

Southwest Biodynamic Group Newsletter Spring 2025

Spring

When the moon aligns the sun The ocean gathers

When the scar of the torrent knits The boulders flatten



When the hare rut The rhizomes shiver



When the loam breathes The earthworms sing.

by Leland Bardwell

Dates for your Diary:

Wednesday 23rd and Thursday 24th April – best Dandelion picking mornings – see inside for details

On 14th July 2025 - Yarrow Day - at Half Moon Field see inside for details

Sunday 29th October 2025 - South West Biodynamic Group Autumn Gathering – details to follow

Teign Green News, Oxen Park Farm, Lower Ashton, EX6 7QW

Dear Veg Lovers,



It's our favourite time of year here on the farm: **SPRING!** The time full of hope and promise for a new season, where we see the land coming back to life after what feels like a **LONG** winter, with primroses, catkins and elder leaves unfurling and we start sowing. We've been in the propagation tunnel sowing chillies and peppers on heat, filling modules with beans and peas, and replacing the tired winter salad plants in the polytunnel with direct-sown carrots and radishes. We're also delighted to update you that since our Winter update, **we have nearly finished our new polytunnel!** See some of the trusty team of volunteers skinning it last month.



We hosted a wonderful thank you pot-luck lunch for all our volunteers and it was so nice to come together to celebrate them- see our sunny lunch table .

We've just come to the end of a funded volunteering project from The National Lottery Community Fund, and as part of that review we totted up that in the last year, **over 80 volunteers of all ages have contributed over 2,200 hours help in the last year!** If you add on residential Wwoofers and corporate volunteer groups, it's more like a whopping 6,000

hours! We literally couldn't do what we do without this incredible team- thank you so much!



There's a few changes to our team again, with me about to pop any day now I've handed over to **Bridgette**, our fabulous trainee from last year, who will be staying on as my maternity cover, managing all things behind the scenes, volunteering and veg boxes in my absence. Although I'll be stepping away from my usual role for a while, I'm hoping not to be a stranger and will be bringing the new farm baby to distract the volunteers on Tuesdays. In January we also welcomed **Sam** to our team). Sam is on the Apricot Centre's Level 3 Regenerative Land-Based Systems traineeship, and will be studying one day

a week alongside living at the farm getting stuck into all things Teign Greens for the other 4 days. Slightly off veg topic, See above the cutest new members of the farm community, Oxen Park Farm's Kunekune piglets, who have been melting our hearts since arriving

last month.

On the veg front, late winter brought lots of treats to veg bags, from our bumper crop of celeriac, fancy kalettes, and a flurry of cauliflowers which caught us by surprise last month. As we reach the end of our stored veg from last season, and nudge into hungry gap, we are closing to new members until our new season crops are ready in June.

There's still lots of lovely veg in store for existing members, from our favourite springtime purple sprouting broccoli, to treats we buy in at this lean time from other producers such as Riverford mushrooms and Rhubarb from Oxen Park Farm. If you've been mulling over signing up, and want in on the freshest local veg on the block, don't delay and get on our waiting list! Email – teigngreens@gmail.com or see website teigngreens.co.uk.

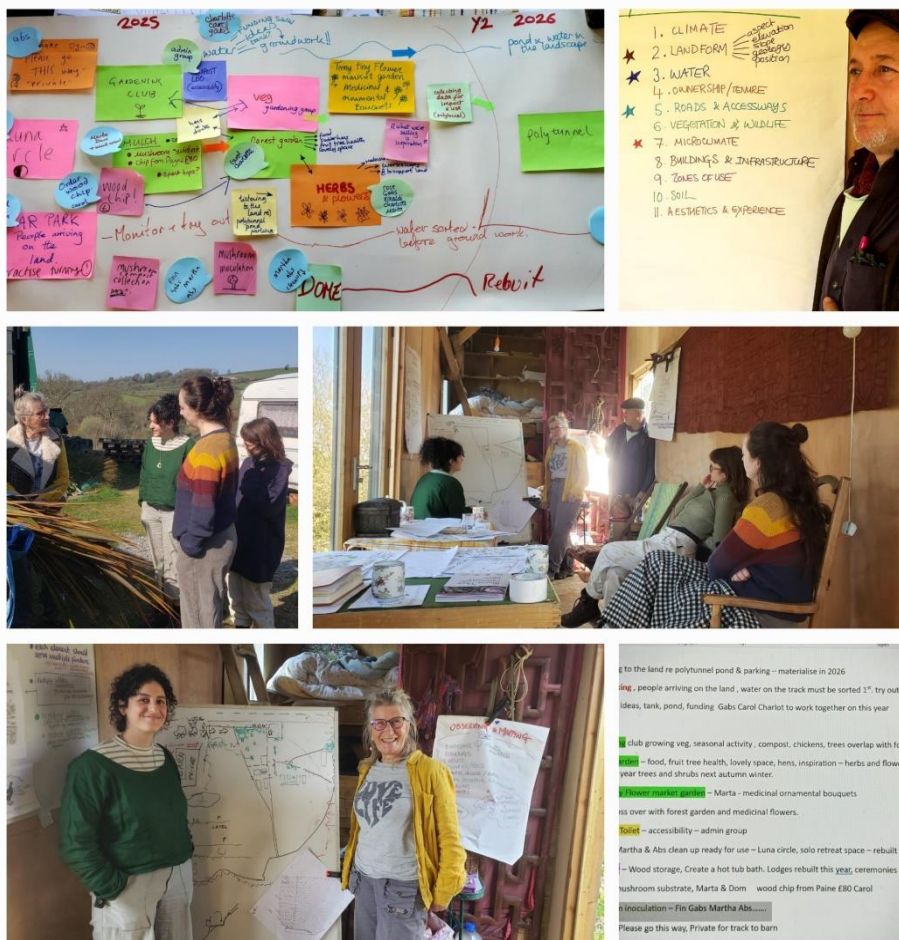
Holly Budgen.

Half Moon Field, near Tigley, Dartington, Totnes.

We have officially become a CIC. The object of the CIC is to allow small scale growers to 'incubate' their projects.

We recently had a design meeting looking at how the whole interacts with each other and how we should move forward - very much looking to nature. The top picture with the post it notes shows all the different projects and their inter- relationships.

The pictures underneath shows some of the event and we also walked the land and felt into the different areas.



On 14th July 2025 there will be a Yarrow Day at Half Moon Field

9am start – workshop on Yarrow and its properties and value as a compost preparation. Afterwards the group will pick yarrow found in the field, followed by a bring and share lunch.

If you are interested in coming, please email halfmoonfield@planetmail.com or call Carol on 07900666074 for directions.

Spring Gathering. (See back page for pictures of the day. Thank you Selby for the photographs.)

We held our annual Spring Gathering at Whites Farm on Saturday 12th April.

We dug up the preparations that we buried in the Autumn, started the process of making some more and after lunch stirred cow horn manure preparation which we sprayed on the land at Whites Farm before taking the remainder back to our own gardens.

Manfred Klett lecture. Before we did all the above, Selby Thomas opened with a summary of Manfred Klett lectures on the Spiritual History of Agriculture. Rather than try to summarise her summary, I have quoted a few paragraphs from the lecture below which remind us of the importance of working biodynamically.

Manfred asks the question of what happens when we make and stir the preparations.

‘You gather these blossoms and for the biodynamic preparations, you take the mesentery of the cow. You make a ball by wrapping the mesentery around the dandelion blossoms. You sew it up and bury it in the earth in Autumn, thus exposing it to the earth during the winter. In Spring you dig it up. You find it has become a tiny bit of humus. You add it to the compost or manure and it starts to radiate. Through such a manure the plants become more sensitive to the surrounding soil.

What actually happens when we carry out such a practice? Have you even reflected on this? Let us follow the practice once again. You gather the blossoms. They represent a high or even final evolutionary stage of the plant. The same is true for all plants. All the trees and herbs as it would reveal the highest perfection of their physical evolution. The same is true for the cow or any animal. So too are the forms of the crystals the highest perfection in the physical world. But the idea to combine the dandelion blossom and the cow mesentery is not found in the physical world. They are ideas of the origin of natural creativity which stand behind nature, given us to use as a new impulse into the future..

This may not at first appear to be an enormous work, but it is. When one builds an atomic bomb it is clearly an enormous work because by the thought of man all of a sudden tremendous destructive forces are released. This is exactly the contrary to our work with the biodynamic preparations. Out of human thought they represent a technique in the living sphere which consciously releases the evolutionary forces. Because of this work more and more can be done out of the realm of freedom. This is different from the daily work, which we must do as a farmer.’ - Diana White, Editor.

BIODYNAMIC PRODUCE FOR SALE

BIODYNAMIC BEEF from our freezer from our biodynamic South Devon Cattle, 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 for availability of produce. www.teigngreens.co.uk email teigngreens@gmail.com

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 meat. You can order online at www.apricotcentre.co.uk

BD FRUIT JUICE CORDIALS for SALE - All with organic apple juice

Contact Derek Lapworth on 07747 120 669

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

Recipe.

This is a recipe using millet. Millet is possibly the first grain to be used for domestic purposes, was grown in China before rice was introduced. (about 12,000 years ago). It is particularly high in silica.

This information came from 'Foodwise' by Wendy Cook, published by Clairview. Wendy used to work in the kitchen at Emerson College. *'We began to work with a cereal/planetary menu programme, effectively using specific grains on the different days of the week. Some of this research was done by Dr. Udo Renzenbrink in his Nutrition Centre in the Black Forest.'*

Rice – Monday - Moon
Oats – Tuesday - Mars
Millet – Wednesday - Mercury
Rye – Thursday - Jupiter

Barley – Friday - Venus
Maize – Saturday - Saturn
Wheat – Sunday - Sun

Wendy could not herself find there enough evidence of planetary connection with the grains and the days of the week, but that it is a useful idea to help us use a wider variety of whole grains. It also calls for inventiveness in finding recipes according to the season. She feels that is good to have a rhythm in what one eats, but not to get rigidly stuck in formulaic practices, which is can become the opposite of nourishing.

Multi-colour Millet Salad: (serves 4)

Ingredients:

225g/8 oz millet
1 large carrot, scrubbed and sliced
4 tomatoes
A 5cm.2in piece of cucumber, sliced
1 red pepper, deseeded and chopped
1 avocado, peeled and sliced
Fresh basil leaves, torn or roughly chopped
Juice of 1 lemon
2-4 tablespoons olive oil
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste



Method:

- 1) Put the millet in a dry pan and stir over the heat for a minute or so until it smells toasted and the grains begin to pop.
- 2) Pour 400ml/14 fl oz water. Allow the mixture to come up to the boil, then cover and cook over a gentle heat for 20 minutes until the millet is tender and all the water is absorbed.
- 3) Allow to cool and then add all the remaining ingredients, forking them through gently through the millet.

A few flower picking, early mornings, for the preps, if you would like.

The mornings of **Wednesday 23rd and Thursday 24th April** are ascending moon in Aquarius. Amongst other "flower days" in ascending moon, optimal times to pick dandelions, for storage. Until at the Autumn Gathering, they can be sewn into the mesentery. This, then buried, in the Earth, for compost prep 506.

At the Spring Gathering on Saturday, we did as proposed in last year's Spring newsletter; stuffed and hung dandelion, yarrow and camomile in the mesentery, stag's bladder and intestine. So we'll have plenty of flowers, for some research, next Spring, when we dig them up again, your participation, should you choose, will be valuable, in helping with their gathering. At this year's Autumn gathering, we can then repeat the process with the dandelion 506 prep, to sense the difference hanging each of the flower preps, rather than as has been traditionally, just the yarrow, makes.

So... A sunny morning is needed, for the powerful sun-force to enter the dandelion flowers, you are about to pick. Please gather half-opened flowers, as early in the morning as you can manage! Identify the central petals still furled, which means these will unlikely be unpollinated. This is what is needed; the vital force in the emergent flower, before it cycles on it's journey to seedhead. (When the flowers are fully open, all the petals are rayed wide and these will often have been pollinated.) Please dry them, out of the sun, on paper. And when fully dry, they can be transferred into a paper bag.

Details for picking of the yarrow and camomile will follow in the summer newsletter. Details for picking of the valerian, for it's fragrant fermented juice, which is added to the compost pile after all the compost preps go in, will also be in the summer edition of the newsletter.

For those of you who brought along dandelions last Spring, when we didn't do as "advertised" and make the prep then, my apologies to you all. Seeing all the young and new faces last Spring was truly a delight. Thank you for coming along. And we hope to see you again soon.

With love to all,
Sarah

At the Autumn gathering we can then repeat the process with the dandelion 506 prep. to sense the difference hanging each of the flower preps, rather than as has been traditionally just the yarrow, makes.



A reminder that the Southwest Biodynamic Group is now able to make small grants to biodynamic projects, training, or anything connected with biodynamics. Please contact me, Diana White dianawhite35@hotmail.com and I will take your request to the 'Grant Group' for consideration.



The wonder of the transformed substances.

Cleaning the small roots from the humus

Preparing the dandelions

Hanging preps in the air with protection.

Beautiful BD salad from Whites Farm polytunnel and starting them young!

