

Local Dirt

November 23, 1999

The Newsletter of the Berkeley Community Gardening Collaborative

Member Gardens

Berkeley High School
East Campus
Berkeley Booster's
Project Sunflower
Berkeley Youth Alternative's
Community Garden Patch
The Edible Schoolyard
Franklin Elem. School
Karl Linn Community
Garden
Northside/Peralta Gardens
LeConte School
Farm & Garden
Malcolm X School Garden
Ohlone Community
Garden
Peoples' Park Garden
RISE Urban Farm
Spiral Gardens
Strong Roots Gardens
Willard Greening Project

Affiliates and Supporters:

Alameda Co. Food Bank
Americorps
American Community
Gardening Assoc.
Berkeley Ecology Center
The Berkeley Food Proj.
CCC
CALCorps
Center for Eco-Literacy
City of Berkeley
Occidental Arts
& Ecology Center
UCCE Alameda Co.
Youth Dev. Program
West Berk. Neighborhood
Development Corp.

P.O. Box 2164
Berkeley, CA 94702
(510) 883-9096

NEXT MEETING:

Monday, December 6th, at 6:30pm

Where: 1718 Ninth Street
Berkeley

Winter Solstice Potluck

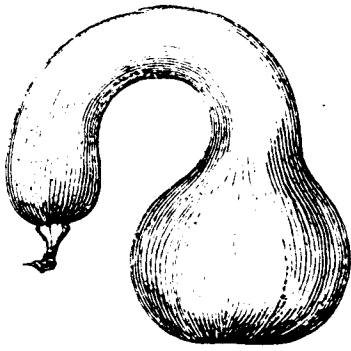
(please bring food to share,
wine and desserts provided)

Monday, Dec. 13th Public Hearing
and Rally on Genetically
Engineered Foods (see below)

Minutes of October 4, 1999:

Attending: March Greenhut, Rivka Mason,
Margo Schueler, Carol Bennett-Simmons,
Betty Izumi, Jennifer Smallwood, and Beebo
Turman.

We met at the Ramada Circle at the Edible
Schoolyard. Since it was a group of school
gardeners we discussed their issues.
Funding ideas were talked about, with some
curiosity about who the Center for Eco-
literacy is supporting this year, as most
Berkeley school gardens were not funded.
Beebo will inquire. Also, are there any
gardens that have extra volunteers, and
could share them with Malcolm X, LeConte,
or Jefferson schools?
Announcements were made about upcoming
Harvest Festivals (B.Y.A.) and compost
delivery. Adjourned early due to cold fog!



G.M.O.s Gotta Go!

Tell the F.D.A. (Food and Drug Administration) what you think about their policy on G.M.O. (Genetically Engineered Organisms). There will be a public hearing (one of three around the country) and rally in Oakland, on December 13th, 1999 at the Elihu Harris State Office Building, 1515 Clay Street (cross street: 15th St.). The official meeting is 9am to 6pm, and you must register to attend (see below).

To register to attend the FDA public hearing on genetically engineered food in Oakland, CA (December 13, 1999), please fill in the following information about yourself. The deadline to register is Friday, November 26. Space is limited, so register early. If you would like speak at the meeting, attach a separate sheet that outlines the nature of what you would like to say, as well as a time you would like to speak, and contact information for those who will be speaking with you.

Name _____
Title _____
Business Affiliation _____
Street Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone _____ Fax _____

Please cut out this form and mail or fax it by the deadline to:

Janet McDonald
San Francisco District FDA
1431 Harbor Bay Parkway
Alameda, CA 94502-7070
Fax: 510-337-6708
Phone: 510-337-6845
e-mail: jmcdonal@ora.fda.gov

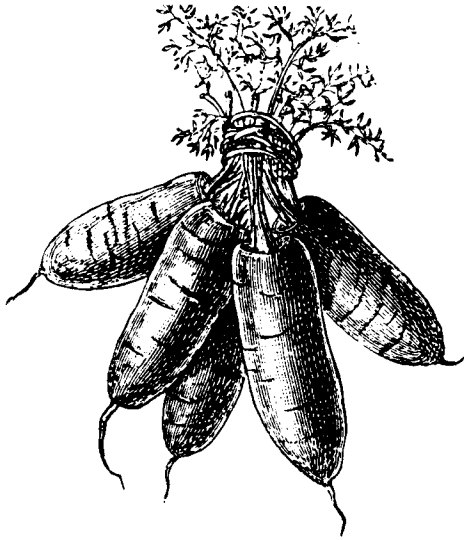
THE RALLY: PLEASE COME and represent your concerns for your health, your children's health, and your right to know how your food is engineered, and farm life is being altered.

WHEN: Noon, outside the hearing.

BRING: Banners, signs, and friends!

There is a new sub-committee of the Berkeley Food Policy Council that was formed in October, to review the information available about the G.M.O. situation, write a fact sheet, make a policy referendum that could go to the City Council, and hold an informative discussion/speaker event in the next three months. If you are interested in coming to our planning sessions, please call Erica Peng at 548-8838, or Beebo Turman at 527-3773.

30 th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION of the ECOLOGY CENTER! A fun time was had by all who attended the wonderful, organic dinner in honor of those visionary people who started the Ecology Center in 1969. Awards were given to Kathy Evans (for starting the recycling program), Karen Pickett (for defending the headwaters and forrests), and Henry Clark (for working with the West County Toxic Coalition). Francis Moore Lappé was the inspirational speaker (a woman whose cookbook, "Diet for a Small Planet" influenced us older folk greatly back in the early 1970's).



THE BERKELEY FARMER'S MARKET: TUESDAYS

The Ecology Center wants to stay at their present site, on Derby Street, inbetween Milvia and Martin L. King Way, on Tuesday afternoons. It is a place that has worked for neighbors and customers, and is very close to the Berkeley High Alternative School and their new gardening/cooking program. The school district was planning a baseball/soccer field there, but if they could be persuaded to put a softball field there instead, then Derby Street could be left open, as many Berkeley-ites would like. Call your Berkeley city council person to voice your opinion.

HOLIDAY CRAFTS FAIRE!

Three Saturdays in December, the 4th, the 11th, and the 18th, at the regular Saturday Farmer's Market on Center Street, there will be sold hand-made gifts from local artists.

RAIN or SHINE!

Music, magic, and hot apple cider!

Come one and all, bring your festive spirit!

There was a very informative "Teach-In" on the University's Gill Track, on Saturday, November 6th, organized by "Bay Area Coalition for Urban Agriculture" (BACUA). The topic encompassed urban food systems, biotech, the University of California at Berkeley and the Gill Track. It was a very successful event with a very good turnout. The panel of speakers laid out the importance of urban ag and sustainable urban food systems (#1.), the role of the University could play in helping that cause by devoting the Gill Track to research and education on urban ag and food systems (#2.), and the direction it is actually taking with the Novartis deal (#3.). In short, they laid out the crossroads our food system is facing and how the fate of the Gill Track sits at that crossroad. In the afternoon a large number of people stayed for the action breakout groups. A longer summary of the issues dicussed is available; it will be available at our Dec, 6th meeting. Congratulations to Terrel Brand for all his super organizing of the event!

The Codornices Creek Community Garden

Community
Garden Update

As many of you know, this community garden was loaned the use of this open land for the past 5 years, with the condition that they vacate as soon as Temple Beth El wanted to start their new building on the large site. The Temple finally submitted it's application for an Environmental Impact Report, which is the first step to getting their building and site designs approved by the city. But in the past 9 months the Temple has had no other community meetings to talk about the daylighting of the creek, parking issues, or dealing with the beautiful old oak trees, as they said they would do last January.

As community gardeners we are very willing to give up our gardening space, but it pains us to see the Temple planners design such a huge building on that land, and to ignore the possibilities of putting the parking underground and daylighting the creek. Please let your opinions be known by signing this petition, and having your friends sign it. This will be discussed further at our Dec. 6th potluck (see first page).



To the City of Berkeley Council and City Manager

We the undersigned support the full restoration of Codornices Creek at 1301 Oxford Street in Berkeley. We would like developers, Congregation Beth El, to follow Option 4, specified by Waterways Restoration Institute, that calls for the culvert to be removed and restoration of the entire length of the Creek at 1301 Oxford.

"This option would provide maximum environmental benefits for the creek and would allow for a more consistent and stable channel grade to be established between Spruce and Oxford Streets." (Waterways Restoration Institute, Channel Assessment and Concept Design Study for Congregation Beth El, June 1999)

We support the wording of the **Berkeley Creek Ordinance** that states:

"...it is in the interest of the City of Berkeley to encourage the removal of culverts and channels ... and to restore natural watercourses whenever safely possible." (17.08.020.H.)

We agree with the similar intent specified in the **Joint Watershed Goals Statement**, agreed to in 1995 by the cities of Berkeley, Albany, El Cerrito, and Oakland.

Name	Address	Signature