

FOOD

ISSUE 20

COUNTRY  
WOMEN

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(From Producer to Consumer:)

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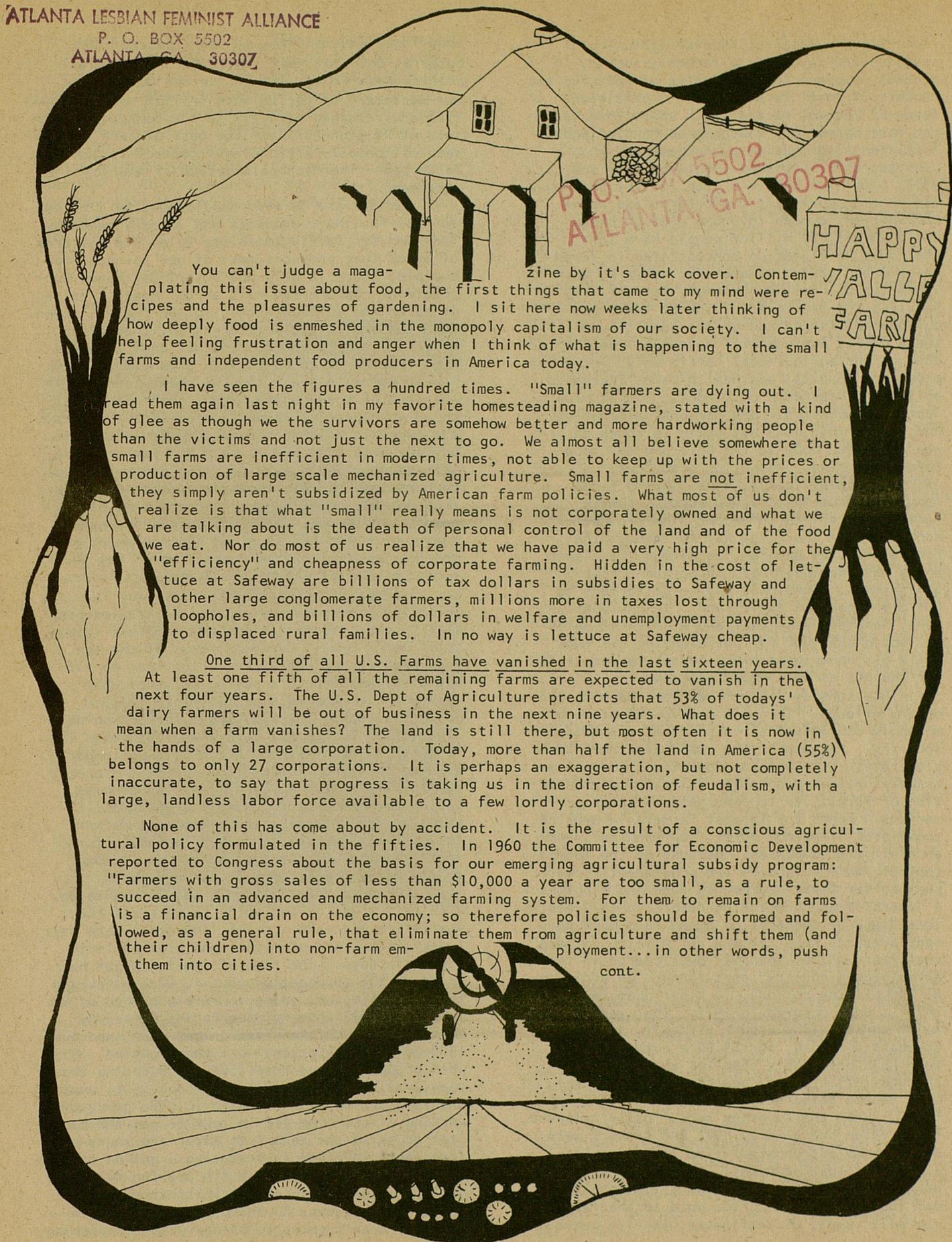
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You can't judge a magazine by its back cover. Contemplating this issue about food, the first things that came to my mind were recipes and the pleasures of gardening. I sit here now weeks later thinking of how deeply food is enmeshed in the monopoly capitalism of our society. I can't help feeling frustration and anger when I think of what is happening to the small farms and independent food producers in America today.

I have seen the figures a hundred times. "Small" farmers are dying out. I read them again last night in my favorite homesteading magazine, stated with a kind of glee as though we the survivors are somehow better and more hardworking people than the victims and not just the next to go. We almost all believe somewhere that small farms are inefficient in modern times, not able to keep up with the prices or production of large scale mechanized agriculture. Small farms are not inefficient, they simply aren't subsidized by American farm policies. What most of us don't realize is that what "small" really means is not corporately owned and what we are talking about is the death of personal control of the land and of the food we eat. Nor do most of us realize that we have paid a very high price for the "efficiency" and cheapness of corporate farming. Hidden in the cost of lettuce at Safeway are billions of tax dollars in subsidies to Safeway and other large conglomerate farmers, millions more in taxes lost through loopholes, and billions of dollars in welfare and unemployment payments to displaced rural families. In no way is lettuce at Safeway cheap.

One third of all U.S. Farms have vanished in the last sixteen years.

At least one fifth of all the remaining farms are expected to vanish in the next four years. The U.S. Dept of Agriculture predicts that 53% of today's dairy farmers will be out of business in the next nine years. What does it mean when a farm vanishes? The land is still there, but most often it is now in the hands of a large corporation. Today, more than half the land in America (55%) belongs to only 27 corporations. It is perhaps an exaggeration, but not completely inaccurate, to say that progress is taking us in the direction of feudalism, with a large, landless labor force available to a few lordly corporations.

None of this has come about by accident. It is the result of a conscious agricultural policy formulated in the fifties. In 1960 the Committee for Economic Development reported to Congress about the basis for our emerging agricultural subsidy program: "Farmers with gross sales of less than \$10,000 a year are too small, as a rule, to succeed in an advanced and mechanized farming system. For them to remain on farms is a financial drain on the economy; so therefore policies should be formed and followed, as a general rule, that eliminate them from agriculture and shift them (and their children) into non-farm employment...in other words, push them into cities.

cont.

"The provision of Federal agricultural services and payments to farmers, should, in general, support this objective of reducing the numbers of small farmers...and 'inefficient' farmers...consolidating their units into larger farm operations that can be handled under 'efficient' agribusiness management."

And they succeeded. Between 1960 and 1970, a million people a year (mostly black and mostly poor) left their farms and rural communities to move to urban areas. Since World War II, 22 million people have left the farms, a migration concentrated in seven major urban areas. These are: Newark, Washington, D.C., Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, and New York. Think of the riots during the sixties and of the condition of these cities and you will have some idea of the cost of our agricultural "efficiency" in relief payments, hospital and health care, increased pollution, breakdown of schools, racial violence, unemployment, and personal alienation. And all of this does not begin to touch on what has been done to the soil and our food through chemical production practices.

How, specifically, have "small" farms (anything from 40 to 2,000 acres: family farms) been driven to become "inefficient" and to fail? The first way is through the federal subsidy program, as already mentioned, which has overwhelmingly supported corporate farmers. Subsidies pay large farmers to not plant part of their land. In one year alone, Senator James Eastland of Mississippi, collected \$250,000 for not planting his farm while his unemployed black tenant farmers left for the cities with empty pockets.

This subsidy program has far reaching secondary effects. The main one is the growing monopoly control of all aspects of the Food Industry. Because of the rapid growth of conglomerates, only a few corporations control most aspects of food production sales, from production of fertilizer to ownership of the supermarkets. Among the largest farmers in America today are: Tenneco, Purex, Dow Chemical, Exxon and Gulf oil companies. Because of the monopoly control, family farmers are consistently overcharged for their equipment, feed and supplies. A Federal Trade Commission report in 1972 states that "lack of competition among farm machinery manufacturers cost farmers 251 million dollars" that year, while "monopoly over charge in the animal-feed industry" cost farmers an additional 200 million dollars. A clear example of how this is done occurred in 1972. That year, six major corporations bought virtually all the soybeans produced, for \$4.00 a bushel. They then held onto their supplies until halfway through 1973. Dairy, poultry and cattle farmers became desperate for soybean-based animal feeds. When the soybeans were finally released, their value had gone up 400% and farmers were hit with an astronomical rise in feed prices. I remember that year well, as I helplessly watched Purina Goat Chow rise from \$5.00 to \$11.00 per 100 pounds. The price paid to the farmer for milk, eggs, or beef never did rise corre-

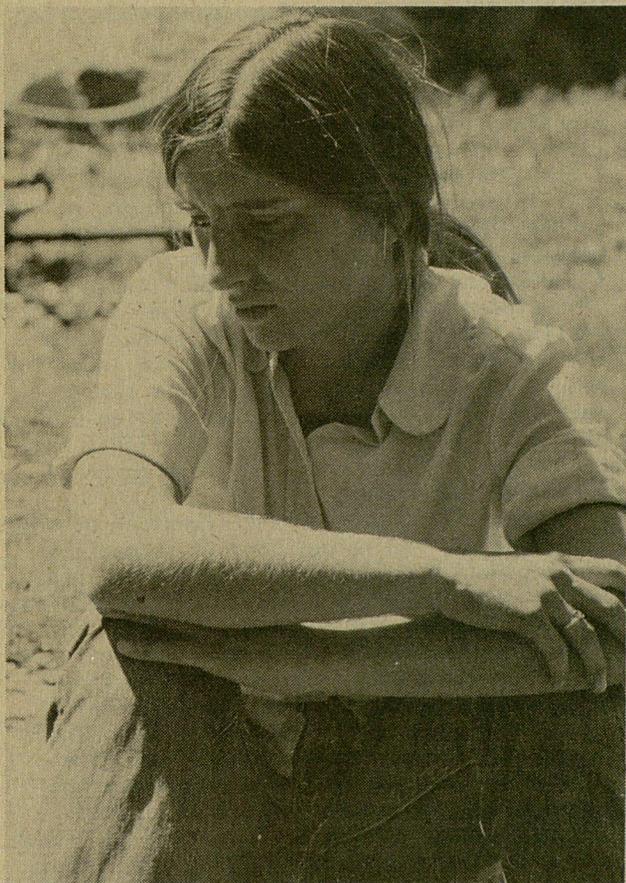
spondingly and many family farms passed into corporations that year, while Purina's overall profits rose 120%. And let us not forget that our Secretary of Agriculture in 1972 came directly from and returned directly to the Board of Directors of Ralston-Purina. The best picture I've seen of monopoly agribusiness control is given in CW #18--"The MacDonalidization of America". I recommend it.

Farmers are further handicapped by limited markets for their products and in many cases by the need for fairly immediate sale. In the area of Texas that produces most of our spinach, for example, there is only one buyer: Del Monte Corporation. So one can sell at Del Monte's price or watch the spinach wither in the fields. Even when farmers do begin to organize, they often have little real power. The National Farmer's Organization is an aggressive organization seeking to maintain power for the small farmer. In one area of the country, where they were particularly successful in organizing dairy farmers, the two main milk processors simply refused to buy any milk from NFO farms. NFO farmers were left to pour their milk down the drain. Large corporations can easily afford temporary losses from not buying milk or the stockpiling of soybeans. Individual farmers, trapped between monopoly control of supplies and equipment and monopoly control of the markets which buy their products, cannot afford even temporary losses.

The tax structure is the final way in which the government helps insure that independent farmers become part of the landless industrial labor pool. Everyone knows of the tax loopholes for corporations, which lead to situations like Tenneco's paying no taxes whatsoever while showing a profit of 73 million dollars a year. The individual farmer who declares farm losses for more than four years is labelled a "hobbyist" by the IRS, is no longer allowed to deduct losses from income. Property tax laws in most states continue the process, taxing farmland according to its speculative value as real estate. Inheritance taxes make it virtually impossible to keep a family farm in the family. (Unless of course you belong to the happy family of U.S. corporations.)

I used to think all this had little to do with me. I was by-god going to buck all the statistics and make a small (100 acre) farm pay. I was quite proud of myself and gloried in 16 hour work days. The rest of America might be going to the corporations but I, with my rugged individualism, was going to save a corner of it. Then came 1972 when Ralston-Purina raised my goat chow and chicken feed prices more than 100%, 1974-76 when hay prices more than doubled, 1975 when property taxes rose 150%. And during those years, milk and egg prices rose only 50%, wool and lamb prices rose not at all. The glory of working a full-time job in town to get the capital to build the farm & to cover the hours of free labor involved in producing a gallon of milk is wearing a little thin. I'm pulling my head out of the sand and recognizing that my four goats, 35 chickens, 30 sheep, and two tons of potatoes aren't going to change what's happening

to American agriculture. With a growing consciousness, I even begin to wonder if it isn't already too late: if in the next 10 or 15 years there will be any significant land not in the hands of the corporations and the ruling class; if we will have any choice whatsoever about where we get our feed, our seeds or the food we don't produce ourselves. To have all dairy production in this country in the hands of a few corporations by 1985 is quite frightening. And my four goats or our back-to-the-land movement are doing very little to keep that from happening.



Last Sunday's paper helped remind me how far out of hand things have gotten. A small article on a back page told of a CIA project which seeded clouds, sought to direct hurricanes and tornadoes, and studied melting the polar ice cap in order to cause droughts, destruction and famine in Cuba, China, the Soviet Union from 1966 to 1972. These Pentagon & CIA projects were "aimed at increasing America's 'food weapon' -- the political use of food sales." They succeeded in causing droughts in Cuba. Who knows if the droughts and floods of the last few years in this country weren't also engineered to increase the food weapon of the large corporations? Whether there will be land

to live on, whether there will be an earth not polluted to its own destruction, whether there will be food to eat, for us and for the peoples of the world, depends in large measure on what we, as Americans, do in the relatively few years left before these are no longer questions.

Some things that we can and must do, as reflected in article after article in this issue, are:

1. Stop buying at Safeway. Begin to buy as much as possible from independently owned stores. Pressure stores to buy from local producers and non-corporate farms and to label local foods. Educate consumers to buy independently produced food and to understand the real costs of supposedly cheaper agribusiness produced food and to understand the real costs of supposedly cheaper agribusiness products. Make a commitment to pay farmers a fair return for their labor and investment, not an artificially manipulated price. Re-educate yourself to eat what is in season and decrease your dependence on the elaborate technologies that deliver eggplants in December.

2. Organize and support alternative food distribution systems and non-profit stores. Put your money and energy into stopping monopoly control of food marketing.

3. As farmers, we country women need to become far better skilled and more committed to the production of food for others. We need to build farmer's markets and co-operative farmers' associations and to produce in enough quantity to supply city alternative distribution networks.

4. Support the National Farmer's Organization and buy from NFO farmers.

5. Fight for tax reform on local, state, and federal levels, partly by organizing tax strikes (see CW #18).

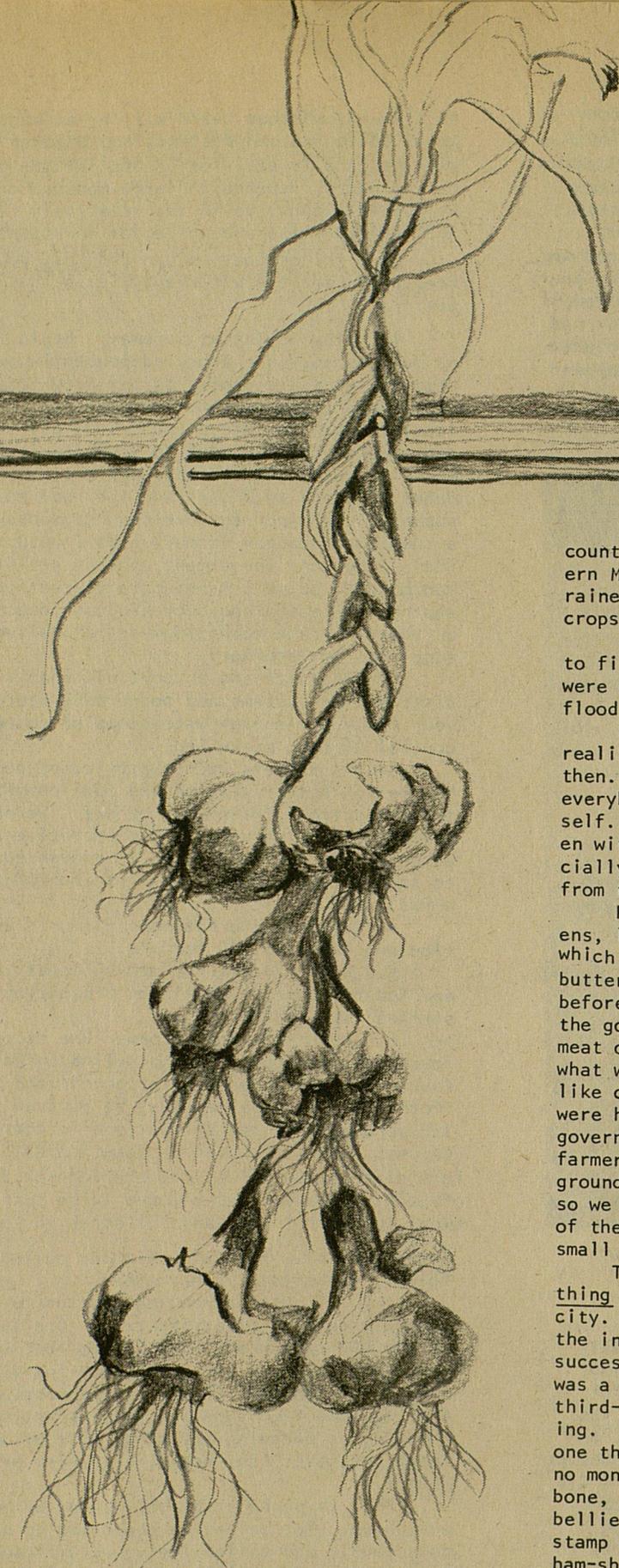
6. Work for land reform. One recent encouraging development was a ruling in Federal Court that all federally irrigated land in California's Fresno Valley must be divided into 160 acre parcels and sold at pre-irrigation prices. The 1906 Water Reclamation Act limits farm size to 160 acres, but the Federal Bureau of Land Management has allowed large corporations to control thousands of acres in the

Fresno Valley. Hopefully similar rulings will follow law suits in other areas.

7. Fight for new legislation to break monopoly control of agriculture. One such act is the NFO sponsored "Family Farm Act" which would prohibit any corporation or individual with a substantial interest in manufacturing farm equipment or supplies, and marketing farm produce, or pursuing any other agriculture related business, from engaging in farm production.

Food is perhaps the only thing we all must have. Yet unless we begin now to act consciously and collectively, we will soon have no choice at all about the quality, quantity, or price of food available to us. The defeat of the "small" farmer is the defeat of all of us. ♀

# THAT



Times weren't always easy living in the country. In 1956, we had a hard time in southern Missouri. I was 8 years old. That year, it rained, rained and kept on raining. All of the crops were washed out. But, we did have food.

In order to get that food, though, we had to fish for it, shoot chickens, which we were unable to catch, because of the water flooding our yard, and slaughter livestock.

Since I was a kid at that time, I didn't realize how "close to the bone" things were then. But, I did pick up on the scariness for everybody grown-up and got a little scared myself. After all, seeing Mother hunting a chicken with a .22 rifle was a bizarre sight, especially since I had in close memory gathered eggs from those same hens.

People that didn't have livestock or chickens, like us, had to get food in commodities, which usually consisted of big tubs of lard, butter, and flour. I'd never seen canned meat before, but they got this too. I don't think the government listed the ingredients of this meat on an outside label, so, I don't know what was in that meat. It looked something like canned dog food. Food was scarce. Those were hard-times. The year after this, the government started the soil-bank to pay the farmers money whether or not they planted ground or not. It was a slow recovery, though, so we spent the next year in the city. Most of the small farmers really never recovered, small being people who owned under a 1000 acres.

The only time I remember there being nothing in the house to eat was one day in the city. Maybe there were other days, but like the ingredients of that canned meat, I've successfully blocked them out? Anyway, this was a 100° day in St. Louis. We lived in a third-floor apartment with no air-conditioning. In the kitchen, a ham-bone was boiling on the stove. Mother was out of work. We had no money. There wasn't any meat on that ham-bone, but we hoped we could get a soup. Our bellies were empty. And, there was no food-stamp office in those days. So, we had our ham-shadow soup, until mother was able to scrape-up some money somewhere.

Since then, the city has always seemed like a hungry place to me. And, I have fantasies

# WAS YESTERDAY

(nightmares?) about all the hungry kids around. Recently, I worked at a recreation center on the south side and those nightmares seemed more realistic than ever.

There were lots of hungry kids. At 5:00, we would hand out food that looked a lot like that canned meat, and the kids seemed happy to get it. Then, around January of this year, the government decided those kids had to prove they were poor by getting their parents to fill out a form saying how much money they made. In this neighborhood, the parents are mainly recent southern immigrants (like we were) who spend a few weeks in the city to try and make some money (usually fail) and then go back to migrant work on the farms. Anyway, the people at the recreation center decided that these people would not fill out these forms if they sent them home with the kids. So, they just cut out the food program deciding not to deal with a problem that might happen. For me, there were more nightmares. For the kids, there were empty bellies growling over the tv at fat smiling children on Sesame Street

Food stamps don't take care of these people because of a lot of problems. One being they move so fast. The system isn't set-up to deal with people who lack a permanent address and are nutritionally malnourished and near starvation the minute they apply. People like this are often too ignorant of city-ways (unaware of city bureaucracies that are set-up to deal with hunger?) to apply in the first place. Sometimes, they are simply too proud to take welfare of any kind until they are near starvation. These are only a couple of the problems.

One of the biggies is that these people see living in the city as a very temporary thing. They see themselves as country people who will shortly return to the good life of the farm, which in most cases never existed for them as the good life or is not the good life anymore and hasn't been for a long time. But, they see the country as more of a friend than the city.

The country was good to me and my belly. I think I was the last generation for that, before the huge farm system took over with the mechanized cotton pickers, choppers, and bean pickers. My grandmother owned a 200 acre farm

and during my childhood we lived close to the land and provided work for a number of farmworkers. In other words, our cotton pickers, choppers and bean pickers were people not machines. At that time we all could live a decent life off the land until disasters like the flood of 1956 hit us and the machines and big farmers began to take over. A way of life died. The migrant farmworkers like the ones above, are the casualties left-over from that way of life and are great gaping wounds in a society that still uses them for beasts of burden but doesn't care for them in any other way.

I am thankful for the good memories of food I have from the farm: bologna, white beans, and onions for lunch after working in the field. Blackberry cobbler with great thick dumplings, and chocolate cake, with homemade sugar icing. And, fresh ground sausage topped with white gravy and flavored with sausage drippings. White biscuits, freshly rolled-out made from flour and baking powdered to just the right amounts by skilled grandmotherly hands. I can still see the fried chicken piled crunchy high on the table with fluffy mashed potatoes and the succulent juices dripping from the corners of cousins' mouths as they bite into a well-rounded leg. Thanksgiving Day full of turkey and dressing fixed by a sage with the dressing seasoned with giblet juices combined with sausage, celery and onions. Fresh quail for breakfast, midnight catfish orgies, and all-night eating parties. There's wild rabbit fried in brown gravy, and black-eyed peas, with corn-bread, and pecan pie for dessert. Oh, and fresh honey eaten with the comb, fresh taken from the hive. And, watermelon and mush-melon busted on a hot summer day. We would eat the heart out of one and throw it away because we had a whole field to pick from. Fresh tomatoes from the garden, and new green peas so sweet you want to run out and make love with the good earth that grew them. And, green onions from that garden, and Grandma saying that the green part at the bottom was the best, when I wanted to throw it away.

And, there was the planting of that garden on warm spring nights. Digging in the dirt at dusk to put the tomato plants in, feeling the mud as we together sunk the roots of the plants in the ground. There was a great feeling of satisfaction as we stood back and looked at a new green row of plants.

And, the gathering of corn. Grandma's instructions about only taking ones with black headed husks so that we would be sure of taking only the ripe sweet ones. And, mostly working in the earth. Watching Grandma work and tan in the sun as we gathered the corn. There was joy in seeing her happy weathered face under her bonnet and the wizened eyes for all seasons. There was no fear of a growling hungry stomach there. Only quiet.

If you understand the quiet of a sundown over a field, then you know why country people find it hard to accept the empty indifference of city living as a permanent existence. ♀



# GROUNDING FARM FANTASIES

One of the main reasons why I wanted to talk about my farm is that a while back I read a book by Marge Piercy called Dance the Eagle to Sleep. It had a whole section in it which I feel needs clarifying. It describes a fantasy many city people have, which is that when the revolution starts to get seriously on its way, revolutionaries will move out of the cities, buy land in the country, and in six months, they'll be producing enough food to send back to their people in the city. It's just not true, unless possibly you inherit a farm, a working farm with all the equipment and the animals that you need, and you have the knowledge to run it because you grew up there. I want to share with you how our "self-sufficient" homestead evolved into a goat farm producing milk that doesn't always make it to anyone's mouth.

My initial vision was not goat farming at all but rather small self-sufficient homesteading. Our first spring, we got five sheep, two goats, and twenty five chickens. We put in the garden and I guess we really thought that by the end of the first spring we'd be providing all our own food, and the animals would be paying for themselves - realizing the vision pushed in Mother Earth News and Organic Gardening. That was the dream of all the people leaving the city.

We soon recognized it was going to go a whole lot slower than we'd ever thought. But the main thing that happened during that first year was discovering that goats were the most interesting of all the animals we had. We definitely began concentrating on upgrading and breeding with the best bucks we could find in the area. We even trucked a couple of does 60 miles to get bred to some purebred bucks, a concept most homesteaders don't think of at all.

We carried on the second year with a slightly higher number of animals, but still tried to balance all the different aspects of the farm, keeping a few sheep for wool, a few goats and different kinds of fowl. We did not even think that we wanted to produce food to sell to other people but we began to realize that to feed our animals we had to sell some products outside the farm.

Eventually the goat aspect got to be the major one because Jeanne and I were both really taken with breeding better animals. If you're breeding better animals, you're having more animals, so you're keeping many more kids than if you were just producing milk for yourself. I remember one summer Jeanne had gone off on a buying trip and came home with a whole truck load of new registered goats from various breeds and breedings. We had twelve milkers and were getting six gallons a day (which I now realize is pretty poor production). We had to consider getting rid of all that milk. We were using one or two gallons and selling the rest. The amount of work involved in milking twelve poor goats and selling the milk from the farm, (which meant having people come any time of night or day to buy milk), doing

it in that kind of back-handed way and pretending that it wasn't happening when it really was, made us think of doing a Grade A dairy.

That involved going way over twelve milkers. Forty milkers seemed to be the minimum number to make a successful go of it. So we had to build a bigger holding barn, and, specifically for a Grade A Dairy, a special milking barn which includes a milking parlor, a handling room and a cooling room. That summer, we began the building of the holding barn and the investigation of other Grade A Dairy barns in the area. There seemed to be one specific design that had been developed for goats - either a four or eight stanchion milking parlor. The building cost ran ten to twenty thousand dollars, assuming you could get the stainless steel equipment you needed used. That was the minimum investment, in addition to the cost of the holding barn and buying the animals. There's no way you can even conceive of doing Grade A unless you have an independent income, an inheritance, or you can take out an incredible loan. We didn't do Grade A because of the expense. There's always the risk that your area will not be able to handle selling that much raw goat's milk. It's the kind of an item that takes a lot of publicity and pushing to make people appreciate it. So with that, the whole thing broke down; Jeanne left; and I found myself doing the farm alone, scaling way back almost to the homestead level, producing only a small surplus. At this point, however, I was totally involved in breeding goats, showing goats, selling registered goats, and I realized that come spring again I was going to need another outlet for my milk.

So, I investigated Grade B dairying. Grade B is much cheaper than Grade A, but you have to have a place to ship your milk to that will make it into something. (That's what Grade B is, milk to be used in manufacturing.) The dairy inspector said he would approve my set-up the way I was milking (which is right in my holding barn) if I would build a special milk handling room. I think that's the direction I'll be going in. I didn't get it done for this spring and I'm finding that I prefer getting rid of the milk (when there is enough help and energy available) by delivering it to local people as raw milk. This is not an alternative for any more than eight milkers, though.

The picture looks really bleak for milk because of a number of factors. The laws governing selling milk or milk products are real discouraging. The laws that govern selling eggs are stringent but they're easy to obey, just candling and weighing. The laws involved in selling milk include a heavy financial investment as far as equipment and buildings go, and a monthly testing by the dairy inspector. Selling raw milk (which is illegal unless you're Grade A), you have to replenish each store in your area every four days. For selling manufacturing (Grade B) milk, the closest place to here that can handle goat's milk

is about 200 miles away.

I think the clearest picture I can give of what's involved in producing and selling milk are the California Dairy Laws. I have two books each of which is 150 pages long. There are chapters on butter, eggnog, cottage cheese; every single possible product is governed by laws. I honestly don't think the laws have any reason for existence as far as protecting the buyer from unscrupulous dairies or unhealthy milk. The laws governing raw milk are for insuring low bacteria count and that's what the dairy inspector comes out for once a month. That's why you have to milk in a concrete room, use nothing but stainless steel, and cool the milk down immediately to a certain temperature. I think if your goats are clean, you're milking in a clean place, your equipment is clean, and you keep the milk cold and put it in clean containers, your bacteria count stays down no matter what kind of structure you milk in. I think that the law should read that anybody who wants to sell milk will be tested once a month; and if the milk is clean consistently, it is obviously safe for human consumption. I have the feeling these dairy laws are the same kind of laws as building code laws, which are clearly designed to encourage the buying of building materials.

The other most discouraging factor in producing milk is feed. I would really like to unplug myself from the capitalist patriarchal economy of this country and thought I could by producing all my food right here on the farm. I was overlooking, however, the fact that once a month I must go to town and buy grain from the feed companies. I was buying Purina grain. I am now buying from a smaller outfit, which feels a little bit better, but I think it's good to remember that unless you're feeding your animals right off your place, you are still dependent on the mainstream economy. You shouldn't get too self-righteous or optimistic.

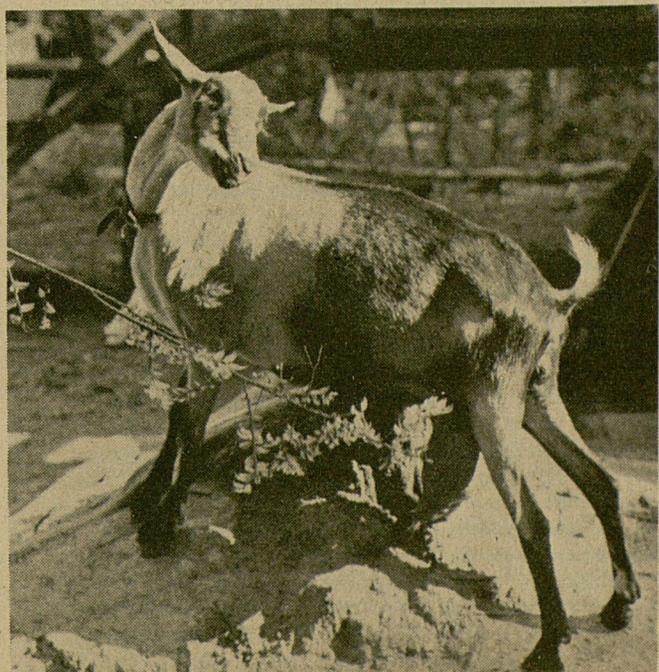
Grain in this area seems to have stabilized in price during the last couple of years, though for a while it was going up 10% every month. Right now, hay is my biggest concern and is why the whole thing will probably fold for me in another year or so. I just can't keep meeting the hay costs. Alfalfa isn't grown here on the coast because it's too damp in the summer to cure it, so it all has to be trucked in from several hundred miles away. Two years ago, I paid \$54 a ton and last year I paid \$84; this year I've been quoted \$120 a ton. I've tried to raise my milk prices to make it all worthwhile. I don't know if I can go up this year another 50%. Supposedly, a lot of people have plowed their alfalfa crops under because they're not as lucrative as other food crops. I really think the direction of dairy farming at least in California is to the people who can grow their own feed. The people who have to truck in their hay or their pellets are just going to have to fold.

In the inland valleys, there are a number of goat breeders who I've spoken to recently who have managed to achieve a financial balance. The reason why is really clear. They live in an area where feed is cheaper and the feed companies are nearby. They only have to truck their milk thirty minutes to the processing plant. I moved to the North

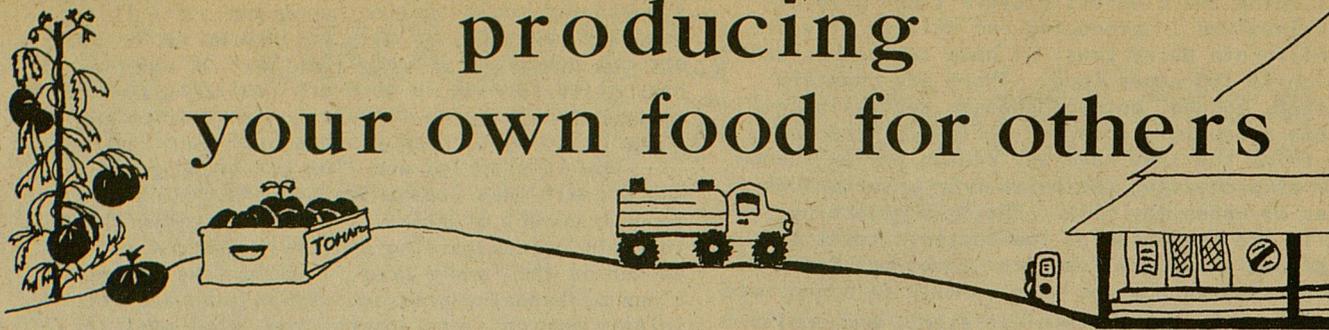
Coast because it's a beautiful area and it has sympathetic social action happening. But it's not dairy country, if only because we can't grow our own feed, and I feel like those of us who have tried farming up here are realizing that we're probably going to have to leave the area if we're going to make a successful go of it.

Now it's spring and I've got eight goats who are all just freshening and are giving a tremendous amount of milk. I also have eleven kids that I'm bottle raising and trying to get rid of. As far as the future goes, I would like to continue my breeding program. My animals are definitely moving along towards the ideal goat in terms of body type and production. Last year, I kept seven replacement does; I plan to keep four this year. I'm culling much more heavily than I otherwise would because of alfalfa prices, but I think it's a good thing in the long run. In the future, I'll probably be keeping around fourteen or fifteen does and three or four bucks and I'll try to support my breeding mania by selling milk.

The point that I'm at now feels good to me. The animals are paying for themselves. If they continue to milk through their whole lactation and if I can sell the kids, they'll provide some income besides paying for their own feed. I think you can go bigger than just providing for your own needs, but I do think it's hard to do a really large venture. The goats pay for themselves on paper but much of the labor is free labor. If you're willing to give that free labor in daily chores, an extra load at kidding time, delivering milk, and cleaning and searching out bottles; if you're willing to count that as just what you want to do with your day for perhaps ten cents an hour wage, then the goats easily pay for themselves. But if you want a minimum hourly wage, goats aren't the way to go. Even the Grade A Dairy people will tell you that it's a lot of work with not much return. ♀



# producing your own food for others



One of the first decisions the homesteader has to make is, "What am I going to do with all this extra stuff?" "Stuff" being more milk than can be consumed by your family group, beets that stay in the ground for six months because no one can look another one in the face, too many eggs, etc. There are two basic ways of handling the problem of producing more than you can consume. I have called these ways the "closed" system and the "open" system. And it goes without saying that there are many points on the scale from closed to open.

What I mean by a "closed" system is one in which all or most of the products used by the family are produced on the place and circulated within the particular ecology of that place, so that the need to generate cash is minimal. Too much milk? Make your own butter, raise hogs with skim milk, feed your chickens on clabbered milk and barley, make cheese, yogurt, ice cream. The waste products generated by the animals are returned to the soil in which the vegetables are grown, and excess vegetables are fed to the animals, as well as canned and frozen to tide you over the winter. But, at least here on the Mendocino Coast, such a system can be employed only on a very small scale. The reason for this is that the climate here does not permit the raising of such high nitrogen legumes as are needed to feed your milking animals. If you are fortunate enough to own a really big spread, you could grow sweet clover hay, which is a fine substitute for alfalfa. But right then and there you have slipped from a closed system to an open one. Can you feature harvesting one hundred acres of any kind of hay by hand? So you're into big equipment, which requires cash to buy, fuel, and maintain.

The "open" system is one in which you turn your excess stuff into products you can sell. In this system there is a constant flow of cash, though very little of it may stay put at home. Our farm falls somewhere in between these two extremes. We do in fact produce almost all the food we eat. We make our own soap, and time and skill permitting we have the resources to tan skins and spin wool for our own clothing. We heat with wood, of which there is an abundance here in our own woods.

If you decide on an open system, you are immediately hit with a number of questions you must answer, some of them not very pleasant. First and foremost, how are you going to generate that cash? The man at the feed store never heard of the barter system. The state of California does not perceive the logic of allowing

food stamps to be used to buy feed for food-producing stock. So. Money.

The two products with which I have had the most experience are eggs and garden produce, so I will relate some of my experiences in turning carrots and chickens into money.

The second nasty question to deal with is legality. More of that later.

When we began farming seriously (as opposed to growing a garden, having a couple of goats, and a dozen chickens), we were still smitten with the vision of the "natural." So we bought about sixty half grown pullets and turned them loose. They had little houses, provided with nest boxes, in which they were supposed to lay their eggs. Do you know that I once found about four dozen eggs laid in a huckleberry bush that had grown out of an old redwood stump? Rotten, every last one of them. We had provided the birds with completely enclosed pens in which they stayed at night so the coons and skunks wouldn't get them. Every once in a while I'd try leaving the birds in their pens till about two in the afternoon, thinking they would have laid their eggs by then, and in the proper places, too. Ever hear of a cow that could hold up her milk? Well, chickens can hold up their eggs, too. I don't know where they laid them. Maybe they didn't at all. All I know is that our production rate that first year was about thirty percent.

The next year, we bought some seven month old pullets. Unknowingly, we also bought one of the worst diseases that can happen to the poultryman--coccidiosis. Everything went all right that year, because the older pullets had developed a relative degree of immunity to the disease. But the next year all hell broke loose. We had about sixty or seventy well-grown, beautiful looking gals, all about twelve weeks old. These we had bought as day olds. About a month after turning them into the laying pens, they began to sicken and die. We lost sixty percent of our flock that year. And we continued to lose birds until we got them up off the ground into wire cages. Coccidiosis is a parasitical disease that is spread by the birds consuming bits of their own feces as they scratch on the ground.

This little chicken saga brings us to a most difficult question. Why do commercial growers do things the way they do? Obviously to get the most from the least. But instead of being disgusted by the practices of commercialism, we need to study them closely to see what

of value we can glean from them.

We now raise all our chickens in a semi-commercial way. When the day-olds arrive they are placed in their own separate house, which has a hardware cloth floor, through which the droppings fall onto removable trays to facilitate cleaning. The brooder house is eight by eight, and the brooder canopy is four by four. There is adequate ventilation and the light is red, to discourage toe and ass picking. In other words, they live in a completely enclosed environment. Also, this house is designed in such a way that our feet never come in contact with the area on which the chicks live. *Coccidiosis* spores can live in the ground for as long as twelve years, so it is easy to inadvertently contaminate young birds, especially if you still have producing hens around who have had some exposure, but who have developed an immunity. After the birds come out of the brooding house, they go into growing cages, which are also raised up off the ground. Finally they are moved to the laying house, where they live in cages. We started all this purely for health reasons, but discovered another great advantage. Our birds maintain an average production of around ninety percent all year. They are not subjected to tremendous changes of temperature. They don't get rained on. Coons can't get them. Everyone says to me, "But how can they stand not being able to run around?" Well, I honestly don't know if they know the difference. They seem happy, and always set up a tremendous chorus of welcome when we arrive, though they have a constant supply of feed and water, so it's not because we are coming to feed them. I guess it comes down to this: if you want dependable egg production, if you need eggs for money, then take a tip from the growers, and get those gals up off the ground.

There are certain practices of the commercial chicken farmers we have rejected. We do not feed laying or growing stimulants, and we also allow our ladies a decent night's sleep. They have a constant sixteen hour day, year around. This is provided by a lighting system run by an automatic timer, which must be adjusted as the days lengthen and shorten during the year.

And then there are the legalities I promised. Each and every egg must be candled (held up in front of a special light) to inspect for cracks in the shells or spots inside the eggs. Also the eggs must be washed and each egg must be weighed and graded. These rules apply only if you are going to sell your eggs off your own place, in a store.

By now, you're probably thinking, "Forget it!" But remember, these facilities have to be built only once, and then you fall into a rhythm of when to order day-olds, feathering it in with your other activities to keep the eggs rolling.

Alas, not so with gardens. They must be built anew every year. The money return on gardening labor is miniscule compared with the return on other enterprises. Also, in garden-

ing, most of the commercial practices are so mechanized, specialised, and repulsive, as well as dangerous, that as a gardener you are really quite on your own. It is a constant source of amazement to me that folks are willing to pay really stiff prices for good eggs, but expect you to turn out organic, freshly-picked produce at Safeway prices. Though in love with the idea of the natural, such people seem ignorant of the fact that the reason Safeway produce looks so uniform (ever see one of those really obscene carrots at Safeway--they wouldn't be caught dead), is that it is fertilized and pesticided to death. Their produce is grown from specialized seed that produces a vegetable that can be harvested mechanically. It is harvested green. And so it arrives at the store with nary a blight or bruise. I am not a fanatic on health foods, but I do believe that along with your vitamins, you are also taking in generous quantities of poison.

Last year was the first year we really put in a big garden. I thought, "Oh boy, I can plant all those weird things like bok choy and everyone will be delighted! Hogwash. As far as vegies go, people are very middle-of-the-roadish. "Don't give me any of that weird squash that looks all white and has scalloped edges, and furthermore, I hate beets." So this year, we're going middle class: broccoli, lettuce, beans, tomatoes, corn, etc. That's ok, I'm not so crazy about beets myself.

But, people must understand that they can not have produce picked so recently it still has morning's dew on it for what amounts to a wage of less than five cents an hour! In a small large garden, by which I mean anywhere from one to four or five acres, the soil preparation is a major task. Usually someone with a garden of an acre is not going to have a regular tractor, but some kind of heavy duty roto-tiller. For soil improvement, cover crops are a must. It is back breaking work to till in clover and rye that have gotten three feet high. Then the organic manure must be worked in. Watering systems that give you time to do something besides stand all summer at one end of a hose must be devised. And how to fight those ever-living pests that have no respect for us high-minded gardeners? All these things take incredible amounts of time. Yet still the guy wants his lettuce for chain-store prices.

I garden because I love it. And I am also fervently hoping that the eating public will be slowly educated to the facts, the realities of producing vegetables that will not poison you as they help you to grow twelve ways.

So if you're opting to farm an "open" system these are the facts you must deal with: producing efficiently and on a large enough scale to pay for your labor, dealing with the legalities of marketing your produce, constantly out guessing the consumer and most important, maintaining the steady flow of money that will keep it "open." To ignore any of these means a return for you to those baskets of rotting produce and eggs and one less alternative food source for non-farmers. ♀

# Which Had Known Rain

(to my mother)

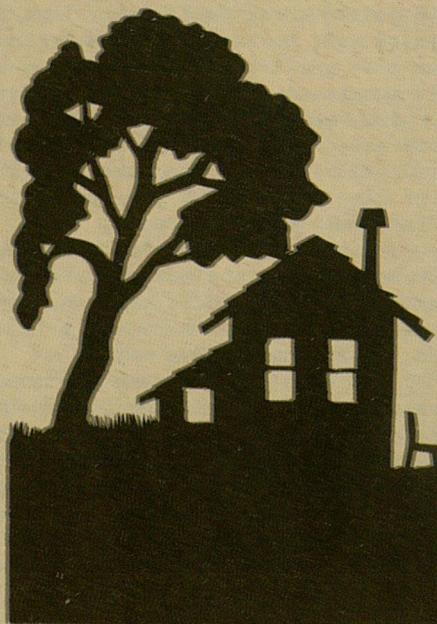
The Great Depression  
created a caste system  
among close relatives--  
never stated  
but always felt.

Our relatives to the north  
(farther from the Sand Hills)  
had kitchen linoleum with discernible pattern,  
real soap, flowering crabapple trees,  
and eventually, the thing  
which divided the haves from the have-nots,  
a Combine  
(leaping john deere greenly)

three miles to the north  
our aunts and uncles almost made it  
but they had more children,  
allergies, sick horses--  
five miles to the north  
we got into great aunts, second cousins,  
better land-farthest  
from the Sand Hills.

there was magic of a Sunday  
in their lined-up farm implements,  
clusters of old cars, folks visiting,  
and no sense of strain in the Kitchen

*oh mother, thick icing butter icing  
two-egg cakes, oranges,  
currants, almonds, a dream  
of grocery in your silent  
grand slam wishes,  
but your bald-headed  
johnny cakes hot after school  
make my remembrances,  
Roger's Golden Syrup a sparkling recall--  
And never mentioned oh mother  
your brother Billie William  
with the soft brown eyes  
one hot noon  
went out behind the empty granaries,  
and a fury .22  
Blasted his music, his highland  
song along the slow drag  
of the years  
that never came.*



But our closest relatives  
one section to the south  
thereby closest to the Sand Hills,  
they had all our problems,  
we shared the worst  
no rain so no seed so no feed  
so no cows no milk no eggs  
no underwear, no courage  
to mix with the northern relatives  
and say hell, my folks work  
just as hard but with no rain  
no seed...

our southern relatives  
painted their barn doors red,  
they had rust free water,  
their raspberries sprang  
as by a Divine Hand  
which had known Rain.

in their kitchen  
my mother looked like a queen,

as if summoned by C.N. special telegram  
from Hawker Junction.

*the wheat fields fooled me  
they looked like a thick stand  
from the road  
but the men would walk through,  
come back slow--  
the women said nothing  
(no shoes for winter)  
only the caragana bushes,  
gophers with Mongoloid eyes,  
french blue lilacs,  
guessed the riddle of the skies.*

Our fathers shared New Brunswick jokes,  
brother love season after season  
until their hour glasses  
drained  
dry,  
leaving us a legacy  
of do-it-yourself,  
an exuberance of family,  
symphony of high letters  
in blue-lined envelopes

*while under the toothy moon  
the Sand Hills stirred,  
squeezed their wild horses tighter,  
suffocated all coyotes,  
sucked down seed drills,  
buggy shafts*

*swivelled their boundaries  
towards our relatives  
in the north...*



# A Subtle Form of Genocide

"Food is a weapon. It is now one of the principal weapons in our negotiating kit."

Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz

As a child, I remember my mother evoking images of the "starving" children in Asia as she urged me and my sisters to "clean our plates." As I grudgingly ate my dinner, I'd think, "What difference could how much I ate make to some one on the other side of the globe?"

Since that time, I've learned that it can make all the difference in the world -- the difference between health and hunger, between life and death. It is of course not a question of how much I as an individual eat but rather how the U.S. as a whole consumes and controls the world's resources.

A good place to begin in order to understand how we contribute to world hunger is a look at our economy. We have the highest production and consumption in the world. We account for 6% of the world's population and yet we consume between 30-40% of the world's resources. We are told that overpopulation (in Third World countries) is the real cause of the world food problem. But it is we who are using up the world's resources; in ecological terms we are overpopulated. If only 20% of the people of the world consumed at our rate, there would be absolutely nothing left for the remaining 80%. More for us means less for the rest of the world.

A good example of the U.S. pattern of excessive consumption is the amount of grain we eat. North Americans consume 1850 lbs of grain per year, most of it indirectly, in the form of meat products and dairy foods. Most of our commercial livestock is fed a high protein diet -- a mixture of grains, soybeans, milk products, fish meal and wheat germ. This is an ecologically disastrous and wholly unnecessary diet. It takes 8-10 lbs. of grain to produce 1 lb. of beef.

People in South Asia consume 400 lbs. of grain per year directly. In 1973, American livestock was fed as much grain as all the people in China and India eat in a year!

We are not only eating a lion's share of the world's grain but our high production, consumption and waste are destroying the earth's life support systems. The contribution of Third World peoples to environmental destruction is minimal. An individual in the U.S. consumes 22 times as much energy as the average Chinese and pollutes 50 times as much as the average Indian. Every time we flush the toilet, we use 8 gallons of water.

Our excessive energy production which has increased the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, may be responsible for major changes in climate throughout the world.

What is becoming increasingly clear is that in order to maintain our costly lifestyle we need most of the resources of the poor countries, and we need them to be cheap.

How do we manage to insure a steady and cheap supply of raw materials? For one, we give military support to oppressive dictatorships willing to serve our needs and the needs of the affluent minorities in their own countries.

By supporting these governments we are condemning the majority of people in these countries to poverty and hunger, as we consume their resources. A good example of this is the fish industry. Nearly half of the protein taken from the Pacific comes from the fisheries off the coasts of Chile and Peru. Most of the fish is converted into fish meal which is used as animal feed (for U.S. cattle). The fish meal factories in Peru are owned mostly by American and Western European interests. Nearly all of the fish meal is exported to Western Europe, the U.S. and Japan. Peru has one of the highest rates of malnutrition of all the Latin American countries.

A reasonable person might ask: "How can such an absurd situation be justified?" The economist answers: "Third World countries must increase their foreign exchange earnings to import capital goods for economic development." What this means is a cash-crop economy. Using the fish meal concentrate as an example, fish meal is a valued commodity in world trade and will bring in more money than if the fish were eaten by the poor and hungry people of Peru. Okay, so now that the fish meal is sold there's money to purchase food. The catch is that those who own and sell the fish meal for a profit are not the same people who are hungry. Instead, the profits either leave the country -- to foreign investors or to the Swiss bank accounts of corrupt local government and industry officials -- or are invested in real estate speculation, banking, etc. The growth of food exports occurs at the cost of malnutrition and hunger for the majority of people. 430 million people in the world are seriously malnourished (conservative estimate), roughly 50% of them are children 5 years and under.

But all is not lost, don't forget U.S. food aid -- our "Food for Peace" program. Aren't we doing the best we can with our massive government food aid?

Virtually all current U.S. food aid comes under Public Law 480. P.L. 480 was established in 1954. It was designed to help American agribusiness by getting rid of the surplus food

which existed then. This was accomplished by either giving the food outright or selling it on long-term easy credit loans. In the late 50's and early 60's when there were large amounts of surpluses, Food for Peace exports represented 25-30% of our total agricultural exports. Since 1964, however, the percentage has been dropping sharply. In 1972, the year of the Russian grain deal, P.L. 480 exports were only 12% of the total. In 1973, a year that world famine had drastically increased, our "Food for Peace" program dropped to 4% of our total agricultural exports.

Who receives P.L. 480 funds or food? In fiscal 1974, of the \$152 million in food aid, 43% went to South Vietnam and Cambodia, 6% to Latin America, 10% to Africa, 28% to Asia and 13% to other countries. The political use of these funds is evident. Neither Vietnam nor Cambodia is on the U.N.'s list of the 32 countries in most critical need for food aid.

Another glaring example of how "Food for Peace" is used to further U.S. political interests is the case of Chile. In 1968, Chile received \$29.6 million in food aid. In 1970-1973, the Allende years, Chile received no food aid. In 1975, Chile received \$35 million in food aid.

What effect does dumping large amounts of free or cheap food have on the economy of the recipient country? The local growers are unable to compete and are forced to grow other crops, often non-edible cash crops, e.g., cotton or tobacco. There are often additional incentives to plant cash crops too. These include government price support and the availability of loans.

The end result is increasing dependence on the U.S. for food because the whole cash crop system is geared toward producing money not food.

#### The Green Revolution

In addition to exporting food when it is in our political and economic interest, the U.S. also exports its technology. The Green Revolution was the U.S. answer to the world food problem. The main focus of the Green Revolution is increasing food production. This is accomplished by the use of high yield varieties of grains (created through genetic manipulation), chemical fertilizers and farm machinery. While our agricultural system works (though not very efficiently or ecologically) for us it doesn't work in Third World countries for a variety of reasons.

For one, mechanized farming requires more land and capital investment than are available to the vast majority of people. This means that only the already rich and big farmers benefit. They become bigger and richer widening the gap between the haves and have-nots. The net effect of mechanized farming is to force people off the land into city slums, unemployment, poverty and hunger.

A second disastrous consequence of the Green Revolution is the reliance on "miracle"

hybrid grains. They are less hardy than the native varieties and more susceptible to pests. This means that entire crops may be endangered and/or high levels of pesticides are required. Pesticide residues constitute a hazard to the environment and to the health of the agricultural workers and the population at large.

Often times, too, in the interest of higher yields, nutritional quality is sacrificed. In several instances, it was found that the protein content of the high yield varieties was considerably less than that of the native varieties.

A third reason the Green Revolution doesn't work is that it creates a dependency on oil (for chemical fertilizers, pesticides and fuel for farm machinery) at a time when the price is skyrocketing. Also, there is a built in dependency on the U.S. for farm machinery, hybrid seeds and know-how.

The agricultural problems of the Third World are basically social. They are problems created and maintained by the needs of the U.S. and other industrialized countries. The industrialized countries need the resources of the Third World at cheap prices for their economic expansion. The U.S. government (and the governments of other industrialized countries) needs Third World countries politically oppressed and economically exploited so that their governments can serve U.S. interests rather than the interests of their own people. The high level of consumption in Western industrialized countries is made possible by the poverty of the Third World.

We did not give food aid or technical assistance to either China or Cuba after their revolutions. Yet, these two countries have eliminated wide-spread hunger and have substantially improved the material conditions of their people. They didn't need us to tell them how to grow their rice and how to plan their families.

Despite the fact that I have shared the information presented in this article a number of times before I am once again experiencing the force of these facts. It is hard for me to resist feeling depressed and overwhelmed by the realities of the situation. I feel powerless to change the economic system which creates and maintains this inequitable distribution of food and resources. How futile my efforts to simplify my life style, reduce my consumption seem, in the face of the need for massive changes.

#### What Can We Do?

U.S. direct military intervention (as in Vietnam) and support of military dictatorships (Chile, etc.) creates and sustains world hunger and poverty. Without our support these governments could not survive. We must organize to influence U.S. foreign policy. We must educate to unmask the false humanitarian front and demonstrate how the U.S. is a fundamental cause of world hunger and poverty.

It is important for people to understand that U.S. foreign policy is determined by U.S.

economic needs -- to survive economically the U.S. must expand and expand and expand, at the expense of Third World countries.

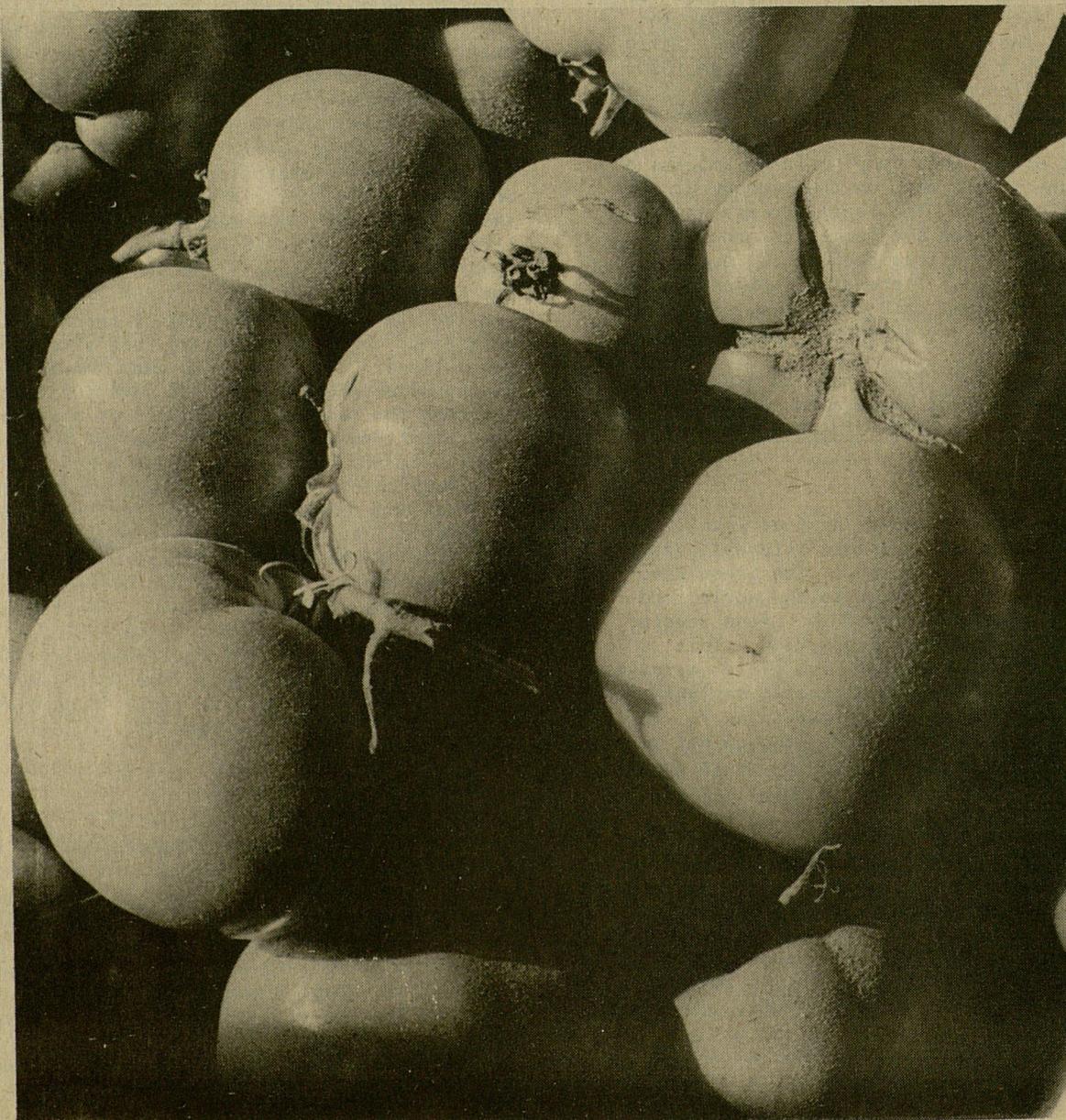
As a nation, we need to de-develop. There simply are not enough resources for the world's poor and for future generations unless we do. We cannot continue our over-consumption indefinitely.

Also, we must end the domination of our multinational corporations. They exert control over the economic and political affairs of Third World countries to further their own interests -- namely, increasing their profits. Third World countries must control their own wealth and resources in the interests of their own people.

Individually and collectively, we need to simplify our life styles. We can reduce our meat consumption (reducing our weekly meat consumption by just 1/4 lb. would free up enough grain to feed 60 million people; though,

it would take a lot more change to make sure it got to those hungry 60 million), grow more of our own food, learn about nutrition to eat better and less expensively. We need, also, to confront and resolve the distribution and hunger problems which exist here. At least 10 million people in the U.S. suffer from malnutrition and hunger. The elderly, people on Welfare, Native Americans (especially those living on reservations) and other minority populations are at greatest nutritional risk.

Without a commitment to altering our way of life which involves political, economic, sexual and social change, individual change can have only limited impact and benefit. We must, therefore, share and develop our insights and understanding of how this system works with our friends, lovers, neighbors, community. Hopefully, what will emerge in the process is a vision and a strategy toward the creation of a society based on peoples' needs not on profit. ♀



# STALKING The SURPLUS APRICOT

We live in a large communal family and spend many weeks each summer gathering food to put away for winter and to supplement our own produce. We've worked for small scale organic growers, who farm a few acres of vegetables and care for five to twenty acres of orchard crops, and we've worked on big commercial operations gleaning what is left behind to rot after harvesting. Mostly we pick nuts and fruit for drying, but we also get tomatoes, grains, olives and hot weather vegetables. In the production of food for sale there is always a certain proportion of waste that can be obtained cheaply or just for the labor of gathering it. This waste is partly because only flawless food can be shipped, stored, and still remain marketable; but there is also waste because there are limits to harvesting efficiency, either by hand or machine, and some food is always left behind. With some crops, the growers make agreements among themselves (which have the power of law) that they will each sell only a certain percentage of their crop in order to control the market price. We have picked melons for ten cents each in huge fields which have already been harvested twice yet still have thousands of beautiful fruit in them. The sight of this tremendous amount of good food, most of which will rot, causes me mixed feelings of delight at being able to supply ourselves with all we want and anger at a system which insists that vast quantities of food be wasted for economic reasons.

When we first began gathering, we knew no one who farmed and mainly gleaned in orchards and fields that had already been harvested or were abandoned. Wherever food is harvested by machine there are tons left in the field. Tomatoes are an especially good example. The tomato harvester is a \$100,000 machine about fourteen feet wide by thirty feet long carrying twelve people who work the conveyer belt. The machine picks the whole plant and shakes the tomatoes onto the belt where the people throw off green or overripe tomatoes, while the machine discards the stalk. You can literally gather tons of discarded tomatoes if you can use them. Often in these fields there are strips of unpicked tomatoes that were left because it was too much trouble to maneuver this incredible machine to get them. We just drive through tomato country until we see a field where they are harvesting. Then we stop

and find the boss (who's probably driving around in a pickup), and ask if we can pick up tomatoes. More often than not, they'll show you where the best picking is.

There are orchards where they pick once, leaving fruit on the trees that they won't come back to pick because of economics. Because the hired pickers are usually paid by the box (around 60¢ to one dollar for each lug), they want to pick where the fruit is plentiful and easy to get, in order to make a decent wage. This discourages thorough picking and creates a situation where owners sometimes can't afford to hire pickers if the fruit is not large or plentiful enough to make it worth the pickers' while.

We make it a rule to always find the owner or boss of what we want and ask them for the fruit, even if it's falling and rotting on the ground. People will get uptight and feel ripped off if they are not asked and it is very rare that someone has turned us away without reason. It is of utmost importance to be clear with people about whatever deals or agreements you make and even then you may have to work your way through some misunderstandings. The business of asking people for free food, even though it would be wasted otherwise, is delicate and a few people doing an unrighteous trip can close farmers off to even bothering with allowing gleaning of surpluses. We've talked with pear orchard owners who no longer allow people to even pick up the unmarketable fruit off the ground because some people they had let do so had stolen the picked fruit from the shipping crates. We felt hesitation about writing this article because of the importance of maintaining goodwill with the farmers who could be hassled by people gathering in an unconscious manner. We went ahead with the writing out of positive feelings of wanting to make this information available to more people who could use the food which goes to waste in great quantities.

Keeping your deals clear, sometimes requires a lot of energy. We once had a friendly encounter with a farmer who offered us tomatoes from a field in back of his house; we hadn't even asked for them. Several days later, we came back to pick the tomatoes and he was not at home but we met his brother-in-law who owned the field. We told him that we had been offered the tomatoes by the first man and asked if it was still all right to pick them. He heartily assured us that it was fine, take all we want. I asked if ten lug boxes would be all right, and he said it was. We drove out to the field and unloaded ten boxes and proceeded to fill them. The plants were very full and the picking went quickly. We barely touched the first twenty feet of three rows, out of thousands of incredibly long rows of tomatoes. Just as we were filling the last boxes, the owner's wife came tearing down the dusty road in a pickup. She leaped out, demanding that we stop immediately and why had we picked ten boxes when we were given permission to pick only three? She was very angry and self-righteous and we were shaken by the intensity of her emotions. I told her that I had clearly asked her husband for ten boxes and his per-

mission had been given, but that if she felt badly about it we would be glad to pay them cannery prices for the tomatoes we had picked. I spoke with as much clarity as I could muster in the moment and with no returning anger. This was disconcerting to her and she mumbled for us to just take them and go away. We persisted, not wishing to create bad feelings in any way and also not wishing to leave feeling like thieves when we had no intent to steal or do anything but abide by the understanding we thought we had. We offered to trade her pears and apples for what we had taken since those were fruits less available in her area. By this time, she had dropped her angry stance and voice and was willing to accept the pears, some of which we had with us and gave her right then. A few weeks later, we made another trip to their area and brought a truckload of pears by their house and offered them all they wanted. To follow through completely, we spoke to the friendly farmer who first offered the tomatoes, telling him what had happened. He reassured us that those folks were city people who for years had come up frequently to visit and always loaded their car up with produce from his farm but now that they were newly into the business themselves they were very tight with the surplus quantities of food they had. While it took extra time and effort to come back, the result was that everyone felt good.

Another way we sometimes obtain large quantities of food is by going into town to the packing houses, dry yards, canneries or processors. You can check the phone book for their locations. In most states, there are marketing laws that regulate food processing and there are government inspectors to enforce the laws. For instance, food can't be packed for shipping if it's ripe, too big, too small or deformed. Of course, rotten and diseased food is also rejected, but even some of this is edible if you cull through it. The culls from these sorting operations are usually fed to hogs or made into fertilizer. But you can buy the culls cheap and stand on the end of the conveyor belt and pick the nicest looking ones. Several times when melons were in season, we loaded our truck with hundreds of pounds of melons from these belts at ten cents each. On one of these trips, the inspector told me that there's a marketing law saying you cannot take food from the sheds without putting it in boxes, so we always have boxes on hand. Boxes are important, anyway, for small fruits and tomatoes. We use boxes that will stack up in the truck, such as twenty-five or fifty pound wood lug boxes, but cardboard is o.k. if they are not too big.

Over the years, our gathering trips have evolved to a point where the major way we work is by making contact with small growers and working out a trade of food for labor. We like this way because we can work directly for our food and at the same time help growers who need labor and have little money. To us, food is worth more than money. We could never make a living picking for money and we could never afford to buy the food we earn with our labor. We pick for a percentage of what we pick, from

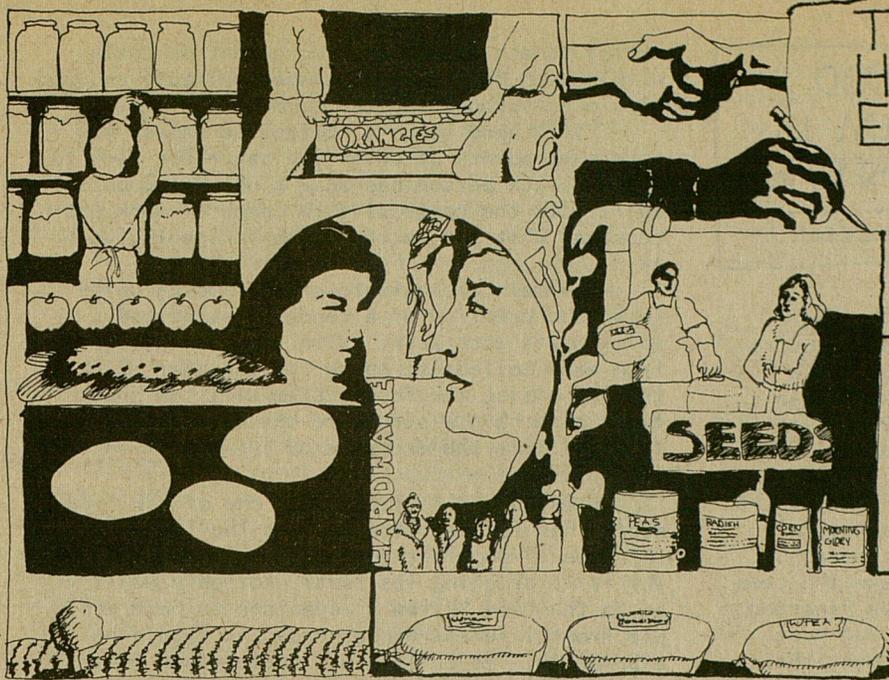
a quarter to one half, depending on what it is and on the working conditions (such as: are the weeds tilled in or overgrown, are the trees pruned or not, is the fruit unirrigated and small or irrigated and good sized?). This works out well for people who don't get enough for their crops to afford paying pickers. Sometimes we've done a second picking for shares in an orchard that would not otherwise have been picked because the fruit was spread too thinly for professional pickers to bother with. With small growers, as in the packing sheds, there are also surpluses that they cannot sell because of scars, sunburn, deformities or ripeness. We are willing to take these as part of our trade and that is good for both of us since this food often just gets fed to the hogs.

Gradually, we are learning how to decide if it's worthwhile to pick for shares. One year we picked cherries in a small orchard with a bumper crop of fruit. The deal was that we would receive one third of what we picked and there was an understanding that we would be able to trade some of the cherries for twice their weight in apricots from an orchard owned by the same people. We had two people picking who together could pick from fourteen to eighteen boxes a day, thereby earning five to six boxes themselves. At market value, five to six boxes were \$45 to \$54 for the day's work. Often, however, it's difficult to figure the market value of what we're doing; we've had to evolve our own standards for deciding if it's worth our while to do the work for shares.

Making contact with growers is sometimes difficult. You can go into the farm labor office; we've made a couple of good contacts there. Let them know exactly what you're interested in and maybe someone there will have a lead. Sometimes you can contact people through local stores, distributors or truckers. We've met growers in their orchards in the course of gleaning or following another lead and have been able to work out a trade. Basically, we've had to overcome reticence and fear of making contact with people because we might be refused or they seemed unapproachable. Human contact is what gets you on the road to harvesting. Farming is a lot of hard work and farmers often need a hand. They don't like to see food going to waste either after putting so much energy into growing it. Even though you might not get what you expect you never know until you try.

We've slowly accumulated the equipment we needed, such as canvas bags or buckets to pick into, wooden lug boxes and a good truck. For harvesting olives, nuts or prunes we use twelve to sixteen foot poles to knock them out of the trees and tarps or a parachute to spread under the tree to catch the fruit. We usually bring camping equipment and camp out in parks nearby where we work, or sometimes in the orchards where we are working.

We enjoy making contact with the people who grow our food and working out a system that grows and distributes food that is beneficial to all of us. And it's always a good feeling to be able to use what would otherwise be wasted. ♀



# THE PEOPLE'S FOOD SYSTEM

some neighborhood food conspiracies, which eventually set up storefronts, which in turn set up back room distribution systems that graduated to their own warehouses.

And this is but one of several networks in the United States. It has direct connections with other systems and warehouses on the West Coast extending from Tucson to Vancouver, BC. On the East Coast there is an even longer his-

tory of co-ops and farmers' markets. In Vermont, for instance, almost one out of every ten Vermonters buys food through the co-ops comprising the New England People's Food Co-operative. Minneapolis and the mid-west has one of the oldest co-operative food systems going. What's happening here is not an isolated phenomenon.

The People's Food System is now involved in some major changes. Several new collectives have joined and all participants are now involved in articulating points of unity among all the collectives. The emerging consensus should be shaped around some of these ideals and should probably reflect the following ideas:

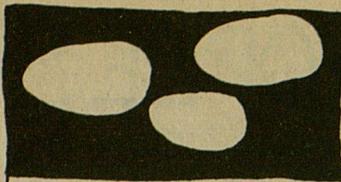
- 1) *The Food System is anti-capitalist.*
- 2) *In unity is strength.*
- 3) *The Food System is working towards a worker-controlled socialist society.*
- 4) *the quality of the workplace and the creation of viable, non-hierarchical jobs are important.*
- 5) *A major task of the Food System is the dissemination of information: information about nutrition and about political and economic social change.*
- 6) *There is a concern for the quality of food.*
- 7) *There is concern for the way food is produced and who produces it.*
- 8) *The Food System is anti-racist, anti-sexist, and anti-classist.*
- 9) *Fanshen, the process of "overturning oneself", or self-criticism, is essential to the realization of all of the other ideals of the Food System.*

But..even if the Food System can agree on these broad and loosely stated goals, and then go so far as to agree on what they mean more specifically, there are almost none of them that don't involve some conflicts and difficulties. These difficulties begin, and end perhaps, with the challenge of trying to build a socialist system in a capitalist society. And of course one place this comes down is in shortage of money.

What I want to talk about here is not why there is a need for change in the American food system, but rather the process and the difficulties involved in trying to make that change, a change that amounts to revolution. I will focus on the People's Food System in California, which is involved in getting food from the growers and producers to the consumers. It's located in one of the largest cities in the country, but I'm eating their cheese right here in Albion.

I collected most of the ideas in this article by interviewing five women working in the Food System: three from Red Star Cheese (distributors), one from the People's Bakery, and one from Amazon Yogurt. What I've written here is based almost entirely on their feelings and experiences, as expressed on one afternoon--another five people from the Food System would have said something entirely different. And it was merely impossible, I discovered, for me to write an article about what they said that faithfully says what they said. Here instead is what I have to say about what they said.

What's happening in the Food System is really exciting. It's expanding to include more and more stores, so that it's no longer an esoteric "alternative" serving a few counter-culture people, but a viable enterprise serving average people. At this point, a whole cross-section of food buyers can walk in from the streets and come in contact with the functioning expression of consciously evolved ideals and goals. The People's Food System is an alliance of about twenty-four collectives involving over ten stores, several distributors, a newsletter, an urban-rural information and exchange collective, a childcare collective, a bakery, a collectively run chicken farm supplying eggs daily to the stores and Amazon yogurt, an all woman collective just on the threshold of actually producing yogurt. The distributors alone in this network handle at least \$250,000 worth of sales each month. All of this grew in the course of four years out of



## THE FOOD SYSTEM IS ANTI-CAPITALIST

*"The whole food system is undercapitalized..."*

In the words of one worker: "The whole food system is undercapitalized, and if you're undercapitalized it's real hard to get to a level where you can be self-sufficient. Red Star is a viable business with \$80,000 sales each month, but its net worth is probably under a \$2,000 dollars."

And Red Star is looked upon by some of the other collectives as one of the "wealthy collectives," capable of financing the poorer ones. But enough is too little. Take the case of Left Wing Poultry, the Food System financed chicken farm, which rents its space but must buy its chickens. They can't even cover their own costs until they get more chickens, but each batch of 500 pullets costs them \$2,500! So they keep their prices up while they're trying to capitalize themselves, that is, to raise the money to operate at a volume that would allow them to lower their prices in the long run. Meanwhile, people wonder why their eggs cost so much. Isn't the alternative food system supposed to lower our prices? Many of the collectives are caught in this same dilemma. They're dependent on long term loans from individuals, along with some grants and some money from organizations. To get a bank loan, they need to have already been a viable business for two years, and only a couple of the collectives are reaching that point now. Soon they may have the privilege of borrowing money at about 15% interest. Privilege.

Really the sanctified way to raise money in this country is through profits skimmed off the top of workers' wages or added to the price of your product. At no point can the food system escape the fact it's occurring smack dab in the middle of capitalist America, and capitalist America isn't designed to support enterprises like an anti-profit food system.



### IN UNITY IS STRENGTH

*"The system should be able to include co-ops who are merely interested in bringing good, cheap food to people."*

*"We should be a self-conscious political force. We can no longer live the segregated existence available to Americans isolated from international struggles."*

These voices exemplify the divergent views members express about the work and concerns of the Food System. The workers in the Food System are focusing some of their best energy now on

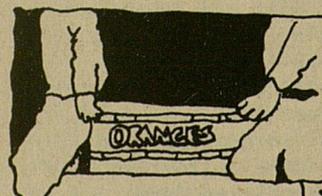
trying to achieve unity: agreement on goals within each collective, between collectives, and with other groups and the community at large. "It's hard to be a collective unless you have some points of unity you can refer back to, so that each person has some kind of accountability to the collective in terms of work process and what you're trying to do ideologically."

The main emphasis towards building unity is in the creation of a representative body which meets each week. With representatives from each collective gathering together on a regular basis, the Food System will for the first time have a structure designed solely to facilitate the exchange of ideas between collectives.

A third world caucus from one of the food stores has focused attention on the lack of third world people throughout the Food System. Why is it dragging its feet? Not only would it be to the Food System's advantage to have people from different backgrounds, it should be a priority. To build a new society you must include all people.

Another obvious means of reaching out is making connections with community projects. "The system's best bet is to connect up with existing organizations. There are a lot of people doing a lot of things and not necessarily connected with each other. Usually one community doesn't know beyond its own community what's going on, and we can be part of all those things because everybody eats and everyone hates to buy their food in supermarkets." There are tenants' unions, people organizing against police brutality and neighborhood childcare centers ripe to connect through neighborhood stores.

There is a need felt as well for unity on a larger scale. One kind of support which "everyone was enthusiastic about" has been the idea of sending seeds and grain to Angola, inspired by a slide show someone gave. Thus movements begin. The food system is trying to increase its connection to national and international movements such as Native American Solidarity and the Farmworkers. The participation of the Food System in this year's July 4th Coalition la Peoples' Bicentennial Celebration is very important as it marks the first time the whole food system has taken a public, unified stand on an issue and actively connected up with other political groups.



### WORKING FOR A WORKER-CONTROLLED SOCIALIST SOCIETY

*"Worker control means total respect for the people you work with."*

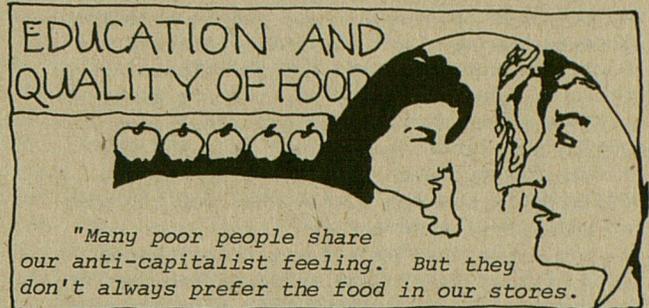
*"Most collectives remain competitive through self-exploitation."*

Are Food System jobs "viable"? One criticism of the system has been that it's mostly white, college educated, downwardly mobile workers. For the first year and a half no one was paid, so people worked other jobs, got welfare, or lived off savings. The whole beginning was volunteer labor, ("the great ideal that has sort of fallen by the wayside"), but that has evolved into a workplace that pays the workers subsistence salaries based on what they can afford. They recognize that if you're only getting \$150 a month, only certain people can work there. There are large differences amongst the various collectives as to what people are paid, with some of the retail stores most easily realizing a real subsistence salary, but mostly wages range from nothing to \$300 per month. One of the truckers said he's embarrassed to answer when other truckers ask him what he's getting paid. It has been written that "most collectives remain competitive through self-exploitation. The collective worker who puts in twelve hours a day in a warehouse for pay and the owner of a corner store who spends all one's hours working are locked onto the same treadmill."

While the whole system is discussing standardizing wages, Red Star is also considering requiring full or part time work commitments (35 and 15 or 20 hour minimums.) The collective was originally spontaneous--people worked as much and as hard as they felt moved to do. Some of the original people, who after all helped create the business and the workplace, are still working and opposed to the idea of minimums. This makes it hard to get the work done and make certain that knowledge and the ability to make decisions get shared. Things can't be as loose as they once were. Red Star is growing rapidly: for instance, at one point its volume shot from \$30,000 to \$80,000 monthly in just six months. Red Star lacks the work patterns necessary to maintain a larger business efficiently, despite the recent transformation from doing the work "when it crops up" (and suffering lots of spaceouts) into a system of tight committees, designated work, and rotations. Often twice as much time as necessary is spent checking over work and correcting mistakes. So the energy of moving food usurps much of the energy that might otherwise go into education, outreach and focusing on being part of the community. Yet some see institutionalizing work schedules on a worker controlled collective as a contradiction in terms. Always the balance must be sought between being work and worker oriented--doing the work most effectively without sacrificing the workers' option to put in energy by choice.

Collectives are not reknowned for their efficiency, but they may be the only way to avoid a hierarchical structure--a boss and those who obey her (more likely him). The dark side of the collective is all the meetings necessary to pass information horizontally instead of sending it down from the top. In Red Star, there is a business meeting each week; there's a weekly evening meeting to discuss larger issues (outreach, wages, collective process); there's

a weekly meeting of the whole food system; and there will soon be a study group. One of the workers reported "The meetings are more draining to me than just the work." So there's a lot of burnout. Making a desirable workplace doesn't result automatically from putting control into the hands of the workers. Still, making a desirable workplace is a foundation essential to making a desirable society.



"Any threat to Amerika from the food system won't come from a competitive volume, since we could be shut down for any number of reasons if our volume got threatening. Rather it's possible through education and organizing. We try to see education work as being as important as cheese moving, but it gets shuffled aside a lot because of the amount of physical work there is to do." Red Star is talking now about setting aside one afternoon a week to self-educate through reading, recognizing that as real work and nothing that you can't educate the community before you've educated yourself.

The Food System is interested in reaching as many people as possible ("building a mass base for socialism.") The way to do that is to get people into the food stores. Many of the poor people in the communities the People's Food System is serving share their anti-capitalist feeling. But they don't always seek the kind of food offered in the Food Systems stores. A large sector of the community doesn't have time to do their own canning or spend hours making a homemade dinner. The dilemma is how to serve them while recognizing that the conditions for workers in the canneries are poor, that lead seeps into canned goods, and that the food is no longer nutritious after all the processing it's subjected to. Many people depend on meat in their diet, yet through the Food System would be served by those who recognize the waste of grain that goes into producing meat and who know about the poisons that are injected into animals destined for the table. Many shoppers cannot afford to subsidize the third of a crop organic farmers might lose by not spraying. Sometimes the solution for reaching everyone is to carry both organic and commercial, but it's not always so simple.

The food system turned down a merger with a church-connected buying club, consisting mostly of older third world women, because there was a lot of suspicion around their selling shit food, such as Nestle's Quik. After a great deal of self-criticism, they have decided to complete the merger, some of them recognizing that "If

you see things in process, you're able to let go of a few ideas that are taken so seriously by you, almost to a point of rigidity, that you can't connect with those who you're trying to build something with. At some point we're not even going to have the luxury to debate over these things. People are going to get poorer and poorer and somehow we're going to have to learn to take care of each other.

You can have stuff in the store that you might not personally agree with, like canned foods, and then educate around them, because the point is to draw as many people into the store as you can, and then have literature about good nutrition and the politics of nutrition. Because otherwise, there's always going to be this elitist, in a sense, segment of people who know about food and say groovy, far out when they see a store, and other people who don't know what you're talking about and never get in."

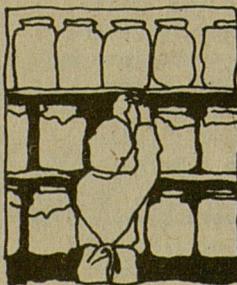
So maybe you don't always carry "good" food. But at least "one thing we know we're doing is trying to deliver food at a reasonable price, it's true value and not a manufactured value." What if this means charging more than Safeway?

"If there's enough education work done, people can understand, for example, why they should maybe pay 2¢ more for a pound of squash, but for some people there isn't a choice, even if they understand. Like people on welfare, who are living on such minimal amounts there isn't a real choice involved."

If people are thus forced, to make purchases based on their economic situation, they lose out in the long run.

"It's not always true that prices from agribusiness sources are cheaper. A lot of times they'll do a few things cheaply so that you'll get fooled into thinking their prices are cheaper, then they raise their prices or make all the other prices higher. So for a long time what drew people into our stores were the cheaper prices even though the sources were organic. A number of factors, like no wages, kept the prices down. When you pay really low prices for food, someone gets exploited for those savings. Farmers or brokers are underpaying the people that do the work. So I see no choice but to pay what the food is worth."

This leaves the foodworker no choice but to educate about the implications of a purchase other than its cost.



## THE WAY FOOD IS PRODUCED AND WHO PRODUCES IT

"There's almost no way the Food System can support farmworkers directly."

If the food system is going to provide a real alternative to corporation controlled

agribusiness and monopolies, it seems clear it should not be buying its food from them. But supporting small farmers has been controversial. It's hard to say what proportion of the food system is dependent on agribusiness. Many grains and beans come from small farmers, but some foods, like oats, have to go through a press which only big mills can afford. The cheese distributors can't get most of their products directly from the farmers. Produce directly from the farmer is difficult, since it's perishable and the food system only deals in small quantities. Many farmers have to contract their stuff out to guarantee they'll be able to sell it all. For instance, there's a cherry tomato co-operative near Fresno that has forty acres, and the PFS could market perhaps one per cent of that. So, a lot of the Food System's produce comes from the giant commercial produce terminal which serves the whole city and outlying areas.

Yet everyone feels pretty unified around buying from farmers as much as possible. This agreement was reached only after some difficult struggles and examinations around some big contracts made by the Co-operating Warehouse for such grains as soy beans and wheat. A couple of years ago they contracted with a farmer from Idaho for pinto beans. Let us imagine they paid 35¢ a pound, the amount calculated to cover his costs.

"At one point the bean market went up to about, say 60¢ a pound; the farmer still got 35¢. Then it dropped to about 21¢; the farmer still got 35¢. This demonstrated to a lot of people the benefits of paying to a farmer what his or her costs really are. You have a stable price and pay for the needs of the farmers, instead of the buyers and the farmers both being victims of the market and the forces of the market. There was conflict for a time in the Food System when some newcomers, who only saw the farmer getting more than the market price for his beans, objected. Many of the current conflicts got focused on this issue. But after much thought and discussion, most agreed this is the best way to deal with small farmers, who are some of the greatest victims of capitalism.

At any rate, the number of farmers the Food System deals with will always be small compared to the number of farmworkers whose work they depend on. The only way the Food System can support farmworkers directly is by being on the picket line with them during strikes. Basically, it can only support them indirectly, by raising money, by publicity in stores, by supporting the few workers' co-operatives there are, by collecting signatures on a petition to put an initiative on the ballot and by donating food and money to farmworkers' meetings. This is seen as token but needed support. How can you buy from the farmer who allows the non-landowning farmworkers their fair share when there essentially aren't any such farmers?

The hard truth is, there is no such thing as a righteous banana. And the green beans you're buying probably aren't much better. I picked beans one morning a few years ago, run-

ning races against the friends I'd gone with. I quit after 4 hours and collected the 75¢ I had earned. That was the one day of my life I stepped on the other side of the exploiter/exploited fence separating food workers from food buyers. The fence is made up of the middlepeople who make certain neither side really benefits from the arrangement, only the middlepeople. The food system, as distributor, is mostly stuck on the same side of the fence as those of us at the consumer end of the food chain.



It's hard to say what's sexist about the food system. It's certainly reached a point where it's not blatantly sexist; there are no sex roles in the various jobs, but some women feel it in styles, how people relate to each other. For instance:

"In terms of rhetoric, people always assume we're anti-sexist. But in practice, it doesn't always come down to that. Within a collective the men usually have the business skills and a lot of them are reluctant to share those skills in different ways. In the main Food System meeting there's a real male dynamic happening, them being most articulate and competitive ('my ideology's better than yours.'). The women's meetings we've started are totally different than that. Though some of the workers have seen women's meetings and struggling around sexism as being low priority, the meetings have helped us all to narrow the gap between our notions of revolution and what we do on a day to day basis."

This kind of energy is being expressed not only through discussions and women's meetings within a mixed collective, but in the formation of an all women's collective, Amazon Yogurt. One of the Amazon workers shared her political analysis:

"The women in Amazon relate to each other in a less abstract way, a less competitive way. We touch each other more physically and talk about how our real life experiences relate to the kind of politics we want to be doing. We talk more about ourselves than the masses, for we are the masses. I'm trying to find the power within me, but by doing that I'm not ignoring the starving people. I know their oppression oppresses me. That's why we're putting together this yogurt factory. We've all got to work on alleviating the conditions that prevent us from taking power unto ourselves. We can't lead the masses, that still oppresses them, denies them space to seize their own power. Men and male-identified women don't come up with this kind of analy-

sis. They sit and argue about rhetoric and abstract ideals."

The Amazon women will be making acidophilous yogurt without honey and stabilizers, the only such yogurt to be produced on the west coast. While more expensive than Safeway's, it will be cheaper than other nutritious yogurts. They joke about calling it feminophilous yogurt and publicizing its beneficial effects on yeast infections ('men would never think of that!'). They're giving energy to the spiritual side of working with food. The same woman who described her political views declared:

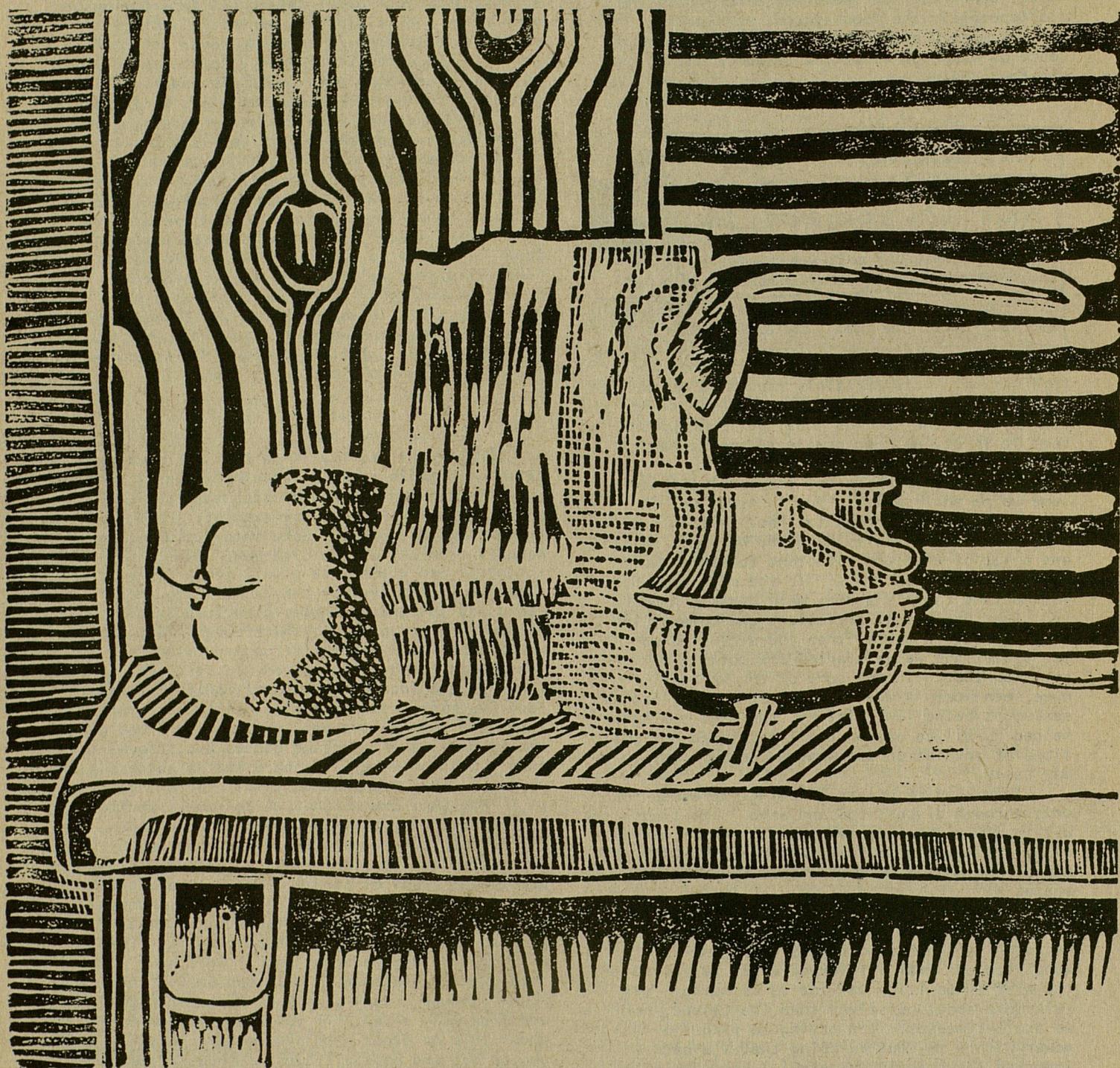
"I'm concerned with the whole person, from the molecules that make up my body to the way I function as an individual in the community and in this society to the way I and my sisters function to the way we as humans deal with the cosmos. Hence the statement that we've discovered the political connection between women and food. You have to pay attention to everything, like where your raisins come from for baking bread and what they do to your body when you eat them. This is something we've learned only by being women working with women, not in any other place. This is coming from a feminist, holistic way of looking at things."

What's the reality? The holistic view is that "an organic or integrated whole has a reality independent of and greater than the sum of its parts." From this viewpoint, the Food System can incorporate, take into its being and benefit from all of the divergent views, strengths and weaknesses of all those who participate in it, if they can evolve into an organic and integrated whole. The food System is learning and growing, which doesn't happen without pain and without struggle. I have focused too much, perhaps, on the struggle, ignoring the incredible success manifest in the Food System's tremendous flexibility, it's present good health, its very existence. I could easily have taken the same quotes and information I set forth here to share what a success and a blessing the Food System is--offering us a long shot chance that we consumers won't be consumed by greed--our own or that of the Amerikan corporations. But my purpose has been more than to simply make us enthusiastic about what a few of us are doing. I have tried also to help us all participate in the process that generates the Food System's power, the process that justifies the hope they may find a successful and enduring path. So I have shared their "fanshen," their own self-criticism. To see clearly, we must look carefully and from many sides. If you wish to know more about this or other food systems and networks and co-ops and possibilities, I suggest the following resources:

THE NEWSLETTER COLLECTIVE  
3030 20th Street  
San Francisco, California 94110

EARTHWORK - An urban center for the study of land and food  
1499 Potrero Street  
San Francisco, California

♀



# MAKING A FARMER'S MARKET

The farmers' market is an ancient concept which is again finding a place in our complicated food distribution system. There are many reasons for this return to direct marketing by the producer. In Mendocino County the primary motivations for forming a farmers' market seem to be a need for cash income for small land-owners and homesteaders, a desire for more local self-sufficiency, and a revulsion toward the wasteful, exploitative, corporate food industry. Apparently these concerns are felt by people of various ages and backgrounds for we have a very heterogeneous group.

Organizational meetings for the farmers' market started last fall. The Rural Institute and the Mendocino County Farm Advisor's Office initiated the meetings and continue to give support. The early meetings were largely group discussions and from these discussions the farmers' market group evolved. Some participants felt that there should be no organization, that things would simply happen. Since many people involved have had bad experiences with such attempts, this approach was quickly dropped. Once a consensus had been reached on the general form and goals of a farmers' market, a committee was asked to draw up bylaws based on that consensus. At this point people were asked to make a commitment to the group. A ten dollar membership fee was required and from then on only members were permitted a voice in the organization.

The bylaws contain a statement of purpose: "to create a rewarding situation for local food growers/producers, and thus encourage and support trends toward local foods grown for local consumption, a local food economy, and county self-sufficiency. Other purposes include to encourage the growth of craft oriented cottage industries...." The rest of the bylaws are a direct result of this statement. The Mendocino County Farmers Market is a co-operative organization made up of Mendocino County producers of agricultural products. Membership is also open to food processors and crafts people who live in Mendocino County. Commodities sold at the market place will be primarily agricultural in origin and will be bought from local producers for resale at the market. The sale of all non-member produced goods is subject to membership approval and can only be sold at the market by a member.

The members are responsible for meeting the expenses of maintaining a market place. The farmers' market is a project of The Rural Institute, a local non-profit corporation fostering "self-reliance through self-sufficiency" which supports and includes several projects furthering this aim. It derives non-profit status from this affiliation and did not need to form a separate legal entity to conduct business. Space at the market will be rented to members on a daily or seasonal basis. Each seller will provide his/her own stand. The stands will be removed at the end of the day. The market site is a vacant, tree lined lot on a main street. The lot has been rented to The Rural Institute for a nominal fee by a

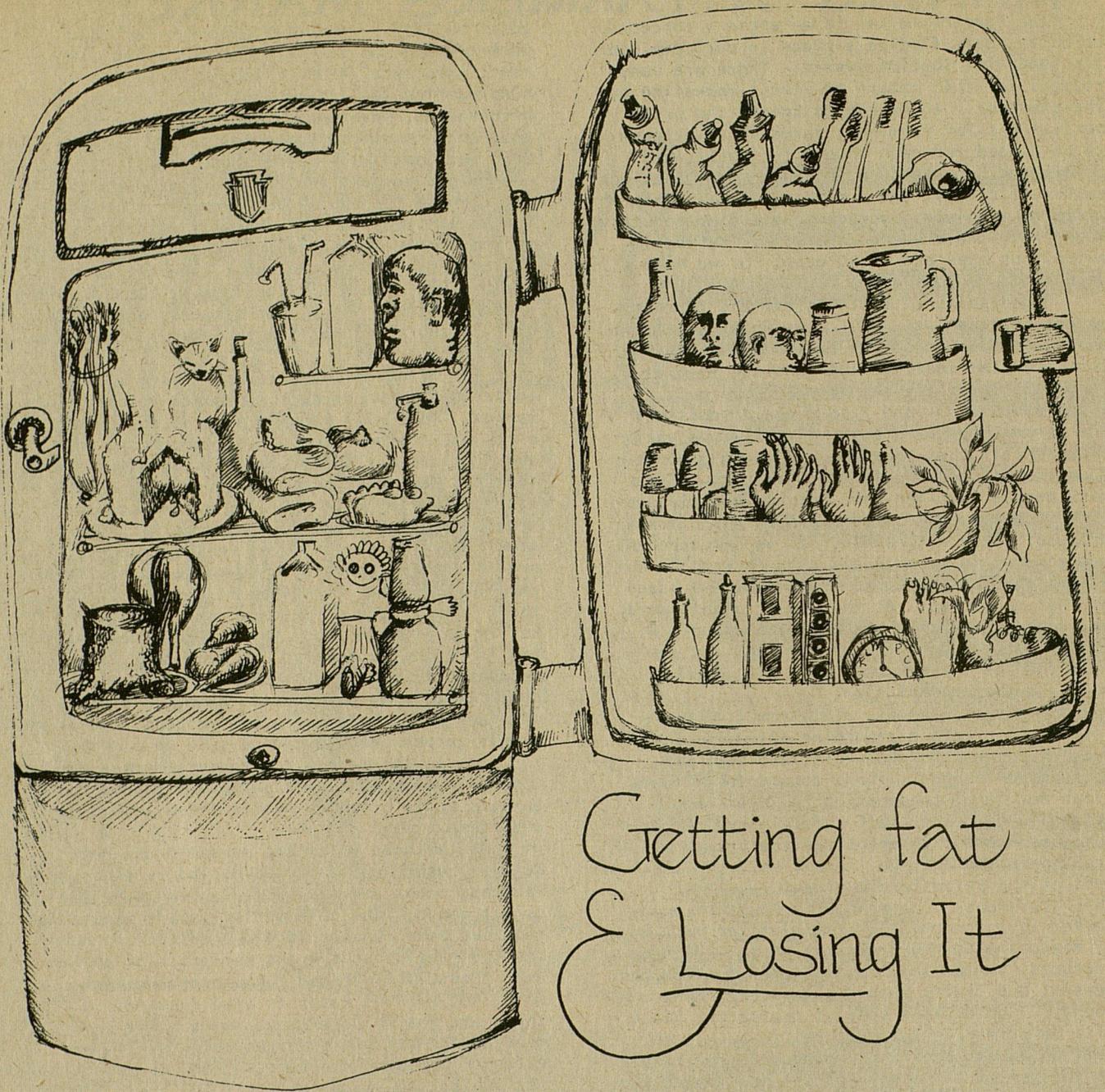
local realtor. Projected expenses for the market place for five or six months include rent, insurance, trash disposal, toilet and hand washing facilities, business license, site preparation, maintenance and water. We think that an income from space rentals of \$200 to \$250 per month will cover those costs.

Since members are from various parts of the county, there will be a variety of products for sale at the market. We will offer most of the common vegetables. Tree fruits, berries and grapes are promised too. In addition to the produce, there will be locally blended and roasted coffee, honey, cut flowers, eggs, rabbits, fish, sunflower seeds, herbs, hand milled lumber and crafts.

The bylaws provide for a pricing committee to set a minimum price for produce sold at the market. This will provide a guide for those of us who are not experienced in pricing goods and will prevent unfair competition within the market. Much discussion centered around the minimum pricing rule and also around how to handle excess produce from gardeners. Farmers grow crops to make a living while gardeners grow for their own use. A gardener can afford to sell goods for less than it cost to produce them. One of the purposes of the farmers' market is to promote truck farming as a new industry in Mendocino County. We felt that it was necessary to protect the farmers from unfair competition with gardeners. However, gardeners are encouraged to become members. Occasional excess garden produce can be sold to a member for sale at the market. A farmers' market group made up predominantly of gardeners rather than farmers would probably handle these issues in a different way.

As the opening of the market draws near we have become aware of the myriad rules, regulations, codes and laws which govern the sale of all goods. The sale of fruits and vegetables requires cold running water, a toilet and hand washing facilities for the sellers. If perishable foods like dressed rabbits or fish are sold, hot running water is also required. These are Health Department rules. The Department of Agriculture enforces weights and measures and grading standards. Food is generally not subject to State sales tax but there are some exceptions. The sale of taxable items requires a permit from the State Board of Equalization. We invited representatives from each of these agencies to one of our meetings to convey what is required of us. They were very cooperative and seemed more than willing to help.

Our Farmers' Market will succeed, I think, because it is an idea whose time has come for this area. The members have sharply differing viewpoints on many subjects but we are all willing to compromise when necessary. As is usual in organizational efforts, four or five people have done most of the day to day work necessary to keep things going. Of the thirty-nine people involved in the Mendocino County Farmers Market, fourteen are women. We have influenced the direction of the group from the beginning and we will continue to do so. ♀



## Getting fat & Losing It

Food--life giving, joyous, and an obese person's death. I love gardening, watching my plants grow and bloom, and I'm proud when the fruits and vegetables are large and delicious but food is not only my joy but also my problem. I overeat and I am fat! I have gained since my son's birth and have now reached a glorious figure of 70 pounds of excess fat. Not only is this a terrible load for my body to carry around ( stress on heart, etc.) but it's even worse for my head. When I'm down I feel like a fat blob, and fat people are definitely outcasts in our strong, healthy, young body society. Fat is many layers of insulation

to protect us from the outside world. Why are we fat? Remembrances of childhood experiences: After being spanked, having your parent make up to you by giving you a treat, usually sugar in some form.

After being disappointed about something, a parents or lovers promise unkept, being cheered up by a sweet.

Food ( all kinds) satisfying some inner desire for fulfillment, the need to be filled up..

Clearing your plate because others were starving.

Eating as much as you could because you weren't

sure when you would get to eat next?

Our parents, relatives and friends guide us into overeating and eating sugar until we become obsessed with the idea that food is a solution to our problems, to feeling depressed, dissatisfied or unloved. So we eat-eat-eat-, until we are fat-fatter-fattest.

I have been on a diet since I was in high school-starving myself with no breakfast, milk and apple at lunch, and possibly, a taco french fries, and coke if I went out to Jack in the Box for dinner. Even though I modeled at that time, I was convinced that I was fat. All my friends and I would spend hours talking about beautiful thin women and dieting. Our culture was conditioning us to be emaciated and sick. Luckily I had enough balanced meals at home and physical outside activities to avoid ruining my health altogether. Why does society destroy it's young women? Weak women can't fight back. Don't be a weak skinny model or hide behind layers of FAT-Be yourself.

Over the years I have tried Stillman's, Atkins, Fasting, diet pills, you name, it and I have done it. I would loose 30 pounds but then slowly put it back on again and eventually kept adding more each year from my depression and sense of failure.

Some aids to breaking our conditioning and our overeating, are Behavior Modification, Fat Women's CR groups, and clubs such as Weight Watchers.

The newest approach to overeating is "Behavior Modification". Many books and articles have been written about using behavior modification to find out the how and why of your overeating. They also state why "Fad" or "Crash" diets fail.

The average person goes on and off 1.4 diets per year. Diet colas and grapefruit juice, along with tons of carrots and celery, are typical diets. Fad or Crash diets, besides only working temporarily, can often cause physical problems such as, "headaches, dizziness, diarrhea, fatigue, indigestion, skin disorders, and constipation", not to mention the mental states of irritability and depression. You've been so good all week but then you can't resist that hot fudge sundae on Friday- then depressed with your failure, guilt riddled, you decide "I've blown it, I can't win," and proceed to gorge yourself the rest of the weekend.

Behavior Mod tells you to stop focusing on food and start evaluating the behavior that keeps you fat. Being overweight means consuming more calories than the body uses and those excess calories are converted into fat. Example- The average fat conversion formula is one pound of fat stored for every 3,500 excess calories, a little over 100 extra calories a day. A handful of peanuts or a glass of beer and in one month you're one pound heavier. It's taken me a number of years to reach my glorious overweight stage-but in one year it's possible to go from thin to plump without ever being gluttonous. As you become older you become less active and this has the same results as overeating. With extra pounds you become less active, adding more fat,

and so the cycle goes on..The heavier you are the more awkward you become and the more you fear falling and making a fool out of yourself. A fat body tries very hard not to draw attention to itself and its awkwardness. No matter how old you are or overweight you can still walk. Get out of the habit of parking at the front door of a store. Park a little ways away and walk. Don't have children run and get things for you, or take out the trash, you do it. The more you move the more you will feel like moving.

Most diets have lists of do's and don't's, but they usually tell us nothing about how to do the do's and avoid the don't's. You assume it's your willpower versus the pie or spaghetti! Unfortunately, even if I've restrained from eating sweets until I've lost 30lbs., I always eventually give in again to old habit patterns and soon have gained the weight back, feeling "I have no willpower."

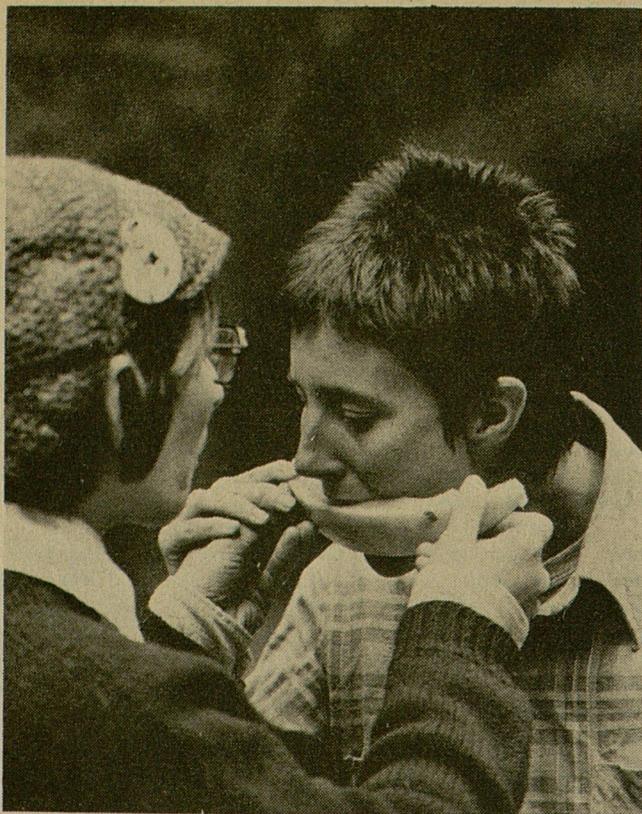
Changing your behavior does not require that you endure hunger pangs or nausea, headaches, or other side effects from crash diets. But it does require effort and long term commitment. Realistic changes in behavior will result in slower weight loss and new habit patterns which will keep the pounds from coming back. Analyse your problems: you are either eating too much, eating the wrong kinds of foods, or exercising too little. If you are like me, you're probably doing all three.

Step One- Write down everything you eat, what time you ate it, also what mood you were in at the time you ate, and how long it took you to eat. Also keep track of any exercising you do during the week. It sounds like a lot of work, but after a week you can sit down and study your bad habits in black and white. Yes, you did only have one egg, one piece of toast and a glass of orange juice for breakfast but you also had a midmorning snack of coffee, with cream and honey and a donut. One of my little bad habits is being freaked out after work and consuming half a box of cookies on my drive home, or in general sneaking food in my car because no one can see me there.

Step Two- At the end of the week you might compute how many calories you ate in a day and check that number against the number you need for your desired weight. If the numbers agree, your problem may be inactivity rather than overeating. Most overweight people, however, consume too many calories because of "recreational eating". In our society food is often connected with recreation, relaxation, and release of tension. We have coffee, tea and sweets with our friends as we talk or play cards, we celebrate special occasions with cakes and big meals and drinking, and eating often accompanies watching T.V. or Reading. My worst nemesis feeling rejected and then satisfying myself with something sweet.

After listing the problem areas, attempt to change them, but not so radically as to cause failure; if we were perfect we wouldn't be fat. Example: Instead of eliminating all eating in my car, I now keep a good supply of fruits in the car. (sweet but not as fattening as cookies)

cont.



I've tried reducing the temptations at home. Goodies I bought on the pretext of being for the family were most often consumed almost entirely by me. Also an overweight person may hate exercising but substituting short walks for those afternoon snacks might also mean eating less at meals since moderate exercise tends to lessen appetite. I've found just getting out of the house (ie: kitchen) walking out to the garden, weeding, or watering really helps me. Keeping busy with my music is essential to stopping my eating. Out of sight - out of mind.

Keeping a daily log helps me really know how I am doing and where I still need improvement. After 3 or 4 weeks you should have enough data to see trends, whether you're a recreational eater, social eater, or just can't resist the sight and smell of food. You can slowly change your thinking habits as well as overt behavior. Stay out of the kitchen, have someone else prepare the meals and cleanup or prepare very simple quick meals so you spend as little time as possible in the kitchen. I have become a good cook but as I chop and dice I consume a lot of food. (not to mention nibbles off my son's plate when he is through eating.) Remembering I'm cooking for three and not six is also helpful.

Thin people eat as much as they want and then stop, overweight people are influenced by how much food has been put in front of them. Try eating on a salad plate instead of filling your dinner plate. Don't gobble food, eat more slowly; it takes twenty minutes after eating before your stomach will register dinner so hold off on the second helping and dessert, until you

are sure you are really hungry and not just shoveling it in!

There is no magic to behavior modification principals but it takes concentration and serious effort over a long period. It may mean permanent changes in your lifestyle but it can end dieting forever.

A successful method for acquiring support from other fatties plus a reconditioning of eating habits is a club such as Weight Watchers. These clubs are made up of people who have already lost weight (sometimes as much as 200 pounds) and members like yourself who are trying to lose weight. Through a specific diet, weekly meetings, and group support, you are guided into a new life of eating and cooking reasonably, losing weight slowly, and reeducating yourself to be healthy.

An important part of my fight against fat has been my fat woman's consciousness raising group. Whether we are 20 pounds or 70 pounds overweight, we all share the same problems and conditioning. Once a week we meet to rap, listen, walk, or do yoga together. I've discovered I'm not so very unusual in my insecurities and lack of self-esteem. We talk about our fears and try to discover why we are hiding behind layers of fat. We talk about how others see us, whether they avoid us or attempt to relate to us as to any other person. Our sexual fears and fantasies slowly emerged as the the group became very close. The old joke about a lover being crushed to death is not so funny to a fatty, and building up layers of fat to protect you from rejection is a reality for many fat women. Watch out - there may be an uncontrollable sexual-sensual being hiding behind that fat and who knows what would happen if she were exposed? Let her out. The illusion of protection isn't worth the danger of being fat.

In the group each week we try to deal with our problems, fears, emotions, and lack of self-esteem. Cutting through the bullshit and excuses takes a while; and, although we sometimes hit hard, the group is always there with love and support. Weighing in each week is also important because the scales don't lie. Fat women have used the same excuses for a long time, so in the group we try to get past them to examine the real problems and fears. Some of my worst fears, now that I've explored them in the context of the group, are becoming easier to deal with. Our talks have broken down some of my layers of insulation, although I'm still a long way from totally understanding why I keep doing this to my body. I guess the head - body connection still needs work, but hopefully by next summer I will be wearing shorts to play tennis, instead of long pants because I have no shorts big enough.

One leader of fat consciousness raising groups has said that she feels that a dieter's chief problem is her husband. "What you ought to do," she counseled one dieter, "is get rid of that bastard; then you could lose some weight." The next week, the dieter had lost five pounds. "I really lost 185 pounds," she said. "I took your advice and got rid of him. I figured that he

was deliberately trying to keep me fat so that he could have a good time needling me about my lack of will power. It took me twenty years to figure it out, but I'm well rid of him." (From Ms. America: Put Down and Ripped Off by Nora Scott Kinzer).

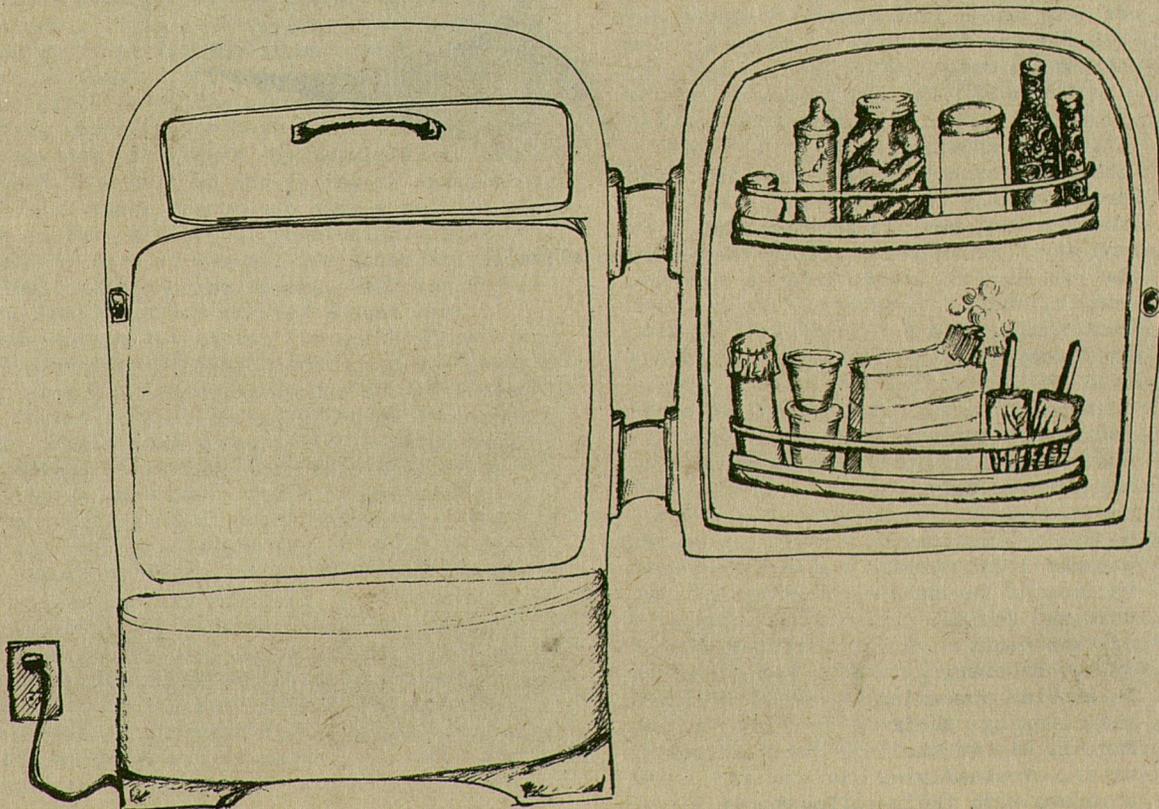
Whether it's a lover, husband, parents, or friends, don't let them keep you fat. If the people you are living with can't help you - get out. A large problem for me has been constantly having to deal with food (shopping, cooking, cleaning up), as I am expected to in the traditional role of wife and mother. I have been conditioned from youth that as a woman I am the provider of the family's food. I can remember watching my mother slave away after work, going through guilt feelings because she hated to cook but knew it was her role. As soon as I started high school, I can remember cooking to relieve some of the pressure on her. We also ate out as much as we could afford so she wouldn't have to cook. My mother gave up art to raise a family and I feel she should have had an alternative. Underneath the surface, she resented us for making her a slave. My grandmother, however, made the kitchen her court and ran it as a Queen. Turning out a tasty meal was a great accomplishment and justified her spending hours over a hot stove.

From this mixed background, I got married at nineteen and suddenly became the food provider. I'll never forget one of my mother-in-law's wedding presents, a beginning cookbook which included instructions for boiling water. I felt the pressures beginning for myself. Food became an ob-

session. I bought cookbooks galore (I must have about 15) and hoped the energy I put into food would get me the positive notice I needed: "Oh you are such a good cook" - "My, this is delicious". Those beginning years of cooking, when I burned half of what I cooked and ate the rest crisp on the outside and raw on the inside, sent me into a state of frenzy. I became driven, a compulsive competitor with all other good cooks. I had to become a good cook or be a failure. I see now how stupid those hours of agony and frustration were, not to mention the pounds I added while stuffing my face in my depression.

It's taken me ten years of slow realization to figure it out but I only cook now for the joy of it, not because I have to. One of my overweight realizations was that I have to stop dealing with food all the time. I stopped fixing elaborate meals and the rest of the family learned to cook because I told them I was finished. It is each member of the family's responsibility to see that the meals get done, not just mine. Of course, we still have peanut butter sandwiches for dinner every once in a while when everyone is too tired to cook, but that sure beats the anger and resentment that I felt when I had to cook. Not cooking has helped my food obsession a lot, so I highly recommend getting out of the kitchen as a way to lose weight and gain some peace of mind. ♀

Some of this material was derived from:  
Overweight by Jean Meyer  
Psychology Today, May 1976  
Permanent Weight Control, by Michael & Kathryn Mahoney.



first bananas,  
now oranges,  
all the things  
I don't or  
won't eat,  
meat that I can't  
(stomach)  
my stomach  
connecting so intimately  
to my heart,  
like a man's, I suppose.

all the substances  
with which  
I am not able to  
nourish my  
substance.

This time, seeing the movie, titled The Orange,  
I know that  
this morning (eating one, anticipating  
seeing the movie with you)

will be the last.  
One solitary orange  
sits on the fruit platter,  
kept company only by  
a pomegranate,  
waiting to be loved with,  
and a lemon,  
sour end of,  
and it will not become part of me.

"I cannot eat  
oranges anymore,"  
I tell you and you say  
indignantly  
for the movie, so succulent,  
has made the juices  
of your mouth (and cunt)  
run for the thought  
of eating one,

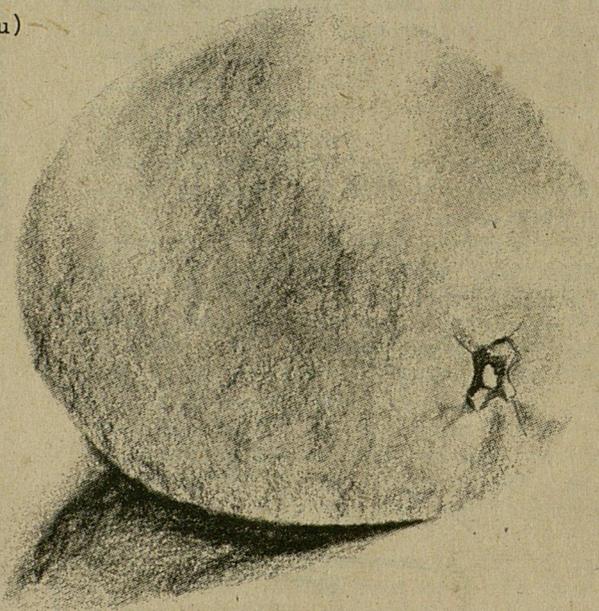
"WHY NOT?"

"They are too alive,"  
I answer, knowing  
that the connection with meat is  
probably only obvious  
to me. "Ah, you are so beautiful,"  
you say, "to answer 'because they are too alive!'"

And now I  
wonder, what  
next, which fruit  
or vegetable  
will be lost  
to me,  
not a gain to  
tree or vine  
but perhaps only  
waste.

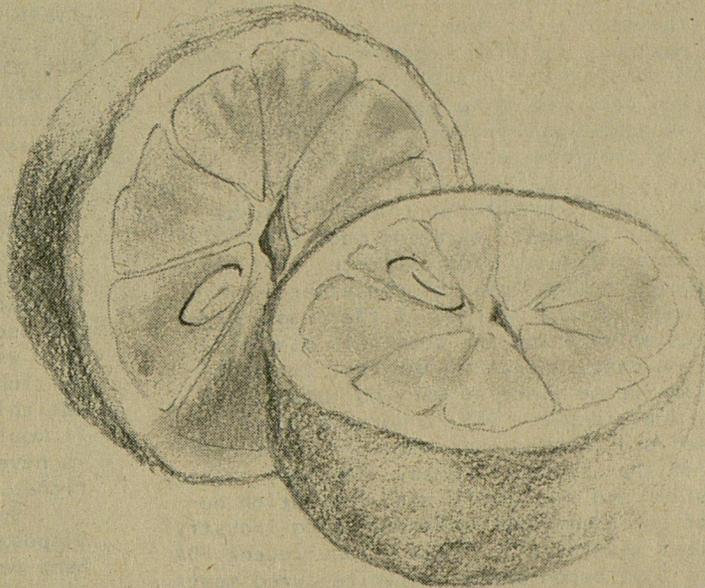
Wasted fruit, the  
bananas I don't eat  
because of Neruda's  
poem are dumped  
off the docks  
by the cluster,  
tarantulas screaming  
and clinging, their  
fur all wet in the  
water, eventually  
to drown with their yellow homes.

# ORANGE



Iceberg lettuce, I never liked anyway,  
 wilts in Safeways across the nation while Gallo wine  
 turns to vinegar giving those foolish enough to buy it hangovers.  
 My favorite Japanese honey sesame cookies  
 are not even food for the whales  
 whose death I protest.  
 The meat just walks  
 around, mooing, wait!  
 this started to  
 to be a love poem  
 about the fact that  
 the only thing I had  
 left to eat, so moist  
 and succulent, after giving up  
 oranges, so satisfying  
 after giving up  
 bananas, was  
 you.

but I can't  
 keep control,  
 can't make myself  
 be a poem  
 anymore than I  
 can make myself  
 eat this beautiful  
 living orange.




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## Femini sm & Vegetarianism

Nearly as difficult as searching the world's sea cliffs for fossil evidence of the geographical distribution of an extinct sea creature, is the effort to find the pieces of the true pictures of our own human past. By scratching about in the history (his story) of archeology and literature, Elizabeth Gould Davis finds that "the killing and eating of animals by man is a recent phenomenon and is related in time to the patriarchal revolution. Greek myth records that it was not until the Bronze Age, almost within human memory, that man defied the matriarch and learned to eat meat."<sup>1</sup>

Now imagine for yourself a world where there were no domesticated animals, no slaughtering, no violent bloodshed, and no "nurturing" of our bodies from products springing from such actions. Feels good doesn't it? We must remember that food is so much more than what we see on our plates each day. It is a **formative** source of physical and psychic energies. The attitudes that go into growing it, harvesting it and preparing it are all part of the energies that you take in when you eat. This is one of the reasons wild foods are so nourishing. They are of the natural world and cared for by the earth's angels: earth, water, sunlight, and air. Before the earth was polluted with poison chemicals and synthetics, women understood the peaceful way of gathering plants and also began cultivating their own plants. Even

after the human race became omnivorous, and men became hunters, women still provided the major portion of the diets in the old ways. Meat was a treat rather than a primary food source.<sup>2</sup> Women are traditionally the givers and nourishers of life rather than the takers. I wonder if it is unnatural for women to eat meat.

But whatever the past, we do have a digestive capability for a meat and vegetable diet. In the case of a survival crisis, I suspect this would be an advantage. However, in our present world which is ridden with violence and bloodshed, I feel there's a strong need for reducing it in whatever ways we may. Vegetarianism is such a way. Not only can we help reduce violence but we can ease the world famine since it takes 8 pounds of vegetable protein to form each pound of beef protein we consume.<sup>3</sup> Since 1940, the United States has more than doubled its meat consumption from 50 pounds a year per person to 115 pounds per person. Interestingly enough, the extent of our present carnivorousness is not even an inherent part of our modern culture. Could this increased meat consumption be one contributing factor to the rise of cancer, psychological problems, and random violence of the last 25 years?

There is no question that becoming a vegetarian is a difficult and major life change for many. We have all been brought up and are living in the middle of a nation of big meat eaters.

How many times have I been out to a restaurant with someone and wished I ate meat just to make ordering or even finding a decent meal simpler?

This society gives no help to struggling vegetarians except for a slightly lower grocery bill. It is a way of life for Americans beginning with the meat Gerber baby foods. This society has done an excellent job of removing the meat eater from the source of her food. How many children learn how their food comes to them? Animals are well hidden, chopped up and packaged in cellophane.

I suppose I was lucky that the switch to not eating meat came easily while I was still living in the city. Not only had I felt killing animals to be wrong but there were all sorts of "rational" discoveries being made about the harmfulness of meat. For instance, meat eating can give you a high level of cholesterol in your blood. When I learned of the drugs given to fatten animals and the chemicals used in processing meat, I didn't want that extra pollution inside me since so many pollutants are already unavoidable. DES, a hormone found in most beef and chicken, has been proven to cause cancer of the cervix in women. How many sisters will suffer and die in the next generation because of our commercial meat producing industry? The latest meat hazard I read of was recent FDA findings that bacon and all nitrite-cured meats such as ham, hot dogs, bologna, etc. contain one of the most potent cancer causing agents known. BEWARE, BE AWARE sisters of what you eat!

So while I was in the city I went over to a milk, egg and vegetable diet with no subsequent body freak-outs or meat cravings.

When I moved to the country and began gardening and acquiring goats and chickens, my relationship to food changed drastically. My food source became the garden and animals rather than the local co-op store and my connection to it became my labor and soul rather than my money. The food cycle became an earth cycle.

Coming from the caged place of an animal lover in the suburbs and suddenly finding myself with plenty of land for animals, my initial joy in getting some blinded me to the full implications of what it means to care for large numbers and varieties of animals. Currently, we raise chickens and goats for food, and keep horses, cats, and a dog for pleasure. When we bought our first goat does and hens, I didn't think much about what we'd do with old hens, young roosters and buck kids and by now we've had plenty. If one is involved with animals agriculturally, meat is part of that trip one way or another. And I've come to understand the meat eaters who raise their own animals or eat their excess animals. I personally could never raise livestock with the thought of meat in my mind as I cared for them, let alone knowing my final act with them would be a taking of their lives. But there are homesteaders who can do it and feel fine about it. I remain a vegetarian on the homestead primarily for what runs deepest in me, an aversion to killing. I also want to stay connected to what I am eating. For someone else to butcher what I eat removes me from too important a part of the food process.

But a decision against killing is not easy to live by on the homestead where animal "husbandry" is a major part of one's work. Situations might arise in which I would kill. I

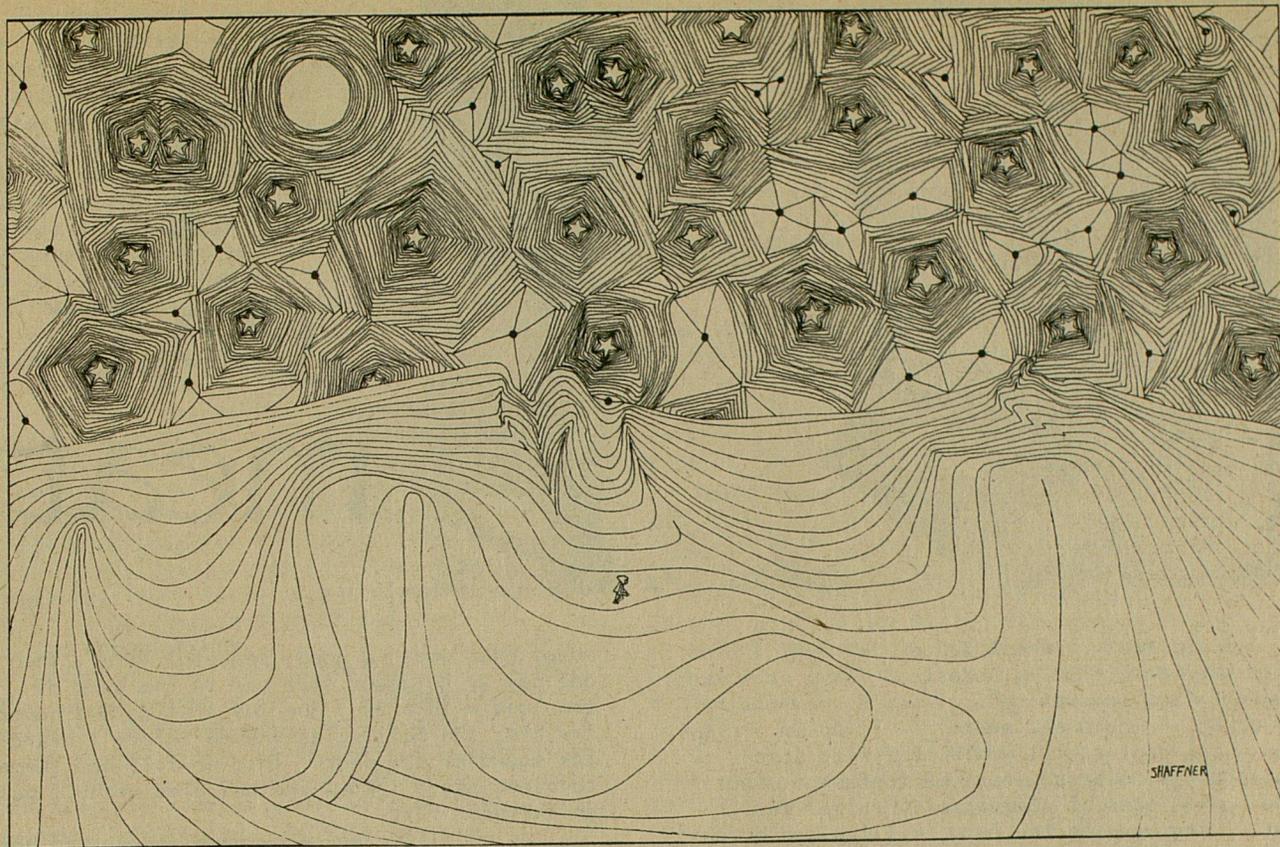
think of an animal in terrible prolonged pain and I might decide to kill it like I do mangled insects. Or if I was starving or couldn't feed my animals I might kill.

Well back to what we vegetarians do with our young male goats? Are we just "passing the bucks" when we take them to auction? We see no alternative at this point it seems to be a necessary evil and heavy side effect of the rest of our goat venture which is primarily a joyous one and provides excellent food in the form of milk and cheese.

I was surprised at my own thought the other day after I had been up to my elbow (literally) in death when a doe died in kidding and I cut her open and pulled out three dead kids, and then went on to examine her organs. They looked so rich and healthy, I flashed "Someone should eat this." Then I realized what a rich gift it would be for the earth. Giving to the earth is never wasting for she will always return her riches.

Speaking of gifts, this brings me to the disposal of our extra young roosters. Our old hens receive retirement benefits. Such pension plans hurt our chicken-egg ratio but nothing more. Efficient? - not exactly but you'd be surprised how many old hens just die on their own. We used to sell or give our extra roosters away to people in the valley, but the last couple of years we have taken them a few miles away to a water source and left them to their fate, usually racoons or bobcats in a matter of a week or two. The roosters are semi-wild Araucanas and know how to live well in the woods until they get grabbed from their tree perch some night. Horrible as the death image is, I do feel good about giving them to the wild animals, partially as an exchange for taking over their old haunts on much of this land we have "civilized" in whatever form.

After reading The Secret Life of Plants and tuning in more to my garden I wondered how I could continue "killing" plants. Is pulling up a carrot different from killing a chicken? Is dropping asparagus into boiling water different from dropping crabs in? I stumble over finding an answer just as I hesitate before I pull up a carrot. Plants don't move or squeal to my perception and they don't appear fearful or look at me with the eyes that reflect any animal's soul. Killing plants is something I would rather not do but something I am willing to do to obtain my food. Only root crops must one kill to harvest. Most plants one can eat from without killing. You can harvest outer leaves of leafy vegetables like lettuce or chard, or eat the fruits of a plant like tomato or eggplant. There are also those that we harvest after they die, e.g. garlic or winter squash. Also all grains are the end products (the seeds) or dormant beginnings of a life cycle. I relate to my vegetarian way of life as a gathering of gifts rather than a taking of lives.



I often wonder if animals can smell or otherwise sense meat eaters. I know they can sense intent. A friend who had been thinking about eating meat was watching a herd of deer and focused his hunting thoughts on one particular animal grazing in the middle of the others. After a short interval that deer snorted and ran off before any of the others showed any alarm. After he told this story, another man tried the same thing and the reaction was the same; the deer he focused on became visibly nervous and ran away. I want my encounters with animals to be as clear as possible and I feel a meat eating vibration would limit the contact, interfering with potential communication. I do understand a certain sort of powerful communication that can exist between the hunter and the hunted when there is respect for the prey and a fair chance for its survival but such relationships are sharply defined. The only hunting I can empathise totally with is when one needs the animal, e.g., in the extreme north where edible plants are few and winters long.

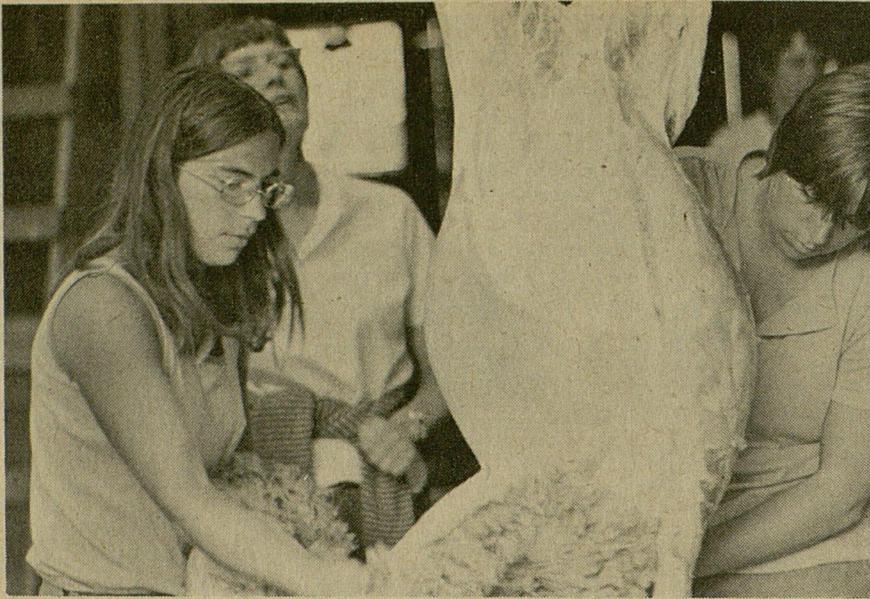
A challenge to my way of life came recently from a couple who only hunt and gather food. They stressed the importance of freedom for all beings up to their moment of death and felt any domestication of animals or cultivation of plants was a form of slavery. A valid viewpoint. However, it seems to me, we have actually bred plants and animals who are not found anywhere in the wild and that therefore they are linked by their very existence to humans. We support them and they support us, an exchange of energies even though the life and death power between us

belongs to people. It feels like a valid connection between people and animals.

That link for some homesteaders encompasses the animal as meat and if that feels right for you then it is. But in no way is the mass deportation of animals, packed into trucks so tightly they can't even move, to huge slaughterhouses where killing is a business, to packaging their parts in cellophane, justifiable. To think of the end products as nourishment for body and soul is absurd. I would urge you to become aware of what you take in and try a vegetarian diet just to see if it doesn't make you feel higher. Peace. ♀

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Davis, Elizabeth Gould, *The First Sex*, G.P. Putmans Sons, 1971, p. 137, Penguin Edition.
2. The exception to this is northern people whose main food source is meat but whose populations (living in snowy climates) always remained very small.
3. The people-power potential for social action here is astounding. If Americans reduced their meat consumption by 15 percent, or for a year one day a week went vegetarian it would free 15 million tons of grain for direct use by human beings - a figure three and one half times the total amount of food aid projected by the US for 1975. From: Maya Pines article "Breaking the Meat Habit: in Food for People, Not Profit, ed. Catherine Lerza and Michael Jacobson, 1975, by the Center for Science in the Public Interest.



# I eat meat

I eat meat. Almost all of the meat I ate this year came from my homestead farm: chicken, turkey, lamb and venison. I don't know whether or not I would eat meat if I lived in a city now. I expect that I would, but with some guilt about doing so and some confusion about the healthiness of commercially raised meat. But living here on the farm, killing and butchering are fundamental realities that I know well and accept clearly.

Three years ago I decided that I had to learn to kill if I was to continue eating meat. This was not a moral imperative, but a personal one. I sent my lambs and goat kids off to butchers and stockyards and I wanted to know what that meant, what I was doing. There is no way to live with domesticated animals and not be involved with death. Almost all of the young males must be slaughtered and there are the older, "cull" animals which must be killed or sold, unless one chooses to spend money on the luxury of free retirements. One becomes involved with death either remotely (by putting an animal up for sale and not actually experiencing the consequences) or very directly (literally with bloody hands). For me, the latter way is best. I know how my animals die and when and where. What I don't need for my own use, I try now to sell to friends or to slaughter for acquaintances. I feel better doing it myself than sending my animals off to auctions and slaughterhouses.

I learned to butcher from my neighbors, two brothers in their eighties. The first time was probably as hard and as meaningful as it will ever be. She was Diesel, a "bummer" lamb I had raised on a bottle. Her mother was killed by dogs when the lamb was a month old and a nearby rancher gave her to me to raise. From the first, I knew she would eventually be slaughtered as she was a mutton-type sheep not suitable for my wool-type flock. Every day for two months I fed her on a bottle, cared for her, loved her and knew that I would someday kill her. She lived eight months as happy as any

sheep ever does, a good, peaceful life. Then one day my neighbor shot her in the back of the head with a 22. She was grazing and never saw him; she fell, glassy-eyed before I heard the sound of the shot. Then he slit her throat to bleed her. I knew she had died without pain and without fear.

As my sister and I skinned and gutted her, I kept looking at her saying, "This is Diesel; I have taken her life." I felt very conscious, humble and thankful. Later that night, I found that I was very shaken. When I closed my eyes, I would see Diesel falling dead or Diesel's body being skinned. This was a very intense, but not a negative experience. I did not feel bad about what I had done, but I was feeling all of it. The act of killing is one we are very removed from in this society; for the first time, I was experiencing my place in the cycle of life and death. My sister was more matter of fact. She was no less conscious but killing did not seem to have the same personal and emotional reverberations for her.

As we butchered, our neighbors taught us to waste nothing. They ate the heart and kidneys we were unaccustomed to. The head and intestines were buried in the garden to become fertilizer. The skin was stretched for tanning. I had not thought of tanning but it became clear that now I had to learn. Waste when one has killed seems as close to a sin as anything I know in my atheist world.

Everytime I ate "lamb" for the next year, I knew I was eating Diesel. The smell of "meat" became that of flesh for me. When looking at a chop, I saw her backbone and ribs and remembered cutting. This is a state of consciousness that seems to have been an irrevocable change. All meat is flesh to me now. I feel good about that.

About a year after my first butchering experiences, I was cutting up some venison for stew and experienced an intense revulsion. I could see the newly dead buck before me, smell the blood in the meat. I did not want that

death and that flesh inside me. I was surprised by the long-delayed reaction. I had expected these feelings when Diesel died, not a year later before some long frozen and nearly anonymous stewing meat. But though the feelings didn't come when expected, they should have been expected. It is very heavy for most city raised Americans to become directly involved with killing their own food and I was no exception. I forced myself to eat the stew that night as I have a private commitment to eat what I have killed. For several months after that the thought, sight or smell of meat filled me with revulsion. I quit eating it altogether and thought, "Well, here it is, you will finally have to become a vegetarian." I never eat meat more than once or twice a week and have a large garden, so this was not a major change. Then towards the end of summer came the time when I had to send my wethered (castrated) lambs and goat kids off to auction. For days I thought about the choices and found that I was ready once more to do my own slaughtering. I want to raise sheep and goats and that is one of the consequences.

I garden with as much attention as I raise animals. I have seen a columbine I admired and talked to shoot out four more blooms in less than twelve hours, where there had been no buds at all. I have seen a cabbage I was particularly fond of grow twice as big as any other in the row. My experience of plants is that they are as "alive" and sensitive as many animals. I can honestly say that it is sometimes harder for me to pull up a cabbage or cut the heart out of a broccoli plant that I have tended, nourished, and loved, than it is to kill a young rooster that I have no particular relationship to. All eating involved me to some degree or another with killing.

I have killed quite a few animals since that first experience with Diesel. I have cut the heads off of chickens and a turkey; shot and slit the throats of sheep mauled by dogs. I have yet to shoot a healthy sheep or goat in order to eat it, that deeper step into death will come this summer. But I doubt it will change my experience of butchering. Killing a chicken or turkey, slitting the throat of a wounded sheep have remained momentous acts for me. There are minutes of standing with hatchet or knife poised, as I feel my responsibility and weigh the consequences. Killing has to be a clear and reverent action; it has never become easy or routine. When I killed the turkey, it began squawking after I severed its neck. I stood absolutely horrified at the thought that it might be suffering, that it was not "dead." What I learned was that death is not a simple clear break with life. I cannot escape the experience of the dying - the blood, the muscle spasms, the lungs involuntarily "squawking". Through doing my own slaughtering, I come to a richer awareness of my place on the earth. And I know that as I am now a consumer, so too will I some day be consumed.

There are still places of uncertainty and confusion in me, though. This winter eigh-

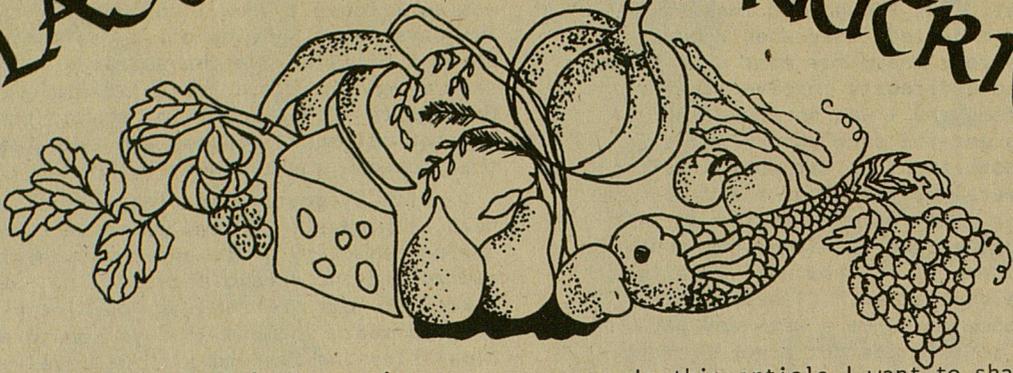
teen of my sheep were torn up by dogs. I had to kill each of them as they lay in shock. As I killed them, I wondered if I should bleed and gut them; but the pain of the experience was so intense I knew I could never eat them. Two days later, seeing all those bodies piled up on a hillside for the buzzards, I realized that my emotions had led to terrible waste. Faced with such a situation again, I would call all the neighbors to come and take the meat so that someone would benefit.

With my goats comes the further battle of head with heart. I read of homesteaders slaughtering old dairy goats and can understand and appreciate the sensibleness of it. Statements like, "If your milker gives you ninety pounds of good meat, she has done you one great final blessing besides all the lovely kids and milk she gave you. Her life ends in a spirit of respect and thankfulness..." make infinite sense to me. But as I am now faced with the old age of my first goat, I find that I cannot yet face killing and eating her. I can see that it can be quite righteous to eat an animal one has known and loved deeply, but I am not at that place now. What I'll do in another year or so, when she no longer milks enough to pay for her feed, I don't know. Practicality is not such a cruel rule as it may seem, for it means that all the remaining animals will be well fed, housed and cared for. One has to accept responsibility for all of them, those that will live and those that will die.

I don't believe in moral imperatives about food. I've seen too many rotten toothed honey eaters, self-righteous vegetarians and defensive meat eaters. But I do want to say to other meat eaters that the experience of butchering can be a tremendously deep and positive one. Butchering is not a sin, but an inevitable part of the domestication of animals. One of the most exciting things I've ever done is to look at a plate and know exactly where all the food came from and what it is. I am connected to and thankful for the butter, the potatoes, the broccoli, and the lamb. I get impatient with meat eaters who say "Oh? I never could!"; (one has lost a lot of life when one cannot face clearly the implications of one's daily choices).

For non-farm dwellers, I urge as much consciousness as possible in the buying of meat. All of the indictments of the wastefulness of eating a pound of beef that was produced by eight pounds of grain are true, as are the indictments of the carcinogenic chemicals added to most commercial beef and chicken. But one can buy lamb, which is raised on grass not grain, and fish. One can seek out health food stores and alternative food distribution systems, or even deal directly with farmers, to obtain healthily-raised surplus animals. We don't need to eat a half a pound of wastefully produced and poisoned meat a day (as the average American now does), but centuries of domestication have given us animals whose flesh we can feel good about eating. It is a gift to be thankful for. ♀

# THE LAST WORD ON NUTRITION



I want to begin my article on nutrition by explaining how I came to be called a nutritionist. I earned this title after studying nutrition at a large university where I was barraged with chemical formulae, re-programmed about how to be a professional (and above all, to respect the "doctor's authority"). I have been changed by the whole process. It's hard to look back and remember who I was before it all.

I remember reading books by Adelle Davis, and getting very fired up. If I became a nutritionist, then I could learn to prescribe the exact food which would magically eradicate people's physical ailments. I would be able to take a sample of someone's carrot to my house and grind it up. Then I would tell them exactly how much vitamin A was in it. Those were my ideas back then; now my sights have been lowered a good deal. Vitamin C will not magically cure polio. In fact, most of the relationships between diet and physical health are subtle and long-term. I learned that the analysis of a carrot takes elaborate scientific procedure and equipment and that I didn't want to spend my life in a laboratory.

Some of the reasons why I entered the nutrition field have stayed with me very strongly. Those are:

--a belief that what goes into our mouths is crucially important for our bodies and our spirits.

--the knowledge that 'western medicine' has always devalued the importance of nutrition. It's not even offered in many medical schools. Perhaps this is partially because food has traditionally been in woman's domain. Also, preventive medicine is not nearly as profitable as surgical procedure or drugs.

--control over our food is rapidly being grabbed from our hands by the owners of corporations for their own profit. Everything I have learned about the politics and economics of food has pointed to the fact that we must fight back against the destruction of our food supply. Food, and our health in general, is one place where the profit system is sure to strike home in each of us.

In this article I want to share some of the things I've learned and thought about. They are a synthesis that some friends and I have tried to find between respect for the results of systematic, scientific research; knowledge that the American way of eating has to change; and a strong distrust for the propaganda of the food industry and agribusiness. You will have to make your own synthesis from what I write here and what your own body tells you.

I think that what happens to us before our food enters the mouth is very important--both to digestion and absorption and to how we think about eating. If there is tension at the table, the digestive tract becomes a reflection of that anxiety. Similarly, when I go through periods of eating on the run, it usually means that I'm not taking care of myself in general and I begin to devalue my food. A lot of these 'other' connotations attached to foods--beside it being a conglomeration of nutrients--get planted in early childhood and are very difficult to change. Certain emotions will associate with a particular food; food can mean love, reward, punishment, status, security. All of these factors affect what happens along the long, long tube called the digestive tract.

Once it is in the mouth, the food gets chewed and mixed up with saliva which contains an enzyme that digests starch. From now on the food encounters a series of enzymes. These are chemicals made of protein which speed up or make possible many chemical reactions.

You have probably heard the viewpoint that we should eat almost all of our foods in the raw state. It is true that some vitamins are destroyed by heat and that there is often loss of vitamins and minerals into the cooking water. However, there are enzymes present in food which are inactivated by cooking and these may be enzymes which destroy vitamins in the plant. We don't use these enzymes as such for processes in our own bodies. Our digestive tube does to them what it does to any other protein. It chops them up into amino acids for later use. Actually, cooking helps to speed up digestion for some foods. It opens up protein chains so that enzymes have more area to work with.

The stomach is basically a storage organ where food is held and passed slowly into the small intestine. Protein digestion begins there, and hydrochloric acid starts the process. Stomach juice is so highly acid that if you put your hand in your stomach it probably would be gone in very little time. What protects your stomach from digesting itself? Mucous!

Much maligned by "professor" Ehret, mucous protects the entire digestive and absorptive tract and it lubricates the passage of feces through the colon. There are many other cells throughout the body whose sole function is the production of mucous. The "mucusless diet" states that eggs, dairy products, meat and grains somehow create mucous. There's no proven basis for this, though milk products, for example, may cause an allergic response in some people. I suspect that Ehret (who seems to understand little about human physiology) was using the term mucous to mean toxins in general. The strict "mucusless" diet is much too low in protein. Also, there is no basis in research for its food combining ideas such as, "don't eat nuts with juicy fruits, don't eat protein and starch at the same time, etc." They underestimate the amazing capacity of the body to digest food and to cope with variety.

Protein, fat, carbohydrate, vitamins and minerals are all digested and absorbed into the blood stream in the small intestine. The large intestine is where water from food and intestinal juice is absorbed. When you have diarrhea, the intestinal tract is irritable and pushes the food through too fast for all the nutrients and water to be absorbed. In constipation, the feces isn't moving along fast enough, too much water is absorbed and it is difficult to pass.

Feces are made of undigested nutrients, used-up red blood cells, bodies of bacteria living in the gut which didn't get digested, and fiber from food, which is indigestible carbohydrate. One source of fiber is the outer layer of grains which is milled off in the refining process. This bran layer also contains vitamins and minerals, but I think that fiber is the most important reason for eating whole grains: whole wheat, brown rice, rye, oats. Fiber helps to speed the feces along in the colon (large intestine).

Nutritionists and doctors are finally starting to admit that constipation and diverticulosis (inflamed out-pouchings of the large intestine) are linked to the high meat intake and highly refined nature of the Western diet. Fiber has also been linked to preventing cancer of the colon and heart disease. Though this is still controversial, it does seem to be true that cultures which get more of their calories from foods high in fiber (same as roughage or bulk), suffer less from these diseases. Check to make sure that 'wheat' bread you buy isn't just white flour with some caramel coloring thrown in. The loaf should be heavy and not squash together into a little lump when you squeeze it. Try

using a tablespoon of bran (preferably purchased in bulk and not pre-sweetened) to your cereal or baking if you are constipated. Some people may need more, some less. Of course, constipation is also related to stress, so bran may not be an instant cure. Grain fiber seems to work better than vegetable; raw vegetable fiber better than cooked. This is a good reason for eating raw rather than cooked foods. Also, eat the skins of fruits and vegetables if they are palatable and haven't been sprayed with preservative waxes.

I've included a chart on pp. 41-42 which gives a basic rundown of key nutrients and their sources. The first on the list is CARBOHYDRATES. Starches and sugars are put together in this category because they are very similar in chemical structure. Starches are long chains of the simplest sugar molecule.

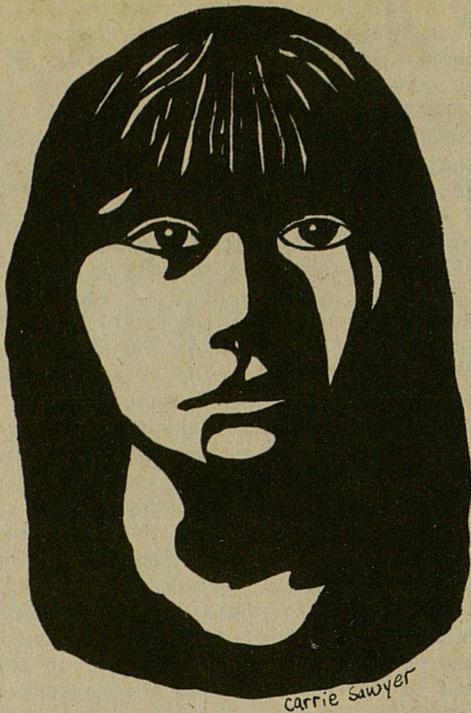
Because starches are longer and more complicated than simple sugars, they take longer to break down. When we eat foods that are high in sugar or honey, there is an immediate rise in blood sugar. This is that mythical "quick-energy" boost. It's not worth much because the fast sugar rise signals to the pancreas to release insulin, the hormone that regulates blood sugar. Insulin helps the blood sugar level too much. A tired feeling may follow soon after the candy bar. To get a more even supply of energy it is better to eat more complex foods such as fruits, nuts, protein foods or starches. This will give a slower, steadier rise in the blood sugar.

It is my sense that honey is only better for the body because it has not had its small amount of vitamins and trace minerals (minerals needed by the body and present in our foods in tiny amounts) refined out of it. It should not be regarded as a good source of nutrients. This goes for molasses as well.

White, refined sugar is getting a reputation for being the source of many physical and emotional problems. People are saying it causes diabetes (high blood sugar), hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), heart disease, hyperactivity in children, arthritis, cancer hemorrhoids, etc. There is no positive proof for these connections as yet. But when large population groups are studied, the incidence of diabetes and heart disease, for example, do rise with increased sugar use. This may be due to other factors, but we might as well be on the safe side since there are other definite reasons to cut down on sugar. We know that a dose of a concentrated sweet is a kind of shock to the system and we know that sugar causes dental cavities. Aside from these, my main objection to eating a lot of sugar is that it provides a lot of calories with no other vitamins and minerals coming along. Like pure fat, it can be called "empty calories". Also, it often occurs in foods that are high in chemical additives.

Starches are the more complex form of sugar. Lately in this culture, they have been falsely accused. People think that if they eat starches they'll get fat. This isn't true.

cont.



For one thing, the body needs some carbohydrate-- either starch or sugar. Fruits and grains-- main sources of carbohydrate, have other necessary vitamins and minerals in addition; potatoes are a very good source of vitamin C.

Carbohydrates have the same amount of calories, per weight as protein. Calories aren't a separate 'thing', they are a measure of the heat and energy contained in food. This energy is the fuel to make muscles move and to power the trillions of chemical reactions going on all the time in the body; repairing cells, making new blood and skin and hormones. A gram of carbohydrate or protein--about 1/30 of an ounce--will produce four calories. A gram of fat will yield nine calories and alcohol seven calories for each gram. So--it's the butter and gravy and sour cream on the baked potato that are the real culprits in weight gain. If you eat huge amounts of starchy foods, you can certainly gain weight, but this is equally true for protein since it is not stored for future use as protein, it is stored as fat!

Any calories that you didn't use during the day to think, to be, or to shovel manure are stored as fat. It doesn't matter whether they originally came from carbohydrate, protein or fat. If your exercise or speedy existence uses up more calories than you ate that day then you will lose weight. Fat is the stored energy bank for that "rainy day" when there won't be enough food. Many of us in this sedentary culture are preparing for a deluge.

To return to the list of nutrients, the next item is FATS. Fats are important! They transport vitamins A,D,E and K. The "essential fatty acids" found in vegetable oils are necessary for cell membranes and other substances

in the body. Fats are storage forms of energy for plants as well as animals in nuts, seeds, coconuts and legumes like soybeans and peanuts.

Many people wonder about "saturated" and "unsaturated" fats. Animal products are higher in saturated fat, while vegetable sources tend to be higher in polyunsaturates. Some of these polyunsaturated fatty acids are called "essential" because we need them in the diet; we can't make them on our own as we can other needed fats. They are found in vegetable oils, whole grains, and nuts.

There is some controversy about whether the heat of processing destroys the essential fatty acids in ordinary commercial oils. Though I haven't seen precise studies, I tend to see truth in this suspicion. Salad oils are treated with many, many chemicals in processing in addition to the possibly destructive heat levels. If they are available and you can afford the added cost, I think it is worth purchasing cold-pressed oils.

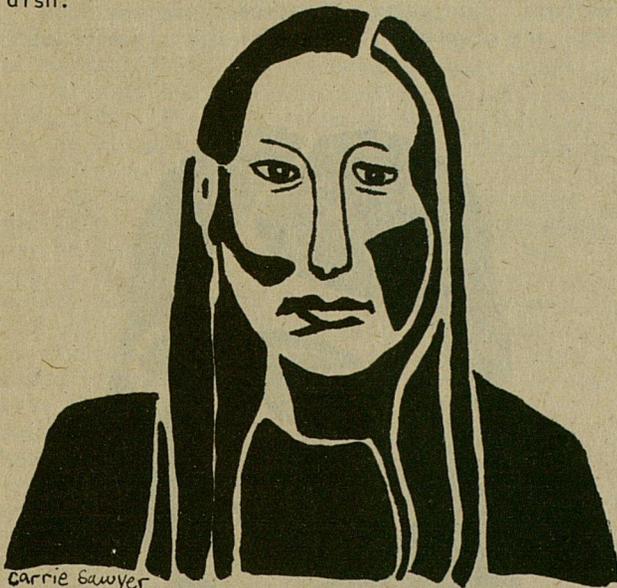
When fats and oils are cooked at a very high heat, the fat breaks down. It becomes gummy and gives off an irritating blue smoke. At this point the polyunsaturated fatty acids are broken down. They no longer are beneficial and may even do harm. The more saturated a fat is, the more hard and solid it will be at room temperature. The saturated fatty acids are structured more or less in a straight line and it's easy for them to mesh together to form a solid crystal. The more unsaturated fatty acids in an oil, the more liquid it is. For example, peanut and olive oils will be liquid at room temperature but solidify in the refrigerator. Soy oil may get a little thicker in the refrigerator but not as much as peanut and olive oils which are more saturated. Corn oil is even more unsaturated so it is hard to notice a change when it is chilled.

Hydrogenated fat such as margarine, shortening (like Crisco) and most commercial peanut butters have hydrogen pumped in artificially to make a solid fat. Some of the benefits of the original PUFA's are lost. Margarine with "liquid vegetable oil" listed as their first ingredient are softer and have more of the natural oils which haven't been hydrogenated. It's a good rule of thumb to use oil when ever you can instead of butter or margarine in sauteing, frying or baking. Try to get "old-fashioned" peanut butter which hasn't been smoothified.

On to PROTEIN, the main building block of the body. Proteins are long, curled-up chains of amino acids. The "amino" prefix stands for nitrogen, and this is the crucial part of protein. Even though air is 80% nitrogen we can't take advantage of it in that form; neither can we be like the plants who use the nitrites and nitrates in the soil. We need to get our vital nitrogen from protein.

There are 22 amino acids. Eight of them are called "essential" to the diet because we can't make them ourselves from the other amino acids in food. A protein is called complete

if it contains all of the essential amino acids in the right proportion for the body's needs. Animal foods--meat, poultry eggs, fish and dairy products are the only foods which of themselves are complete. Vegetable products contain protein but must be eaten in proper combination with each other and eaten within an hour of each other in order to give the proper balance of amino acids. Frances Moore Lappe's book, Diet for a Small Planet, does an excellent job of explaining this concept and gives suggestions for ways to combine vegetable proteins. (Read her book for a more complete introduction to vegetables as complete sources of protein) The basic principle is that grains will form a complete protein with legumes (beans and peanuts) when eaten in the proper proportions; small amounts of milk and cheese can be added to greatly increase the protein value of a vegetable dish.



This is the way that most of the world eats. Americans and Northern Europeans eat far more protein than our bodies need. For example, the recommended amount of protein per day for a woman of 23-50 is 46 grams. This is approximately the amount in one 3-ounce hamburger, two cups of whole milk and two eggs. Most American women eat a lot more than that. And even 46 grams is a high estimation. It allows for some measure of stress, individual variation and the fact that not all protein will come from complete animal sources.

The main point I want to make is that meat is not necessary at all for good nutrition, especially if one is eating dairy products and eggs. If all animal products are eliminated from the diet then it is harder to get all the vitamins, minerals and protein that you need. You just have to eat more carefully. Any extra protein that we eat after meeting the day's needs is used for calories or is stored as fat. There is almost no storage of protein. Eggs are a good, fairly inexpensive source of protein. White and brown eggs are the same on the inside--they come from different breeds of hen. Fertile eggs are no

higher in protein--they only have the benefit of the extra sperm. If the hens have been running around and given feeds without added antibiotics and amphetamines the eggs will be healthier, but this isn't a function of whether or not the eggs are fertile.

As we have discussed above, meat isn't necessary to the diet. Many Americans eat too much of it, from these points of view:

- 1) As a result of all the industry propaganda, meat has become a symbol of status, affluence, and the healthy diet. Because of overconsumption, the unnecessary protein eaten is wasteful.
- 2) Meat is a form of protein that is often very high in calories. Meat is frequently 30% fat due to the invisible fat marbling surrounding each muscle bundle. Meats such as bacon, sausage, hot dogs, luncheon meats and most hamburgers are especially high in fat. This fat may be a contributor to heart disease later in life.
- 3) Meat is eaten instead of foods which contain fiber such as whole grains, beans and other vegetables.

4) Meat is poorly inspected.

5) Meat, as it is produced in this country is the victim of a terrible unnatural environment and a barrage of dangerous or possibly harmful chemical additives. Meat producers have found it more profitable to crowd cattle into feedlots, feed them antibiotics to protect against diseases resulting from this unnatural situation and inject them with hormones to increase their rate of growth. These hormones increase the water content of the beef muscle and save the growers millions a year on feed bills. Those now used are variations on DES. DES causes bladder cancer in mice and has been banned, very belatedly, by the FDA.

The cattle feed has had its seed treated with mercurials, like most other products of large scale farming. It has been grown with artificial fertilizers and sprayed with pesticides. The wastes from the cattle are not recycled. The meat may be treated after slaughter with more chemicals such as red food coloring; chickens are submerged in a "preservative" antibiotic dip. The safety of all of these and all the other additive substances to meat is suspect. The FDA, like other regulatory agencies in the U.S. is operating with an abysmally small budget and is tied very closely with those it is supposed to be regulating.

Aside from all of this, there isn't any thing inherently bad for us about meat. Some people claim that meat-eating per se, is what makes this culture a violent one. This idea seems to be a great simplification of the complex political and economic factors which have led to the phenomenon of violence. It ignores all of the cultures whose diets are largely composed of flesh where violence is not the prevalent form of human interaction. We all know people here who eat meat and yet are not violent in general, and those whose hostility, physically or otherwise, endures regardless of brown rice and sesame seeds.

cont.

**Vitamins and Minerals:** Vitamins are substances found in small amounts in the body and in most natural foods. We need very little of them. They are chemicals which are organic compounds--meaning that they contain carbon atoms. Minerals, on the other hand, are inorganic. They are single atoms. Some such as sodium, potassium and phosphorus we need in fairly large quantities. Trace minerals are necessary in minute amounts; very little is known about their function in the human body. Some examples of trace minerals include: nickel, molybdenum, cobalt, zinc and several others.

Vitamin content differs a great deal from one plant to the next. It's affected by the genetic strain of the plant, by the soil conditions, amount of rain, sunlight, and length of time between harvesting and the time it reaches the consumer. Fruits and vegetables contain enzymes which gradually break down vitamins. Blanching--brief immersion in boiling water will destroy these enzymes. But heat, itself, will also destroy some vitamins, so any cooking should be as quick as possible, in water (as small amount as possible) that has already reached the boiling point. Oxygen damages certain vitamins and boiling water has expelled the trapped air. Steaming is a good way to cook vegetables and retain the maximum vitamin content. Once cell membranes are damaged by heat, vitamins (except for fat soluble ones--Vitamins A, D, E, and K) and minerals will leach out into the cooking water. Because the cooking liquid contains many vitamins and minerals, it should not be discarded but instead, used in soups, sauces and baking.

Minerals are leached into the cooking water but otherwise they are not destroyed in cooking. They are not affected by heat, sunlight or oxygen.

One mineral that we tend to get too much of is sodium. Sodium combined with one atom of chloride forms table salt. The natural sodium content of foods is sufficient to meet our needs except under conditions of excessive perspiration and salt loss. Cultures which consume a lot of salt show a high incidence of high blood pressure (hypertension). It is theorized that the tendency towards hypertension is established in children who at a very early age are introduced to added salt in their food. All commercial baby foods have added salt unnecessarily (mostly to please the parent's taste buds). Try cutting down on salt and soy sauce added to foods and eat less of such salty foods as bacon and other cured meats. Salt is added to most commercially processed foods and sodium comes along with many additives, for example, MSG, sodium, saccharine, etc.

A mineral that is especially needed by women in their reproductive years is iron. The iron that is lost in monthly menstrual blood must be replaced. The National Academy of Sciences recommends that we get 18 mg. per day. This would approximately be the amount contained in 4 oz. of meat, fish or fowl, 2 eggs, 1/2

cup cooked dried beans, 1 cup cooked dark green vegetables, 1/2 cup of cereal and 4 slices of enriched or whole wheat bread. Since I don't eat meat, I know I don't get that much iron every day. Still, I am quite healthy. It's possible that people who don't eat meat can absorb more of the iron in plant foods. Even though the R.D.A. may be on the high side, it's still important for women to be conscious of their iron intake.

This brings us to the whole question of R.D.A.'s. They are decided by synthesizing the studies of many scientists. Experiments to determine the amount of nutrient needed are conducted. For example, a known amount of Vitamin C is fed and the amount excreted in the urine is measured to determine the amount utilized by the body. To determine the minimum requirement lesser amounts are fed to figure out the smallest amount needed to prevent deficiency symptoms. The values obtained from many subjects are graphed. The normal distribution of



values obtained from many subjects are graphed. The normal distribution of values forms a bell-shaped curve. To arrive at the recommended level, the mid-point is selected and a statistical measure of good luck as added (two standard deviations). This takes into account individual variability and provides a margin of safety. The final value, in this case, 45 mg of Vitamin C per day, is supposed to meet the needs of 97.3% of healthy Americans. It's important to recognize that this is just a general recommendation. If you don't get that amount in your diet everyday it doesn't mean that you are malnourished. However, needs for most nutrients are increased in times of illness and stress--physical and emotional. During pregnancy most nutrient requirements are increased, especially for calories, calcium, vitamins A, C and folacin. Breastfeeding also increases nutrient requirements.

How do you know how much you are getting of a particular nutrient? The chart in this issue can give you a very general idea. If you want more exactness, look in the food composition charts included in some cookbooks, nutrition books or those available from the U.S. Government (see book list at the end). But these must be taken with many grains of salt, because these values are averages based on limited number of samples and there are so many variables which determine nutrient composition. Also, food preparation effects nutrient content. Iron cookware will add iron to the food (if it is cooked in an acid medium, for example, tomato sauce) but may also destroy some of the vitamin C already there.

Unfortunately, I can't go into all the controversies about vitamins and minerals in any depth. I have personal feelings about supplements and they are:

If you are eating from a good variety of foods then it's not necessary to take vitamin or mineral pills. Food contains small amounts of vitamins and minerals complexed with other compounds. They are released more rapidly into the bloodstream. We do not know the body's capacity to handle this load.

If your diet is deficient in particular nutrients then vitamin and mineral supplements may be beneficial. But I would rather that people changed their diets and added more naturally nutrient-rich foods. The main reason for this is that foods contain trace minerals in minute amounts that the body needs. These trace minerals are not ordinarily found in mineral supplements. Also, there may be other substances present in food whose importance hasn't yet been discovered; there are probably unmeasurable numbers of substances in foods that contribute to health.

Many people have the attitude that if a little bit is necessary then a whole lot must be even better and so they load up on vitamins and/or minerals. Some people are taking as much as 1,000 mg of vitamin C daily. This is about twenty times the R.D.A. I did an experiment in school where I ate about 500 mgs. of

vitamin C and collected my urine to see how much was kept in the tissues and how much was excreted by the kidneys. Sure enough, all but 50 mg was washed into the Bay. Some people claim that the extra vitamin C does something while it's there, before it is excreted. If you do want to take vitamin C supplements take small amounts (100 mg at most) at 4 hour intervals during the day for maximum absorption, rather than one large dose all at once.

Linus Pauling claims that large daily doses of vitamin C prevent colds. A number of large scale double-blind studies (in which one group takes the vitamin, one a placebo. Those dispensing the pills don't know which is which) indicated that those taking high amounts of vitamin C don't get fewer colds, but may have less oppressive symptoms and the colds may not last as long.

Taking too much of the fat soluble vitamins can be harmful. They are not excreted in the urine but are stored in the liver. Unneeded quantities of the water soluble vitamins--the B vitamins and vitamin C--are normally washed out into the urine. Recently there is evidence that massive doses may do some damage. Some cases of addiction to large doses of vitamin C have been noted in humans and animals. One case in particular refers to a man who worked in citrus fields and ate huge amounts of oranges. When he left that work and returned to a "normal" intake, he developed scurvy, the deficiency disease of vitamin C. Babies of guinea pigs given high vitamin C doses during pregnancy have developed scurvy when they are born and given a more typical amount. Kidney stones could possibly occur in individuals prone to this problem from the increased acidity of the urine when large amounts of vitamin C are taken for a long period of time. [This added acidity can have a positive effect during cystitis (bladder infection)]

There are other known ill effects of "megavitamin" therapy. Personally, I feel as cautious about these very large doses as I do about other drugs and food additives which haven't been adequately tested. This conservatism of mine doesn't apply to taking a "one-a-day" tablet, but I recommend foods as the main source of vitamins and minerals. Natural foods--not factory refined ones which have had everything good milled out and a pill popped back in.

It's hard to just skim the surface as I'm doing. I keep thinking of all the nuances and areas I haven't touched on. A lot of people ask me questions about fasting and "cleansing" and the more spiritual aspects of food. I know very little about these areas. I have a lot of questions myself and am trying to open up and expand the Western scientific nature of my training.

I want to sum up with these points: cont.



1. Eat as varied a diet as possible. Try out new foods!
2. Include fiber-rich foods--raw fruits and vegetables and whole grains--to prevent disorders in the large intestine.
3. Stay close to the source. Eat the original foods, i.e. potatoes themselves rather than frozen french fries, rather than dehydrated potato buds or flakes, rather than potato chips and Pringles. The more a food is processed, the more is taken away from it; token nutrients may be added back but this doesn't make up for the trace elements which are removed. Also, refined and processed foods often cost a good deal more.
4. Read labels and stay away from food additives--the artificial colors, flavors, nitrites, sweeteners, the stabilizers, anti-oxidants, emulsifiers, sequesterants, etc. Of course, some food additives are positive. Vitamin D in milk is, strictly speaking, an additive, as is the vitamin C used as an anti-oxidant. Other preservatives may also be harmless. As soon as some are tested and, after long years, discarded, the Food Industry emerges with hundreds more. The basic motive behind them is profit. Additives may increase "shelf-life", they replace more expensive ingredients like eggs and cream, and they make possible the production of formulated foods like Cool Whip which has no real ingredients. "Foods" like these are the most profitable. Additives are tools that the Food Industry can use to change our esthetics about food. People no longer crave or they have forgotten the unmistakable taste of the original food. On top of all of this, many additives are dangerous and may interact with other substances in the environment in ways that we can't imagine.
5. Cut down on concentrated sweets, sugar, honey and molasses. And lower your intake of foods high in fat. We need so many nutrients for the limited number of calories we can consume (without greatly widening) that we can't afford to use them up with "empty calories" that carry no other food value.
6. Increase exercise. This is probably the best way to stay in touch with our bodies and to reduce risk of degenerative diseases.
7. If you are a heavy meat-eater, try substituting foods lower on the food chain; fresh dairy foods, beans, grains, other vegetables. This makes sense from an ecological as well as health point of view.
8. Increase nutrient intake in times of emotional and physical stress. This would include pregnancy and lactation.
9. Don't worry too much about it. Aside from extreme deficiencies or overabundances the body is remarkably resilient and can handle a varied diet. I suspect that the anxiety caused by pan-

ic about getting quite enough or in just the perfect combinations may be worse for digestion and absorption than whatever was happening in the first place.

10. Changing the way we eat is part of taking control over our own lives, health and self-image. It's caring about ourselves. For us as women it may mean finding our own balance and spitting in the face of the unreal, male-created image of what we think we should look like. It may mean eating simpler foods and not devoting our lives to the creation of the perfect souffle and matzoh ball, or it might mean enjoying cooking for its own sake.

11. Part of this change in the way we eat has to mean understanding that the production of food from farm to factory is controlled by huge corporations.

The reverberations of this system reach around the world. Food is only one example of the control of these corporations, but one that affects us most intimately. Corporations take our tax money through US Dept. of Agriculture research to genetically create the modern tasteless tomato. This tomato was developed to be picked with the mechanical harvester with little regard to vitamin A and C content. Thousands of farm workers are jobless as a result; automation makes more sense so that bosses won't have to contend with workers fighting for a living wage and decent conditions. Automation could be a positive tool, but at present, it is being used against us.

We try to change our own situation by eating lower on the food chain, buying organic produce (which is probably contaminated by wind and water) or by buying a goat to produce our own milk. But we're still forced to buy feed from Purina. These individual responses aren't strong enough. We have to talk to people we know about where food really comes from, how it must be reclaimed, and about supporting struggles like those of the farmworkers. We have to find our own way to use this knowledge to fight back--in our own lives and in our larger communities. ♀

Composition of Foods, U.S. Department of Agriculture Handbook, No. 8. (Available from the Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.)

Eater's Digest, Michael Jacobson, Ballantine Books. This is a guide to food additives which is well researched though now a bit out of date. Jacobson works with the Center for Science in the Public Interest. Write to them at 1757 S. St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009 for their newsletter, Nutrition Action, and other publications.

Better Living Through Better Eating, by Mary T. Goodwin. Write to Montgomery County Health Dept., 611 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md, 20852. A good readable handbook with ideas and recipes.

# NUTRITION CHART

Nutrient requirements are dependent upon the body's need for

- 1) Energy
- 2) Growth and development
- 3) Regulation and maintenance of bodily function
- 4) the ability of the body to use nutrients.

The nutrients essential for good health should come from a well-balanced diet. Between 40 and 50 nutrients are important in human nutrition. The chart below lists the key nutrients.

Key Nutrients	Function	Wholesome Food Source
Carbohydrates, Sugars and Starches	Provides energy	Breads, cereals, potatoes, corn, small amounts in vegetables and fruits
Fiber	Promotes healthy gums and clean teeth. Maintains a healthy colon.	Raw fruits and vegetables, whole grain cereal.
Fats (Lipids)	Supplies a large amount of energy in a small amount of food. Helps keep skin smooth and healthy by supplying substances called "essential fatty acids." Carries vitamins A,D,E,K.	Vegetable oils, egg yolk, cheese and butter, meat, olives, avocados, nuts
Protein	Builds and repairs all tissues in the body. Helps form substances in the blood called "antibodies" which fight infection. Supplies energy.	Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, cheese, milk, yogurt, dried beans and peas, peanut butter, nuts, cereals and breads
Vitamin A	Helps keep skin smooth. Helps keep mucous membranes firm and resistant to infection. Protects against night blindness. Promotes healthy eyes.	Liver, egg yolk, deep yellow fruits, dark green and deep yellow vegetables, whole milk, Vitamin A fortified skim milk, margarine and butter.
Thiamin or Vitamin B <sub>1</sub>	Helps release energy from food. Helps promote normal appetite and digestion. Helps keep nervous system healthy and prevents irritability.	Wheat germ, nuts, pork, peas, whole grain or enriched bread and cereal, dried beans, meat, fish, potatoes, broccolli, and collards.
Riboflavin Vitamin B <sub>2</sub>	Helps cells use oxygen. Helps keep eyes, skin, tongue and lips healthy. Helps prevent scaly, greasy skin around mouth and nose.	Kidney, liver, almonds, wheat germ, cheese, eggs, meat, broccolli, asparagus, milk, enriched bread and cereal.

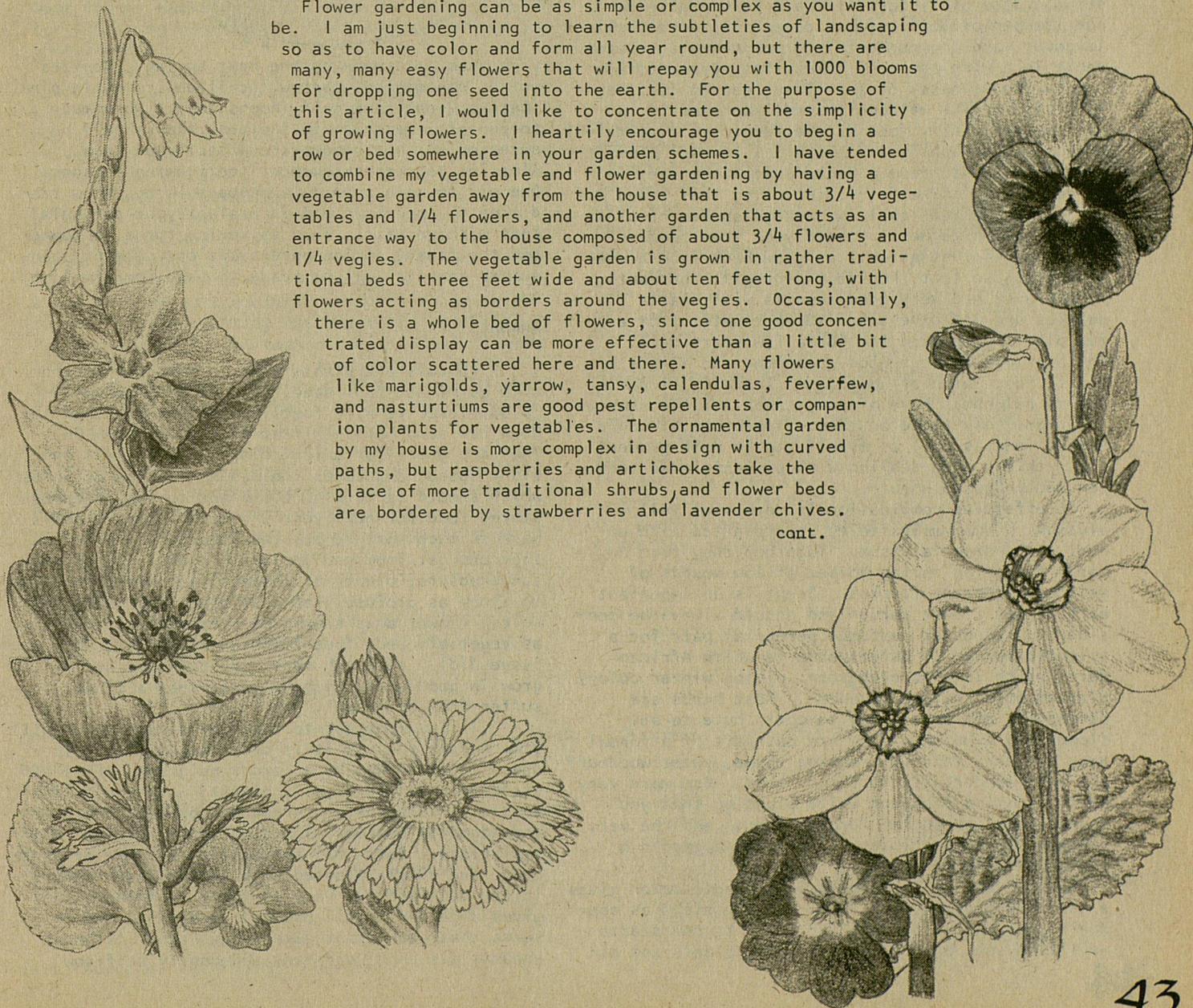
Key Nutrients	Function	Wholesome Food Source
Niacin Vitamin B <sub>3</sub>	Helps keep nervous system healthy. Helps keep skin, mouth, tongue, digestive tract in healthy condition. Enables cells to use other nutrients.	Beef liver, peanut butter, chicken, nuts, whole wheat bread and cereals, squash, potatoes, corn, collards.
Pyridoxine Vitamin B <sub>6</sub>	Helps body metabolize protein. Helps prevent anemia. Regulates body.	Liver, bananas, meat, egg yolks, fish, whole grain bread and cereal, cabbage, beans, spinach, potatoes, cheese, strawberries, milk, orange juice, beans and peas.
Cobolamin Vitamin B <sub>12</sub>	Helps prevent anemia, promotes growth, regulates body.	Liver, oysters, meat, fish, poultry, milk, cheese, yogurt.
Folacin Folic Acid	Helps prevent anemia, promotes growth, regulates body.	Pork liver, asparagus, kidney beans, carrots, meat, potatoes, cheese, green leafy vegetables, dry beans, peas, legumes, orange juice.
Ascorbic Acid	Makes cementing materials that hold body cells together. Makes walls of blood vessels firm. Helps resist infection. Helps prevent fatigue. Helps in healing wounds and broken bones.	Citrus fruits: lemon, orange, grapefruit, lime, strawberries, cantaloupe, tomatoes, green peppers, broccoli, raw or <u>lightly</u> cooked greens, cabbage white potatoes.
Vitamin D The Sunshine Vitamin	Helps the body absorb calcium from digestive tract. Helps incorporate calcium and phosphorous into bones.	Vitamin D-enriched milk, fish liver oil, sunshine (not a food).
Calcium	Helps build bones, teeth. Helps make blood clot. Helps muscles react normally. Delays fatigue and helps tired muscles recover.	Milk, cheese, especially cheddar-type, turnip and mustard greens, collards, kale, broccoli, canned sardines, salmon.
Iodine	Makes thyroxin, an essential hormone that regulates metabolic rate. Prevents simple goiter.	Seafoods, iodized salts.
Iron	Combines with protein to make hemoglobin, the red substance in the blood that carries oxygen to the cells.	Liver, meat and eggs, green leafy vegetables, raisins, dried apricots.
Chromium	Helps metabolize glucose. Protects against toxic effects of lead.	Vegetables, whole grain breads and cereals, fruit.
Zinc	Regulates appetite, promotes growth and wound healing.	Maple syrup, oysters, peas, whole grain cereals, liver, oatmeal, beef, clams, corn, peanut butter, milk.

# A GARDEN OF RAINBOWS

It's hard to say how a mania begins. Being somewhat of a romantic, I think that at first it was the names that attracted me: nigelia (love-in-a-mist), forget-me-nots, monk's hood, indian paint-brush, snow-in-summer. Certainly the poetic consciousness of a people gets worked out in the common names given to flowers. And then, there were all those rows of seed packets, just sitting innocently in the racks, but calling to me like the sirens luring the fisherpeople into the sea. I tried to resist them. For years I would just look at the color filled pictures, read the directions, note the number of days till bloom, and then reach for the ever-so practical radish or lettuce next to it. Then about five years ago, I succumbed. It was only a slim package of calendulas, once known as the pot marigold, but it was the beginning. All of a sudden, amongst the greens of my vegetable garden, was a beautiful row of orange and yellow flowers; and although the calendula is considered a weed by most serious gardeners, I was totally enchanted by their perfection. The effect was an odd combination of heady drunkenness and intense clarity, of being pulled totally into the moment by their beauty. From a distance, it was a colorful bush; but, up close, staring into the mandala form of one flower, I began to learn something totally new about seeing. By the end of that summer my garden was full of blossoming plants and flowers have been a constant source of joy and nourishment to me ever since. Friends who visited got bitten by the bug as well and now most of my neighbors' gardens are equally bejeweled.

Flower gardening can be as simple or complex as you want it to be. I am just beginning to learn the subtleties of landscaping so as to have color and form all year round, but there are many, many easy flowers that will repay you with 1000 blooms for dropping one seed into the earth. For the purpose of this article, I would like to concentrate on the simplicity of growing flowers. I heartily encourage you to begin a row or bed somewhere in your garden schemes. I have tended to combine my vegetable and flower gardening by having a vegetable garden away from the house that is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  vegetables and  $\frac{1}{4}$  flowers, and another garden that acts as an entrance way to the house composed of about  $\frac{3}{4}$  flowers and  $\frac{1}{4}$  vegies. The vegetable garden is grown in rather traditional beds three feet wide and about ten feet long, with flowers acting as borders around the vegies. Occasionally, there is a whole bed of flowers, since one good concentrated display can be more effective than a little bit of color scattered here and there. Many flowers like marigolds, yarrow, tansy, calendulas, feverfew, and nasturtiums are good pest repellents or companion plants for vegetables. The ornamental garden by my house is more complex in design with curved paths, but raspberries and artichokes take the place of more traditional shrubs, and flower beds are bordered by strawberries and lavender chives.

cont.



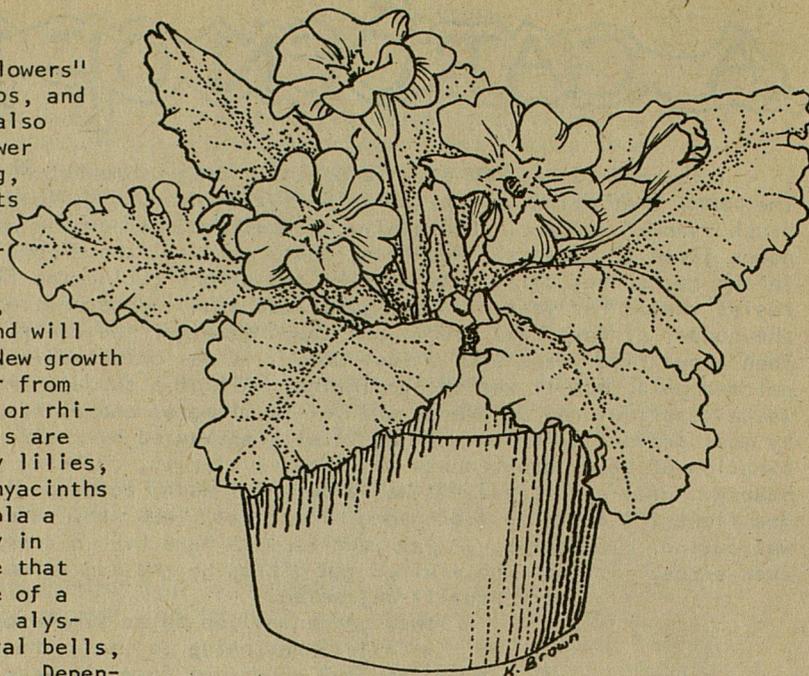
## PERENNIALS

But let us begin at the beginning. "Flowers" usually refer to perennials, annuals, bulbs, and roses, even though many shrubs and trees also produce blooms. In garden books, the flower planting is called the herbaceous planting, or the herbaceous border. Perennial plants as their name suggests, plan to be around if not forever, for at least a good number of years. They are able to weather hard winters; and although their tops die back, their underground systems remain intact and will begin to sprout new shoots each spring. New growth develops from buds set on fibrous roots or from the stored energy in bulbs, tubers, corms or rhizomes. Some examples of fibrous perennials are chrysanthemum columbine, shasta daisy, day lilies, lupine and phlox. Daffodils, tulips and hyacinths are bulbs, while iris is a rhizome, gladiola a corm, and dahlia a tuber. Perennials vary in size from small mound-like plants to those that get several feet high and occupy the place of a shrub. Some of my favorites are perennial alyssum (Basket of Gold), dwarf coreopsis, coral bells, lavender, and the perennial forget-me-nots. Dependable in a wide range of situations, perennials can be the mainstay of any flower garden for they will return like welcome friends each year.

I am especially fond of the foxglove (*Digitalis*) which is technically a biennial; I transplanted it from the wild to form a background along the garden fence. Like fairy sentinels, they stand six and seven feet tall, with huge spikes of pink, purple and white bells. Each year they seem to reseed themselves as well as grow back from a central root, so that they self propagate abundantly. I have also had very good results with shasta daisies and now have a 6 x 20 foot patch from a few plants purchased for 50¢ a few years back. Which brings me to a good question. Do I want a 6 x 20 foot patch of shastas? Actually, I don't, and my neighbors have already taken all the shastas I can politely force on them. Therefore, I would advise you, as well as myself, to be both prudent and ruthless when dealing with perennials as they can become quite unruly.

An effective combination is perennial yellow alyssum (*Alyssum Saxatile*) interplanted with annual white sweet alyssum. Together they form an early flowering spring border of low mounds of delicate fragrant flowers. Scent is an important part of any flower garden and should always be considered. Another perfumed perennial pair for a splendid border is *Osteospermum* (a white African daisy which is also evergreen, giving winter color) planted with English lavender. Most herbs are perennials and have a lot to contribute to any flower bed even when they are not part of a formal herb garden. Yarrow, creeping thyme, sweet woodruff all work wonderfully in flower beds. One more very early blooming blue and white planting that you might try is perennial forget-me-nots and the very fragrant white narcissus, which give a garden a very old fashioned feeling.

A solid bed of one flower in a single color gives a garden a professional look. Even a plant as common as yarrow can do that for you. Yarrow starts well from seed or you can buy a few plants and di-



vide them into many by the next spring. Besides white, the magical yarrow (*Achillea*) comes in pink (Cerise Queen) and gold (Moonshine). When many perennials are grown in one bed, they should be selected so that blooms are distributed in a pleasing pattern throughout the growing season. One way to make sure this happens is to throw tradition to the winds and interplant your perennial beds with annuals. Then as spring turns to summer and the flashy spring perennials are calming down, summer annuals will be ready to take the limelight.

## ANNUALS

Annuals are plants that in a single season will germinate from seed, grow to full maturity (a sunflower to nine feet!), blossom, and then set down new seed before winter frost does them in. They are great for quick color and will fill in blank spaces and cover the fading foliage of bulbs, which should be left on the plant to insure enough stored food for next year's growth. Since annuals have so much work to do, they need all the help they can get from you including good soil, correct sun exposure, plenty of compost, and water, in order to bloom as profusely as possible. For best results, flower beds should be prepared as carefully as vegetable beds (see *Planting Perennials* in issue #18). although many seed packages say "will grow in poor soil", I have never seen a flower suffer from being well nourished.

It is important to know the size a plant will grow before you use it in order to make sure it doesn't get hidden by a larger neighbor. Free standing beds are usually planted with the tallest species in the center surrounded by medium growers and edged by smaller plants (often hybridized dwarf varieties). Beds that are against a fence or large hedge are simply planted with the tallest flowers in the back and the very smallest in front. This gives a garden a well ordered appearance and insures that each plant gets enough sun. Although annuals die each year many abundantly self-sow

so that you will have many "volunteers" the next year which can then be transplanted. Some easy to grow, good performing annuals are listed at the end of this article.

Whether you start your flower plants from seeds directly in the garden, seeds in flats in a greenhouse or sunny window, or buy starts in a nursery depends on what you want. At first I was impatient for flowers and found that the five dollars I spent for 60 plants at the beginning of spring was about the best investment I made all year. Many flower seeds are difficult to germinate, especially directly in the ground, and take a long time to flower. I was often disappointed by a bed that never came up and considering seed packages now run as high as 50¢ I have found it sometimes more economical to buy starts. However, I have discovered that many other flower seeds actually germinate quite quickly and easily, especially those marked s-s below. I now tend to use seeds if germination is easy and the first bloom date is less than 80 days, and plant starts for the slower growing flowers. Unfortunately, most flower packages do not tell how long it takes for plants to blossom, so I usually check a plant encyclopedia.

If the above talk of beds and borders has you believing that this is all too complicated, consider choosing three kinds of simple to grow annuals and plant a double row of each somewhere in your in your garden. The three most popular annuals are marigolds, petunias, and zinnias.

A flower gardener becomes a painter; a garden or bed with white, blue and purple flowers will have a completely different feeling than one with magenta and gold zinnias. If marigolds and petunias don't appeal to you, you might want to plant a row of some more esoteric annual. I have discovered that popularity has mostly to do with fashion and many less common varieties of flowers are just as easy to grow. Experiment! Try *Arctostis*, a beautiful daisy-type flower that blooms from early summer to frost. My daughter's favorite annual is *nemesia*, a free-flowering bush plant that is totally covered with blooms. Some possibilities in the blue range are *nigelia*, *lobelia*, and *aubrieta*. Seed catalogues have descriptions of numerous plants and part of the fun of winter is pouring over the mysterious names and pictures of the myriad possibilities available. In fact, I have learned a lot about flower culture by reading and memorizing seed catalogues.

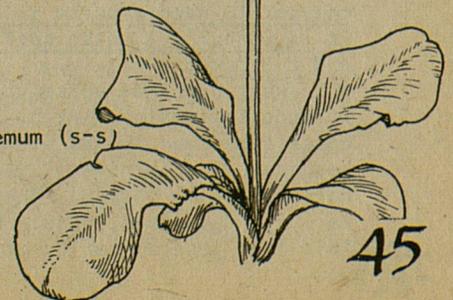
If planting a row seems like too much for you, try planting a few bushes of yellow, white, or

pink marguerites by your garden door. Little plants grow to big bushes and you will be rewarded with plenty of cutting flowers all summer. *Gloriosa* daisies will also provide a bountiful bush of pinwheel flowers in deeper shades of yellow and rust.

Here are a few more general flower planting ideas to assist you in getting started. When transplanting, pinch off all flowers so the plant can devote its energy to establishing itself. This will also make a bushier plant. The only exception to this is flowers that rise on a single stalk, like stocks. Be sure to dead head, or pick all fading blooms from a plant. Since the mission of a plant is to go to seed, "dead heading" will keep your flowers blooming much longer. This can be quite a chore but it is important. It also keeps you in contact with your plants. For the same reason, most annuals will bloom more profusely if they are kept well picked, and certainly a vase of flowers is a delight in any room. Last, take note of what flowers grow wild in your area and think about using them in your garden. Only, before you go around digging up wild flowers, make sure there are many more growing in the same area. Better yet, collect the seeds of wild flowers and plant them.

Fall is a good time of the year to put out many perennials, and in mild or medium climates, annuals can also be sown then. So, no matter when you are reading this, now is the time to begin a marvelous adventure.

Evening has passed and I have been up all night writing this article. Early morning light has just graced the garden. Looking out over the typewriter, I can see the pink and white spires of foxgloves standing behind lavender stocks. Five years and I am still intoxicated by the beauty of it. What an incredible gift flowers are. It makes sense to me that if there are human beings on this planet that there would also be food for them to eat. But flowers, who could have ever imagined? ♀



#### EASY TO GROW ANNUALS

##### Annuals under 12 inches

Agerantun  
Lobelia  
dwarf Nasturtium (s-s)  
Petunia  
Sweet Alyssum (s-s)  
Johnny Jump-Up (s-s)

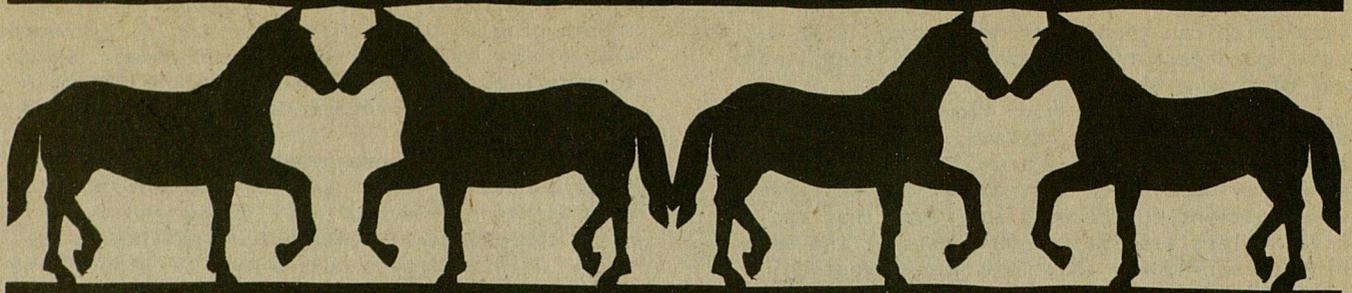
##### Annuals from 1 to 2 feet

Borage (s-s)  
Calendula (s-s)  
California Poppy (s-s)  
Snapdragon  
Stock  
Periwinkle  
Cornflower  
Nigelia (s-s)  
Nemesia

##### Annuals higher than 2 feet

Coriopsis  
Cosmos  
Nicotina  
Larkspur  
Sunflower  
Zinnia  
Corn Chrysanthemum (s-s)  
Scabiosa daisy  
Cleome

(s-s indicates those which self-sow)



## HORSES: FEEDING, CARE AND HEALTH

In my first article (Issue #18), I tried to deal mostly with shelter and general care. This time I will go into more detail. Now that you have an idea of what to provide for a horse, the specifics should make more sense.

### FEEDING:

Every breeder, trainer or horse owner has their own way of doing things. Some people are very strict on mixing and measuring feeds, feed only on a set schedule, etc. This is fine and can't produce bad results, but I'm much more disorganized about it and haven't had a sick horse yet.

Since horses are all different, like people, you can't adhere too heavily to the measurements you find on the back of feed sacks. (They want to sell feed anyway.) These can be o.k. as a general guideline but you have to know your horse and learn by observing what its needs are. For example; my pony is an 800 lb grade Mustang-Welsh type. According to some authorities she should, when doing heavy work, be getting such-and-such number of pounds of grain per day. In reality, if I fed her that much she'd likely explode. She's high strung and like many ponies, any amount of grain (over 2 or 3 handfuls a day) makes her ornery and jumpy. If I was conditioning her for an endurance ride I would probably feed her some alfalfa pellets and a small amount of grain. So you have to pay attention to your horse's temperament. If the horse is getting too "high," try cutting the grain ration in half, feed more hay, and give more exercise.

Ordinarily, if the horse is doing O.K. on pasture or hay, I see no reason for giving more than a couple handfuls of grain a day. Grain is very handy for catching a reluctant horse. Watch the horse's condition closely. Some new owners don't notice that their horse is losing weight. Just scrutinizing the horse every day will tell you what's happening. It's much cheaper to keep a horse in good condition than it is to build a horse back up when it's thin and run-down.

What breed of horse you have makes a difference in feeding. Arab, Morgan and Quarter horse types and ponies are traditionally easy keepers. Thoroughbreds, Saddlebreds, Walking horses take more feed. They're usually bigger and like Cadillacs, need a higher octane fuel. This is a generalization of course. I used to

ride a Saddlebred mare everyone thought was a Morgan. She was small, compactly built, and stayed fat on miniscule amounts of feed.

There are different types of hay. In the Midwest where I grew up, timothy is the traditional "horse hay." Then alfalfa got to be the rage because it puts a better bloom on a show horse. Timothy is a grass related to canary grass. In California where I live now, most people feed oat hay or alfalfa. In Arizona I got some bermuda grass hay that was fine-textured and sweet. The horses loved it.

Whatever type hay you get, it shouldn't be all yellow like straw. The outside of a bale can sometimes be bleached out but there might be good hay inside the bale -- it should be light green and smell good. If baled too green it will get moldy -- (you can usually see some gray mold) -- and it will smell bad. Don't feed this to your horse. Don't even use it for bedding. Put it on your garden for mulch or throw it to the chickens. A smart horse won't eat bad hay, but a dumb one will and can get really sick.

Like hay, grain feed comes in different varieties. You can get plain or crimped oats, or "sweet feed." The plain oats is high in protein and a good energy feed (you know the saying "feeling your oats"). Rolled or crimped oats are easier for the horse to digest, but it's harder to tell the quality of the grain once it's been through the roller. Oat kernels should be plump and appetizing to look at and not dusty. "Sweet feed" is the stuff with molasses in it (like Purina Omolene). Because it contains more corn than oats, it's good for fattening and body heat. These feeds usually contain synthetic vitamins. If you want to be organic, you could probably buy the ingredients and mix your own.

If you are feeding straight oats and the horse is getting to be too much of a handful, you could try switching to barley or sweet feed. This worked well for me. My Hackney pony stud, Brandy, was getting pretty goofy. I wanted to fatten him up some so I switched to Omolene and he gained weight and also mellowed out.

Some horses don't do well on sweet feed or alfalfa hay because it's too rich. One horse I was training kept breaking out in little pimples all over his neck. We couldn't figure out what was bothering him until I had a hunch one day while someone was talking about rich food giving people zits. So, we changed the sweet

feed for oats and the alfalfa for oat hay and the zits went away never to return.

When you get a real thin starved-out horse and want it to gain, don't start pumping in gallons of grain. The stomach will be shrunk some and too much grain will cause indigestion. Start with a small ration (maybe two small coffee cans a day) and increase gradually. Feed as much hay as the horse will clean up. If you find a lot of wasted trampled hay you are feeding too much.

If a horse isn't used to alfalfa hay be slow in introducing it, as it can cause diarrhea. What I do is take a bale of oat or grass hay and a bale of alfalfa and feed equal parts of each until both bales are gone. Then you can go to straight alfalfa.

O.K. In case you didn't know this, a bale of hay breaks up into convenient sized slices called "flakes." You will have to experiment with the size of flake your horse will eat in one meal. Start with a six inch flake twice a day and then increase the size if the horse cleans it up and wants more.

Horses metabolize better if fed small amounts frequently. If you can only feed once a day, that's all right. But if you can break up the ration into two or three meals, the horse will assimilate much more of it (and will be less bored).

If you are working the horse, always feed after the horse has been worked and cooled off. (I will deal with "cooling" later in the article.) Once I sold a filly to a twelve year old girl who called me later and said the horse was being sluggish and disobedient and giving her a hard time. I went over to watch her work the horse. Before the workout she gave her filly about a gallon of grain. I asked her if she liked to run or ride horseback on a full stomach. She got the idea right away.

#### GENERAL CARE:

That gets us to the next subject: worms. About a year later, I went to see this same girl and she had her horse well trained and had bought a fancy new English saddle and some other gear. But the filly was so skinny her ribs and hip bones stuck out. I asked her how come she had a \$300 saddle and a starving horse.

She showed me how much feed the horse was getting and said the mare also had no appetite. This filly was skinny and dull-eyed. She had a pot belly and rough lusterless coat. I asked her when she had wormed the filly last and it seems she didn't realize horses had to be wormed. After worming, the mare picked up really well.

There's some controversy over how often to worm. In the Midwest, where it gets very cold in winter, people worm their horses twice a year, after the first killing frost in the fall and after the last frost in the spring. Young horses (those under four) are sometimes wormed quarterly. In Northern California where I live now, most people worm their horses twice a year, but some worm as often as six times a year.

The wild horse is a migratory animal; in

nature, it eats, shits, and moves on. While all horses are hosts to a certain number of internal parasites, in the wild state, infestation seldom got severe because the animals were not forced to graze the same range year after year. Horses that are kept in dirty barn lots or worn-out pastures need worming more often than horses that run on well-managed pasture or range.

If you have money and a good vet you can have your horse tube-wormed. This is when the vet runs a tube to the horse's stomach and sends the worm medicine straight down. I say a good vet, one who specializes in large animals, because a clumsy one can hurt the horse while putting in the tube.

I've found that the granulated horse wormer you put in the horse's feed is O.K. I like Shell "Equigard" brand because it kills the largest variety of worms.

On the wormer package it specifies to withhold water for several hours before administering the medicine. I also withhold feed for about twelve hours because it makes the horse hungrier and more willing to eat the weird stuff you're giving him or her. Some horses are so smart they won't eat it. I mix it with sweet feed and maybe a little extra molasses to make the granules stick to the grain better.

Flies get to be a problem in the mid-west in summer; they are pretty bad in California and in Arizona they are just unreal. I hate flies. So do horses. It takes a lot of energy to stomp and switch all day. No wonder horses get so happy when the first cold weather comes! They gallop and buck and leap. Wow, no more flies for a few months!

Flies transmit eye infections from one horse to another. They lay their eggs in wounds and can make a sensitive horse go berserk. If you keep your horse in a small enclosure, clean up the shit, and put it in the garden or compost pile, preferably as far from the horse as possible. You can get commercial fly sprays that you rub on the horse. These help when you are working the horse. These help when you are working the horse, as she will perform better if not distracted by flies. I use oil of Pennyroyal or Citronella. I rub it on my hands and rub it around the face, chest, flanks and belly where the horse gets bitten the most. You can also use crushed garlic or garlic oil.

Some stables use window screens and fog with DDT twice a day. I worked at one place, though, that was extremely funky but didn't have a bad fly problem. They had about 30 chickens that picked and scratched in the shit. I guess they were eating up a lot of the maggots. They had ducks too but ducks are horrible cause they fowl (pun intended) all the water troughs. It looked awfully unsanitary to me but the horses never got sick from it.

cont.

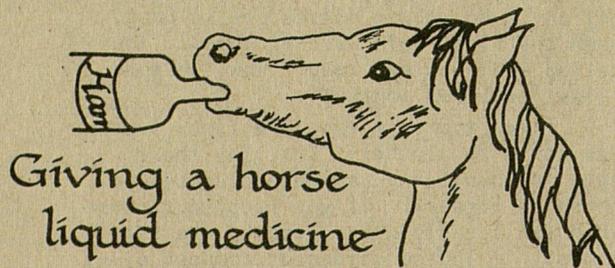
## HEALTH CARE:

There is a book called Veterinary Notes for Horse Owners. I recommend it because it is complete. Also any library has a few horse books. It's good to learn as much about horse medicine as you can. Some of these books that get really into diseases can freak you out and make you think horses are sickly animals. But they're not. Good care prevents most problems and common sense solves a lot of them.

I won't pretend to be an authority on horse medicine, but here are some things you can recognize and what you can do about them.

Overeating and bad feed causes sickness in horses. Colic is about the most common ailment in horses. A horse can be prone to it just like some babies are, or it can be caused by eating too much grain, a sudden change in feed or feeding schedule, by too much fresh green feed, by being hauled in a trailer on a full stomach, or eating when excited or nervous. Gas in the stomach causes the horse to bloat. Sometimes this is visible, other times the horse just acts uncomfortable, lies down and groans or bites at her sides.

The essential thing to do is keep the horse on its feet and keep it moving. This will often cause the gas to pass through the intestines. I think there are colic remedies you can give by mouth. If the horse is in real agony I would call a vet. Colic can kill a horse. The vet can put a tube down the stom-



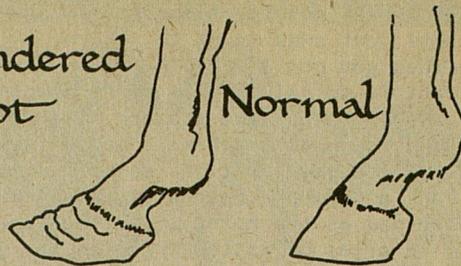
ach and get the gas out. I've never had a horse that was sick enough to call the vet.

Here's something I thought of but have never tried. It seems like since mint tea is useful for human indigestion it might work for horses too. You could make a quart of it (real strong) and strain it into an old beer or wine bottle. Then you tip the horse's head up and open the lip on one side and pour the stuff in. This may be easier said than done but if I ever have a colicky horse I might try it. Giving a liquid medicine is called drenching. It is important not to tip the animal's head too far back (see diagram), so that the liquid goes into the stomach not the lungs. Drenching should be done with care or pneumonia can result, but you can learn to do your own drenching.

Founder, or Laminitis, is another illness caused by some of the same conditions. Ponies seem to founder easily if they are overweight and get loose in the grain bin or a too-lush pasture. A horse can also

Foundered  
Foot

Normal



founder from drinking a lot of water when all sweated up and then just standing around. My friend's saddlebred mare, Joanie, foundered after a show. She was still damp and a little bit hot from the workout and they loaded her in an open truck and drove 30 miles home. What happens is the blood vessels in the feet swell up and the hoof can't expand because it's hard. The horse is in terrible pain and walks as if it is on hot coals. The best thing to do is stand the horse in mud or cold water. Eleanore tied Joanie up in the lowest spot in a corral and kept the hose running till the horse was standing ankle deep in mud. This is soothing. She did not ride the horse for 2 months. But she was quite lucky, as Joanie recovered and we rode her for many more years. Some horses never completely recover from founder. You can sometimes tell if a horse has been foundered because the walls of the hoof have little horizontal ridges and the toes may be grown out and curved slightly upward.

When you are working a horse intensively and feeding a lot of grain to keep him/her in condition, remember to cut the grain ration in half on any day you rest the horse. Otherwise, the horse can get what farmers used to call "Monday Morning Sickness." The horse comes out all stove up behind and loses control of its hindquarters. A friend of mine had this happen to her horse. She covered her with blankets and didn't try to get her to move at all. She said in an hour or so the horse was ok.

Beware of sudden changes in routine or feeding, especially taking a horse that has been working hard and then putting it in a little pen or a stall without any exercise. I know a couple of people who had horses die of a thing called "twisted gut." Both of these horses went from intensive training to standing in a stall with no exercise.

Obesity is not a healthy condition in horses. Fat horses are prone to leg and foot injuries because they have so much more weight to carry. Obese mares often have trouble conceiving or giving birth. It's not kindness to keep a horse fat. Restrict feed and work the horse into condition gradually.

Horses get some contagious diseases, the most common being a cold. When I was a kid, sometimes in the spring the ponies would catch cold. Their noses would run and they'd cough. We had some stuff that looked like Wild Cherry cough syrup only it was for horses. This one pony, Flash, had a bad cough. One of us held him and the other tipped his head up and

poured some of the stuff in the side of his mouth. A lot of it went on the ground but he got better. It seems like honey would suffice if you can't find horse cough medicine. Also, horses catch colds at shows or trail rides just like kids catch colds at school. We never lost any horses from a cold.

Distemper resembles a cold only it's a lot worse. The horse gets really heavy phlegm coming from its nose and the glands under the jaw swell up. That's known as "strangles." The horse by this time is gasping and may die if not tended right away. The pony in John Steinbeck's beautiful story "The Red Pony" died this way. The bones of another such horse are bleaching in a gulch near our house. The horse got very sick after a surprise summer rain and cold spell. I told the landlord the horse had distemper. He's a nice guy but tends to not take women seriously. He said "Naw, its just a little cold." Finally when the horse was too sick to move he gave it a penicillin shot but it was too late. Then Bo's horse, Jossie, got pretty sick so we got a bottle of penicillin and shot her up twice a day. My pony had a runny nose at the same time, but never got really sick as horses do. Veterinary penicillin is available from rural pharmacies and veterinary supply houses. (Two good ones are: Omaha Vaccine Co., 2900 "O" St., Omaha, Neb. 68107; and Kansas City Vaccine Co., Stockyards, Kansas City, Mo. 64102. Both have free catalogs.) If distemper is prevalent in your area you can get a vaccine for it.

I mentioned "cooling off" before. Improper cooling can not only directly make a horse sick, it can lower the horse's resistance to whatever bugs may be around. When you work a horse at a fast pace it gets hot and sweaty. If you give a horse in that state a drink and just let it stand around, it can founder. When I rode high class horses in shows, they were kept in stalls and pampered and much was made over cooling a hot horse. Now, out in cowboy country they say "just turn 'em loose and let 'em roll." I try to take a happy medium between these two extremes. If you can, start walking the horse on the way home so he will be cool when you get there. But some horses are such barn rats they fidget and prance and haul ass all the way home. So then what you do if the horse is really steamed up is to lead him/her around for a while until the chest and flank areas are cool to the touch and the horse has stopped puffing. You can give small sips of water during this period, say four or five swallows at a time. If the horse is soaking wet and it's a cold day, you can pamper by throwing an old woolen blanket over it until the coat is almost dry. Then, you can turn the horse loose and/or feed some hay. When a horse rolls, he's scratching his back and getting dust into the coat which helps dry it. My rule is not to feed grain until an hour after the horse is cool.

#### GROOMING

Each time you ride, brush the horse, at least on the back where the saddle and girth

lie. If you don't, the dried sweat and dirt will eventually cause sores. Also, there might be a burr under the saddle that would hurt the horse and make him buck.

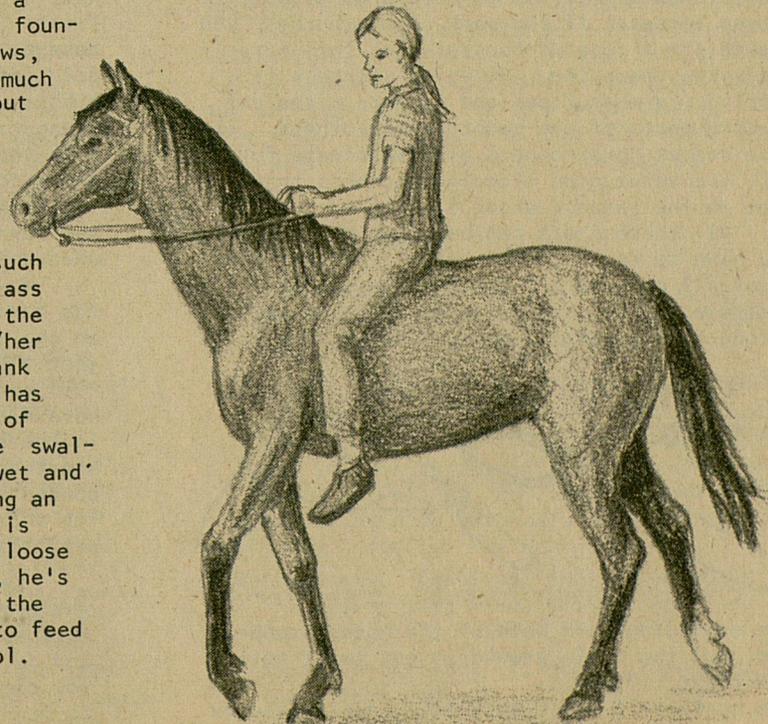
Circular metal currycombs (or rubber ones) are good for getting off mud and mats of long hair, but don't use one on the head or legs as these areas are tender. Finish with a stiff brush. Be extra gentle around the eyes. The horse will appreciate this.

Sometimes in the spring horses will get a fungus. There will be patches where the hair is rubbed off. Bacon grease takes care of this unless it is mange, then you have to get some stuff from the vet.

A good thing to have around is Corona Ointment. You can get this in any feed store. It's good for almost anything but deep wounds. When a wound scabs over you can keep it goosed up with Corona and it will reduce or eliminate scars. I have a friend who makes herbal salves. He uses locally gathered plants and a base of beeswax, coconut oil, vitamin E oil and I forget what else. It works as well or better than Corona.

Chafes result from badly fitting or dirty gear. It's like you wearing shoes that hurt. I plan to devote an entire article to tack. All I will say now is clean the sore place, put some salve on it and don't put any saddle, straps or anything on that place until it heals.

When I was traveling on my pony I spaced out one morning and tied the sleeping bag on too loose. A buckle worked around and made a sore on her back. I found some yarrow that day and made a poultice with yarrow tea, then put some salve on it. The sore started to heal right away but I moved the sleeping bag to the front of the saddle till the spot healed.



Horses get lice in the winter. Lice go for horses that are sick or run-down. I wait till a sunny day and give the horse a bath with animal flea and lice shampoo. Or you can use 4% Malathion dust. A horse that works hard enough to sweat frequently does not often get lice.

Jossie got hurt in a fence last year and flies got into the wound. About 6 months later she broke out with scabs all over but mostly in the chest and neck near the cut. We tried shooting her up with combiotic (a penicillin streptomycin combination) to get rid of this infection but it didn't work. Then our cowboy friend Ed said wash her down with Pine-Sol. Bo did this and it got rid of most of the scabs.

A horse will also get abscesses and grubs (another fly thing under the skin). If these are very big they can be treated with hot compresses of Epsom salt and Golden Seal powder. Epsom salt will draw out the pus and Golden Seal will disinfect it.

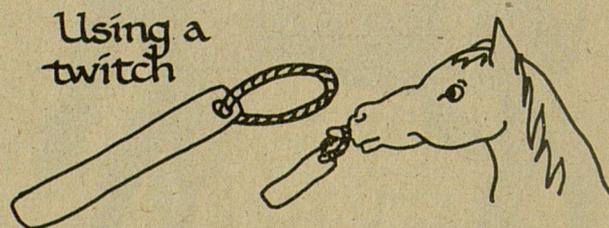
I keep some Golden Seal around all the time. I wash out any cuts and dab on the powder. For deep wounds there's a product called Scarlet Oil. It's all natural ingredients and I think also helps keep the flies away.

Penicillin and combiotic seem to be the recognized panacea for deep wounds and bad infections. I won't take penicillin myself but it has saved a lot of horses from the bone yard.

#### SHOTS

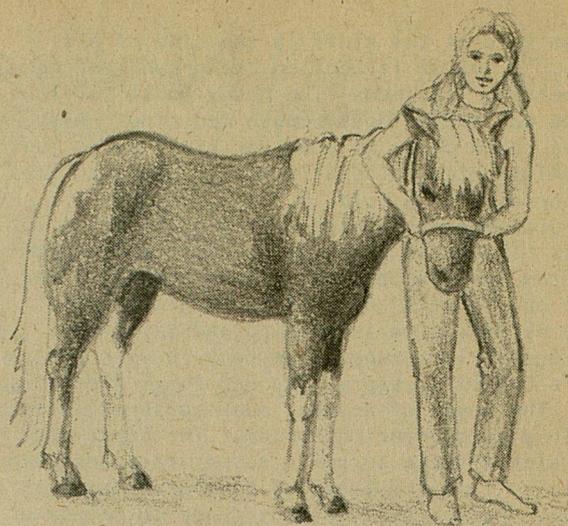
Every year I give my horses shots. There's a series called Encephaloid that combines Tetanus and Sleeping Sickness. You give these 2 weeks apart in the spring. Tetanus is easily contracted through puncture wounds, bad cuts or an infected navel in newborn foals. The tetanus germ lives in barnyards especially around horses. If you work around horses, you should get a tetanus booster shot for yourself every few years too. Sleeping sickness is carried via mosquitoes and is more prevalent in some parts of the country than others. In some states horse owners also vaccinate for VEE, the Venezuelan sleeping sickness that went on the rampage about 5 years ago.

All these shots can be given by you. First you have to restrain the horse. If your horse is at all excitable I recommend a twitch. Its a simple device, a stout piece of wood with a strong rope or chain loop through a hole in



one end. You take hold of the horse's upper lip, put the chain around it and twist until it's tight. (Ouch!!)

The horse will be so busy being distracted by the twitch he won't even notice the shot. This



is also useful when you have to treat deep wounds. It saves a lot of hassle, but must be done quickly because the lip will become numb and the horse will start resisting again.

**Warning:** Do not stand right in front of a horse when restraining it. The horse could panic and knock you down. Stand to the side of his head so if he jumps forward you can get out of the way.

All of these shots, tetanus and antibiotics, are given "intramuscularly" - in the muscle of the neck, the chest, or the hindquarter. Use a sterilized syringe (either a disposable plastic one or a glass one which has been boiled at least 5 minutes). Before filling the syringe, wipe the top of the vial with rubbing alcohol & pour some over the needle. Push the needle through the rubber top of the vial and draw the medicine into the syringe. If you begin to have difficulty, inject some air into the vial first. Draw out slightly more than the correct dosage. Then, hold the syringe with needle pointing upwards and tap gently to work air bubbles to the top. Push them out with the plunger. Make sure all the air bubbles are out. Some vaccines are "live viruses"--this means the vaccine itself is infectious. Be very careful when handling these! Work over newspaper and burn the paper, the vial and the syringe when done.

Now, you're ready to give the shot. While the horse is distracted, pour a little alcohol on the spot where the shot is to be given. Inject the needle into the muscle about 1/2-3/4". Pull back on the plunger for a second. If you have hit a vein or artery, you will see blood in the syringe. If so, remove the needle, and start again. No blood, then quickly inject the contents of the syringe, remove the hypodermic, rub the muscle and let the horse go. With practice, this takes only a few seconds.

Keeping horses is the kind of thing where books are good but experience is better, so the best thing to do is get out there and do it. But...if you do have any problems you can't find the answer to, you can write to me--P.O. Box 604, Lower Lake, Cal.95457, and I'll try to help. ♀

# Farm Notes • Farm Notes •

Beginning with this issue of COUNTRY WOMEN, we are starting this new column in the practical articles section. It is a space for comments on practical articles which have appeared in COUNTRY WOMEN, questions about practical matters for other readers to answer, and short notes and articles which don't fit into our usual format. We're beginning this column because we want a place for feedback and dialogue about practical homesteading information. We also want to encourage women who don't feel up to writing a whole article to send us letters with stories about things that have worked well for you or problems you need help with. We welcome letters and contributions to this new column!

Dear COUNTRY WOMEN,

I have a few comments concerning the Pig Feeding article (issue #19). The author states "we added a chopped up mixture of meat scraps, lettuce and fruit that we found at the dump, thrown out by the local supermarket." Free feed is fine, however, feeding improperly prepared (raw) garbage to swine can result in trichinosis a disease affecting swine and the humans who eat the resulting contaminated pork. Garbage feeding can also result in the spread of hog cholera and infectious foot and mouth disease in swine. Both these deadly diseases are now under control, but that's mainly because garbage feeding is on the decline and is restricted in many states.

So, please advise your readers, particularly the small-scale pork producer doing her own butchering that raw garbage feeding, although a cheap method of putting on a pound of meat, creates an extremely conducive atmosphere for the spread of some highly infectious diseases.

your sister,  
L. A. Petersen

(Editor's note: Thorough cooking of garbage will solve this problem. One local homestead keeps an old wood cookstove out by the hog pen and boils the garbage (for at least 30 minutes) in canning kettles on top of the stove. This keeps the odor and mess out of the kitchen.)

COUNTRY WOMEN,

I'm writing about the article on "Raising Motherless Day Old Calves" in issue #17. Most of what the author had to say was in agreement with my experiences in working with infant calves. However, in learning/sharing with the older (experienced) friends I lived with for eight months, I came to an entirely different conclusion than the author about raising the calves on goat milk.

First, some background information: They have a very small place and keep four pigs, two milk goats, one milk cow with calf, and are usually raising four to six day old calves. They have lots of contact with other farmers and keep a continuous supply of goat colostrum in the freezer, usually two or more gallons. This is what

the calves always get started on. This is gradually replaced with fresh goat milk until the calf is six to eight weeks old, when they get straight cow's milk. The calves very seldom get scours, and my friends have only lost two calves in the last two years (one had genetic defects).

One other thing: those calves grow like the sky's the limit. People from twenty and more miles around know about those calves and my friends can't raise them fast enough. They get top dollar for their efforts. (An example: when people come to check them out, they consistently estimate the calves ages at two to three months older than they actually are, 'cause they're that healthy and big.)

in sisterhood,  
Phoenix Loftus

There's a good series of booklets available on home tanning. All three (Fur Tanning Techniques, Fur Dyeing Techniques, and Fur Working Techniques) are by Sarah Huntington. She first learned tanning as a Peace Corps volunteer raising rabbits. The booklets are short (15-25 pages each), but are clearly written and thorough enough for any home tanner. Available from: Metasis, P.O. Box 128, Marblemount, Wa. 98267; \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00.

## Goatkeeping Information

For those beginning with goatkeeping here is some reliable information to learn from and to turn to when trouble arises:

Starting Right with Milk Goats, by Helen Walsh (\$3.00) Available from: Mother Earth News, P.O. 70 Hendersonville, NC 28739

Dairy Goats--Course #105 (\$4.75) The Penn. State University, 307 Agricultural Administration Bldg., University Park, Penn. 16802 (by far the best source!)

Dairy Goats: Breeding/Feeding/Management III. Dairy Goat Association, c/o Tiara Goatery, RR 1, Virden, Ill. 62690

Aids to Goatkeeping (\$10.00) (hardback) Dairy Goat Journal, P.O. Box 1908 Scottsdale, Ariz. 85252

cont.

# Farm Notes. Farm Notes.

Dairy Goat Journal (monthly-\$5 per yr.)  
P.O. Box 1908, Scottsdale, Ariz. 85252  
Countryside & Small Stock Journal (ten times  
per yr.--\$5 a yr.) Rt. 1 Box 239, Water-  
loo, Wisc. 53594

As cured hay for winter feeding loses its vitamin A, it turns brown and gets brittle. A good supplement for the loss of vitamin A is a natural product called 1100 D Super Caroyed. It consists of carrot oil, vitamin E and D. Very good to use from breeding thru kidding season, when vitamin A plays a crucial role in the development and delivery of healthy kids. It can be obtained from: Nutritional Research Assoc. Inc. Box DG, So. Whitley, Ind. 46787.

For those who have trouble with abscesses, there's now a vaccine. A 250cc bottle of Pasturella-Caryne-bacterium costs \$6. There's also an antiserum for active cases. You can get it from: Omaha Vaccine Co., 2900 "O" St., Omaha, Neb. 68107. They will also send you a catalog on request.

Recently I lost a five month old doeling to unknown cause. I had her autopsied and found out it was kidney failure, probably a birth defect. If you have an animal die it's always a good idea to have an autopsy done. If the cause of death is infectious you'll want to know so you can treat the rest of your herd. The cost is usually cheap (mine cost \$1.00) and you learn an awful lot.

A good safe worm medication is Thibenzale. It comes as pellets, capsules, paste and liquid. I crush the capsules and add them on top of their feed (no trouble trying to poke it down their throat).

Don't breed yearling does under 100 lbs. no matter how old. You end up with a small doe, less milk when she freshens than she should give and troubles at kidding time. I did it once and regretted it. I ended up having to pull the kid, and she almost didn't make it. Never again!

I hope this helps some country woman starting with goats and I would be glad to hear from any other women who raise goats, too.

Michelle Kattelman  
Box 14  
Newark, Mo. 63458

## PREPARING HOLES FOR FRUIT TREES

"Better a ten-cent tree in a dollar hole than a dollar-tree in a ten-cent hole" so one saying goes. While some trees may take seed and even flourish in the poorest of soils, most fruit trees thrive best in good earth.

I have found that there is a good way and a poor way to prepare holes for planting fruit trees. A poor method was exemplified a couple years ago when a neighbor-friend set out his fruit trees. He simply dug four holes three

feet deep six feet apart and in the very unfertile soil he stuck in the fruit trees. A year later the trees looked as they did when he set them out, and he wondered why.

I set out four fruit trees of the same variety and size twenty-five feet apart, preparing the holes with enriched soil, and in less than a year's time the trees had doubled their original size and yielded lucrative and delicious fruit.

Digging: The preparation of a hole should begin at least six months in advance. Some farmers may disagree but I have found that six months in advance gives time to carefully prepare the soil inside the hole. I begin by digging a hole five feet deep and five feet square. The soil where I live in Southern California is hard clay. It is hard to dig through but with the help of water to loosen the clay and a pick the hole can be dug deeper. After digging five feet down (once I dug almost six feet down and thought I'd have to call for a tow rope), I haul the hard clay elsewhere. Clay, I find, is useful for filling in mud holes in driveways.

Other soils may be blessed with richer contents than hard clay. Even so, I suggest digging the hole deep enough to allow the spreading roots to expand.

Fertilizing: The second step is fertilizing the hole. Roots need rich soil to grow in. I have used different methods of fertilization, all effective, yielding healthy delicious fruit usually the year after planting.

Six months before planting the tree, usually in September, I begin filling the hole with nutritious ingredients. I throw in grass clippings, straw, rotting wood, old pinecones, leaves manure, garbage, earthworms, rock phosphate, and enriched soil. Frequently I get down into the hole to turn these ingredients, mixing them together with a spade or hoe. Then when the rains come, the water permeates the ingredients further and filters down to loosen the soil on the bottom. I continue to add more of the same kind of ingredients until the hole is filled with luscious nutritious humus which roots love.

Last September I tried a somewhat different method, which I had read about in Rodale's How to Grow Vegetables and Fruits by the Organic Method. At the bottom of the hole I placed two round drain tiles, plugging the ends of each with pebbles and covering the tiles with a thick layer of compost, peat moss and phosphate rock. Then I added the other ingredients-- grass clippings, straw, etc. Whether the added tiles and pebbles helped, I don't know but within this first year six beautiful red apples have matured on the newly planted tree.

Spacing and location: Spacing of trees is very important too. The roots and branches of fruit trees need plenty of room. Usually, fruit trees planted within fifteen feet of each other are too close! Location can mean the climate of your area or a site on your

cont.

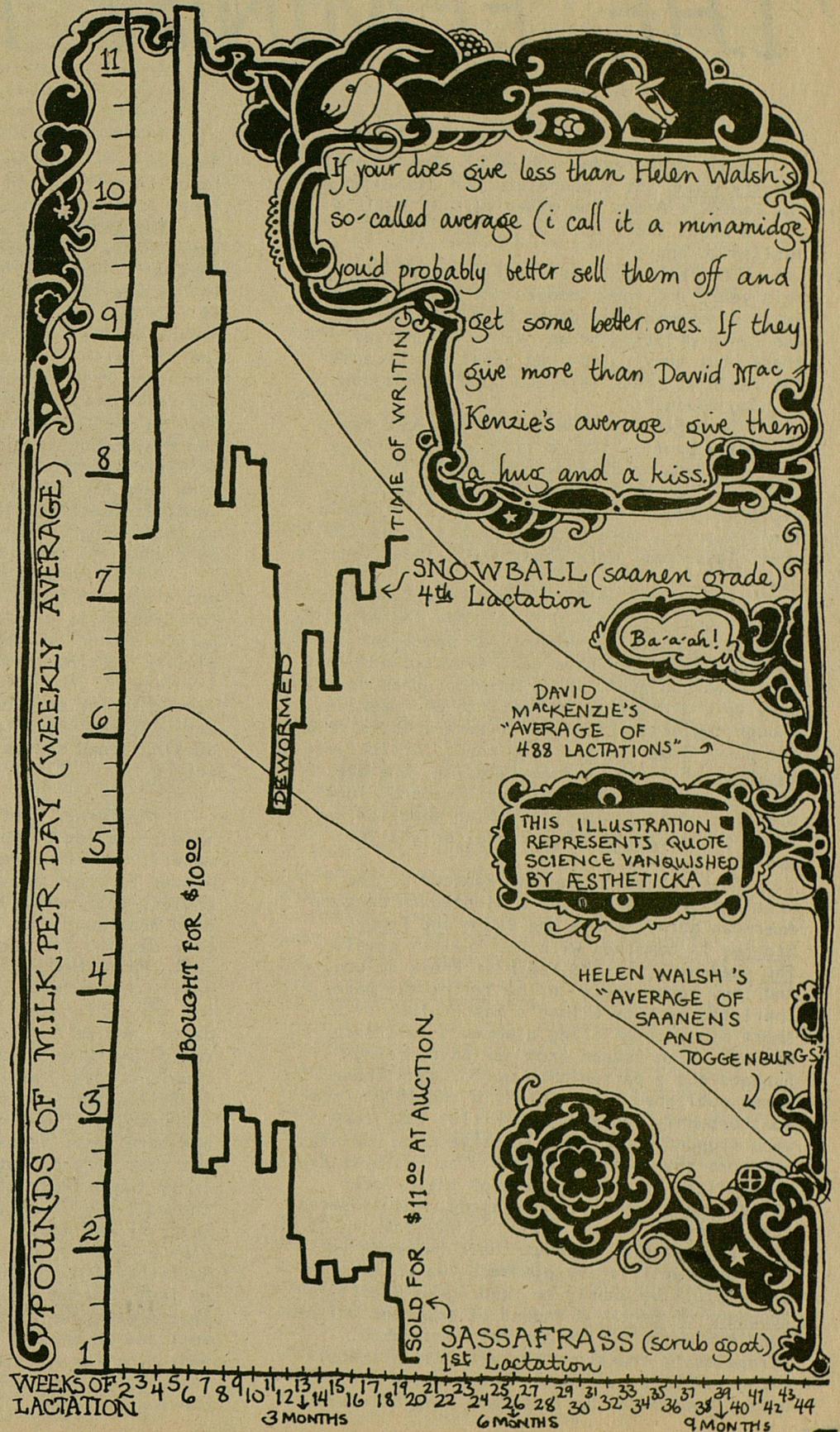
property. As most people know, orange trees grow in Southern California, but I had one tree that didn't do well even though I had originally a healthy tree and a well-prepared hole for it. The tree was just in a bad location. What the tree wanted was a calm sunny location but I had placed it on a hillside frequently hit by fierce winds. Perhaps trees in your area can tolerate frost (and even welcome a snap of cold weather) while most trees in my area would be killed by frost. So it is important to find out first where trees will best survive.

Planting: Before planting a tree, I dig a basin deep enough and large enough around to give the roots spreading room. Then, around the roots I spread some rich composted soil, earthworms and a pound of oat grain. You've never heard of spreading oats around roots? A lot of people haven't. It's an old method my mother taught me and my mother learned it from her mother. Both the oat grain and the worms aerate the soil, which help the roots adjust and grow even better. I then cover the roots with enriched soil and tamp down the soil so that no air can get to the roots. With my fingers usually, I make a water basin around the base of the tree and water with a slow trickle until the basin is covered.

This, simply, is probably the most effective way I have found for preparing holes for fruit trees. From experience, I know that a well prepared hole is the primary factor for a healthy tree.

Cecilia ♀

# GOAT PRODUCTION CHART



# THE FEMINIST PRESS

Along with review copies of their books, Country Women got a pamphlet from the women at The Feminist Press the other day. It tells a little about their work as an alternative publishing house:

"The Feminist Press is five years old this year, and fewer people are asking us if we're a movement newspaper or a group of women who run a printing press. We're neither of these, but they're not bad questions because The Feminist Press is a lot more than a publishing house."

"To begin with, we don't choose our books to make a profit, but to fill a need. And we know what you need because we hear from you all the time. You tell us you want more books by neglected women writers, more nonsexist children's stories, more good materials to use in your classrooms, more information about women's studies."

And at the Feminist Press, what you want is what you get. Theirs is a press dedicated to helping recreate the history of women and discovering how women have been educated and what they have achieved. In my opinion, they do this best in their series of reprints of important, though neglected, feminist literary works from the past. Those that I have read, particularly Daughter of Earth by Agnes Smedley, are eye-opening windows into the persistence of long-standing feminist issues such as abortion and women's oppression in marriage, on the job, and in the world.

These themes occur and reoccur in the writings of Kate Chopin, a nineteenth century American author whose The Storm and Other Stories is combined with her realist novel, The Awakening, in one Feminist Press volume. And they occur again in The Yellow Wallpaper, Charlotte Perkins Gilman's masterpiece of a short story chronicling a woman's fall into madness as an escape from her patronizing husband and a patronizing world. Both these women published their works in the 1890's and so thoroughly shocked the critics that they were dropped from the collective consciousness for more than half a century. The Feminist Press specializes in the rescuing of these foremothers, and for this work alone, they deserve much credit.

For example, without their interest in our feminist literary pioneers, we would probably still be unable to read Agnes Smedley's Daughter of Earth, a record of one poor white American woman's life and her recurrent struggles to transform herself from a schoolmarm, waitress and washerwoman into a newspaper writer, political activist and revolutionary.

Because this book moved me most, I want to focus this review on it, but other Feminist Press books are equally fine.

The story plot of Daughter of Earth is very nearly autobiographical, a record of Agnes Smedley's real life experiences growing up poor in the American southwest during the early part of this century. Her considerably skill in, rendering the class realities of her childhood and the harsh, economically exploitative, and punishing frontier realities of work, class, and sexual caste, as well as the incredibly stark physical beauty of the Nebraska, Colorado and New Mexico countryside makes Daughter reminiscent of the work of Willa Cather in many ways --- a kind of My Antonia of the landless, working class whose contribution to the making of the American frontier is so frequently overlooked.

But in comparison, how much stronger and bleaker a book is Daughter of Earth! For Smedley is writing about that class of people either too poor to homestead or unwilling to bind themselves to farming as a livelihood, those who sought something a little easier and found an even harder life. Early in her childhood, this reality became Smedley's and she describes it with a grim poetry:

"My father wanted to make money, he said --- a lot of money --- and he could make it now if we went away somewhere. He wanted to break away from the farm with its endless pettiness. Our life there had indeed been poor, but as I see it now, it had been healthy and securely rooted in the soil. My mother was satisfied to work ceaselessly and to save a few pennies a year, but for my father such an existence was death, and he had stood it as long as he could. There were but three or four festivals a year. The rest of the time he had to follow the lone plow over badly yielding stony soil, stumbling over the clods with his bare feet. He wanted to wear shoes all the year, but my mother thought if she could carry two buckets of water at a time from the well a mile away --- and in her bare feet; if she could, as she put it, "work like a dog," he had nothing to complain of. My father did not go away ... but he won at last, for we all went away. And from that moment our roots were torn from the soil and we began a life of wandering, searching for success and happiness and riches that always lay just beyond --- where we were not."

Agnes' family moved from town to town, from mining camp to mining camp, in search of an elusive economic security --- a security that eluded them and the lack of which finally destroyed both their unity as a family and most of its members' lives.

Agnes Smedley left her family behind, in the earth of Colorado, and went on to write about her childhood and adolescent experiences in a very concrete, immediate way. Her ability to expose and condense into single vignettes a wealth of perception about class stratification and the role of social and religious prejudices between people comes out in passage after passage of this book. In this passage, for instance, she both describes an isolated event --- the flooding of her parents' tent --- and the whole social order of their Colorado town:

"Down the tracks on higher land stood the big house of the section-master. There lights were burning; everybody was up; everybody was listening to the voice in the flood. We hurried toward the light. Yes, the section-master said, we could stay on the front porch. His wife came out; we need not be frightened, she assured us, for although the water was rising, yet the section-house was built on high ground and would not be swept away. Even if the water surrounded it, still it would stand. She was a pious Catholic and had been praying all night and she put her faith in God against the might of the flood. She smiled continually, as one sometimes whistles when walking up a dark canyon at night. We ought to pray also, she suggested; at such a time as this one should not hesitate. My mother drew back; something in her was hostile to Catholics, as to foreigners. My father did not reply; he would have prayed, still unbelieving, for the picturesque effect of it . . . a warm room, burning candles, a lighted shrine, perhaps incense, the sound of sweeping waters carrying danger on their bosom. Only something hard and cold in my mother's manner prevented him from taking advantage of such a dramatic situation."

"The pious woman smiled and when she walked it was softly and languidly, like an animal that has eaten until sated. Occasionally she would come out to say a few words to us, then retire to her bedroom to pray. Her whole manner showed that although God had permitted the river to surround all the other houses on this side of the tracks, He was protecting the section-house."

"My mother and Helen resented the woman's manner; the night air was cold on the veranda, my father was wet to the waist, and we were all but half dressed. Yet the woman did not ask us into the warm house. She asked us to pray --- but my mother was not a person to pray under compulsion; she was too honest for that."

"The morning came. Then the pious woman came from the house and smiled reassuringly at us shivering on the veranda. The

flood was rapidly receding, she announced. The mercy of God and the power of prayer were proved --- God had saved the section-house."

The other striking aspect of Daughter of Earth is its uncompromisingly feminist view of the sexual caste system. Smedley's utter unwillingness to submit to the usual woman's roles of wife and mother, so oppressive in this culture, made her an abiding feminist, always aware of other women's situations and determined not to fall into those patterns of dependency on men. And this despite her early marriage! But it was a source of constant friction between her and her culture:

"I spent three years in that school and they were unhappy years. They asked me my name. Marie Rogers, I replied. Father a doctor, yes. Dead, yes. Husband's name Knut Larsen.

"Oh, your name is Larsen then!" they exclaimed.

"My name is Marie Rogers!"

"Your're married, you say?"

"Yes, but Rogers is the name I was born with and it is the name I will die with."

"Sorry, Mrs. Larsen, but your name is Larsen."

This poisoned my three years of study.

Once an elderly woman teacher pitied me: "It is really a shame that you, a married woman, should have to make your own living when you should have a home and children!"

I turned on her quickly, and she and I looked at each other across a gulf separating two worlds. She knew then that I must be a bad woman! But I knew that I was a woman not yet broken in to slavery."

Daughter of Earth is a deep, bitter, poignant book, not pleasant reading despite its utter engrossingness. It is an uncompromising, unidealized look at the ugliness of class divisions and their powerful ability to deform lives and leave its survivors brittle from their struggles.

Agnes Smedley survived, though, and went on to commit her life to propagandizing, in the United States, the struggle of the Chinese people against their class system and the success of their Revolution. For her pains, her many books, some of them firsthand accounts of her life with the Red Army, were cleansed from our libraries during the McCarthy witchhunts. I thank The Feminist Press for resurrecting Smedley and the many other forgotten and suppressed feminist authors whose works they reprint.

To order Daughter of Earth, or any of the other books published by The Feminist Press, you should send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to them at Box 334, Old Westbury, New York 11568. Their catalogue for 1976, which you will receive in return and a nice piece of printing in itself, lists some twenty-four book titles covering a wide range of women's history and literature, and several children's books. ♀

# Merging Through Dance

This is the last in a three part series on the exploration of body movement. The basic theory involved here may be clarified by referring to the previous articles.

Pliés are good for practicing lifting and lowering and keeping the body aligned. To plié means to lower the pelvis, bending the knees over the toes and coming back up. Try standing with your feet next to each other in close parallel position. Plié until the knees cover the toes from sight. You can try pliés in different positions. That last one is called "parallel first." For alignment, a mirror can be helpful. Do not let your bottom stick out nor your back arch. Keep yourself together and lift to lower. This is a seemingly subtle but vital difference: lower, don't drop. To lower involves first a lifting. Ruth Botchan, my teacher, illustrated this by putting an orange on a table. First she pushed it off so it dropped hard to the floor. The next time she lifted it oh so slightly and lowered it gently to the floor. It is the same with the pelvis or any body part. After practicing pliés awhile, let your arms respond-- lifting as you lower, lowering as you lift.

An excellent lifting/lowering movement is to begin as in the plié, but add, as you lower the pelvis, your torso folding forward until the fingertips touch the ground. They take no weight; the balance remains entirely over the thigh sockets. The torso returns to center as the pelvis lifts. Try your pliés with every other one adding the torso.

You can also add relevés to the simple pliés lifting up to half toe. Keep the weight centered over the metatarsal; don't let it spill to the outside. Try pliés with spine contraction going into relevés with an arch, straightening as you return to center.

For something a little livelier, turn the pliés into bounces and find how the arms can swing freely in response. You can extend that into all kinds of body movement over the bouncing legs.

A very beautiful movement is shifting from one position to another in the plié. So let's talk about transitions. Ease of transitions is the key to sensuous movement. The easiest, smoothest, most efficient way to shift weight is in a curve; an undercurve or an overcurve. Get in a steady double balance position over two legs. As you shift onto one leg, it is a lifting and lowering action from the pelvis that will put you right there in perfect balance. Lift and lower onto one, right over the thigh socket. Lift and lower onto both. This is an overcurve. Remember to keep your knees slightly bent.

Now try an overcurve from one leg to the other leg. The undercurve will also get you there smoothly and perfectly. From a double balance, bend your knees (lower the pelvis) and, as you shift, continue curving under and up onto the supporting leg. Under and up onto the other leg - right over the thigh socket. Don't get stuck at the top and bottom of curves.

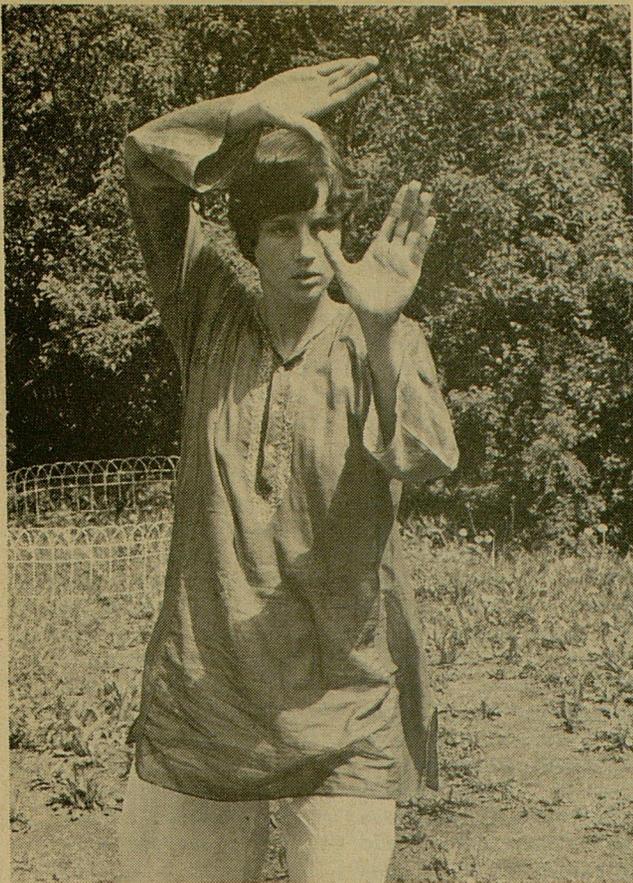
Brushes are good practice in shifting weight and balance. Try this with your feet next to each other in parallel position. Shift the weight onto one leg and brush the other foot along the ground in front of you until only the tips of the toes touch the ground. Both legs are straight. Brush it back, remembering to roll gently through the toes, and return the weight to center over both feet. The action initiates up in the thigh socket, and thus the foot does not drag and stumble. It takes practice; I still suffer from sticky feet. Try a few brushes in a row on one foot, then the other. Then shift from one to the next after each brush.

You can do the same thing in different positions. Try the brushes in first, legs and feet remaining turned out as you brush. Try them out to the side in this position, but only as turned out as you can without tipping or turning your pelvis or losing your knee/toe leg alignment. Try moving from one position to the other (first through fourth), keeping one foot stable and brushing the other.

Try leg swings from first or parallel first that allow the swinging leg, either straight or rounded, to pass through center to the back, keeping the weight on the standing leg. Swing back and forth a few times and end at center.

A good and difficult practice for centering is one that one of the Hawkins dancers had to do on stage. Blindfolded, on several different occasions, she was to make one perfect, resounding clap in front of her body. To do it exactly, especially when you cannot see, you must know your center enough that the arms naturally come together perfectly. Try it with closed eyes - letting the arms respond to an impulse from your center. The clap must resound - if it is shallow, you are off center.

To practice looseness, throw your limbs away. Take an arm and throw it as if it would come off and fly away. If you really let go at the end of the throw, it will rebound back to center. If you want to turn that into a punch, the same thing operates. Kick your leg away as well. Be careful here of knees and elbows.



To explore the looseness and range of your arms, try some circles. Circle them from the shoulder joint. Make a wheel with one arm at a time on the side of your body, full extended circle, without hunching your shoulder. Spin it faster and faster. Then both at once. Try changing directions. Can you do them simultaneously in opposite directions? Swing them around in front, crossing each other and around crossing in back. Swing them clapping in front and back. Make a one-arm wheel that crosses your body in front and circles to the side. Try both arms in the same direction and opposite directions.

Now make circles with your upper torso, letting the arms hang loose. The pivot area is your waist. Start with small concentric circles, deepening as you go all around. Don't hold the arms; let them dangle even in the back. When you're as deep as you can go over straight legs, bend your knees. Finish at center. Explore your own body circles, torso and arms swinging together.

Body twists are great for practicing pelvic initiative. Start by standing steady. Begin with the pelvis twisting as far as it can in one direction, followed by and moving up the spine, finishing with the twisting head. To untwist, start again with the pelvis. Do both sides. When you move a little faster, you begin to see how the twist in the upper body results from the action of the pelvis. Let the arms respond, don't forcibly swing them. The more power you put in the pelvic movement, the more the arms will swing.

A good leg stretch is to stand in a very wide second position. You'll know just how wide after you've tried this once. Curve your spine down, head first, until your hands touch the ground. Shift the weight onto the hands as you bend deeply into one knee, leaving the other leg extended. The weight goes from the hands to the bent leg. Shift back onto the hands, staying low, and into the other bending leg, stretching the first bent leg.

Exploring joint flexibility: there are five ways in which joints can move. Flexion (decreasing the angle), extension (increasing the angle), abduction (moving away from center), adduction (toward center), and rotation. Pick a joint and discover how it moves in each of these ways. Any movement of the joints releases energy.

So far we have dealt mostly with sitting, lying, and standing dances. Here's a fun one for the transition into the world of covering space. It deals with rhythm, one of the aesthetic elements of dance, so let's talk about that for a minute. First, there is the flow and control of energy, which is the force (along with gravity), the source of movement. There is space, and there is time, and the interrelationships of the three. Rhythm is another element. I think of rhythm as the combination of three basic parts. The first is pulse - the steady, even repetition of beats. Try clapping out a pulse of whatever speed you like. To divide the beats into groups of like numbers, setting them into measures, is giving the pulse a meter. The first beat in each measure is accented. An example would be: one. two. three. four. one. two. three. four. one. and so on. Duration is not beating every pulse, but holding some together or dividing some up, giving one beat many claps. When the duration pattern repeats, that is rhythm. Keep it up until you feel comfortable, until you feel the pulse inwardly and don't have to count. Try even and uneven patterns.

After you've played around with clapping, let's put it into movement. Start with a simple pulse. Have someone clap it for you, or beat it on a drum or with two sticks, or sing it, or just do it yourself. When it feels steady, close your eyes and feel it in your body as if your heart were beating to that pulse. When your body is ready to translate, choose one part and move that part in the proper pulse. It may be in your shoulder or head, your nose or finger, your wrist or knee. After awhile, add another part in the same pulse and do them together; maybe trade back and forth or divide it up however it feels right. Add another and another, all moving parts working in the same pulse. When your body is rocking with a steady, solid beat, put the rhythm in it. Maybe all parts will take the same rhythm together, then some will hold while others beat. Think about accents and rock out!

Most of the moving around practices are especially fun with other people. Start walking around, letting your arms swing freely. Walk forwards and sideways and backwards.

Feel the movement of the other people so you don't crash. Tune in to your breath. Let it become sounds streaming out. Walk faster and faster, keeping in tune with the others; and turn it into an easy run. Let the run get faster and faster as much as the space will allow. Then slow down, more and more, until you are standing still. Try a brisk walk with someone calling out commands of when to turn; try for precision and quick response.

Try walking with a marble held in your toes; good for the arches. Skate on your feet. Skip, making them high and suspended and danced.

Make up a simple movement and walk across the floor with it. If you are with others, let them happen simultaneously. Trade your movements as you see others. Combine them.

Walk on different levels as well as directions. Keeping on your feet, walk as low and then as tall as you can; keep them changing. Walk on your knees, crawl, in all directions; let the sound out.

Leaps and jumps take a bit more practice. A leap is a giant overcurve where the whole body is in the air as you shift weight. You push off from one foot and land on the other, rolling through the foot and bending the knee as you land. Do not arch your back in the air; a straight spine takes you the furthest and won't hurt your back. Try a series of leaps; then runs and leaps.

Jumps require careful foot-work. Stand center, bend your knees and as you lift with the pelvis, push off with your feet, rolling through the foot, so your toes point to the ground in the air. This gives you height. Remember your shoulders do nothing. On landing, roll through the feet and bend the knees so as not to jolt yourself. Try a whole series. Change your landing position, say, from first to second and back. Jumps are tiring, don't over-exert your capacity.

Test your balance with suspension. Overcurve and hold; overcurve and suspend.

Are you right there on your axis? Try suspension as you move across the floor. A suspension is much different from a freeze; the energy is moving on to the next movement, only the timing slows down for a moment. Where's your breath on the high step and suspension? It should be coming in.

Turns are very tricky. They require absolute axis and balance. Try them at your own speed, on half-toe, being sure to bring the energy back down to center. Step over and onto that axis as you turn. Let your arms come up for balance; contract a little to help get you around.

A wonderful movement sideways is to a small leap to the side as the leg you leap from kicks up to the side. Step across in the front, step out to the side, step across in back, leap and kick again. Try the same series with a body tilt as you kick.

Another beauty is the chasé. Say you are moving to the right. Undercurve to the right, then hop onto the left foot in the same spot

where the right one was. Do this over and over until you cover a large distance smoothly. You can also chasé forward and back, though the back is very difficult. Try combining front chasées with runs. To the side, try one chasé, step side, cross front, side, back, chasé.

Enough of specific exercises! These are practices to initiate concepts of basic anatomy and movement potential. Use them to expand your own beautiful dancing, your own unique everyday movement, your means of bodily expression. Use them to build up your strength and flexibility in all your body's activities and to find the joy of merging into harmony through dance.

There are a few general categories in movement that are vital to the whole art, to the lifestyle. Music. Dancing with music as inspiration can set your soul free to set your body into expressive magnificent motion. Every different piece of music will stimulate new body response. Work with a musical friend. Dance to her music, jamming together sound and movement. On a more "professional" level, compose a dance, then add the music that fits. Or pick some music and dance to the set piece. It seems to me particularly high to jam together. If no music is available, believe in the truth of your own internal music. Tune into that rhythm, add the aid of nature's rhythms and whirl away!

Within the elements of dance itself is dynamics. This is the use of your energy, a large part of the expressiveness, the force that changes the movement. The energy can be manifested, for example, in soft, fluid movement or in forceful, sharp movement. It operates with quality, the essential nature of a movement, which also depends on the use of energy. To change the quality, you can change the amount of energy and/or the nature of its release. Think of the movement of tracing finger drawings in the dirt, then the change when you suddenly get stung by a yellow jacket. That's change in quality. Examples of qualities are sustained, percussive, vibratory, or swinging movements.

Motivation is another element. What is your inspiration? What is your form, your style? Let's work some of these elements into the realm of improvisation. Improvisation in regard to dance is simply to have not planned ahead, to be spontaneous, to just go ahead and do whatever comes, each point leading to the next. You can improvise to music, you can pick a theme and improvise to that. It is especially wonderful to improvise with a group of people. This is a list of some ideas.

1. Choose a quality - for instance, fluid - and dance with that only. Change the quality, then combine some.
2. Pick your atmosphere - a world of molasses, a dense forest, a cold, isolated night on the beach.
3. Name an experience or mood - falling in love, leaving a friend, dealing with a sexist employer, innocence, political violence.

4. Pick a direction and path in space and move only that way - sideways and curved, backwards and straight.
5. Use an object - a scarf, elastic band, a long rope.
6. Sensory stimuli - look at a drawn pattern and dance to it.
7. Make no plans - just start moving in relation to each other.
8. Work on a specific plane or level - for instance, vertical plane, knees level.
9. Work with gaits - walk, skip, slide, run. Get basics, then add changing directions.
10. Dimensions - tight, expansive. Be as tiny as you can; then as huge.
11. Rhythm and speed
12. Symmetry/asymmetry - off-centered movement. Remember that off-center movement needs compensating balance.
13. Use texture as stimuli - sandpaper.
14. Base the movement on rebound - watch a rubber ball.
15. Do a dance of giving and receiving energy from each other - greet and depart.
16. Follow the leader.
17. Confined in a box.
18. Hang your head so you look through your legs at each other and sing.
19. Listen to a haiku and dance to it.
20. Dance with isolated parts of the body.
21. Dance with voices only.
22. Respond to color.

The following are more detailed.

1. Have someone calling the commands. Everyone stands frozen. Caller says, "move one thing," and everyone makes one quick move with one body part. "Move one thing" again and another quick change from another body part. Keep this up and then, "move two things," and on to whatever is desired.

2. Start with body all in one piece. Part by part gains flexibility.
3. Everyone dancing until caller says, "melt." Sink, melting, into the ground.
4. At a sign such as a clap, everyone falls.
6. A long, more involved one: discovery improvisation. Start by lying relaxed. Very slowly, part by part, you discover that parts are you, can move, how they move. Discover your self as an infant might.
7. One person starts dancing and comes to a stable position. One at a time, the others dance in and build on to the stable structure.
8. Lying relaxed, concentrate on your breathing. Add sound to your breath. Let your body respond more and more to the breath as it works into a total dance with voice.

Make up whatever comes to the imagination. Study animals, birds, forests, life situations, words, music, spiritual discoveries.

A wonderful way to end a period of dance practice is to get in a circle, or, if alone, move in a circular pattern. Start walking slowly around to a steady beat. Get gradually faster in the beat until you can't walk any faster and must break into a run - still to a definite beat. (A leader helps here to determine the increasing beat by claps or drum.) Faster and faster, arms go out like a bird, leaning into the center of the circle until you're absolutely flying. When you've reached your peak, your terminal velocity so to speak, begin to slow back down to an easier run, then a walk, and to stillness.

Finish either with something vigorous, or quiet and subtle. Leave with a sense of arriving and concluding. ♀



# TURNED-ON WOMAN'S SONGBOOK

by  
Ruth Mountaingrove

Turned-on Woman Songbook is a sharing experience. It is the story of a woman's individual movement towards herself and other women told in words and song. The words tell the background of each song, giving them more meaning for the reader and the songs convey mood and feelings, bringing you right to the 'now' moment of experience. They are songs that women can feel good about singing as the words celebrate our femaleness rather than treading on it as so many songs do. Sharing moments of humor, quiet observation, ecstatic love or frustration and anger, these songs can be easily identified with. We know we have felt what they speak of, have perhaps even lived out closely similar experiences.

The melodies are relatively simple and easy to learn, no complex timing is involved, and some of them are quite beautiful, others catchy, good work songs.

I first heard "Prayer to the Goddess" at a wonderful Seder given by my family several years ago. Ruth was there and sang the song for us. There was magic in the air that night and her song contributed to it and was felt deeply by all of us, some of whom had never heard a song to a female deity before. It played its part in the expanding of our awareness.

The words to the tunes that float through your head count in the growth of consciousness. I sometimes have the same song returning to my awareness many times during a day and am glad when the words contain positive affirmation of that which I'm working to incorporate in my life. You will find the words to most of these songs helpful in that way. Enjoy them, sing them, and they will become part of your growing woman self. ♀

Available from: New Woman Press  
Box 56  
Wolf Creek, OR  
97497

Price: \$3

*Lament*

## People Keep Passing Through My Life

People Keep passing thru my life. People Keep  
passing thru my life Here to-day and tomorrow they're on their  
way Hardly get to know them and they're here to say goodbye  
I want to reach and touch but they must fly - well someday I'll be  
on my way and then I'll say goodbye to those people who keep passing  
thru my  
life. -- Some are going East, some are coming West. some have  
just been  
here and gone & now are back a-gain. some are going South, some are coming  
North. Hardly get to know them & they're gone.

© words and music Ruth Mountaingrove. 1970

# GETTING A FAIR SHAKE

For winter in northern California I dreamed of a warm, inexpensive and organic home. I chose a simple square framed cabin structure sided and roofed with redwood "shakes." Shakes are essentially thin wooden shingles split by hand. They can be used for outside or inside siding and for roofing. Shakes are made from durable straight-grained wood. Among the softwoods, redwood and cedar are excellent and pine is a good second choice. Among hardwoods, oak is most frequently used. Even fallen redwood left by yesteryears logging operations can be used; beneath the rotted layers of bark and sapwood, there is often sound wood.

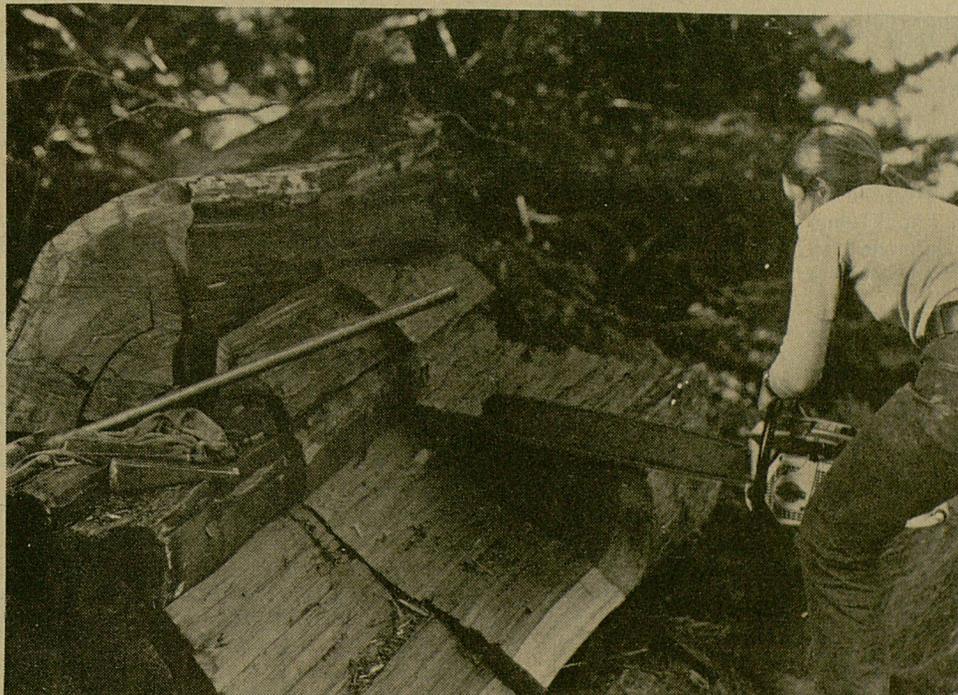
There are two types of shakes: barn and shingle. The former are 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick, 6 - 12 inch wide and 24 - 36 inches long. Barn shakes are split perpendicular to the timber's annual rings. Shingle shakes can be up to almost an inch thick, 12 -24 inches long and are split parallel to the annual rings. What I call shingle shakes, the old timers refer to as "bastard" shakes because, being flat grained, they are more prone to split and twist with weathering than barn shakes. I also found if you make your shakes as wide as your froe allows (9 inches or more), they are less likely to split when nailing through.

When I began shaking, I was only familiar with barn shakes and consequently my first attempts proved quite frustrating. You need nearly perfect wood (which was plentiful for the old timers) - no knots and very straight, even grain - and, of course, the loggers left only what they considered unusable tree sections. After switching to shingle shakes, all the wood previously rejected for barn shakes split beautifully.

Before you can split shakes, you must saw and wedge off appropriate sections of logs. Things to look for when surveying an available wood supply are, first, logs must be at least 30 inches in diameter. If less than 30 inches, I found the grain was not compacted enough to allow good splitting. Second, logs with a minimum of branches, knots, twists, and rot.

All this cabin building and shaking was done with a little help from my friends; we did our cutting with a two person saw (appropriately nicknamed a "misery whip"). Often we would spend two or three days cutting a four or five foot section, and then find we could utilize only two of the eight bolts the section would make. I figured it would take about five years to get enough shakes that way, so we borrowed a chainsaw for a day and got enough sawing

cont.



done so that sections of which we could only use a quarter were still worth the sawing effort. A chainsaw does mean you can be more selective and don't need to have such fine wood to begin with (i.e. you can afford to use less of each section cut).

Once you have sawed a log section the length of the shake desired, you set it on end, and using a sledge and wedge, break it into pie shaped bolts, quarters or eighths, depending on the size of the log. You should then split off the "heartwood" or center quarter or so which is too hard to split properly.

Now the shaking! The necessary tools are a froe and mallet. A froe is a steel blade, 15 inches long, 2 inches wide and 1/4 inch thick with a handle that makes a 90 degree angle to the blade. The blade has a sharp cutting edge which is laid on the wood. The upper edge of the froe is wider, dull, and pounded on with the mallet. The mallet can be a metal bound wooden one, or just a weighty piece of hardwood. We went through three mallets in our shaking, two metal-bound pepperwood ones and a madrone branch. I would not recommend either type, maybe hickory would do. Now I use oak branches and accept a limited life span.

To make your first shake, lay your froe across the top of the section at the desired shake width and pound it down with your mallet the depth of the froe. Work the handle so that the force goes through the bottom of the blade, and the shake should split off. For example, if you are behind the block of wood you would pull the handle toward you.

If the wood is presawed in sections, you should be able to make about ten bundles (ten to fifteen shakes in a bundle) in a day, taking plenty of time for your lunch break and farm chores. The old timers claim to make a thousand a day. It took fifty bundles (10 bundles equals 100 sq. ft.) to cover the gabled roof on my 20 x 20 ft. cabin.

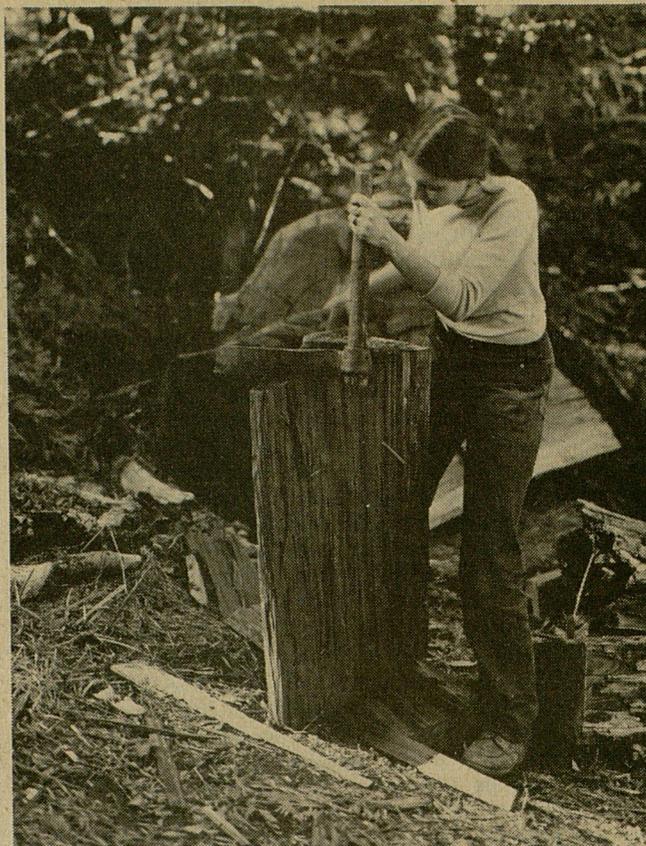
The gist of this whole trip is that shaking is the smooth part; finding and setting up proper sections of timber is what causes the curses. Maybe it would be wise to prepare you for some common knucklebusters:

1. Shake does not split off after pounding froe in and pulling with all your bloody strength. Probably,

a) the wood won't ever split, or

b) the wood will split part way. If it splits enough to slip your froe down further, then do so and slide in a block of wood (the handle of the mallet you smashed yesterday will do nicely) which will hold the top of the shake away from the block so your froe can slide down easily. Then you can continue splitting down the length of the shake.

2. Shakes split off but break; leaving holes and gaps in the shakes, or they "run out" before you split them to the bottom of the bolt. If you encounter this type of difficulty, try first splitting a piece thick enough for two shakes each. Then bisect those two. You also might try evening off your surface, using the froe on both ends of the bolt. Or split more



gradually, i.e. concentrate on cutting down with the froe.

Often when you are through with the rough shaking, you need to finish off your shakes by trimming the edges. I just use a gentle hit with the froe to square off shakes and remove bark and sapwood. You can leave the less durable sapwood on and just plan on those edges being covered by overlapping shakes.

Shakes used for interior walls or decorative siding can be put up just about any way you can figure out since there is no weather to beat. Roof shakes must be your best quality ones, for they must lie flat and not curve. You can use lower quality ones on exterior walls, for the roof overhang and steeper slope should keep most of the rain off them.

There are two methods of laying shakes: board and shingle. Barn shakes can be laid either way. Shingle shakes should be laid shingle style. If your shakes are thick ones (1/2 inch or more), they must also be laid shingle style. Before you can lay your shakes, you need to set up sheathing or lathing. I used 1 by 6's, laid perpendicular to the roof rafters, spaced according to shake length so that the top of a shake would be at the top of one piece of sheathing and the bottom of the shake would cover a second piece of sheathing. But let me relate an incident that might make you consider solid sheathing or plywood under your shakes.

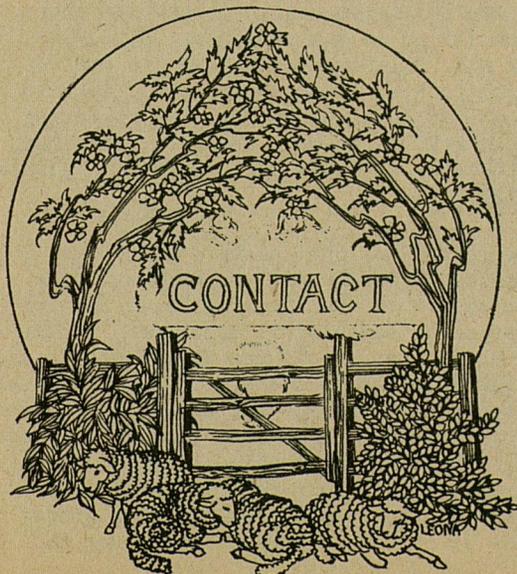
One night I predicted it would snow. I woke up before light the next morning and found Jitka, the cat, sleeping on my pillow

and Aluna, the dog, curled up in the cradle behind my head. Hmm, I thought, and decided to shine my flashlight to see if and how much it had snowed outside. You can imagine my astonishment (even after rubbing my eyes) at seeing two or six inches of snow over everything inside the cabin including the covers I was sleeping under. I live on a windy hill and the snow being lighter than rain had blown in under the shakes. Our other cabin with barn shakes laid board style was snow tight. Luckily it only snows on rare occasions. So if you live in snow country or don't like the wind playing in your roof, I would recommend a solid inner roof.

After the sheathing is up, you can begin hauling those bundles of shakes up onto the roof. To lay board style, you are essentially laying a double row of shakes with a six inch overlap. Always begin at the bottom of your roof or wall, and nail shakes in a straight row across the bottom, leaving at least a quarter inch gap between shakes for expansion when wet. Then go over your first row with a second layer over the first layer's gaps. For your next row, overlap your first row at least six inches and repeat the process of laying a double row. Use two galvanized 6d common nails per shake. If you have problems with the shakes splitting as you nail, try dulling the nail points with your hammer first.

To lay shingle style, the bottom row is laid the same way as board style, i.e. a double layer of shakes. Try to use your thinnest shakes for the bottom row. On each succeeding row, leave 1/3 of your shake length to the weather and put on a single layer of shakes (e.g. if your shakes are 24 inches, you would leave 8 inches to the weather and have a sixteen inch overlap on that first row). Repeat the process of laying a single layer of shakes over the gaps between the shakes in each preceding row, leaving 1/3 shake length to the weather on each row. This method provides a triple layer over most of the area. Most of each shake is covered in this method of laying shakes, so your roof might last longer than one laid board fashion.

Shake making is a lot more work than throwing up board siding, but aesthetically it is well worth the effort and if you don't have a sawmill, it is a way to supply your own lumber. It feels good to be out there in the woods splitting shakes when they're going well, and it's a fine feeling to take the slaughtered waste of redwood lumbermen and transform it into functional, beautiful housing. The danger of fire is high because shakes would go up like a match box, though, so be careful! Don't worry about small cracks in your roof, because the wood expands when wet, and as the old timers will tell you (and I, too, found it true), "With a shake roof, you can see the stars and still be dry."



We are four women, 32,25,11, and 10 who own 17 acres of land outside of Willits. We are looking for 1 or 2 other lesbian feminists to share the land with us. A small cabin and other private dwellings now exist. Women interested in living here need to be into building their own sleeping structure. Write Joanie, Artemis, Chandra and Tara at 3100 Ridgewood D Road, Willits, Ca. 707-459-5776.

Small, isolated organic farm has room for ideas and several high energy people. Self-sufficiency is the idea, as is a life of moderation. I'd like this to become a small community with our own school. Roddy is 4 and needs other kids. Mechanical ability and music are desirable. Write P. Keighley, Gen Del, Lytton, BC, Canada. Would also like to communicate with folks in BC and Washington. Visitors are welcome.

# CONTACT

We're an ongoing communal experiment in egalitarianism, feminism, open relationships, communal child rearing, bisexuality, and joy. We're two years old, have 230 acres, and want to connect with others interested in joining us. Please write for more information. Aloe Community, Route 1, Box 100, Cedar Grove, NC, 27231.

Twin Oaks expands. 9-year old community of 70 working towards a nonsexist, nonracist, cooperative lifestyle. Members share all income and labor from our hammock, construction, and other industries. We're adding a new dwelling and seek adult members now. Twin Oaks Community, Louisa, Virginia 23093.

Tamarack Farm Community, a small rural educational community centered around farming, forestry, craftspersonship and sharing personal growth is seeking female resource people with skills in forestry and natural science, and in arts/crafts. Farming experience is also a plus. Salary is \$75/wk plus room and board. For more info and an application, contact: Rox Andersen, Tamarack Farm Community, Plymouth, Vt. 05056.

East Wind Community located on 160A in Ozarks is seeking members. Promoting a non-sexist, non-violent, non-punishing egalitarian society. Now 65 members and growing quickly. Inspired by Walden Two. Associated with Twin Oaks in VA. Interested? Write or call: EWC, Tecumseh, Mo. 65760. (417) 679-4460.

I'm healthy, active, 62, gay, alone and lonely. My partner of 14 years died last year. I like country life, gardening, hiking, fishing, camping, birdwatching and people. I live on a small farm (40 a.) that I own - big garden, can and freeze year's supply of vegetables. I raise guinea pigs commercially and have a Mon-Fri. job. I need someone of my approx. age who would like to share my adequate home and farms and recreational activities. Diane Dearasaugh, Rt. 1, Box 20, Hiwasse, Ark. 72739.

Person(s) with mechanical and farming experience to live on and run 113 acre organic farm 15 miles NE of Wheeling. Write Box 6494, Wheeling, W.Va. 26003.

Women's Music Festival will be held near Mt. Pleasant, Mich., in the country, Aug. 20-22. Performers include Margie Adam, Meg Christian, BeBe K'Roche, Willie Tyson, Holly Near. Advance donations ('til Aug. 1) are weekend \$15, Fri. night \$3, Sat. day and nite \$6, and Sun. day and eve. \$6. For info, tickets, maps and schedule send money order and self-addressed stamped envelope to We Want the Music Collective, 1501 Lyons St., Mt. Pleasant, Mich. 48858 (517-772-0582).

We need to contact women who are interested in living in and working towards building a matriarchal village - i.e. a large amount of

land with women and children only, living individually and/or in circles and interrelating with one another as an interdependent village. Contact Leila, Box 62, Albion, Ca. 95410.

A women's community is forming in the country outside Ithaca, NY. We are presently about 10 women committed to buying 50-75 acres of land by the Spring. We would like to communicate with women who can offer advice (i.e. legal) or suggestions and especially with other budding rural women's communities. Our group is still open to other women who are serious about building a community immediately. Please contact: Brown/Sena/Reinstein, RD #1 Slator's Ln, Newfield, NY 14867.

Women traveling this summer who have music, poetry, films or workshops that they would like to share at a women's coffeehouse please contact Donna Eickhorn, Las Hermanas, 4003 Wabash Ave, San Diego, Ca. 92104, (714) 280-7510.

Several women here want to learn construction skills this summer. Almost all skills in the community are now possessed by men. If we could find a woman-teacher who would like to join our community or live with us a while, it would be great. We couldn't pay any salary, unfortunately. Contact Dee, East Wind Community, RFD 6B2, Tecumseh, Mo. 65760.

My children need a place to live part or full time in the country. We live in a small apt. in NYC. They need a break from the city and I need a break from them. Will contribute money or labor in exchange for their room and board and expenses (I am a carpenter). They are two boys 9 & 8. Contact Sherry Harriot, 105 Thompson St. NYC, NY 10012.

Naiad Press is interested in seeing lesbian novels suitable for publication. Query first, outlining very briefly the general plot and word-length of the manuscript. Enclose sase. Write Naiad Press, c/o The Ladder, P.O. Box 5025, Washington Stn, Reno, Nevada 89513.

We would like to get in touch with country women living in N.W. Arkansas, S.W. Missouri or N.E. Oklahoma areas. We are considering moving to N.W. Arkansas and would like to correspond and to exchange ideas on gardening livestock care, herbology, shelters, etc. Contact: Lorraine & Connie, R.D. #1 8SW, Highland N.Y. 12528

The recent national gathering on women's spirituality in Boston will be documented in fact and spirit in the upcoming issue for Summer Solstice of WomanSpirit magazine. Fifteen hundred women from across the United States and Canada participated in the event which feminist theorists and herstorians are comparing in impact to the nineteenth century Seneca Falls convention. This special double issue (128 pgs) can be ordered from your feminist bookstore or from WomanSpirit, Box 263, Wolf Creek, Oregon 97497 for \$3. It will be available June 15. ♀

## FUTURE ISSUES

**CLASS:** Your values, prejudices and ethics as related to class. Does change of life style change your class realities? Functions of class in society. (Deadline - September 25)

**CITY/COUNTRY, COUNTRY/CITY:** What motivates the movement between them? Problems in transition. Integrating both realities on a personal as well as a political basis. Future possibilities for interconnectedness. (Deadline - late fall)

**PERSONAL POWER:** Searching for it, access to it and expression of it. Images of success and failure.

**ANGER AND VIOLENCE:** The relationship between the two. Positive and negative ways of relating to each. Anger within the family, between men and women, in society.

We welcome articles and poems for these issues. We also are in serious need of graphics and photographs. We need images of: women, especially women working, farm animals and country scenes. Please label all work with your name and address.

## BACK ISSUES

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE from Country Women, Box 51, Albion, Ca. 95410 and we'll pay postage.

- #10 Spirituality .75
- #11 Older Women .75
- #12 Children's Liberation .75
- #13 Cycles .75
- #14 Foremothers .75
- #15 Sexuality .75
- #16 Women Working .75
- #17 Feminism & Relationships \$1.00
- #18 Politics \$1.00
- #19 Mental & Physical Health \$1.00

Country Women's Poetry - 125 pages, paperback. \$2.00 plus .25 postage. Available from: Country Women's Poetry, Box 511, Garberville, Ca. 95440

Subscriptions are \$4.00 for one year (five issues) and start with the current issue.

Library and Institutional Subscriptions, \$7/yr. Foreign countries please send U.S. dollars only. Bulk rates available on request.

# Country Women Festival

We want the Country Women Festival to be different this year. In order to ensure a more conscious and focused experience, we have started work early and are planning three day skill workshops, evolving guidelines for workshop leaders, and are organizing night activities. We are a collective of a dozen or more women from diverse backgrounds with diverse interests. We want the festival to be a powerful learning experience as well as a catalyst for action and contacts that expand and grow through the rest of the year: a seedbed for direction and growth personally and collectively. We seek to explore our understanding of the women's movement through the sharing of skills, ideas and art forms. We want to celebrate the country women's community and deepen our understanding of it's politics.

Like the last three years, the festival will be held in a campground deep in the redwoods. It will be from 2:00 PM Friday, Sept. 10, to noon Tuesday, Sept. 14. Provided are beds in cabins and tents, running water and showers, and all meals. Like last year, there will be scheduled workshops to share country skills and special interest. If you can teach a skill or will coordinate a discussion group, please let us know immediately, with the specifics of what you'd like to do.

We have found in the last years that both mothers and nonmothers have a more complete experience if there are few children to be cared for. Women who can make other arrangements are strongly encouraged to do so. However, collective childcare will be provided.

Space at the festival is limited because of the size of the campground so the festival is only open to women living in the country. Admission is by advance registration only. Cost for the four days (camp rental, insurance, and food) is \$20.00. Surplus from last year's festival will be available for partial scholarships for women in need. We can also arrange some trades for large quantities of food. Reservations, accompanied by a \$10.00 deposit, must be made as soon as possible. No one will be admitted without a prior reservation so get yours in now. (We'd appreciate the full fee if you can afford to send it in advance.)

Send reservations to: COUNTRY WOMEN FESTIVAL, BOX 251, ALBION, CAL. 95410

COUNTRY WOMEN  
BOX 208  
ALBION, CALIFORNIA 95410

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Atlanta, Ga. 30307

~~Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance  
PO Box 7084  
Atlanta, Ga 30309~~

# Zucchini Marmalade

2 lbs. young zucchini  
juice of 2 lemons  
1 T. grated lemon peel  
2 T. crystallized ginger,  
chopped fine

1 (13 1/2 oz.) can  
crushed pineapple  
1 package pectin  
5 c. sugar or honey  
(or to taste)

Slice squash thinly, measure 6 cups zucchini into a big pot. Add lemon juice and peel and pineapple. Bring to boil, lower heat and simmer until squash is barely tender, about 15 minutes. Add pectin, place over high heat and boil. Add sugar or honey and ginger. Boil hard 1 minute, stirring constantly.

Remove from heat, skim off foam, stir and skim 5 minutes to cool slightly and prevent fruit from floating. Place in sterilized jars, clean rims and seal. Makes 5 half pints.