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As a Californian transplanted in New England, I am keenly aware of the limited number of sunny warm days I have in front of me, and am trying to enjoy all this summer has to offer. Farmers too across our region are now engaged in the heroic work of feeding us all.

Take a break and join us at the NOFA Summer Conference, August 12-14th, at UMass Amherst. Eric Toensmeier, edible perennials expert and award-winning author will join us on Friday evening, August 12th. Eric will lay out his vision for a new form of agricultural systems, based on perennials designed to help sequester carbon. Keynote speaker Dr. Ignacio Chapela, from UC Berkeley, will speak on Saturday, August 13th. Dr. Chapela is one of the leading activists in the anti-GMO movement and will speak on the urgent threat to global food security posed by ongoing and recent deregulations in GMO policy in the U.S. and worldwide.

Now is an exciting time to be a NOFA member in the Eastern part of our great Commonwealth. Lots of new and interesting activities are coming up throughout the summer and into the fall. Our new Boston organizer, Laura Eppstein, is quickly filling up great workshops on composting, honey, lactofermentation and more. The Fall Bulk Order opens July 15th. So take a break from weeding, and do a soil test in time to order soil amendments, compost, and other supplies for the fall. Orders are due August 15th - for delivery in September. Yes, you can drop off your order in Amherst, at the NOFA Summer Conference. BPA-free canning lids will be available again as well. You can pre-order them, or pick them up also on-site at the conference.

Lastly, I just wanted to send a big thank you to some volunteers and colleagues who have been working hard to help on the publicity front recently: volunteer Shelly Tapper has generously been writing for the NOFA/Mass newsletter for the past few months, Caroline Roszell is helping with Summer Conference publicity, and Lea Kone, Assistant Director of NOFA-NY, and Bill Duesing of CT NOFA have been critical partners in helping us get the word out across the region. Many thanks from Boston! See you in Amherst.

Mindy

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JULIE RAWSON

Why I go to the Summer Conference

I have been at the last 26 NOFA Summer Conferences. You may wonder why I haven’t missed any in all those years. It is true that I was paid to run it for the past 24, and that I am quite excited to attend not as the boss this year. But it was something much more abiding than employment that has brought me back every year. I couldn’t possibly miss the parade when all the kids come out all painted up and singing songs. Our kids grew up at the summer conference and it many ways it shaped their adult lives. I couldn’t miss the skit that we put on. Nor could I miss the new things I learn at workshops that I take home and put to practice on our farm. I couldn’t miss seeing all my friends from all over the northeast and beyond who I only see there. I couldn’t miss the inspiring keynoters who by their work encourage me to act more thoughtfully in the world. I hearken back to the years we brought our milk cow with us in the back of the truck so we could milk her all week end — and do family cow workshops, and that inspires me about all the presenters who share their life work and all their best practices with others. I couldn’t miss the young families who bring their food like we did and camp out to save money, but whose way of living and raising children is changed by the experience of the conference. I couldn’t miss the dating scene either. Many a solid NOFA relationship started at the NOFA Summer Conference. Mostly what I couldn’t miss is all the smiling people who are having the times of their lives learning, debating, partying, walking on campus and feeling part of a larger more wonderful movement, be they first timers or seasoned veterans. Now our grandchildren (and those of other long term NOFA folks) attend and it seems the generations have brought us full circle. I hope to see you there. I promise it will memorably enhance your personal life and your life work.

SUMMER CONFERENCE AUCTION

By Mel Shaw, NOFA Summer Conference Auction Coordinator

Enjoy the breeze as you float along the Charles River, you got such a deal on the daily rental that your worries simply float away.

Or perhaps you hear nothing but the wind and the sound of your bare feet on dewy grass as your body moves slowly in conjunction with your breath. You think of nothing during this Tai Chi experience, except maybe a fleeting thought about your Ayurvedic yoga class later in the day. People come to Kripalu Yoga and Meditation Center in Stockbridge for self-care and enjoy gentle yoga classes, introspective workshops, and solo time—including an inspirational labyrinth walk at dusk, hiking trips, or nutrition guidance.

Do you love bread but are too busy to bake every week? Bring the delights of fresh baked loaves into your home every week for six weeks with the help of Nashoba Brook Bakery. Looking for a fun outing for you and a group of friends? Check out the private tour at the Westport Rivers Winery.

Don’t forget to check out our awesome auction and help support NOFA while supporting your budget! Bring your purse, your pocketbook, your wallet, your carryall, your suitcase, your checkbook, your credit card, your wife, your husband, and your firstborn child! Whether it’s for a friend or just a treat for you, come peruse and bid at the Silent Auction beginning on Friday, August 12th through closing at 5:30 pm on Saturday, August 13th. Exciting items include restaurant gift certificates, travel packages and entrance passes to some of the hottest museums and tourist locations throughout New England, holistic massage and spa packages, agricultural supplies, products and services, CSA shares and more will be up for bid! Saving up for
that trip with the grandkids?! Bid at the auction. Winning bidders should plan to claim items by 6 pm on Saturday, August 13th.

If your business is interested in donating goods or services to benefit the NOFA Summer Conference Auction, please contact Summer Conference Auction Coordinator, Mel Shaw at mel.q.shaw@gmail.com or 978-376-7092. Donating an auction item is a great way to generate visibility for products and services.

THE 1-2-3 OF BEES
CHILDREN’S WORKSHOP
2011 NOFA SUMMER CONFERENCE

In the 1-2-3 of Bees workshop, children will learn about the busy lives of bees and why natural beekeeping is so important to the planet’s ecology. The 1 ½ hour workshop for ages 7-8 will be taught by Christy Hemenway, a beekeeper and the founder of Gold Star Honeybees.

In this workshop, the kids do not have to mind their own beeswax. Christie will bring a demonstration top bar hive, natural beeswax, and honeycomb for the kids to handle. This is for the express purpose of teaching and inspiring her students to engage in discussion and questions.

Not to worry though, there will not be any bees. As Christy explained, removing bees from the hive can be stressful for them and within four hours of the queen being missing, the bees try to replace her, so the bees need to stay home. What the children will find are answers to questions such as why bees sting, what occurs when they sting, what the differences are between girl and boy bees, and what bees look like. The answer to the last question might ‘bee’ surprising.

Christy started Gold Star Honeybees, which became her fulltime occupation in 2007, after attending beekeeping school. While in school, she searched in old buildings to find natural beehives. She noticed how different natural beeswax is from that produced by the traditional beekeeper Langstroth beehive, which uses a prefabricated wax foundation. Then she learned that the wax foundation creates an environment that can adversely affect the genetic diversity of the bees, and that recycled wax used for new foundation can contain harmful chemicals that were used to destroy Varroa mites.

Christie took action and joined other manufacturers to produce the top bar hive, which allows natural bees to form, avoiding the problems that the wax foundation can create. The practice is spreading as more beekeepers adopt the top bar hive. Students will take away from the workshop not only education about bees and natural beekeeping, but also another view of why more environmentally healthy practices are so important.

NOFA/Mass is also offering two Boston-area fall workshops taught by Jean-Claude Bourrut on Honey Harvest and Winter Hive Prep. CLICK HERE to learn more about organic beekeeping and to register for those workshops.

SAVE THE DATE: JANUARY 14, 2012
25TH ANNUAL NOFA/MASS WINTER CONFERENCE IN WORCESTER
By Cathleen O’Keefe, Winter Conference Coordinator

John Jeavons to serve as keynote speaker & all day seminar leader. Mr. Jeavons’ keynote speech will address “Food and Our Future: Exciting Solutions through Biologically Intensive Gardening and Growing Quality Food: Soil Fertility with Higher Yields and Lower Resource Consumption.” The 3-part seminar will focus on “Planning Your Future Garden Mini-Farm” through vegetables, special root crops, compost and calorie crops.

Call for Workshop Proposals
You are invited to submit a workshop proposal for the conference, which draws about 1,000 people from Massachusetts and neighboring states. Participants include seasoned farmers, urban homesteaders, hobby gardeners, landscapers, food activists and many other engaged learners. Proposals are due August 19. CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT A WORKSHOP PROPOSAL.

Children’s Coordinator Wanted
Responsibilities include creating an exciting program for children aged 3-12 that includes a variety of games, crafts and hands-on activities. Children will also go outside if weather permits. Pre-registration information will be provided by the Registration Coordinator and will include children’s names and ages. The program runs during the keynote and workshops only. There is a stipend of $200. To apply please contact Cathleen O’Keefe, Winter Conference Coordinator, wc@nofamass.org, 413-584-6786.
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LEGALIZING
YOLANDE
A CHICKEN IN EXILE,
AND HER FAMILY’s
EFFORTS TO BRING
HER HOME

By Caroline Roszell, NOFA Summer Conference Publicity
Intern

One day in early March, 2011, Audra Karp came home to find a
notice on the door of her Roslindale home. “It said to remove
the chickens within 24 hours,” she recalled. A mother and a
professional midwife, Audra also has the distinction of being
the owner of Yolande, a one-year old white Brahma hen whose
unceremonious deportation has
become the cause célèbre for
Boston’s ‘Legalize Chickens’
campaign.

Yolande joined the Karp Alenberg
family as a just-hatched chick. She
grew up, along with her adopted
sisters Roxy and Carmen (a Barred
Rock and Rhode Island Red,
respectively) in a pen in the warmth
of the family’s kitchen. When the
chicks were old enough, they were
moved outside to a small coop in
the family’s backyard.

Yolande and her sisters provided the
family with up to three eggs per day.
In addition to the fresh eggs, the chickens converted household
food scraps into rich fertilizer. “See that raised bed?” Audra asks,
pointing to a 10 inch-deep wooden box, built on solid concrete.
It is densely planted with lush, five-foot tall tomato plants.
“That’s chicken poop.”

Yolande quickly became an ambassador to the neighborhood.
“We used to have people with kids come by to see the
chickens,” says Audra. “It was a nice way to get to know our
neighbors, and to educate people about green living and
sustainability.”

Then came the notice. “When we first got chickens I applied for
a permit with Inspectional Services, because the ordinance said
that you could keep chickens with a permit,” Audra explains,
referring to Boston City Ordinance 16-18A. The Ordinance
forbids keeping chickens—unless you have a permit from the
Inspectional Services Department. Audra followed the
necessary steps, but her permit was rejected. The permitting
process for backyard chicken-keeping in Boston is famously
arduous—so much so that the majority of the city’s backyard
chicken keepers keep their chickens tucked away, officially
without sanction.

According to the office of Rob Consalvo (City Councilor
serving Roslindale), Audra’s permit rejection came down to
zoning. Each neighborhood in Boston has different zoning
rules. In Roslindale, chickens are flat out forbidden, so her
permit was automatically denied. Residents in other
neighborhoods might have a better chance at getting a
chicken permit, but for most neighborhoods, they would first
need a use variance.

Yolande’s family is not letting her go without a fight. Audra
filed an appeal and is currently awaiting her
hearing. Meanwhile, she is collecting letters of
support from her neighbors and has teamed up
with other urban poultry supporters to form a
group, Legalize Chickens in Boston. The group is
petitioning to change the permitting process to
make it easier for would-be (and current) chicken
keepers.

To learn more about the effort to bring Yolande
home, CLICK HERE. You can also follow Yolande
on Twitter and join the group’s Facebook page for
the latest updates. For those who want to learn
how to keep a flock, NOFA Mass offers an annual
Massachusetts Organic Poultry Series. For
workshop dates and locations, plus details and
registration, CLICK HERE. NOFA/Mass is also
developing a section on its website full of information to help
prospective backyard chicken raisers. It will include a
database on Massachusetts towns and their rules on poultry
raising, advice on how to keep birds in a way that is safe and
neighbor-friendly, talking points should you need them with
your town fathers and reluctant neighbors, and legal advice
on finding and changing town regulations. Stay tuned for
these upcoming resources.

Caroline Roszell, the NOFA Summer Conference PR Intern, is
passionate about two things—growing vegetables and
writing. She fell in love with agriculture on a biodynamic farm
in Port Townsend, WA, but has been growing food in cities
ever since. Currently she is the Project Coordinator for the
Gardening through Refugee Organizations (GRO) Project in
Boston, which has helped over 600 immigrants and refugees
start growing their own food in community gardens and
backyard plots.
Thank You to our Spring Appeal Donors!

David Carlson  
Derek & Katie Christianson  
John & Margaret Lowry  
Ellen Parsons  
Dori Smith

The Importance of the Plant’s Root Ball

Frequently a bedding plant is transplanted into field soil conditions that are less than perfect. Within the root block or ball, the plant, and the plant’s partner microbes should have established a system and structures capable of extending their organization out into the field soil. The green leaves provide the energy to power the outreach and the potting soil serves as the cultural base. Investing in sufficient media for ample root balls pays back in improved crop yields.

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Perennial Edibles Expert, Eric Toensmeier;
GMO Activist and UC Berkeley Soils Biology Professor, Ignacio Chapela.

www.nofasummerconference.org
FROM FIELD TO FRIDGE

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Astarte Farm
123 West St.
Hadley, MA
413-584-5552
dporganic@aol.com
www.astartefarm.com

Amherst Farmers’ Market, Spring Street, Saturdays 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Astarte Farm is digging and drying 10 varieties of heirloom garlic. We will be featuring a different variety each week at the market, all washed and ready to hang and dry at home. Sweet corn is coming! We start picking before the sun is up to provide you with sweetest, most tender sweet corn this side of your own garden. Want to try something different? Choose from our wide variety of black, striped, green, speckled or orange tomatoes - and yes, we’ll have a few red ones, too!

Atlas Farm
635 River Road
Deerfield, MA
413-522-7416
csa@atlasfarm.com
www.atlasfarm.com

Amherst Farmers’ Market, Saturdays 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Boston, Copley Square, Tuesdays and Fridays 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Tomatoes, baby greens (spinach, arugula, salad mix), lettuce, cucumbers, beets, carrots, bok choy, cilantro, dill, basil, parsley, kale, collards, chard, broccoli, summer squash, eggplant, peppers, scallions, sunflowers. We also still have shares available for our Full Season CSA—contact us for more info.

Bay End Farm
200 Bournedale Road
Buzzard’s Bay, MA
617-212-8315
david@bayendfarm.com
www.bayendfarm.com

Farm stand hours: Thursdays 2 to 6 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. We hope to have: lettuce, arugula, asian greens, summer squash, cucumbers, carrots, cilantro, basil, scallions, beans, turnips, potatoes, chard, kale, tomatoes, eggplant, peppers

Bird of the Hand Farm
P O Box 264
33 School Street
Sterling, MA
978-422-6217
birdofthehandfarm@gmail.com
www.birdofthehand.us

Plants: hostas, day lilies, Canadian ginger, kale, feverfew, Jack in the pulpit. Fresh cut herbs: spearmint, peppermint, parsley, summer savory, majoram, lovage Vegetables and greens: purple top turnips, turnip greens, kale

Blue Heron Organic Farm
PO Box 67
Lincoln, MA
www.blueheronfarmlincoln.com
farmer@blueheronfarmlincoln.com
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Certified Organic Farm stand located on Rt. 117 just east of the railroad tracks in Lincoln, open Wed-Thurs 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (June-October). Lexington Farmers’ Markets: Tuesdays 2 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Wednesdays noon to 6 p.m. We also sell to many Boston area restaurants; please see website (click on ‘Restaurants’) for seasonal availability

Billingsgate Farm/Grandpa Tom’s
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LARfisher@yahoo.com
Farm hours Monday-Friday 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Sat/Sun 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Pembroke Farmers Market, Saturdays 9 a.m. to noon
Rhubarb, lettuce, yellow squash, zucchini, sugar snap peas, cucumbers, and beans available
We will be offering “Meet the Beekeeper/ Bee hive openings” on August 7 and September 11 from noon to 1 p.m. Don’t miss out; our June event was a huge success.

Billingsgate Farm/Grandpa Tom’s
6 County Road
Plympton, MA
781-293-6144

LARfisher@yahoo.com
Farm hours Monday-Friday 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Sat/Sun 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
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Blue Hill Farm & North Plain Farm
205 North Plain Farm
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seanstanton@hotmail.com
www.northplainfarm.com

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Hatfield, MA
dandp2002@yahoo.com
www.goldenoakfarm.us
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Lettuce, Chard, Kale, Parsley, Cilantro, Dill, Basil, Squash, Cucumbers, Carrots, Beets, Beans, Scallions, Leeks, Garlic, Cabbage, Tomatoes, Arugula, Radishes, Blueberries, Eggplant, Peppers, Sweet Corn, Melons.

Many Hands Organic Farm
411 Sheldon Road
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www.mhof.net
Barre Farmers Market, town common, Saturdays 9 a.m to noon. Pre-order pasture raised certified organic chicken for July 31 and October 23 and fresh Thanksgiving turkeys

Old Friends Farm
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Certified organic flowers including: sunflowers, lilies, zinnias, and vegetables including: mixed greens, baby arugula, baby lettuce mix - all triple washed, spun dried and ready to eat, rainbow carrots, rainbow beets, scallions, cherry tomatoes, garlic scapes, cucumbers, hakurei turnips, baby bok choi, head lettuce, radishes, eggs, market discount cards available

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7 Carver St.
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thefarmers@redfirefarm.com
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Small Ones Farm
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smallonesfarm@att.net
www.smallonesfarm.com
Farmstand open daily starting August 1, 8:30 a.m. to dusk
Fruit CSA shares available. Check our website for details.

Thank you to everyone who donated to the 2011 NOFA Summer Conference Farming Education Fund (list as of June 30 2011):

Ms. Basia Alexander    Ellen Kamhi
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Thank you to New and Renewing Members in June

David Consalvo          Ann McGinley
Jennifer Derkazarian    Juanita Nelson
Laurie DiDonato         Ellen Parsons
Susan Dutra             Adele Smith-Penniman
Douglas G. Feick        Susan Phelan
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Maura Lyons             Phillip Szenher
Monika Mann             Phillip Szenher

Special thanks to Dave Hopkins and EcoRealty for generous support of the Northeast Animal-Power Field Days at the 2011 NOFA Summer Conference.
BACKYARD POULTRY WORKSHOPS

Barre
Saturday, July 16th
9:00 AM-2:00 PM
Many Hands Organic Farm
411 Sheldon Road
Barre, MA
Registration: $40
Instructors: Julie Rawson and Jack Kittredge

Concord
Saturday, July 23rd
1:00-5:00 PM
Pete and Jen’s Backyard Birds
159 Wheeler Road
Concord, MA
Registration: $40
Instructors: Jen Hashley and Pete Lowy

Instructors:
Jack Kittredge & Julie Rawson annually raise 450 broilers, 75 layers and 100 turkeys in a certified organic free range system, and have raised poultry for over 25 years. They will show young turkey poults in the brooding house and adult layers and broilers in the field. Topics include: field and permanent housing; pasture management; certified organic commercial and home-raised feeds; rotations; equipment; and marketing. Participants will have a chance to perform hands-on slaughter at the end of the workshop. Bring something to share for a noon potluck lunch.

Instructors:
Jennifer Hashley & Pete Lowy operate "Pete and Jen’s Backyard Birds." Learn about raising broilers and layers from chick to market. Topics include: brooding; mobile coop construction; electric fencing; feed rations and supplements; veterinary care; marketing; and humane slaughter. The Mobile Poultry Processing Unit will be available for producers to learn about poultry processing options.

Discounts Available. NOFA Members receive a discount of $5 per workshop. There is also $5 discount for registering 14 or more days before the workshop you’re registering for. The full schedule of Backyard Poultry Workshops is AVAILABLE HERE. For info: Ben Grosscup, 413-658-5374. By email, ben.grosscup@nofamass.org; put “Backyard Poultry” in subject.

TWILIGHT WILD EDIBLE WALK

Wednesday, August 3rd
5:00-7:45 PM
Great Brook Farm State Park
984 Lowell Street
Carlisle, MA
Registration: $25 Members/$30 for Non-members
Instructor: Russ Cohen

Russ Cohen, professional environmentalist and wild foods enthusiast, is in his 37th year of teaching courses about wild edibles. His book, Wild Plants I Have Known...and Eaten, came out in June of 2004 and is in its fourth printing.

Greater Boston is home to over 150 species of edible wild plants, many of which are more nutritious and/or flavorful than common cultivated counterparts. Participants can expect to learn about at least two dozen species of edible wild plants at each walk. Keys to the identification of each species will be provided, along with information on edible portion(s), season(s) of availability and preparation methods, along with general guidelines for safe and environmentally responsible foraging.

The park has an automated parking machine that charges $2 per car. Participants are encouraged to carpool or bike to the location.

To register, CLICK HERE, or contact Ben Grosscup -ben.grosscup@nofamass.org or call: 413-658-5374
ORGANIC LAWNS AND LANDSCAPES REFRESHER COURSES

Amherst Instructor:
Chip Osborne is a nationally recognized organic turfgrass expert and professional horticulturist with over 35 years of experience in the green industry. He is the president of Osborne Organics, a company founded to provide education to the land care industry and public sector. His specialty is natural turf management. He has developed strategies through hands on experience that assist in moving through a transition period.

Newburyport Instructor:
Javier Gil has been a NOFA Accredited Organic Land Care Professional since 2007, and earned his AAS in Horticulture from the Essex Agricultural School in 2004. A native of Spain, he became a certified lawn care professional by the Grassroots Healthy Lawn Program in 2006 and is Maugett certified.

Re-accreditation credits available. Workshop cost: $100 general public; $75 NOFA members and AOLCPs. To register visit www.nofamass.org or contact coordinator Kathy Litchfield at (413) 773-3830 or Kathy@nofamass.org.

COMPOSTING: EASY, CHEAP, NUTRITIOUS
Tuesday, August 9th
6:00-8:00 PM
Southwest Corridor Community Garden
Corner of Lamartine St and Hoffman St, Jamaica Plain, MA
Instructor: Allison Fastman

This workshop explores a variety of compost methods, including: effective Microbes, vermiculture, tumblers, barrels, and plain old piles. Presenter Allison Fastman will talk about what methods are best for different situations, what can and cannot be composted with each system, rat and pest control, Nitrogen and Carbon balance, and how to collect and use compost tea. Allison will also go over how to make a composter for each method, how to find excellent free materials, and how to use compost to enrich soils. $18 NOFA members/$20 Non-members.

GROWING ORGANIC FRUIT TREES IN A BACKYARD
Tuesday, August 16th
6:00-8:30PM
City Natives, 30 Edgewater Drive, Boston, MA
Instructor: John Bemis

Why not grow organic apples in the backyard? This workshop will go over how to plant and care for fruit trees using organic methods. After a pruning demonstration, John Bemis, from Hutchins farm, will cover materials, varieties, rootstocks, as well as disease and pest management. He will be sure to touch on the likely challenges growers face and variable responses to those challenges. $25 NOFA members/$30 Non-members.

John Bemis is a partner at Hutchins Farm in Concord, MA. He has been organically growing vegetables for over 35 years and currently oversees nine acres of apple trees. He studied agriculture and construction in Peru and has a degree from MIT in Architecture.
**PRESERVING THE HARVEST: LACTO-FERMENTATION**

Thursday, August 18th  
7:00-9:00PM  
Natick Community Organic Farm  
117 Eliot Street, Natick, MA  
**Instructor: Sharon Kane**

Keep immune systems strong while preserving summer’s bounty! In this workshop, participants will learn first-hand how to naturally ferment a variety of garden vegetables. Lacto-fermentation, an ancient pickling process that uses homemade salt brine to preserve freshly harvested vegetables, fosters the growth of friendly bacteria to preserve the vegetables. These same bacteria help to maintain the natural balance of bacteria in our intestines. Recipes from author and healer Sharon Kane will be provided.  
**Pre-registration required. $30 NOFA members/$35 Non-members.**  

Sharon Kane is an organic gardener, improvisational cook, musician, and energy healer. She has written a book on food preservation titled: *Lacto-Fermentation Through The Seasons: The Art of Old Fashioned Salt Brine Pickling.*

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**HONEY HARVEST: FROM HIVE TO JAR**

Saturday, August 27th  
10:00AM-1:00PM  
Boston Nature Center  
500 Walk Hill Street, Mattapan, MA  
**Instructor: Jean-Claude Bourrut**

Want to know how honey gets from hive to jar? Interested in tasting the sweet liquid right from the hive? This workshop will cover all aspects of harvesting honey, from frame removal to jarring. Jean-Claude will begin the workshop at the apiary, where participants will learn how to remove harvestable frames of honey. Afterward, the group will move inside to learn about extraction. This workshop focuses on participation and hands-on demonstration so that participants can do as well as watch.  
**Pre-registration required. Cost: $25 members/ $30 non-members.**

Jean-Claude Bourrut has been keeping honeybees for 20 years in urban and suburban settings. He currently manages a dozen hives in three apiaries, and is the Assistant Farm Director at Natick Community Organic Farm.

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**HIVE VISIT: WINTER PREPARATION**

Sunday, September 11th  
10:30AM-12:00 Noon  
Boston Nature Center  
500 Walk Hill Street, Mattapan, MA  
**Instructor: Jean-Claude Bourrut**

With winter coming, it is important that bees have what they need to survive. During this workshop on winter preparation, Jean-Claude will go over natural ways to help honeybees survive the cold. He will walk participants through all aspects of winter preparation, including food security, air and humidity control, and winterizing the hives. In addition, participants will learn about honeybees’ winter habits and how to monitor hives during the cold months ahead.  
**Cost: $25 NOFA members/ $30 Non-members.**

To register for Boston-area workshops: Composting: Easy, Cheap Nutritious, Growing Organic Fruit Trees in a Backyard, Preserving the Harvest: Lactofermentation, Honey Harvest, and Hive Visit, contact Laura Eppstein: laura@nofamass.org, or call 617-913-0538. Online Registration also available at www.nofamass.org.
Homesteading Column July 2011
By Sharon Gensler, Outreach Coordinator

This morning in the garden, I was stopped in my tracks when I heard a symphony of buzzing. Stopping to look, I was literally dazzled by the beauty. Over the years, I’ve planted and encouraged many different wild flowering plants in the garden as a haven for beneficial insects. They have kind of had a life of their own by popping up in different locations and in different groupings over the years. This particular clump contained yarrow, black eyed Susan’s, crown vetch, Gloriosa Daisies, mustard, red and white clover, dandelions, and buttercups. They were teeming with insects, large, small and tiny, gathering nectar and pollen. It was an amazing moment where I was able to open all of my senses to the colors, scents and sounds of beauty. A pause that refreshed! It also gave me inspiration to share it with you.

Coincidently, June was “Pollinator Month” (who knew) and I attended 2 programs about pollinators sponsored by the US Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. Pollinators are essential to life, as we know it, on earth. The honeybee, our most well known pollinator is under great stress and their numbers are diminishing. The documentary film, Queen Of the Sun, is an exploration of this problem and is well worth viewing. The other program was specifically about native pollinators and their importance, especially in the face of the imported honeybee’s decline. There are tiny solitary bees, wasps, butterflies, flies, and beetles doing the important work of pollination with little or no fanfare. They have short lifespans coinciding with the flowering of very specific plants. They might just be the helpers that keep food on our tables. Seeing that they help us so much, we need to help them survive and thrive by providing habitat and pollen crops for them.

There are 40 million acres of lawn in America. Most of it is a “food desert” for pollinators, as there is little to sustain them and many pesticides and other chemicals to harm them. If everyone puts just one half of their lawn into friendly habitat (wild flowers, native plants, shrubs etc.) we will have created 20 million acres of new wildlife habitat. (This from a US Fish & Wildlife staff person who considers insects as wildlife!)

So, what can you do: Convert some of your lawn; let part of your garden be “wild” or at least beneficial friendly; plant host plants for caterpillars; plant flowers of different colors and shapes in blocks; plant flowers with umbel heads with small florets; install solitary bee nesting houses; leave some of those “weeds” – dandelions and goldenrod (supports 115 species of insects) are heaven for these little guys. Not only will you be helping the pollinators, but also you will be creating that place of beauty, which might just stop you in your tracks. Enjoy the summer and see you at the NOFA Summer Conference!
NORTHEAST ANIMAL-POWER FIELD DAYS WILL FEATURE PRESENTERS RAY LUDWIG AND SAM RICH AT THE NOFA SUMMER CONFERENCE

By Erika Marczak, Draft Animal-Power Network

Ray Ludwig of Tolland, CT is one of New England’s finest Ox Teamsters, and he has literally written the book on the subject, “Pride and Joy of Working Cattle.” With over 50 years of training cattle, 25 years of running a 4-H working steer club with up to 21 members at a time, and working his own little farm, Ray has some considerable experience working cattle and passing on his skills.

Interestingly, Ray started with Morgan horses when he was a young man, but soon the needs of starting a family took priority and he sold them before the farrier and feed bills became too much. A pair of calves caught his eye, and for $35 plus some time training, he soon had the team to beat at the local pulling matches. Ray has had many different types of cattle and recognizes the qualities of each breed, but Milking Devons have a special place in his heart. Even now in his eighties, Ray still manages his ten acre farm with a pair of Devons. Plowing, harrowing, cleaning up and firewood keep him busy. When he was younger his favorite task was working in the woods with his cattle.

Ray will present two Saturday workshops at the 2011 NEAPFD. The first will be with Jacob Bowen about selecting and training calves. Later in the afternoon he will focus on cart work training. Ray’s advice for beginners is to “start with calves, think things through and be a friend, but you must have discipline.” More than once did Ray’s 4-H students place over him in Open classes at the fairs. Nothing pleased the children or Ray more to see all that hard work pay off.

Sam Rich of Abington, CT is another accomplished teamster. Horses have been on the family dairy since 1988. Sam didn’t take to the horses at first. He spent many years training and successfully showing steers as part of Ray Ludwig’s 4-H club. It was horses versus cattle for quite some time at home until Sam lost one of his steers from his last pair. Teamless for a couple of years, Sam finally took in some horses to do farm work.

Today Sam and his father have a few teams of Percherons that they use for field work, logging, sugaring, wagon rides at the family ice cream shop and anything else that can be done. Sam’s horses are quite versatile. He may use them at the fair in the obstacle and pulling contests, the next day they may give wagon rides or demonstrate the walking plow. Plowing is one of Sam’s specialties. In 2007 Sam went out to the National Plowing Contest in Ohio and took first place with the walking plow as the only New Englander in the competition. In 2008 he took second in the international class.

Sam will present several workshops revolving around plowing with draft animals at the 2011 NEAPFD. Friday it will be the walking and sulky plows. Saturday he will demonstrate ground driven hay equipment and Sunday precision plow adjustment. Sam’s advice for beginners is to “find what you like, find teamsters to talk to, stick with the basics, combine what works for you. Every situation is different.” He also advises finding trained horses, not just a broke horse that goes through the motions, and warns that working horses can be addictive and expensive if you let it go that far.

Ray and Sam take pride in their work, whether it be on the farm or at a competition. One look at their curried animals, polished horns, clean leather and that certain graceful way that they work their animals shows the care and detail that go behind it all. These gentlemen and their animals can be seen at this years’ 2011 Northeast Animal-Power Field Days at the NOFA Summer Conference.
EXCITING ENTERTAINMENT OPTIONS AT THE NOFA SUMMER CONFERENCE
By Chuk Kittredge

When the sun goes down in Amherst, at the NOFA Summer Conference, the fun has just begun. Both Friday and Saturday evenings, we will feature live music for everyone to enjoy. Refreshments of the adult variety will also be available for purchase.

Friday evening will feature the annual NOFA Contra Dance band, Calamity Physics, with caller Tim Van Egmond. Tim Van Egmond has been calling and playing for contra dances since 1973 and has shared his talent for smooth and accessible dances around the country. This is his second time calling for NOFA and we are happy to have him back. Calamity Physics is the trio of Steve Howland, on fiddle, Becky Hollingsworth, on piano, and Kevin Blanchard on whistles.

Saturday night, we will welcome back Steve Leicach, percussionist. Steve, master drummer, composer, educator, has been drumming for over twenty-five years. He has studied and performed in Africa and the United States. Steve is an expert in Ghanaian drumming, African and Caribbean hand drumming technique, drum improvisation, percussion theory and traditional instrument making. He’s highly accomplished on a wide range of many ethnic instruments including congas, djembe, balafon, shekere, and talking drums.

Saturday night, in addition to acoustic drumming, you can check out our Zydeco band, Dirty Rice. Dirty Rice was founded in 1995 in order to bring Zydeco music to audiences in the Northeast. The band was immediately well received with audiences following performances in New England and New York, including many of the major folk and dance festivals. The music of Dirty Rice is appropriate anywhere where people want to get up and dance to the infectious rhythms.

NOFA/MASS ANNOUNCES
2011 ADVANCED GROWERS’ FALL SEMINAR
WITH HARVEY USSERY

“The Modern Homestead”
Friday, November 4th
and Saturday, November 5th, 2011
8:30 AM to 5:30 PM
Barre Congregational Church
30 Park Street, Barre, MA

This two-day seminar focuses on achieving greater food independence using innovative models for increasing production on the homestead and small farm. The seminar will present an integrative, whole-systems approach to achieve maximum diversity and biological efficiencies that imitate nature while minimizing reliance on purchased solutions. Learning methods for soil care, cropping, and livestock husbandry, the participant will gain confidence in declaring their independence from the prevailing agricultural system. Topics covered include:

* Soil care that minimizes tillage, understanding how the soil food web and natural soil fertility informs systems of feeding the soil with composts, mulches, and cover crops.
* Preventing crop damage by insects through support of biological diversity.
* Livestock husbandry: strategies include natural feeding and remedies, and "stacking" of species.
* Mushroom cultivation for edibles, medicinals, and recycling woody "wastes."
* Converting organic "wastes" into resources using earthworms and soldier grubs, which create compost while
also providing high-protein feeds for poultry, pigs, or farmed fish, reducing dependence on purchased feeds.

* Natural food storage to enable you to eat fresh and local produce year-round; lacto-fermented foods, and season extension, winter salad greens.

**Registration Cost**
The registration cost for the seminar is $150. There is a $15 discount available for NOFA members and a $10 discount for early-bird registration. Contact: Ben Grosscup, Event Coordinator, ben.grosscup@nofamass.org, 413-658-5374.

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**GMO AND OTHER BILLS COMING UP AT STATE HOUSE HEARING ON THURSDAY, JULY 21 -- JOIN US!**

by Jack Kittredge

Five bills (briefly explained below) supported by NOFA/Mass will be heard at a hearing in Gardner Auditorium at the State House starting at 10 am on Thursday, July 21, 2011. Anyone supporting any of these bills is more than welcome to testify in person, or to submit testimony via email to Joint Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture, Room 473F, State House, Boston, MA 02133, or email to Brian.Ferrarese@MAHouse.gov

[CLICK HERE](#) for more info on the hearing and each of the bills to be heard.

**S00335** would create a Livestock Care and Standards Board of 11 members (one to be a representative of NOFA/Mass) with the power to advise the Commissioner of Agriculture on actions to ensure the humane keeping of livestock, and to approve regulations and standards promulgated by the Commissioner for the health, safety, comfort, etc. of livestock.

**H00261** would require the labeling of genetically engineered seeds and plant parts and the reporting of their sales each year.

**H01141** would provide that local by-laws and ordinances shall not unreasonably regulate agriculture. The application of any Board of Health regulation shall be deferred until it is reviewed by this standard and found reasonable by a review panel composed of Dept. of Agricultural Resources, Dept. of Public Health, Mass. Public Health Association and Mass Farm Bureau representatives. If any of them object, then the regulation must be approved by a board composed of those representatives plus the Attorney General.

**H03276** would require the labeling of all genetically engineered food sold in the Commonwealth.

**H03351** would set up a state inspection system for slaughter of animals. Meat from animals slaughtered in state inspected facilities could be sold in-state to stores, restaurants, or the public. The system would be under the Department of Agricultural Resources, rather than the Deparment of Public Health.

PS Anyone concerned about GMOs in our food should take a few minutes to watch a compelling video. It is about a mother whose child had a sudden allergic reaction to GMOs and her ensuing discoveries. It can be seen at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rixyrCNVvGA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rixyrCNVvGA)

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**OUTREACH NEWS MAY-JUNE 2011**

Things are a bit slower here at Outreach but we have attended a few events and I want to thank the member volunteers who have given so generously of their time and energy. So, THANK YOU: Lisa Westervelt, Emmy Howard, Ed Stockman, Carolyn Young, Mary Beth Merritt and Pru Smith (and Woody the wonder dog who, to much applause, wore a NOFA/Mass cape in the Strolling of the Heifers parade). Want to help and have fun too?? Sign-up now: outreach@nofamass.org

July 10- Common Good Festival — Amherst
Aug 4-7- Adams Agricultural Fair- Adams
August 19 & 20- Boston GreenFest — City Hall Plaza
CHIP OSBORNE TALKS LAWNS AND LANDSCAPES

By Rochelle Tapper, NOFA/Mass Publicity Volunteer

On Friday, August 12th, from 8:00 AM – 12:00 Noon, at the Campus Center, UMass Amherst, Chip Osborne will be teaching a Refresher Course on Lawns and Landscapes. This workshop is not only for NOFA Accredited Organic Land Care Professionals, but also for anyone interested in learning about organic practices. The conventional landscaper and those landscaping for themselves can get a good introduction to organic methods.

The course will focus on growing grass and teaching fundamentals such as lawns and turf, and will include such topics as soil testing, compost tea, grass types, and nutrition. It will also cover vegetables, flowers and ornamentals. The refresher part of the course is more intensive. It will teach how to take soil, send it to a lab and have it tested, how to interpret the results, and how to translate those results into an organic strategy.

To develop effective problem solving, Chip will lecture to the whole group and then in breakout sessions, landscape scenarios or potential problems will be presented to the small groups to formulate solutions. The groups will then come together to share what will and will not work. For example, due to grass genetics, changing the type of grass seed can produce dramatically different results.

Chip has been a professional horticulturist for 40 years. He was a greenhouse grower, retail florist and nursery operator, who was conventionally trained in the 1970’s to use pesticides. As a result of his experience in conventional landscaping, he transitioned to organic practices over a number of years before and into the 1990’s. With no available formal educational resources, he taught himself to grow organically and became greenhouse certified organic.

Due to requests to speak on organic landscaping, he formed his natural turf management consulting company Osborne Organics, which has grown substantially. Now as a full time turf management consultant, he has worked at the local and national levels. For Marblehead, MA, for which he is currently the chair of the Recreation Parks Commission, he wrote an organic pest management policy which was adopted in 2001. He is also a board member of Beyond Pesticides, a leading pesticide elimination advocacy group.

What is the difference between conventional and organic landscaping? As explained by Chip, conventional landscaping is a product centered approach, which treats symptoms with pesticides, while organic landscaping is site specific. The organic process is to identify the cause and an appropriate solution through a systems approach. A systems approach integrates three concepts that natural organic input is used as dictated by soil testing, that healthy soil is critical for growth of good plant material, and that the focus needs to be on good horticultural practices. For example, conventional landscaping treats crabgrass periodically with pesticides. Since crabgrass is a symptom of minimal turf density, the systems solution is to use good grass seed, not use pesticides.

For the future of organic landscaping, Chip envisions that NOFA’s standards will become the benchmark for the rest of the country. The Northeast is well ahead in organic landscaping, which is becoming more mainstream. He has seen successful models that demonstrate that these organic strategies work and interest in reducing pesticides locally and nationally. A problem with using conventional pesticides and synthetic fertilizers is that they contaminate well water and groundwater, which then can get into drinking water. Though organic landscaping does not have the large market share of conventional landscaping, Chip has seen organic landscaping projects at the homeowner, municipality, and federal levels.

The goal of the workshop is to provide an increased body of knowledge of organic methods in all aspects of landscaping. Organic landscaping is an evolving field, so students will learn about cutting edge strategies, which as the field grows will continue to arise.
We raise our cups to our organic farmers.

Our purchases help to keep more than 180,000 acres in organic cultivation. We couldn't do that without hundreds of organic farmers like you. **Thanks.**

Gary Hirshberg
For all the folks at Stonyfield

Stonyfield.com
Get helpful tips from farmers and growers and talk with representatives of local agricultural organizations about their work. Tickets and maps at A2Z, Deals and Steals, and Serio’s in Northampton. Cost: $8 in advance, $10 day of tour. For information, contact Joanne Mackiewicz at (413) 374-0550 or visit www.WardThree.com.

**CT NOFA**

Compost Tea: First Defense in Organic Land Care
Tuesday, August 23, 2011, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, NY. Peter Schmidt of Compostworks, LLC will lead land care professionals and advanced gardeners through the environmentally cutting edge process that can reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides. General public - $200. AOLCPs, NOFA and/or NYBG members - $185, and AOLCPs who register by August 2nd - $150. CLICK HERE TO REGISTER ONLINE or call 203-888-5146.

New Entry Sustainable Farming Project
The New Entry Sustainable Farming Project is seeking out examples of produce and handwashing stations on your farm! This season we will be designing and building GAP certifiable wash stations at our three farmsites in Dracut using a variety of materials and at different price points. We will use these stations to conduct workshops on GAPs and GHPs with our trainee farmers and help provide blueprints for very basic, low-cost processing and packing facilities for folks who wish to pursue GAP certification on their own farms in the near or far future. We would so appreciate it if you could take just a few minutes to email your thoughts, stories, helpful hints, and especially* pictures of your wash stations to eva.agudelo@tufts.edu. If you would like to send pictures as a text message from your phone, you can send them to (413) 522-5840.

**NOFA-NY**

NOFA-NY is launching its 2nd Annual Locavore Challenge this September. The Locavore Challenge is a month-long campaign aimed at engaging consumers in actively supporting the local organic food movement. Activities range from growing, cooking and eating to taking action within their communities to support the local organic movement. A full list of activities and events is available online. Participants from Massachusetts and beyond are welcome and encouraged to participate! The goal is to have 5,000 people participating this year. Visit our website to learn more and sign-up today: www.nofany.org. For more information about the NOFA-NY locavore challenge, contact info@nofany.org.
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

If you have some extra time this summer and would like to help out the NOFA Summer Conference publicity effort, please contact NOFA/Mass PR Coordinator, Mindy Harris -mindy@nofamass.org, or call 310-663-0054. Members in the Pioneer Valley are particularly welcome!

THE NOFA/MASS FALL BULK ORDER IS NOW OPEN!

CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD AN ORDER FORM

Now’s the time to start thinking about the fall! The NOFA Bulk Order is a great way to purchase supplies for your farm, home garden or landscaping business.

Save money on your fall mineral amendments and fertilizers, cover crop seeds, compost and BPA-free small and wide mouth canning lids while supporting NOFA. Drop off/Pick-up an order form at the NOFA/Mass table at the Summer Conference, or buy/pick-up pre-ordered BPA-free canning lids.

No order is too small; the collective aggregate ensures discounted prices from northeast suppliers such as Organic Growers Supply, Fertrell, and Vermont Compost to name a few. Distribution is a week earlier this year, so cover crop seed can be in the ground even sooner. However, it is a very busy time of year at our distribution sites, so please offer your assistance breaking down supplier orders on delivery day: Tuesday, September 6th. Contact Cathleen O’Keefe, bulkorder@nofamass.org, (413) 584-6786
NOFA/Massachusetts

411 Sheldon Road

Barre, MA 01005