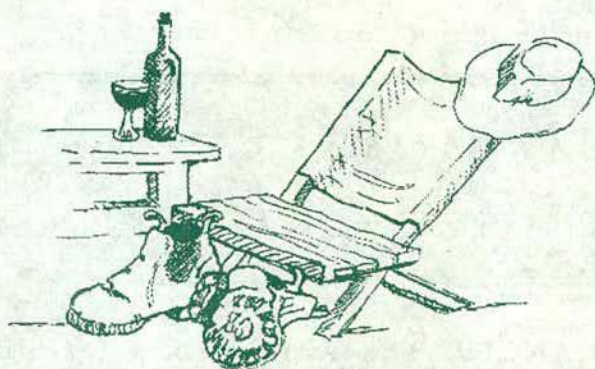
### **Horses on Strike**

Races were off, they'd got the wrong horse  
The bookies wrote ballads for punters remorse  
The Melbourne Cup winner refused to agree  
So they spiked up its oats with Caddie's Coffee

### **Horses on Speed**

Kelpies and corgies, who nipped at their heels  
Were gathered in packs, and hounded to fields  
They were put in a circle surrounded by logs  
Which the horses lit up for a feast of hot dogs

### **Hors d'oeuvres**



## **THE LIFE OF RILEY**

The Hun needed horses, Marco rode far  
Caesar, Napoleon used horses to star  
"But Wills, old mate, this Burke bloke's mad.  
"Exploring is dreary. It's just another fad."

### **Good Horse Sense**

So they lightened their load, of egos in saddles  
Left riders up creeks, without any paddles  
Chargers took charge so geldings locked horns  
Ripped up the roads and pooped on the lawns

### **Much Horse Power**

They galloped together to plan a campaign  
Green horses in action. "No dozers, no planes"  
Hobby horse bands from Franklin to Gove  
Let hills ring out with "Let the Snowy flow!"

### **Horses for Causes**

Knackeries burning, the muster soon grew  
Canberra was stabled with rocking horse poo  
But ASIO's gift horse was looked in the mouth  
Counter-attack came with tanks from the south  
The leading horse faltered  
But then over the claxons  
Came a roar on the ring road  
Of dolphins in Datsuns

We will fight for equine freedom  
And let our wild manes fly  
We will cash in all our super and  
Retire. Retire. Retire!!

### **Horses in Clover**

- Kenrick Riley





## Natural Cures for Cancer

**CANCER.** The word strikes fear in people's hearts. Why are we so afraid? Well, anyone who has watched a loved one or a friend die of this disease, knows the pain and hardship cancer patients endure, not to mention the incredible expense of cancer treatment. The fact that modern medicine offers no real cure doesn't help either.

Each year scientists try to soothe our worries, telling us they are closer to a cure, but is it really so? The fact is, that while heart disease is on the decline in this country, cancer rates are on the increase. Statistics showing higher rates of "cure" are skewed by the fact that doctors will list complications caused by cancer treatments as the cause of death, rather than the cancer itself. Survival statistics, which measure how long a person lives after having cancer, are also skewed because medical science is detecting cancer at earlier stages. So, the fact is, that while more people are getting cancer, rates of cure and survival have not improved significantly in spite of all the research being done.

Chances are pretty good that you know someone who died from cancer or who currently has the disease. This is because one out of three Americans will have cancer during their lifetimes. One out of five will die from it. Some scientists feel that the reason we aren't making progress with cancer is because we are "barking up the wrong tree" with our research. Medical research focuses on better ways to kill cancer cells using chemotherapy drugs, radiation and surgery. Unfortunately, all of these methods have serious side-effects.

There is another approach, although it is currently very controversial. That approach is to strengthen the body's own immune system and let the body destroy the cancer cells. Personal experiences abound, attesting to the efficacy of this approach, but mainstream medicine tends to ignore these individual stories because they are anecdotal. In this issue we'll examine some of the natural methods of dealing with cancer. Be warned however, that we are providing this information for educational purposes only. If you have cancer, you need to study the alternatives for

yourself and make your own informed decision about what kinds of therapies you want to use.

### What is Cancer?

To build an effective treatment for any disease, we must first understand it. Cancer cells are being produced in our bodies all the time. Free radical damage (from air and water pollution and other irritations to the body) causes cells to mutate into cancerous forms. In healthy people, the immune system recognises that these cells have mutated and destroys them. The difference between someone who is experiencing cancer and someone who is not, is the difference in their general health. Cancer is a rundown condition of the entire body. The immune system, in particular, is compromised and is no longer able to recognise and/or destroy cancer cells. Thus, cancer cells are allowed to multiply without check.

These mutated cells grow very rapidly and consume the nutrients needed by the rest of the body. They also obstruct healthy tissues, further weakening the body. They are like parasites which sap the strength of their host until the host is destroyed.

As we mentioned previously, medical doctors focus their therapy on destroying the cancer cells. Ironically, all of the methods they use, further deplete the immune system. Chemotherapy drugs, for example, are designed to destroy fast growing cells. Unfortunately, the cells in the hair roots, the cells that line the stomach and intestines, and the white blood cells are also fast growing cells. This is why people on chemotherapy often lose their hair and are unable to digest food.

Radiation is also used to destroy cancer. However, radiation produces free radicals, the very chemicals which create cancer cells in the first place. Radiation also depletes the immune system. Surgery, while it may be unavoidable at times, not only weakens the body, it also tends to cause cancer cells to spread. Before the advent of chemotherapy and radiation treatments, doctors were reluctant to operate on cancers for this very reason.

The key to natural therapies for cancer is not to focus on destroying cancer cells, but to focus on rebuilding the overall health of the individual. Several factors may be involved. First, there is usually a need to "cleanse" the body. Many researchers believe that our high rates of cancer are directly linked to environmental pollution and free radical damage. Perhaps this is why nearly all of the herbal remedies which have been traditionally used for cancer are "blood purifiers," herbs which help the liver and kidneys filter pollutants from the body.

Some natural healers have linked cancer with a





lack of enzymes in the body. This may be largely due to the amount of heavily cooked and processed food we consume. Raw foods and plant enzymes (such as those found in Protease Plus) should be strongly considered. Of course, it is essential to pay close attention to overall nutrition.

Electromagnetic pollution may also be contributing to our high rates of cancer. It is important therefore to avoid long term exposure to electrical equipment including microwave ovens, computers, cellular telephones etc.

Finally, emotional healing is critical. A common factor in most people who are "cured" from cancer, whether they use conventional or alternative remedies, is that they have strong reasons to live. It is well-documented that love, joy, laughter and other positive emotions enhance the immune response, while hate, sadness, fear and worry depress the immune system. It may be difficult to hold onto a positive attitude when you've been told you have cancer but keep this in mind - none of us really know how long we have to live, so don't listen to projected survival rates or pronouncements of how long you have to live. Look at the things you wish to do with your life and start doing them. Live each day and enjoy it.

We cannot provide enough information here to guide you in your cancer therapy. The most we can do is make you aware of options. You should seek out competent assistance, medical or otherwise, to guide you in your search for answers. We highly recommend you get some good books on natural therapy for cancer, listen to your doctor and then choose the therapy you feel comfortable with.

Here are some herbal remedies which have been used historically to treat cancer.

#### ***Cat's Claw:***

This long vine from Peru has been researched and proven to have many cancer treating properties. Cat's Claw contains alkaloids that enhance the immune system, especially the ability of the macrophages and white blood cells to identify and destroy cancer cells. Quinovic acid glycosides in Cat's claw bring some protection from pain.

#### ***Essiac -Tea:***

Essiac was brought to the public eye by a nurse, Rene Caisse. She learned the cancer curing herbal combination from a woman she was treating in a hospital who learned it from an Ojibway medicine man. The woman had taken Essiac and after only 30 days was cured.

Rene began giving the combination to thousands of people with great success. After taking Essiac, people found relief from pain, increased appetite, improved sleep, improved

energy, and decreased depression, anxiety, and fear. Unfortunately, great persecution followed Rene and her healing because she had no definite scientific experiments to prove the effectiveness of Essiac.

Since that time, many experiments have been done on Essiac, still with no definite results. They have studied and interviewed thousands of people and found that patients diagnosed with terminal and non-curable cancer have taken Essiac and lived long lives.

Essiac contains burdock root, sheep sorrel herb, turkey rhubarb root and slippery elm bark.

#### ***Chaparral:***

The leaves of this strong smelling, tangle-branched shrub were originally used by the Indians for healing many problems.

It came into fame as a cancer cure in 1967 when an 87 year old man healed a large cancer growth on his face by drinking two cups of chaparral tea a day for three months. The report spread and many studies began on chaparral. Studies found that the smelly resin which covers the leaves of chaparral contains NDGA, a very strong antioxidant (antioxidants protect against free radicals which produce cancer cells).

Chaparral is also useful in purifying the blood and the lymph and boosting the immune response. Many doctors feel that Chaparral will treat malignant melanoma. Researchers say that Chaparral will reduce tumors in some people, but it is not a cure and does not help all people. When taking Chaparral it is important to only take small amounts. Use it with other cancer curing herbs. It combines well with Red clover.

#### ***Burdock:***

Besides being extremely nutritive (12% protein, 70% carbohydrates) Burdock is an alterative which builds and cleanses the blood.

This common weed has an active constituent, arctigenin, which has been shown to inhibit tumors in experiments. Research has also shown that Burdock decreases mutations in cells exposed to mutagens. It can be used externally and internally in cancer treatment.

#### ***Pau d'Arco:***

This herb comes from the purple inner bark of an evergreen tree that grows in Argentina and Brazil. Studies done on mice in the 1970's show that Pau d'arco's active ingredient lapachol aids in the treatment of lymphocytic leukemia.

#### ***Red Clover:***

The red flowers from this clover plant are excellent in salves for external cancer. They work to purify the blood and stimulate the liver. Red clover is an excellent aid for the immune system.

#### ***Red Clover Blend:***

This combination contains Red clover, Burdock





and spices. It helps to purify the blood and to stimulate the immune system.

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## What Ayurveda says about cancer

In Ayurveda cancer is a disease that often involves all three humors (doshas), though it typically starts with a predominance of one. The digestive fire is low, allowing a build-up of toxic substances. The cancer represents a negative life-energy, something like a parasite, which has become established in the body. Cancer cells, lacking oxygen, represent a growth in the body outside the rule of the life-force.

Cancer has many causes, including our toxic environment, devitalised foods, sedentary life-style and lack of spiritual purpose or effort in life. Its basis often is suppressed emotion or emotional stagnation, which causes accumulation of toxic material and excess humors. In older Western medicine it was seen as a disease of melancholy or black bile, which also translates as suppressed emotions. Hence, physical remedial measures are usually not enough to restore health.

In the Vedic system cancer is viewed as a psychic disorder, a disruption in the aura allowing the entrance of a negative astral force. Emotional cleansing, mantra and meditation are important to counter this.

### *Spiritual Therapies*

**Gem therapy** is helpful; gems are able to balance the aura and protect the life. Blue sapphire set in gold is the best gem for antitumor properties. It helps ward off the negative force invading the body and should be used with other stones which increase the positive life-force. Diamond, yellow sapphire, and yellow topaz are the best stones for increasing Ojas, the energy of the immune system. Ruby, garnet or red coral can aid in re-establishing proper circulation, which removes the stagnation behind the tumor. Emeralds and peridot help increase Prana (life-force) and relieve pain and disharmony.

**Mantra therapy** is excellent for cancer. Simple chanting of OM is excellent for opening up the aura and clearing the psychic air. The mantra RAM is best to give protection and bring down the Divine healing force. HUM is effective for casting

out negative life-energies.

**Breathing exercises** are important to increase the positive life-force; in the sun for Kapha, under the moon for Pitta, alternating for Vata.

### *Herbal and Dietary Treatment*

**1. Powerful alterative or blood-cleansing herbs.** These herbs destroy toxins, counter poisons and reduce infections: red clover, dandelion, self-heal, stillingia, burdock, sarsaparilla, indian sarsaparilla and Chinese oldenlandia. These herbs are better if used fresh and will go well with a detoxifying diet. Dosages of one to three ounces daily may be required; they are particularly useful for lymphatic or skin cancer.

**2. Strong circulatory stimulants or blood-moving herbs.** They promote circulation, break stagnation, reduce masses and aid in the healing of tissues. They include turmeric, saffron, safflower, myrrh, madder, salvia and spargania. These are particularly good for breast or uterine cancer, liver or pancreas cancer. Dosages need not be that high.

**3. Immune strengthening tonics.** These include famous Chinese herbs such as ginseng, astragalus, schizandra and ligustrum, and western herbs such as American ginseng, comfrey root and solomon's seal. Dosages need to be high, an ounce per day or more. They help in debility conditions and to protect the strength of the patient undergoing stronger therapies (surgical, chemotherapy).

**4. Special expectorant or phlegm-dispelling herbs.** These include kelp, seaweed, Irish moss and the chinese herb fritillary. These herbs are mostly for thyroid, neck or lymphatic cancer but can be useful for other types too.

In addition many strongly bitter or pungent herbs, with their fat reducing and toxin destroying properties, can be useful. These include golden seal, coptis, aloe and cayenne, black pepper, calamus and prickly ash.

**Meat and dairy products should be strictly avoided**, as well as too much protein (the cancer cell itself is pure protein). However, a small amount of protein should be taken to ensure the secretion of enzymes to help digestion. The diet should emphasise raw vegetables and juices such as wheat grass, barley grass, celery and dandelion, alfalfa and sunflower sprouts as long as the patient has strength. Raw green juices are full of Prana and help cleanse out any negative life energy. These naturally cold vegetables should be balanced with spices like ginger and garlic to protect the digestive fire.

*Ayurvedic excerpts from the book Ayurvedic Healing by Dr. David Frawley OMD, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, Delhi.*





## PUZZLE CORNER

This is another start (hopefully not a false one this time) of our feedback and problem corner, suggested this time by Jennifer (see 'letters'). Send your contributions (on time, I beg you) to:

OHGA Puzzle Corner,  
P O Box 6171, South Lismore 2480,  
or phoned/faxed to the editor on  
066 - 291057.

### Jennifer's problem:

What can I do about the native bush rats that have moved into my herb patch and are eating the marshmallow roots??

*I know that rabbits are scared off by blood and bone.  
Could possibly work on the rats or have you tried that?*  
-Elle

### LAVENDER CHEMICAL A POSSIBLE CANCER TREATMENT

I'm sure most of you will have at least one lavender bush growing. It's one of the most loved of all herbs. Its name means "to wash" in Latin, because it was very much in use in soaps in the old days. The ancients also used it in teas after meals as a stomach soother. European farmers of the Middle Ages wove sprigs into their hair to prevent head-aches and sun stroke.

Seventy five years ago, French fragrance chemist René-Maurice Gattefossé stumbled on aromatherapy when he burned his hand in a laboratory accident and found instant relief by plunging it into a container of lavender oil.

Today, according to the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, a chemical derived from lavender is under investigation as a possible treatment for breast, prostate and ovarian cancer. Lavender oil contains perillyl alcohol. In animal experiments at the University of Wisconsin, this substance showed remarkable activity against breast cancer. When animals treated with the lavender derivative were exposed to chemicals that cause mammary tumors, very few developed them. And when animals with advanced mammary tumors were treated with perillyl alcohol, many experienced substantial regression. Recently, the National Cancer Institute approved a test of perillyl alcohol in a small number of people with advanced breast, ovarian or prostate cancers that had not responded to standard therapies. Who knows? One day maybe we'll be washing cancer away with lavender.

- The Herb Quarterly, USA, Spring 1997

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# THIS AND THAT

## GROUPS STOP CALTRANS HERBICIDE SPRAYING

California's transportation agency, Caltrans, manages 230,000 acres of roadsides situated along 15,000 miles of state highways. The agency spends \$30 million each year maintaining roadside vegetation, most of it on the application of weed-killing herbicides. Rural grassroots activists recently prevailed against this colossal agency in their long fight to stop pesticide applications on public highways. Eight hundred miles of California highways are now herbicide-free.

Communities in the rural northwest corner of California scored a big win in their quarter-century battle for herbicide-free public roads when Caltrans announced in March 1997 that it would halt spraying on highways in the region at the behest of local governments.

Residents of the rugged, sparsely populated north coast of California have mobilised against spraying of herbicides -- initially 2,4-D and simazine, more recently Roundup and diuron -- on roadsides since 1972. Most counties and cities in the area gave up herbicides for roadside weed control during the 1980's in response to intense pressure from local opponents. But Caltrans persisted until 1989 when Californians for Alternatives to Toxics (CATs) -- a clearinghouse for community anti-toxic groups scattered throughout northern California -- organized 23 groups in 14 counties to sue under state environmental law. To avoid litigation, Caltrans agreed to halt spraying in the district while it wrote an environmental report.

Six years later, District 1 resumed full-scale spraying and the reaction was intense. Within a year, several vocal grassroots groups sprang up. Neighbors Against Herbicides, Poison Free, Toxic Outcry and others joined forces with established organisations Center for Ethics and Toxics, Lake County HEAL, Mendocino Environmental Center and Friends of Del Norte. CATs was a resource for information, networking and regional strategy.

By early 1997 rallies were occurring somewhere almost weekly, and more than 4,000 people had signed petitions. Protests escalated dramatically in the month preceding Caltrans' policy reversal. Several well-attended rallies were held at sites located hundreds of miles apart, then the arrest of four protesters who blocked a spray truck galvanised resisters region wide; many vowed to do the same. The actions helped generate high-profile media coverage. Representatives to the state

legislature took a strong position in defense of local determination.

Caltrans submitted this time when it realized that the issue transcended traditional community divisions and had gained broad support. Opponents included Indian tribes (one demanded an end to spraying on reservation highways), loggers, parents of schoolchildren, tourism promoters, rural mail deliverers, farmers, disabled and immune-compromised people, health practitioners and thousands of others who rarely, if ever, consider themselves hard-core environmentalists.

In its long-awaited environmental report which was published in 1992, Caltrans proposed a snail-paced schedule of a 50% reduction in herbicide use by the year 2000 and an 80% reduction by 2012. The agency claims to have reduced its use of herbicides by 34% statewide since then, mainly by narrowing the width of the area defoliated on highway shoulders.

Although Caltrans' local determination policy is currently limited to northwestern California, it could have broad implications for anti-toxics activists in other areas of the state.

- Pesticide Action Network North America (PANNA)

## ORGANIC REWARD

Farmers around the German city of Munich are being encouraged to convert to organic methods to maintain the city's high drinking water standards. About 80% of the city's water comes from the Mangfall Valley and as an incentive to convert, farmers in the area are being paid DM550 (about \$500) /ha per year by the Munich Dept of Works. So far a total of 16,000 ha has been converted - about 70% of the catchment.

- Acres Australia, 4/4

## ORGANIC McDONALD'S

All milk used in McDonald's in Sweden - about half a million litres a year - is now certified organic. The fast food chain has also said it is interested in using organic meat in its hamburgers, but at present there is not enough organic product to satisfy demand.

- Acres Australia, 4/4

## CHEAPER ORGANICS

Major British supermarket chain Tesco has radically reduced the prices of its organic fruit and vegetables, bringing them down to the level of conventionally produced food. Public awareness of organic foods is at an all-time high in Britain, due to the mad cow disease and media reports on food sa-





fety and intensive farming methods. Tesco aims to develop the market by boosting demand, hoping this will accelerate domestic volume production. In 1996 only .3% of the farmland was certified as organic and the rate of conversion was one of the lowest in Europe.

- Acres Australia, 4/4

### ORGANICS IN HOLLAND

The Netherlands government has launched a multi-million dollar, four-year project aimed at boosting the Dutch organic food market which has been stagnating since the early 1990s with up to 50% of Dutch organic produce being exported. The government plans to stimulate domestic demand by an extensive advertising campaign to increase awareness of organic foods.

- Acres Australia, 4/4

### MIRACLE HERBAL FISH CURE

More than 300,000 people suffering from respiratory ailments converged on a small tiled house in southern India on a June Sunday to consume a miracle cure of herbs and water suffed inside a live fish, witnesses said.

The Hyderabad Bathini family, which has been giving away the medicine for 152 years, started distributing the cure to patients from 5 am during the auspicious Mrigasira solar phase, which occurs once a year for two days.

For patients to be cured, they must buy a two-inch-long fish, known locally as Murrel, and swallow it live after the Bathinis stuff their secret herbal mixture inside its mouth.

People who have consumed it say the fish helps clear the patient's food pipe as it makes its way down to the stomach, and later releases the medicine. It survives for about 15 minutes inside the body, clearing accumulated phlegm as it flaps about.

Legend has it that a saint gave the wonder cure in 1845 to Bathine Vee-ranna Goud, a farmer known for his piety and generosity, and asked him to treat all who came to him free of cost.

The Bathinis said they expected some 500,000 patients and had prepared about 40 kg of medicine. Complete treatment requires an annual dosage for three years.

The Indian railways ran three

special trains to carry patients from all over India to Hyderabad. The Andhra Pradesh state fisheries department opened dozens of special counters where patients could buy the Murrel fish for about 5 rupees (20 c.) each, only the herbal mixture is free.

Syed Amin Jafri - Reuters, June 8.

### US FDA PROPOSES EPHEDRINE CRACKDOWN

After at least 17 deaths and 800 illnesses linked to ephedrine-laced dietary supplements, the US government said that it will crack down on the pills, tablets and teas that promise to help people lose weight, build muscle and feel more energetic.

The Food and Drug Administration plans to dramatically cut the dose of the herbal stimulant that can be put into any dietary supplement, and to ban the marketing of ephedrine-containing products

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as weight-loss or bodybuilding agents.

In addition, many of the supplements would bear warnings that too much of the product can kill, the FDA announced. No one with heart disease, high blood pressure or neurologic disorders should use ephedrine supplements because the amphetamine-like stimulant can cause heart attack, stroke, seizure or death, the FDA said.

But the FDA found case after case of previously healthy young people who were injured after taking ephedrine supplements, so it proposed new regulations Monday that would affect how dozens of brands are manufactured and marketed.

The FDA didn't go as far as Florida and New York, which banned ephedrine supplements after pills with such names as Herbal Ecstasy and Ultimate Xphoria promised a "natural high". The bans came when a 20-year old college student died after taking Ultimate Xphoria last year.

The FDA already had moved to stop companies from promoting supplements as alternatives to illegal drugs. But Monday's proposals cover traditional dietary supplements sold in health-food shops, convenience stores and gyms.

Ephedrine also sells under the name Ma huang, Chinese ephedra and epitonin. It is a compound extracted from plants and used for centuries by Chinese practitioners as a medicine.

- Richters Newsletter via email, June.

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book review

## HERBAL HARVEST

*Commercial production of  
quality dried herbs in  
Australia*

by Greg Whitten

Here it is at last, the book that Greg has been working on for five years in his spare time. It's a whopper of a book too, with 555 pages, and those pages are not small!

Several people have asked my opinion on the book, because it's not cheap at \$95. It took me a while to make up my mind (having to look at it in my spare time which may be less than Greg's!), but here it is:

If you want to grow and process herbs for the medicinal market, this is your book. Although it is quite superficial on growing information, and what there is is strictly for the cooler southern climates, it is very good on herbal background and on the processing side of the herb business. Greg comes into his own after growing the herbs. His chapters on harvesting, drying and processing give solid and practical information. And it was about time that this sort of info was collated into one book.

At the back of the book he offers us a 'Harvesting, drying, prices (they're a bit off, but that's understandable), and marketing' chart where he tells us, herb by herb, what part is used, when to harvest it, at what temperature to dry that herb, the yield in m<sup>2</sup> and the price you may expect to get for that herb. I find those pages really handy.

All in all I'm quite impressed by the book. It was a very ambitious undertaking, but it's been well worth Greg's spare time.

If you're strictly a fresh herb market person, you will not find a lot in the book for you. Then again, it might inspire you to value-add your herbs and get into the drying of them. But if you're keen to do something else with your herbs

apart from selling them fresh or making lots of tea, this book will give you enough info to start and get good at it.

The book is published by Agmedia and can be ordered by phoning them on (03) 96517155, and will cost you \$95 plus \$8 p&p.

It will also be available, or perhaps already is, from general bookshops.

- Elle

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cont'd from page 7

To this end the APLC requires the cooperation of concerned bodies, such as the organic farming sector, to provide this information and ensure no chemical contamination of organic produce occurs. The information required by the APLC is listed below:

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| * Property name         | * Property location       |
| * Owner's/leaser's name | * Owner's/leaser's phone  |
| * Owner's/leaser's fax  | * Type of organic produce |

The APLC is prepared to enter a contractual agreement with current owners of the above information, to ensure that this information is for APLC use only as has already occurred with museums in Queensland, NSW, Victoria and SA to give the APLC access to rare and threatened species databases in those states. It would aid the Commission considerably if a similar agreement could be reached with your organisation ensuring the prevention of accidental chemical contamination during future locust control campaigns.

Any enquiries can be directed to myself on (06) 272 5727, or the Environmental Officer, Paul Story on (06) 272 5176. We look forward to a positive response and a constructive solution to this problem. Dr. GHS Hooper, Director.

OHGA has so far done nothing about this, since many members are quite sensitive about us passing their names around. We suggest that everyone living in this locust area who is concerned, contact either one of the above gentlemen themselves.

- Altitudes greater than 500m  
— APLC area boundary

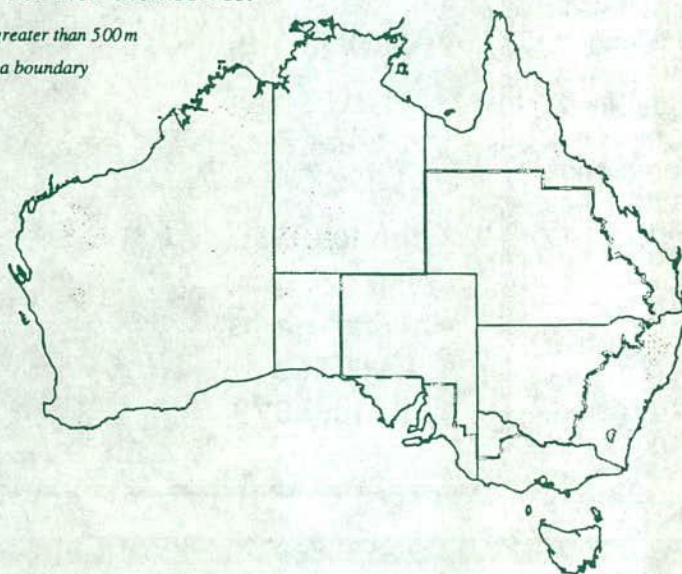
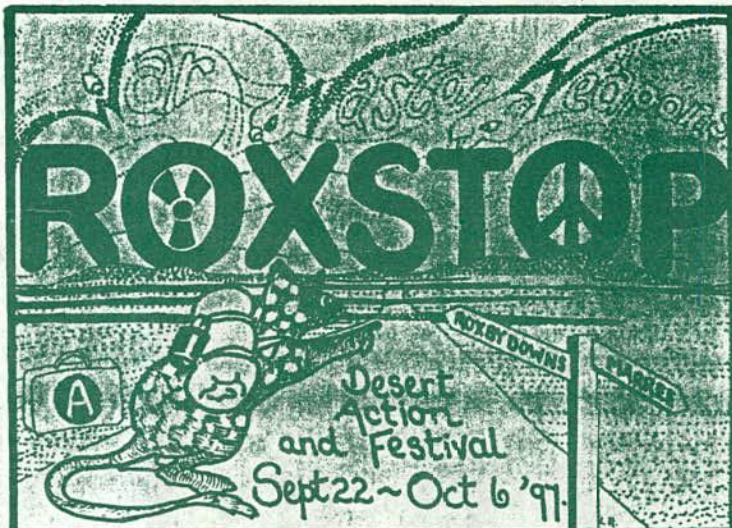


Figure 1. Australian Plague Locust Commission area of responsibility



## DESERT ACTION AND FESTIVAL IN OPPOSITION TO URANIUM MINING

AT ROXBY DOWNS - SEPT 22-OCT 6

There'll be:

- \* a public meeting on workers' health
- \* demonstrations against the mine
- \* a desert music festival in the Lake Eyre South area
- \* a visual art exhibition.

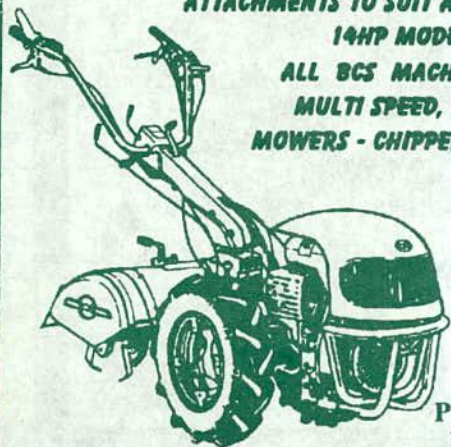
The music festival will be a celebration of the beauty and fragility of this arid region. It will take place 100 kms from the mine within sight of the pipeline which takes water from the artesian basin to WMC's Olympic Dam uranium mine at Roxby Downs.

For more info contact:

Roxby Action Collective, P.O. Box  
222, Fitzroy VIC 3065 - Ph. 03  
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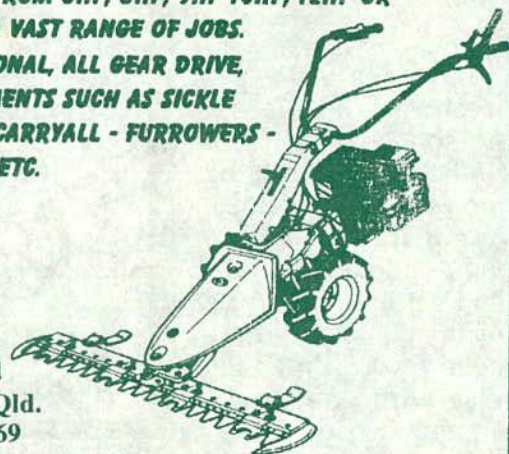
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## Replace Tissues with Echinacea!

by Herbalist, Barbara Hofmann D.H.M. A.T.M.S.

It really isn't surprising that so many diseases start with a runny nose, fever or chest complaint and that people say, "I had a really bad 'flu last winter which lingered on and on and then I came down with this virus."

A cold is often the first sign that the immune system is under-functioning and its chronicity will depend to what degree. Take it as a warning that your body needs help. Bed rest, relaxation and fluids all help - as will Vitamin C and herbs like Echinacea.

Echinacea's immune-stimulating action relates to its ability to increase the activity of certain cells in the body which act like scouts, seeking out foreign invaders before they increase in numbers and then actively destroying them. This is why I emphasise the need to start dosing up on Echinacea just before or in the very early phase of an infection.

How do you know in advance that the immune system is under attack? You may have a history of asthma, sinus or bronchitis attacks at certain months of the year and can therefore start treatment two or three weeks before this time. Perhaps your workmates or family are sneezing and sick with the flu or you are feeling tired, run-down or depressed. Listen to your body, it will tell you.

So if you are intrigued by the possibility of fewer colds and 'flu and wish to avoid the necessity of antibiotics and future disease, consider the simplicity of this natural preventative. Even if you are taking antibiotics for an infection, it is a good idea to take Echinacea at the same time to help counteract and normalise the negative effects of the antibiotics on the immune system.

Remember, you can win the cold war! Apart from taking Echinacea alone, it is also available in combination with Vitamin C, the vitamin renowned for treating respiratory ailments. Locally grown Echinacea-based capsules, liquid extracts, tablets, lozenges, a cough syrup and a gentle Child Formula are available, along with a Chest Rub containing Echinacea and essential oils.

You can write to the Preventative Medicine Society, P O Box 1006, Toowoomba Qld 4350 with questions concerning herbs and your health.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Overseas membership                      | \$ 65     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Application for certification            | \$ 10     |
|                          | (optional)                               |           |
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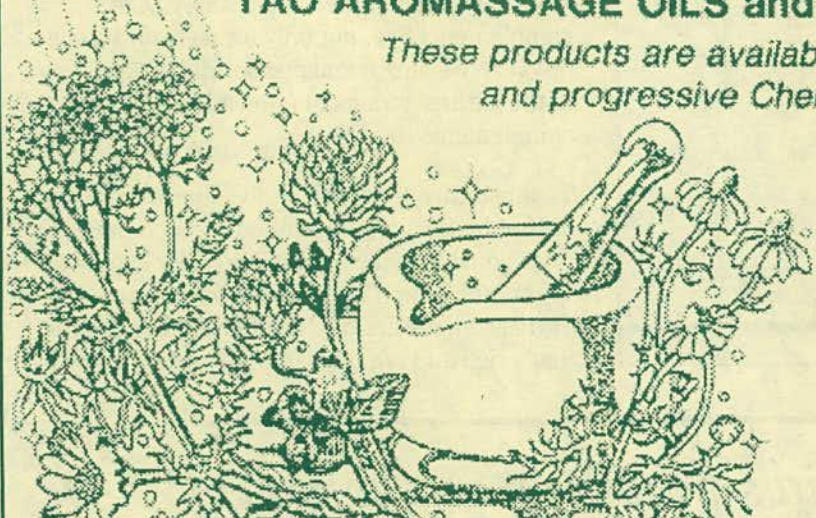
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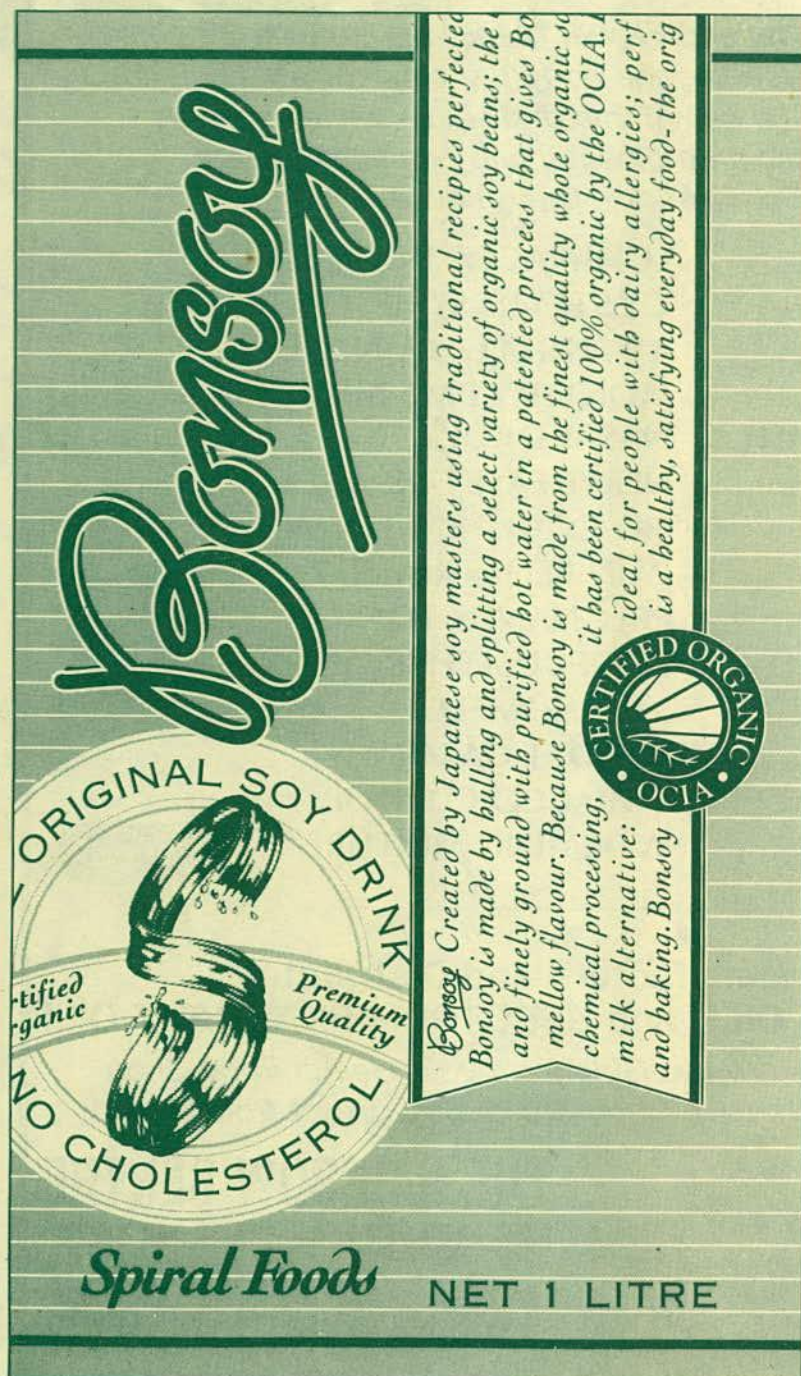
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Being the leader in SOYDRINKS is a hard task BUT we feel we got it right two decades ago when BONSOY was formulated.

World wide Bonsoy is recognised as the forerunner of the modern Soydrinks.

At BONSOY the essence and Nutritional benefits of the Soybean are critical to our product. Our manufacturing process retains this essence and benefit. With claims being made by many companies it appears they want a type of 'Cows Milk' or a 'High this, Low that' Why? With all the recent Soy studies and data being released world wide, on indigenous female peoples that incorporate whole soy products in their diet, we know our Bonsoy recipe is right.

Yes we have made some changes... We are the only CERTIFIED ORGANIC Soydrink in a Box. Not just the Soybeans. A lot can happen to a Soybean after it has been grown. We know exactly what happens to ours every step of the way. Our whole process qualifies for Organic Status.

Our Soybeans are grown in fields in a rotation format. We have selected a special variety of Soybean that's traditionally used in making Soymilk. The water passes through a highly evolved filtration system resulting in a lovely soft water. We use thick rich Malted Barley NOT refined Maltodextrins. Barley Malt complements Soy, not only for taste and colour but also the nutritional profile. Hato Mugi, one of the earliest strains of known Barley, further complements the recipe.

To finish this delicate blend we use an extract of Kombu Sea Veg - Kombu has been used in Traditional Japanese bean recipes for centuries. This combination in the hands of Japanese Soymasters results in a Nutritional Taste delight, that's rich and creamy, smooth and delicate.

**BONSOY, Australia's premium soy company**

*Made from organic soybeans; no gene-beans are used in this product*