

NOFA 2009 Conference - Dick Van Hooft - Workshops Attended

These page with clickable links at: www.organiconcapecod.com/nofa2009.html

Friday - August 7th

What You Actually Need to Live Off the Grid and Why

Presenter - Dave Smalley www.balancepointhomestead.com

Copy of handout with plenty of information and web links for resource efficient washing machines, refrigerator/freezers, power generation.

Notable:

www.homepower.com Home Power Magazine - excellent resource for doing research on what's available for solar power and wind power.

www.sunfrost.com Sun Frost refrigerators and freezers. Use 80% less power than even "Energy Star" models

www.staber.com Stabler high efficiency washing machine

www.bergey.com Wind generators

Highly insulated home with solar hot water, radiant floor heating, and highly insulated construction.

The presenter(s) live quite comfortably on 1.5 kwh per day "off the grid".

Average usage in the U.S. is 30 kwh per day.

Saturday - August 8th

Sustainable Mushroom Cultivation for Home & Family

Presenter David Demarist www.vermontmushrooms.com

Most common types cultivated: baby bellas, regular, shiitake, and regular portabellas.

Discussion of indoor cultivation versus outdoor cultivation. Indoor cultivation, at least commercially, is very energy intensive due to climate control needed.

Home growers often do outdoor cultivation in logs. The procedure involves inoculating the mushroom "spawn" into a suitable "substrate" or growing media. Depending on the type the substrate may need to be sterilized / pasteurized first. (shiitake).

There are plenty of sources for "mushroom kits"

References:

The "bible" for mushroom growers is "The Mushroom Handbook" by L. C. C. Krieger.

<http://namyco.org/index.html> (North American Mycological Association)

Sources for spawn:

www.fungi.com - Fungi Perfecti (catalog is an excellent resource for books, kits, etc)

www.alohamedicinals.com - Aloha Medicinals

www.fieldforest.net - Field & Forest Products

www.wildbranchmushrooms.com - Wild Branch Mushrooms (Certified Organic)

Root Cellars and Crop Storage Structures

Presenter: Chris Chaisson www.wholefarmservices.com

Discussion of various types of food preservation.

Lacto Fermentation (Pickling)

Drying / Dehydration

Freezing

Smoking / Curing

Canning

Discussion of various storage conditions

Very cold & moist (32°F - 40°F) 90-95% humidity

Cold & Moist (32°F - 40°F) 80-90% humidity

Cool & Moist (46°F - 50°F) 85-90% humidity

Cool & Dry (35°F - 40°F) 60-70% humidity

Warmer & Dry (60°F - 70°F) 60-70% humidity

handout table showing optimum vegetable storage conditions.

The best reference is *Root Cellaring* by Mike & Nancy Bubel

Good page of links: www.wholefarmservices.com/links.shtml

Sunday - August 9th

The Path to Nutrient Density

Speaker: Derek Christianson - web site: <http://brixbounty.blogspot.com> (lots of links)

Runs organic farm in New Bedford.

Discussion on high nutrient density crops, soil testing, soil conductivity testing, BRIZ testing. Will have workshop handout with links, books and resources lists.

What Is Brix?

Brix is a term popularized by Dr. Carey Reams. It is primarily the measure of the carbohydrate level in plant juices, but it also includes proteins and minerals to determine the % of total dissolved solids.

High Brix food has the following attributes:

- Improved Flavor
- Greater Mineral Density
- Resists Rotting In Storage
- Animals Instinctively Prefer
- Greater Carbohydrate Levels
- Insect and Disease Resistant

Brix can be measured by extracting juice from the edible portion of any fruit or vegetable and placing several drops on a handheld refractometer. Periodic soil testing and amendment is the key.

Soil Testing Resource - International AG Labs - www.aglabs.com

Panel Discussion - Late Blight Biology & Identification

Infected tomato plants were distributed from a major wholesaler to Home Depot, Lowes, WalMart, KMart. Rapid distribution to unaware homeowners then spores spread rapidly across area.

Discussion on identifying early versus late blight

Discussion of blight management

OMRI Listed products

- Champ WG

- Nu Cop 50 WP

Blight-resistant tomatos

“Legend” (Territorial Seed - www.territorialseed.com)

Mountain Magic, Plum Regal (Bejo Seeds - www.bejoseeds.com)

Striped German (Heirloom various suppliers)

Web site links:

UMass Vegetable Program <http://www.umassvegetable.org/index.html>

Organic Materials Review Institute - OMRI www.omri.org

Net Zero Energy Home

Presentation on improvements made as a result of an energy audit.

Useful Products -

“Kill-o-watt” outlet power meter - directly measure energy use of appliances

“Smart” power strips that completely shuts off accessories when computer is turned off

Links:

Energy Federation Inc: www.efi.org

BuildingGreen: www.buildinggreen.com

Consumer Guide to Home Energy Savings - Wilson, Thorne & Morrill (Paperback)