

SCA - Support Community Agriculture

We've started what we call an SCA, Support Community Agriculture. This is a support service dedicated to helping folks have a successful garden, little and big. The three groups are: gardeners and growers, local service providers and local distributors and retailers.

We have focused on three key growing needs: Biodynamic plants, potting soil and compost. There is really nothing more important for a healthy, productive plant than its beginning. Most of the plants we deal with are annuals; there is no recovery from a poor start.

We start with good seed, organic and heirloom and we are working on local stock. These seeds are started in 3" pots minimum, with biodynamic potting soil, on specific days and soaked in with special teas. As the plants grow, biodynamic teas and sprays are applied.

We start the plants in the container they will be sold in; they are not transplanted by us. The plant only has to recover from the one transplant shock at planting. We have also developed a potting system where no transplanting is necessary.

Each month, plants for the approaching part of the growing season will be available to the gardeners. This follows the year's progression: March, April, May, June, July, September, October and November. A manageable garden, with a succession of plantings.

These plants are being grown by Amish friends in Etheridge, TN. Last year we started working together. This fall they started 60 trays of 3" pots of mixed cold weather plants. Three types of each – kale, collards, mustards, Pac Choi, Chinese cabbage, chard, broccoli, spinach, romaine lettuce, butter crunch lettuce, loose leaf lettuce, some endive, arugula and tatsoi. Forty flats were sold through a local retailer in Nashville and the other twenty we divided and planted for our fall and winter gardens.

The Amish growers are currently seeking orders for this year's plants. Go to our web site, www.biodelicious.org, for the details. Through the SCA site, plants and products from qualified growers and producers will be made available and supported. The SCA is not selling anything. The site is a service and will include planting calendars, planting dates and many more support items. Folks who create potting soil, compost, flow form fountains, do garden prep and more will also be supported through the SCA.

The SCA is providing assistance to gardeners, service and product providers and retailers. All three groups need to match with each other. We are working toward a need-based network, what the gardeners need and what they want to eat throughout the whole growing season.

We have also developed this into our EPS, Enlivened Potting Soil system. This EPS system was created to address the problems encountered with organic greenhouse growing, especially where raised and bench beds are used. This is a Biodynamic system that adds many positive enhancements. Plant rotation, soil enhancement and soil rejuvenation are a few of the solutions with the EPS system.

The present flow of agri-culture is from the producer to the distributor, then to the gardeners and growers. What we eat is determined by everyone else, the growers, the distributors and the retailers. We get to choose from their selections. And what they usually deliver sucks and is not worth the resources it took to create them. The customer is the money source and yet has the least input into his / her food options.



Planted in the garden – Spring 2008

Old world Chinese doctors were judged by their ability to keep the village healthy. This approach places the gardener/patient at the focal point. Gardener and community are first, not last. The service and product providers and the retailers are now the Chinese doctor/merchant, there to help keep the gardens healthy and productive. May they be prosperous and held in high regard.

This change in our agricultural flow needs to happen for a local/regional food circle to be effective. This is a Gandhi thing. Don't fight the big guys, help them change or make them irrelevant. He said grow a garden and make the cloth local. India has the fastest growing, small farmer changeover to Biodynamic/Organics. A great DVD on this is available.

This SCA supports the ideal We are all bozos on this bus (and we do seem to be on this bus together). So maybe we could help support the group activities.

We are a non-profit working through and with Plenty International. Spring 2008 we started working with Plenty and the Slim Buttes Gardening Project on Pine Ridge. With the generous support of the Running Strong Organization, they help 200 to 300 Lakota families have gardens, by working up their garden plots, supplying seeds and thousands of plants.

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The Group Activities have already started and the bus is coming back.

