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JOHN'S CORNER: NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS

by John Ferguson

If one read the book review on "White Washed" last week then this will not surprise you. Thirty faculty members of Washington State (WSU) Agricultural College stated they are being told what to do by the College Administrators, whom are controlled by industry. The administrators hire and fire, set research goals, and criteria based on what industry tells them in order to get industry funding. Capital Press News.

The Rodale Institute has release a report that studied using CMD-CE (chemically and microbially designed compost extracts) for organic weed suppression. They found that the compost extracts reduced weed biomass by 50% and 28% in post-planting and pre-planting treatment compared to the standard treatment (cultivation). The extract also reduced compaction in the soils.

The genetically modified (GMO) Golden Rice was advertized to be a solution for vitamin A shortages around the world and has been in use for 20 years. It has been a complete failure in spite of all the advertizing and governments pushing it onto farmers. Yields are only about 1/3 of regular varieties like Swarna. One has to eat many *pounds* of the dried rice to get even the minimal daily amount of vitamin A. Independent Science News October 2017.

A new form of stewardship called "Conservation Burials" is growing in popularity. The USA already has several natures preserves that permit natural burial without the chemicals used in embalming. The deceased family saves a large amount of money on caskets, embalming fluids, grave liners, etc. and the small fee they pay goes to care for the nature preserve. In addition, all the minerals in the body are returned to the soil, to stimulate new life, completing the natural cycle. <https://greenburialcouncil.org/>



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A new study from Harvard University's T. H. Chan School of Public Health has found a correlation between fertility issues and the food people eat. Subjects that consumed more than 2.3 servings of high residue fruits and vegetables had an 18% lower change of getting pregnant and a 23% lower chance of successfully giving birth. They used the Environmental Working Group's Dirty Dozen as a reference. Fruits and vegetables with the highest levels of pesticides on them are spinach, strawberries, and peaches. Those with the lowest levels are avocados and onions. The reasons to buy and eat only organic foods continue to grow.

More and more people want organic food, sales of organic food now have reached \$47 billion! We have known for years now that food quality deteriorates quickly after harvesting. When food is shipped from other countries, taking days or even weeks there is not much value left in it. As a result, more and more people are buying from CSA's (Community Supported Agriculture) and the demand for fresh nutrient dense food far exceeds the supply. In the November 3rd issue of Natural News there was an article on how a couple earns a six figure income on only 1.5 acres of land. They wrote a book that tells how they do it to help others; "The Market Gardener: A Successful Grower's Handbook for Small Scale Organic Farming."

A study out of Italy from the University of Milan, published in the Journal Frontiers in Microbiology have identified a wild yeast (a type of fungi) that is a more effective than a pesticide in preventing common grape molds. When I read articles like this, it makes me remember this verse from the book of Job: " Job 12:8 (NASB) "Or speak to the earth, and let it teach you; And let the fish of the sea declare to you ."

In this month, HortTechnology Journal researchers found that Horticultural Oils and Insecticidal Soaps were effective in the control of Armored and Soft Scales even when diluted to 2%. They were most effective when the scale was only a day old. When fully mature the treatments were less effective.

Evidence that our food supply worldwide is in bad shape continues to emerge. A study in the Journal Lancet has found that over the last 40 years, the number of children and teens with obesity has greatly increased to over 124 million! It has increased 10 fold for girls and 12 fold for boys. At the same time, there are 117 million boys and 75 million girls that are moderately to severely under weight.

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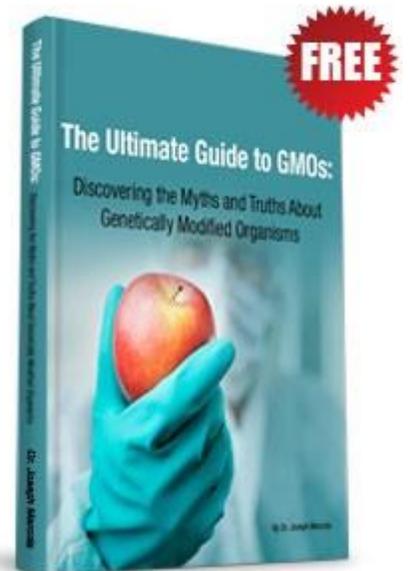
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A study published in the Journal Nature Communications, "Strategies for feeding the world more sustainably with organic agriculture", has found to solve many of the world's environmental problems and to protect the human race we have to eliminate the negative consequences of conventional toxic chemical rescue agriculture. Note: Modern methods based on organic techniques reduce the land required to grow food (food has higher nutrient density), less energy require, less pollution, less potions on our food, less contributions to global warming (greenhouse emissions), etc. I remember reading an article about ten years ago, that stated if we had to pay the "true" cost of conventional agriculture (environmental destruction, health problems, etc.), a hamburger at McDonald's would cost over \$ 500!

Researchers at Cornell University published in the Proceedings of The Royal Society, found that in addition to pesticides, fungicides are killing our bees. Chlorothalonil, a general use fungicide was found to one of the worst in hurting bees. When fungicide and pesticide exposure are combined the effect on our bees is even more damaging. Bees contribute over \$ 15 billion to the US economy every year.

Dr. Mercola has published a free booklet (25 pages) on the dangers of eating GMO foods. It is easy to understand and read and a great way for people to learn how GMO's are creating so many of our health problems. It can be downloaded at <http://www.mercola.com/ebook/gmo-foods.aspx>



Along the same lines, the International Journal of Human Nutrition and Functional Medicine had an article on how to reverse 28 health conditions by switching to a diet that does not contain GMO's. These health problems range from leaky gut and fatigue to obesity.

A study in the journal Antiviral Research, has found that curcumin from the spice turmeric acts against Zika and Chikungunya viruses that are spread by mosquitoes.