

SOUTHWEST BIODYNAMIC GROUP

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2023



Field Maple – Giving Back the Light, by Kitty Roberts.

Nothing Gold Can Stay

Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.

Her early leaf's a flower
But only so an hour.

Then leaf subsides to leaf,
So Eden sank to grief,

So dawn goes down to day,
Nothing gold can stay.

Robert Frost 1923

From the Treasurer.

Thank you to those who have paid their subscriptions promptly when they receive their reminders. This, as well as several more members choosing to have their newsletters sent electronically and several new members joining, we should finish the year in a more secure position than we started. Diana White

Bowden Pillars Project.

In the last newsletter we told you about the purchase of Bowden Pillars Farm, above Totnes (on the Ashprington road) . It has 183 acres, There will be acres of Atlantic oak woodland which will act as a temperate rainforest of the future. The woodland will be cared for by Devon Wildlife Trust and will provide a vital habitat for many different species.

A mixed vegetable, fruit, arable, and livestock farm will be run by the Apricot Centre, and a regenerative village community will live on and be supported by the farm as a whole.

On 20th September they launched a Community Share Offer with an event in the Civic Hall in Totnes. To quote their leaflet - 'A place to explore living harmoniously with nature, create a new community woodland, a regenerative farm, rebuild natural systems and support true low-carbon lives'. The Apricot Centre has already started on the conversion to organic which has to be done before it can be certified Biodynamic.

Bowden Pillars Future has been incorporated as a charitable community benefit society in December 2022.

If you are interested in finding out more about and perhaps investing in this project go to their website bowdenpillarsfuture.land .

Preparations:

A reminder that the Biodynamic Preparations are now stored at Whites Farm, Lower Dean, Buckfastleigh. They are free to members of the Southwest Biodynamic Group.

Currently we are unable to post preparations and they must be collected. If possible, please bring your own container(s). Contact Denise at deniselaurenj@icloud.com to arrange a suitable time.

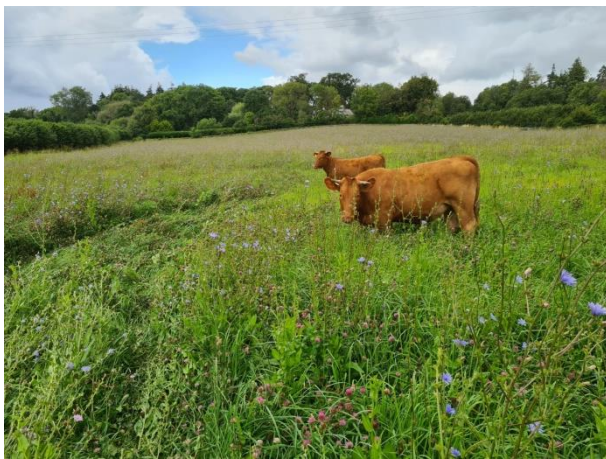


News from Apricot Centre, Huxhams Cross Farm.



It's been a mammoth task harvesting the onions and shallots over the last couple of weeks and the team managed to get 6 tons into the dry store to cure before the wet weather came. These will be left to dry out and use as supplies over the Winter months. We struggled a bit last year as the weather hit before we had harvested all of the onions and they came in too wet and we lost some to rotting in the dampness so it's good to feel a bit more prepared this year.

We've had extra land to grow on this year so our harvests have been bigger. In April we had 4x of our Glebe fields reach organic and biodynamic status so we set to sowing. 1x field is a mixed of brassicas, corn, and greens, 1x field is for our new organic calves that were welcome to the farm in the Spring, 1x field is for our new organic pigs that came in late Spring and the last field we grew and harvested grain for milling into animal feed.



We have started a new round delivering around Kingsbridge and Dartmouth to open up our veg box scheme further into the South Hams. We are thrilled to deliver further and have wholesale customers too that can buy local biodynamic fruit, veg and flowers. To check the catchment area and see if you can get a delivery head to our online shop.

<https://apricotcentre.ooooby.org/signup/box>

We were shortlisted for the FWAG bronze otter award for biodiversity. Devon's Bronze Otter Award showcases the long term commitment to wildlife conservation and sustainable farming shown by many farmers across the county. The winner of the Devon Bronze Otter goes on to represent the county in the regional Barn Owl Trophy, the winner of which goes forward as our regions entry into the National Silver Lapwing the following year.

This year we started a **Supper Club** for our customers and local community where we open up the farm for one Thursday every month throughout the summer and have a vegan meal cooked with our biodynamic and organic veg. It's also an opportunity for our customers to come and see the farm and walk around and understand what we do and how it looks.



We had a friend of the farm come and practise his drone skills and take some beautiful images of our farm from above and it is fantastic to see the aerial view of the fields and crops. Farming in this way is so different from the farming landscape that we're used to and it's great to see this perspective.



DATE FOR YOU DIARY... APPLE DAY - 26th OCTOBER 2023 10am -12pm

At the Apricot Centre, Huxhams Cross Farm, Rattery Road, Dartington, TQ9 6AA

Apple Bobbing, Apple tasting and more.

11 am Farm Tour.

(If Apricot Centre car park is full, park further along the Buckfastleigh road at the Steiner School and walk up the cycle path to Huxhams Cross.)



For more information about what goes on at the Apricot Centre see
www.apricotcentre.co.uk

Whites Farm, Lower Dean, Buckfastleigh, TQ111 0LS



It was apple harvest at the September volunteer day. These are going to be turned into juice which can be bought from the Farm when they host their monthly Volunteer days or other events like their **Michaelmas Celebration on Friday 29th September**.

Program for the day:

10.30am Baking dragon bread and apple pressing.

12.30pm Bring and Share lunch

2.00-3.30pm Biodynamic stirring.

7pm Michaelmas Talk & discussion:

“Trust Your True Calling”, Living in Times of Change and Opportunities. Hans-Günther Kern.

We will provide the dough for the dragon bread.

We kindly ask that people don't bring dogs to Whites Farm as we now have sheep.

If you are interested in the events at Whites Farm which is run as an Educational Trust, please contact Denise Jones deniselaurenj@icloud.com to get on their mailing list.

Biodynamic Training:

If you are interested in learning more about Biodynamics to use in your own garden or to make a career in Biodynamic Farming there are several courses on offer at the Apricot Centre and through the Wholistic Living University. Here is a sample of some of them.

Skills Bootcamp In Regenerative Land-Based Systems – at the Apricot Centre TQ9 7AA

Free for participants, made possible by Devon County Council, Skills Bootcamps and Train 4 Tomorrow, and certified by Crossfields Institute, the Apricot Centre @Huxhams Cross Farm and Landworkers Alliance present the **Level 2 Skills Bootcamp in Regenerative Land-Based Systems to introduce people to the world of regenerative farming** and help them gain skills for

furthering their work and becoming part of the future of farming. Skills Bootcamps are part of the Government's Lifetime Skills Guarantee.

Our September 2023 Cohort is now full.- applications open for 2024 january, spring, summer & autumn/winter cohort

Level 3 Traineeship In Regenerative Land-Based Systems: Food & Farming

Free for participants, made possible by South Hams District Council, West Devon Borough Council and the generous co-operation of host placement farms, and certified by Crossfields Institute, the Apricot Centre @Huxhams Cross Farm presents the **Level 3 Yearlong Traineeship in Regenerative Land-Based Systems to help people transition into, or upgrade their skills in, the world of regenerative farming.**

Level 4 Certificate In Regenerative Land-Based Systems: Agroecology

Free for participants pending funding confirmation, certified by Crossfields Institute, the Apricot Centre @Huxhams Cross Farm presents the Level 4 Certificate in Regenerative Land-Based Systems: Agroecology for people already working in farming who would like to move into regenerative practices or expand their current practices.

Applications now open for 2024 cohort
with January 2024 start depending on course funding

(The term 'Regenerative Farming, can means a lot of things or not very much, but at the Apricot Centre it includes organic, biodynamic and permaculture methods. Ed)

GROW YOUR OWN HEALTH™

online & interactive biodynamic gardening course

2023-24 hosted by WHOLISTIC LIVING UNIVERSITY™

This course is modular and super flexible.

Start at any point in the year and have lifetime access to all recordings, audio, video and study materials from the 1-year course with a simple link for downloading.

You can also choose to buy just a MODULE or a SEASON package

The course is directed towards individuals, who want to learn to plan and create a biodynamic garden to grow their own crops or within a communal set-up.

BIODYNAMIC GARDENING INFORMATION RESOURCE – for free!The Biodynamic Gardening Club (BDGC) have decided to give anyone who is interested in Biodynamic Gardening access for free to their resources which includes a dedicated Facebook Group, a regular E-newsletter and free access to Hans Gunther Kern's excellent weekly question and answer sessions.

You can register for free at www.biodynamic.org.uk/register/.

They also ask that you share the link with anyone who might be interested as they wish to spread the word as widely as possible to 'help save the planet – one garden at a time.'

News From East Moore Orchard – Harberton, Totnes, TQ9 7PE



- is starting to live up to it's name. First apple pressing of the season was on the equinox and still loads left, mainly the bramleys.

Due to weather - too cold, too wet, too dry and too hot through the planting season, vegetables have had a difficult year and it's impossible to predict what will do well, based on what did well last year. At the time of writing storm Agnes is about to arrive which will no doubt take out the climbing French beans. Pigeons and flea beetles have also been busy. Jerusalem artichokes continue to be a success strangely, and the limited edition salad bags are very popular.

The camping has been popular this season as was the families camping weekend over the bank holiday which we hope to extend to a week next year. Now it's time to look around and see what's to be done in the coming winter. – Mike and Noni MacKenzie

Seasonal Recipe from The Biodynamic Cookbook by Wendy Cook

Garlic and Mushroom Bulghar - serves 6 This can be serves cold as a salad, with other salad and perhaps filled eggs

Ingredients:

1 medium onion, chopped
½ lb/225g Bulghar bulghar, rinsed
2½ oz/60g butter
½ lb/225g
1pt/570ml hot stock
2oz/50g mushrooms (preferably brown)
2 cloves garlic, chopped
¼ red pepper, chopped fairly fine
Salt and pepper
Fresh parsley, thyme and chives, chopped.



Method

1. Saute onion in 1½ oz butter. Add the bulghar and saute for a few minutes
2. Add hot stock and bring gently to the boil. Take off heat and set aside in a warm place with lid on for 15 minutes (grain should be cooked and all the liquid absorbed)
3. Saute mushrooms, garlic and red pepper in 1oz/25g butter for 2 minutes. Pour onto cooked bulghar. Add salt, pepper and a squeeze of lemon. Taste for the right balance) Fold in the chopped herbs.

BIODYNAMIC PRODUCE FOR SALE

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

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.teingreens.co.uk

VEGETABLES FROM APRICOT CENTRE/ 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.

BD FRUIT JUICE CORDIALS for SALE - All with organic apple juice
Contact Derek Lapworth on 01364 64401

Hemp and other Tinctures (all homemade)

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

Please see website for costs and purchasing information.

<http://www.englishhemp.co.uk>

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 write to 12 Apple Wharf, The Plains, Totnes, TQ9 5QL 07747398839