

ACRES^{USA}®

The Voice of Eco-Agriculture

Support for Young Farmers

PAVING THE WAY

**YEAR-ROUND
MARKET
GARDENING**

AZOMITE[®]

Testimonial Inside!

**COVER CROP
SELECTION**

*From Garbage
to Groceries*

**UNCONVENTIONAL
COMPOSTING
PROGRAMS**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SOIL & DAIRY COW HEALTH

Thanks for all your hard work and dedication. I look forward to receiving each new issue every month. I just wish I learned about *Acres U.S.A.* many years ago. I wanted to comment on two products that we use that are advertised in the magazine. The first one is Azomite. This product is everything it claims to be. It has improved our soil and increased garden crop yield, and we also use it in animal feed.

The second product is Gold Spike probiotic. We have two dairy cows, and when they get a high somatic cell count or early signs of mastitis, we treat as directed and they clear up in 24 hours. Gold Spike is not cheap, so we split the cost with other small dairy families in our area. For Healthy Cows has other great products that we use also, and their customer service is great.

We bought 11 acres in central upper Michigan in 1994. The soil was sand with a pH of 4.2, and our soil test said very poor no organic material. We just keep putting the composted manure and bedding back, and we now have a place worth passing on to future generations. Thanks again. You are making a difference.

Richard Bilinsky
Gwinn, Michigan

A LIVING MEMORIAL

I am now retired and living my dream, growing holistic fruit and nut trees, garden vegetables, raising chickens and planning expansion in a manageable way. Every year I add new

things and occasionally delete others. Of course, I spent most of my life doing this same stuff on a smaller scale and working one to two jobs as well as raising a family; it kept me sane.

In general, we see many people have been drawn to “real living” because of the horrible deaths we so often see and hear about in confined housing operations for beef, pork and fowl. A great lack of respect is being shown not only animals but our nourishing food.

The monoculture farming pushed on America both by Big Government and Big Ag is disrespectful to food in general but especially the grains and vegetables we use for our nourishment. I have been reading *Beautiful Corn* by Anthony Boutard. It is amazing the respect past generations showed corn!

Modern science is poisoning our soil and water with chemicals, and it is affecting everything in the ecosystem. Genetic mixing and modifying of plants and other organisms is a part of the mentality that allows big business to control people, our day-to-day lives and even our deaths for financial gain. This is not only behind control of food, medicine and pharmaceuticals, but even the disrespect of our deaths with honor.

Most of you understand the beautiful tomato plant of June and July will be dead by December and the knee-high corn of July will give up its seed in hopes of continuing its life the following year. Life and death is a cycle we often refer to as the “Circle of Life.” We gather the grain and

return the stalk and chaff to the soil, and the soil microbial life returns it to the future. Death with respect is an honest goal.

I often hear about people looking for ways to utilize land that they want to set aside, never to be developed. Maybe someone should plant a forest, letting individuals or families come there, planting a tree, as part of your restoration forest to honor a deceased loved one – a forest for the living to honor the dead as a way to remember and continue life without forgetting.

As I have driven around large cities with their housing projects and poorly designed open spaces, I have always been encouraged by school gardens, community gardens and front yard gardens and orchards. We must pass on to the next generation a love for life, what better way than to teach holistic gardening. What joy to watch butterflies and honeybees pollinating vegetables and flowers in not only our gardens but at an inner-city elementary school; to see the joy on a child’s face when they put their hand into living soil and find an earthworm.

Jacob Green
Earlsboro, Oklahoma

THE FARMER’S FRIEND

Recently I pulled down a book from the top of one of my bookcases and took a look at it: *The Complete Guide to Rocks and Minerals* by John Farndon (Hermes House, 2006). I found a very interesting entry in the section on sedimentary rocks on page 99 that I wanted to share:

Marl, The Farmer’s Friend

“Farmers have added marl to soil to improve its fertility for thousands of years. When added to acid soils, the lime in marl helps to neutralize the acidity. It also helps to glue sand grains together so that they retain heat and water better. When added to clay soils, wonderfully it has the opposite effect – helping to make the soil more crumbly and friable and allowing air, heat, water and roots to penetrate better. So marl promotes plant growth in a number of ways: it increases the food available for plants, and makes it

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