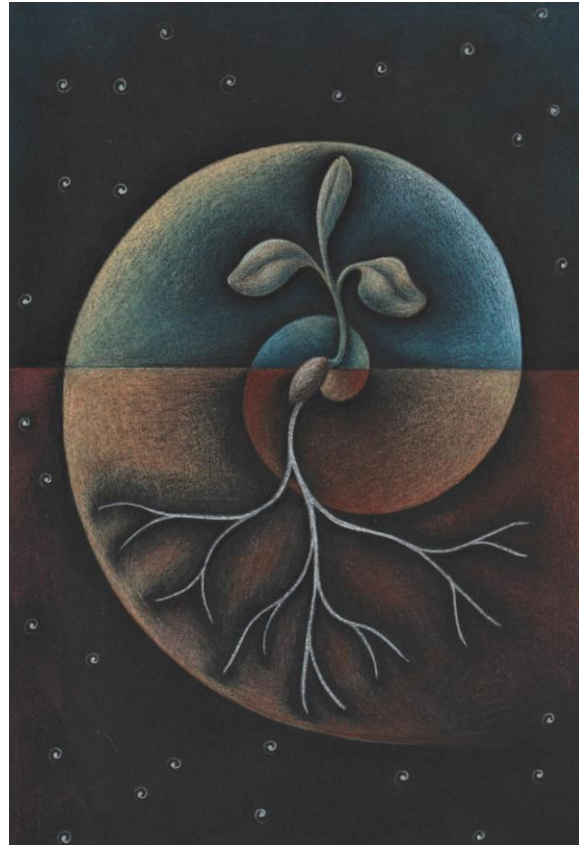


SOUTHWEST BIODYNAMIC GROUP

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2022/23



To Know the Dark

To go in the dark with a light is to know the light.
To know the dark, go dark. Go without sight,
and find that the dark, too, blooms and sings,
and is traveled by dark feet and dark wings.

by Wendell Berry

South West Biodynamic Group

The South Devon Biodynamic Group's purpose is to inform those interested in BD methods of gardening and farming of what is happening in the area. As a member you receive

- A quarterly newsletters and seasonal gatherings where we make the biodynamic preparations. These are then made available to members free of charge.
- A library of Biodynamic books kept at The Apricot Centre.

We charge an annual subscription of £15 per person and £20 for a couple. We offer a concession of £10 a year if needed. Sort Code 20-60-88 Acc. No. 13509680 South West Biodynamic Group

Preparations are available from Whites Farm,,Lower Dean, Buckfastleigh.TQ11 OLS. .Contact Denise deniselaurenj@icloud.com

If you wish to join, please contact Diana White (Treasurer) at dianawhite35@hotmail.com or

From the Editor: Apologies for late publishing of the winter newsletter. I have been slowed down by hip replacement surgery. I hope you receive it before the dates for events listed in Diary Dates.

Get your diaries out before you start reading! There are many courses and workshops advertised which must mean that there is growing interest and demand from people. This may give hope to Wendy Cook who has written an article on the recent book 'Regenesi's' by George Monbiot who advocates that agriculture is the cause of most of the environmental problems in the world. He makes a good case, but his remedy is very controversial. It would be encouraging if Wendy's article stimulated debate amongst members and I would enjoy receiving SWBD Group members' opinions, both on the book and/or Wendy's article. The question that has arisen in me is 'Can Biodynamics feed the world population?' Thank you for reading, Diana White.

A Personal Response to reading 'Regenesi's' by George Monbiot by Wendy Cook

it appears that Agriculture is under threat globally and is earmarked for eradication. Agriculture, which has accompanied human evolution for over 8,000 years, in many aspects of its practice has become decadent in the west and now it is being vociferously challenged.

Oxford author and columnist George Monbiot, currently residing right here in Dartington, is now dedicated to maintaining that ALL agriculture is DANGEROUS , and stating that "arguably it is the most destructive industry on earth" and this includes organics! His recent book, "Regenesi's", exhibits diligent research, and cites lots of statistics.

Monbiot maintains that the best way to feed the population - now declining beyond 'replacement rate' even in the India, is on fermented lab food, largely H2O – processed in large fermentation troughs. It is quick, cheap and does not involve killing animals. It appeals to some people and now this justification and demonisation of Agriculture is being linked to the apparent climate warming, and was featured at the November 2022 COP 27 gathering in Egypt and supported by Monbiot. The event also launched the think tank style Reboot Food 're-launch of agriculture', to which Monbiot also lends his name

Certainly the chopping down of forests in the Amazon to grow soya to feed animals is dangerous and destructive – so is the ever present military industry and war. But many of us are determined to have our nourishment taken from healthy plants grown on healthy soil. We know about biodynamics; which as far as I can see, has not been acknowledged by Monbiot.

We want to buy our food cheaply many of the costs are hidden. It has never been properly enforced that the polluters pay for the clean-up.

Biodynamics uniquely weaves together planetary influences as well as earthly ones. True it appears more complex and labour intensive. However, the latter is likely to turn to our advantage. Nicanor Perlas from the Philippines, who trained in BD at Emerson UK was awarded “The Right Livelihood Award” in 2003 – states in his

powerful book “Humanity Last Stand” (Published by Temple Lodge 2018) (p.5) ---‘The way forward is dramatically demonstrated by agriculture itself. “The Medusa-like touch of death of Artificial Intelligence is thwarted in Agriculture which will become a strategic area of refuge for real humans, not fake digital humans including their robotic versions.’

Biodynamics works best for those with a true love and understanding of cultivation. A BD farm organism for example, is encouraged not take on a more animals that can be fed on that piece of land. The special preparations act as medicine for an ailing, middle-aged Mother Earth. In mythology, the first farmer of Ancient Persians was Zarathustra (King/Initiate circa 1700 BCE); brought forth the plough and it was made of Gold – The 7 grains in their turned nourished 7 different cultures. We have lost the sacred and if we want our health restored, we need to re-discover the sacred.

As the sinister move to get people off the land seemingly once and for all, and devote abandoned land to re-wilding, not only presents the problem of disappearance of properly grown food. Crucially, ousting people off the land gets rid of independence and autonomy.

We see this in the Chinese people who for millennia, were able to grow enough rice for subsistence, now have been forced into high-rise buildings within ‘Smart’ Cities with only a mobile phone to be able to exercise any kind of dominion over their lives and that is questionable as all their interactions are tracked and recorded into the digital society.

Surely this human project is about freedom’ and creativity, Fundamental freedoms are rapidly being reduced and we must be awake to what is happening. Now Land-based Communities are required. We do have skills and unusual capacities. Having been born at the beginning of the war, I had to learn cultivation of the soil ..., music, dressmaking, cooking and through these skills and sharing with our neighbours we grew healthy and happy and creative!

The ‘home’ has been under attack. We need to restore home-life and homemaking.

Biodynamic Tree Paste making workshop 11th Feb 2023 2 - 5pm

This biodynamic practice, known as tree pasting, is an activity where fruit trees are painted with a specially prepared paste during the winter months when the trees are dormant. The paste, made mainly of clay, cow manure and sand, nourishes the bark which helps to strengthen the cambium layer and support sap circulation. This is a hands-on workshop involving making the paste and learning how to apply it. There will be a short introduction in a barn, where there will be the opportunity to make hot drinks, but it is still a draughty area so please come dressed for being outside and for getting mucky. Washing up gloves can be useful ! Bring a container if you want to take some home. To cover time and materials there is a suggested donation of £20, but please come and pay what you can. Please contact me for further information or,

to book a place, as numbers are limited: selby@crookedpath.co.uk 07874996367
01803 762785

Step by Step Biodynamic Gardening Workshops - Starting 11 Feb 2023

Comprising 6 x 1 day sessions from Feb to July 2023,

This course is a great way to learn all about biodynamic principles and practices and enable you to put them into action in your own garden or allotment. See what is covered on the main BDD website: biodynamic.org.uk and scroll down to Featured Events.

Cost £180 for all 6 sessions (£30 per day) including a simple lunch and refreshments.

Places are limited and early booking is recommended.

Sessions run from 9.45am until 3pm Session dates: 11 Feb, 11 March, 15 April, 13 May, 10 June, 8 July

Garden Teacher; Frankie Van Der Stok To book a place ring 01453 759501 or email office@biodynamic.org.uk or book online <https://www.biodynamic.org.uk/event/step-by-step-bd-gardening-2023/>

News from Apricot Centre/Huxams Cross Farm.



These pictures give an idea of the current activities .

Training is a key part of what goes on at the Apricot Centre. To see the whole range, look at their website apricotcentre.co.uk. The website also has a link to their shop which sells their own produce and those of their local partners.

Below is an outline of some of the courses starting soon::

Gather and Nourish – Free Workshops in Totnes:

The Apricot Centre is delighted to offer a series of plant based community workshops to be held at the Green Café 33 High Street, Totnes, run by Hannah from the Apricot Centre using food grown at Huxhams Cross Farm.

Wed Feb 1st – Zero Waste Cooking

Wed Feb 8th – Fermentation Fusion

Wed Feb 15th - Love Your Leftovers

Wed Feb 22nd – Good Mood Food

Places are limited so to reserve a place or go onto the waiting list, please email Hannah.walker@apricotcentre.co.uk

Introduction to Biodynamics – 11th and 12th March and 15th-16th April 2023

This course will take place at At Huxhams Cross Farm, Staverton, Totnes TQ9 6AA

This is an interactive learning experience. Booking essential.

Cost £250 – book via [Eventbrite.co.uk/introduction-to-biodynamics-tickets-511464081837](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/introduction-to-biodynamics-tickets-511464081837)

For more information on more courses run by The Apricot Centre, See their website <https://www.apricotcentre.co.uk/training>

Whites Farm, Lower Dean.

We emerge from the festive season with changes germinating for the year ahead.

After a lot of work and a long process the charitable trust will be running as “Whites Farm Education Trust”. The board of trustees will help to carry the vision further and the Trust will be able to attract funds from other charities with a particular focus interest.

Whites Farm said farewell to Mark Gordine in early December after a tremendous year of hard work where Mark transformed the garden with the help of our regular volunteers. We are immensely grateful for all that he has achieved. Mark’s position was funded for one year by a generous gift and we are now planning the next steps forward.

We are delighted that Whites Farm has recently become a venue for the Biodynamic Association’s Step by Step gardening course. This is a collaboration between the BA, Ruskin Mill and Whites Farm Education Trust and the course runs for 6 months, beginning in February with Franky Van Der Stok as our garden tutor (details on flyer).

Both of the large polytunnels have been reskinned. One of them was lined with straw bales in the Autumn as a first stage in preparing a more suitable space for a variety of community events and cultural activities.

Some of our recent events include setting up a series of experiments for a session on Mechanics for the Circle's home education group, hosting some beautiful musical events (a big thank you to Oliver Mason) and hosting the Anthroposophical Meetings.

We celebrated the Epiphany festival on 6th January where 25 people gathered to participate in the 3 Kings stirring, a joyous event to set the tone for 2023.

Whites Farm Trust will be offering introductory workshops in green woodwork, clay work and pinhole photography from February to April on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons (please contact Alasdair for further details).

The BD study group following the Agricultural Lectures has resumed (next study morning is 27th January) and alternates with our regular fortnightly volunteer days (starting 20th January).

A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated volunteers, whose help is invaluable in maintaining and developing the progress at Whites Farm. By Denise Jones

Please contact Alasdair ignitingflames@icloud.com or Denise deniselaurenj@icloud.com if you are interested in any workshops or in volunteering.

Teign Greens

January is an outwardly quiet month on the farm. The last few of our outdoor crops are holding out against the weather, like the stunning celery, red Russian kale and radicchio salad leaves above. But under the surface- lots is happening. Our rye grass green manures are conditioning the soils ready for another season of growing, our overwintering broad bean, garlic and onions are holding out against the wind and rain and we're busily recruiting our Summer trainees and ordering seeds for the coming season!

Towards the end of last year, we welcomed **Emily, our brilliant new Growing Assistant** to the team. Emily has bags of growing experience, most recently from working at the garden at the prestigious Newt hotel in Somerset, so we can't wait to try out her ideas of unusual varieties and recipes. See Emily below, admiring one of our delicious Pain de Sucre chicory heads (she's not that short- the chicory is just massive!)





Volunteer with us!

We're delighted to announce that we've received funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to help us run even more volunteering days and open events this year! We can't wait to have you down at the farm throughout 2023. See below for our upcoming volunteering events:

- **Drop in Monthly Saturday Volunteer Days-** These run every **2nd Saturday of the month 9:30-1pm**, with a tea and flapjack break at 11ish. Anyone is welcome to drop in (yes we mean kids too!) and we'll get stuck into seasonal farm jobs like weeding, sowing, composting or dock digging. Wear clothes suitable for the weather that you don't mind getting mucky. No farming experience necessary and warm glow guaranteed! It's helpful if you give us a heads up that you're planning on coming, so that we can look out for you and know how many flapjacks we'll need. and join us! February's volunteer day will be on the 11th.
- **Tuesday Regular Weekly Volunteer Days - Every Tuesday** is our veg box days, and our fab Tuesday Team help with all elements of getting our veg to our members, picking, packing, delivering, and even sometimes rocking our overtired baby to sleep! Our day runs from 9-4pm, with a tea and cake break at 11, and lunch at 1pm (from April-September we provide a yummy lunch- but during the winter we haven't got cooking facilities). Tuesdays are more suited to regular volunteers so we can explain the veg bag process, but don't feel you have to come every week. You could come once a fortnight, once a month or just as often as you can make it. We call our Tuesday team our farm family, as it's a lovely group of folk to chat with each week while working together. Fill in our volunteer form [here](#) to get involved.

If volunteering on the farm isn't for you, do get in touch if you'd like to help with any desk based jobs like book keeping. Or if you'd like to support us in other ways.

Contact: teigngreens@gmail.com . Teign Greens Oxen Park Farm Lower Ashton, Exeter, Devon EX6 7QW

We are at Stoney Orchard and neighbour Knapp Copse Nature Reserve.

Stoney Orchard is a regenerative/ecological project, managed by a steering group know as Stoney Orchard Growing Community.

We are a not for profit organisation, wanting to heal the land, slow the water, rewild, regenerate and grow food. We also celebrate the celtic festivals, run rural skills workshops, composting days and days creating a food forest.

We have a small grant to create leaky dams and a swale terrace system to filter the water and provide water resilience in growing systems, this is from the Devon Environmental foundation. Some of this is happening this winter/spring and would welcome individuals or groups to come get involved!!

We are between Sidmouth and Honiton. On the hill between the two there is a pub called the Hare and Hounds at Putts Corner (it's a cross roads) Take the East turn on to Seaton Road. After a mile you will find Knapp Copse turning on the right into a car park, 200 yds further on you will find Stoney Orchard on the right hand side also. [Farway Castle is just after this on the left]

Address Stoney Orchard, Nr Farway Castle Seaton Road Sidbury EX10 0QG
(warning this postcode centers on a farm going toward Sidbury!)
East Devon

If people can let me know they are interested that would be great.
Either by email or phone 07974 802598
plum.pebble@gmail.com

Halfmoon Field Gardening Club

Every Sunday Morning at Half Moon Field near Tigley. If you want to join in, please contact Carol Asuray on 07900 666074 or halfmoonfield@planetmail.com

Seed Swap and Gardeners' Social Café Sat 4th Feb 11am - 3pm at the Old School Community Centre, South Brent, TQ10 9BP.

– Bring, swap, share and discover new seeds. Guest Speakers and Q&A sessions discuss seed saving and successful germination, no dig growing and soil health, composting and gardening to benefit wild life. Some heritage varieties available.

Use our microscope to examine soil health. Raffle and Fun Quiz



Mallorcan Cabbage and Bread Stew (Sopas)

From The Biodynamic Cookbook by Wendy Cook. Published by Clairview.2006

This is delicious cheap, rib-sticking, cure-all peasant cookery at its best, In Mallorca you can buy the sopas –thin slices of dry bread which you lay in the bottom of your soup plate and ladle the soup over it, controlling how thick or thin the final result is. Catalina, who demonstrated the dish for me broke an egg into her soup plate, which cooked in the steaming hot broth. Here is my version:

Ingredients;

2tbsp olive oil
2oz/50g bacon lardons (pieces)
1oz/25g slices of chorizo for the smoky flavour
1 1/2 large onions cut into half moons
3 cloves of garlic, finely minced
2 carrots cut smallish
2 leeks, sliced
1/2lb/250 g chopped and skinned ripe tomatoes or a 400g can
½ small green cabbage or 1/2bunch of chard, chopped
1tsp salt and a few grindings of pepper.
1tsp smoked paprika
1 bay leaf
1pt.570 ml stock
4oz/110g very thin slices of dry bread, white or brown.

Method:

- 1 . In a heavy casserole, heat the olive oil and start to sauté. the onions and garlic till golden.
2. Add bacon and chorizo and continue to cook for a further five minutes. Add carrots leeks stock (keeping green parts to add at the end) tomatoes, paprika stock and bay leaf. Cook for 1/2hour..
3. Finely shred the cabbage or chard. Add to the soup with the green parts of the leek. Cook for another 15 minutes. Adjust seasoning.
- 4, pour onto the bread slices, either in a serving dish or individual soup dishes.

Serve with radishes and chunky fresh and olive oilFor a vegetarian version omit the bacon and chorizo and add some cooked haricot beans to make it a robust meal



Biodynamic Produce for Sale

Biodynamic Wheat for sale ,

SPRING WHEAT, Miluka variety, harvested Sept 2022, available in 25kg paper bags at £10 per bag or 500kg dumpy bags at £400 per tonne.

I am told Miluka is good for baking.

Biodynamic Beef from our freezer from our biodynamic South Devons, various cuts and joints but all the sirloin, rump and fillet steaks have been sold.

Please contact Tristan Bertie 07836 591 847

Lordswood Churchstow Kingsbridge

Or e-mail me at lordswood.biodynamics@btinternet.co

Hemp and other Tinctures available (all home made)

The CBD tincture was made by Nick Read from the hemp grown at Dartington and is the only UK organically grown CBD.

Please see his web site for costs and purchasing information. <http://www.englishhemp.co>.

GREENLIFE SHOP, TOTNES. 01803 866738. Some Demeter products, Biodynamically grown vegetables in season and Seed Cooperative organic open pollinated seeds.

TEIGN GREENS, OXEN PARK FARM, Lower Ashton, EXETER, EX6 7QW – in conversion to BD. Contact Tim Dickens for availability of produce. www.teigngreens.co.uk

VEGETABLES FROM HUXHAMS CROSS FARM: We deliver weekly vegetable bags or boxes. The boxes contain Huxhams Cross Farm own produce as well as several small BD and organic growers who will be providing vegetables at certain times of the year. We can add eggs, flour fruit and water. You can order online at www.apricotcentre.co.uk.

Hapstead Farm Meat:

All produce from animals that are managed according to high welfare, organic, biodynamic regenerative farming principles. Contact Tobias Goulden about what is available. - Email: tobiasgoulden@yahoo.co.uk.

FRUIT JUICE CORDIALS for SALE - Contact Derek Lapworth on 01364 644010

All with organic apple juice--

All bottles are 500ml unless otherwise stated. At £6 per bottle

Elderflower Elderberry Rosehip Blackcurrant Sloe Wild Fruits
Mixed Fruit Sour Cherry Plum

I have stocks of most juices plus now hawthorn and autumn primrose ,

In 330 ml bottles are the following--- At £5 per bottle

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Please phone me for orders or knock on my door at no 10 Chapel Street, tel is 01364 6440

