



CRC's GREEN SCENE

A bimonthly newsletter of the Sustainability Committee at Cosumnes River College

CSA: A Surprise in a Box

Rosana Torrielli and Dave Hodapp report...

Editor's note: Several CRC folks purchase fresh produce through a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) provider. Here Dave Hodapp and Rosana Torrielli review their bi-weekly delivery.



We had been thinking casually about a CSA box as the P.C. thing to do (like driving a Prius) when an earnest young man from Farm Fresh to You in the Capay Valley knocked at the door last fall with a brochure. Dave signed up, figuring, what the heck, we can always back out.

Farm Fresh offers a wide range of options, even 'no cooking required.' The 'small mixed' box arrives at our front door every two weeks, \$25 for two or three types of fruits and six or seven different veggies, all grown on the Farm Fresh farm or on other organic farms with whom it trades. Tucked inside comes a chatty and informative newsletter containing recipes, notes about some of the items, and seasonal farm news.

It was like Christmas when we opened the first boxes. What was all that green leafy stuff? And cabbage—we never think to buy it. Nice! But there's a lot of cabbage in a head for two people to finish, and so cabbage, and some yellowing greens, is often lost to the compost from week to week—

and we feel guilty (although it happens less often than it used to). The leeks were wonderful, the fresh potatoes and pears and oranges and apples and squash and pumpkin all easy to use and extra tasty. We don't eat enough salads during the winter so salad-y greens are welcome—and good for us.

It is a commitment to get through a box of sometimes aggressively unfamiliar vegetables. You'll find nothing you can throw in the micro and nuke for a minute and a half at eight or nine o'clock at night and presto! a hot meal at the end of a long day. You have to invest time in prep and cooking and think about what you'll be eating. That, of course, is the point.

So is this for everyone? No—not if you don't like cooking in the first place and would resent the chopping, peeling, prepping, and cleaning up.

Rosana likes getting the box, but she's not the cook in the family.

(SEE WHO, PAGE 2)

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Dave Hodapp (Chemistry) and Rosana Torrielli

Who Knew Kale Could be Such a Treat?

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Dave enjoys the challenge and says it's fun to open the box and figure out menus. He even checks the website before the deliveries to see what's coming so that he can plan ahead. He's cooked some fabulous dishes—and some 'interesting' ones. The Internet is a goldmine for recipes. Who knew that you

could sprinkle kale leaves with olive oil, vinegar, and salt, fry them in a 400-degree oven for 15 minutes and have a better-than-potato chips treat? We wouldn't have tried this, or a lot of tasty things, if we hadn't signed up for a CSA box.

Check it out:

www.farmfresh toyou.com

Hi-ho, Hi-ho! It's Off to the (Farmers) Market I Go!

Heather Downing reports...

Sweet, warm, and juicy—there's nothing like a tomato fresh off the vine. Or the crunch of a carrot pulled from the ground just moments earlier. Or the sweetness of fruit freshly plucked from your tree. But if you don't have the opportunity to grow your own fruit and vegetables, and you aren't ready to commit to a CSA box, then a Farmers Market may be the next best choice for you. California Certified Farmers Markets offer farm-fresh local produce at juicy prices.

Sacramento County currently has at least ten certified markets at different times and places during the week. Of the ten, four are offered year round. My personal favorite of the four is held on Sundays under the freeway at 8th and W streets, offering a wide variety of seasonal produce that will have you walking away with a big



smile on your face.

This market, the largest in the City of Sacramento, has many offerings: lettuce, tomatoes, olive oil, fish, pork, fresh butchered chickens, fresh breads, cheeses, and much, much more.

Another draw for many people, besides the atmosphere, is the presence of USDA Certified *Organic* growers. Even if farmers aren't certified organic, most still don't use pesticides on their crops. Look for the pesticide-free labels—our just ask.



Kale Chips

adapted from Stacie Billis at ChowMama.com

- 1 bunch organic kale, torn into 1/2" pieces
- 3 Tablespoons organic olive oil
- 1 Tablespoon organic apple cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons sea salt

Preheat oven to 400° F.

Whisk oil and vinegar, and toss kale in the dressing until thoroughly coated.

Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

Place kale on sheet in a single layer and sprinkle with salt.

Bake for 15 minutes or so, until crispy.

- Check out Stacie's blog for recipes and tips for cooking for kids at ChowMama.com and the ChowBaby baby food website.

<http://www.thekitchn.com/thekitchn/ingredients-vegetables/unmeat-how-to-eat-a-bunch-of-kale-in-one-sitting-078886>

For times and locations of local farmers markets, see <http://www.cafarmersmarket.com/index.html> or www.MarketLocations.com.

CRC Students, Staff Shop Local Farmers Markets, CSA's



“We use Farm Fresh to You. I like it because the schedule is up to us, they have lots of options for types and sizes of boxes, and to an extent we can request

substitutions. We pay around \$25 for a small box, which is actually pretty big.

“We like to support small farms. It feels good to know that the veggies were grown by people who care about the environment and our health. It’s fun to receive the box and see what has arrived (it’s like opening a gift). The food feels real, unlike so much of the food in grocery stores. Because we are eating with the seasons, we feel more connected to nature.

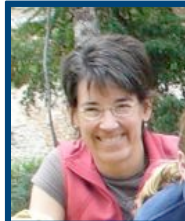
“Our farm sends a newsletter with info about the veggies, the workers, and the animals (wild and tame) on the farm to give us a better sense of what happens.”

-- Julie Hawthorne (SCC), Steve Cochran (Music)

“We absolutely love our CSA box. The farm is named Riverdog, and it is located in Capay Valley. We are very glad we decided to do it, and I now fear that Michael would go into a deep depression if for some reason we weren’t able to continue!”



-- Debra Sharkey (Geography), Michael Schmandt (CSUS)



“I considered a CSA box, but I couldn’t part with my Saturday morning walks to the Davis Farmers Market,

where shopping feels like a social event. Along with a huge variety of local produce, people flock to the market to buy flowers or crafts, eat at a food booth, talk local politics, or just hang out in adjacent Central Park. In the warmer months, the Wednesday ‘Picnic in the Park’ offers live music, dinner fare, and kids activities in addition to the produce stands.

“On Saturdays I like to start with a latte from Mark, the chatty coffee guy, a breakfast ‘sammich’ cooked with market produce by Jaymes Luu, and fresh flowers from Diane, all Davis or Winters residents. After breakfast, I hit the produce and bakery stands to fill my basket with food grown by people I know (or at least recognize) and trust.”

-- Cindy Erickson (Math)



“We love our box from Farm Fresh to You. It’s like Christmas because every week it arrives full of surprises! The produce is fresh, organic, and inspirational. Some might consider it pricey, but we consider it worth it for health, carbon emissions, and convenience.”

-- Lizz Gaylord (student, CRC)



“Year-round fresh local fare here in suburban Elk Grove—who’d have thought it! We love the Lucky Dog Ranch and Cache Creek Meat Co.

stands, with their organic, free-range beef and chicken—and friendly advice. You’ll also find seasonal fruit and veggies, free-range organic eggs, flowers, and plants. The market runs every Saturday from 8:00 until noon at Laguna and Big Horn.”

-- Cath Hooper (English), John Rusmore (Geography)



Green Sleuth: GoodGuide.com Makes it Easier Bein' Green

Fred Deneke reports...

Which of the following do you imagine would rate higher for overall health, environment, and social impact? (For answers, see below.)

1. a) Health Valley Organic Tomato Soup
b) Campbell's Condensed Tomato Bisque
2. a) Plan Toys Sports Car
b) Barbie 64 Ford Galaxie 500 Toy Car
3. a) Seventh Generation
b) Organic Valley
c) Horizon
4. a) Target
b) Walmart
5. a) Trader Joe's
b) Costco

You can find the answers to this quiz (and more detailed explanations) on GoodGuide.com, along with ratings for over 70,000 consumer products and a number of large companies. GoodGuide.com, which has existed for about two years and is still in beta form, states its mission thus:

"GoodGuide™ strives to provide the world's largest and most reliable source of

information on the health, environmental, and social impacts of products and companies. GoodGuide's mission is to help you find safe, healthy, and green products that are better for you and the planet."



The information the site provides is at times useful and even sobering. For example, parents might be glad to learn the comparative toy car ratings and avoid the Barbie model (rated 4.0, in part because of contamination with PVC and tin) in favor of the Plan Toys one (rated 8.3).

Likewise consumers might opt for products from Seventh Generation (8.3) and Organic Valley (7.1), each of which is "very engaged with its local community" and scores high in environment-related areas, over Horizon, which has "one of the lowest scores in toxic or hazardous spills," and is "one of the lowest rated on environmental management compliance."

And when it comes to those retailers, you might be surprised to learn that Target and Trader Joe's tie for the highest rating (with an underwhelming 5.8) with Walmart just a little behind (5.4) and Costco well below that (4.3).

More confusing were ratings for organic versus 'non-organic' products (such as chicken and tomatoes), where the organic in some cases rated lower than their non-organic counterparts, without any clear explanation why. Perhaps we can blame the lack of clarification in such cases on GoodGuide's 'in development' status—and presume that more answers will be forthcoming in the future.

In spite of these failings, I think you'll find GoodGuide can help us better understand the negative impacts of many consumer products and recognize that the true cost of a product goes well beyond the purchase price.



If you haven't guessed already, "a" was the correct answer for all five quiz questions.



Reader Reviews

Green Reads for Kids

Looking to promote green thinking with your younger family members? Prof. Ruth Oxman (ECE) shares some kid-friendly titles that will encourage sustainable living:

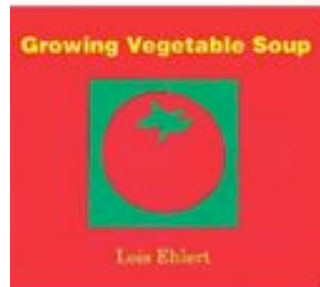


An exciting new book for children, *Kinder Gardens: Growing Inspiration for Children*, by Lisa Ely and Michael Glassman, will be available in paperback at the end of March. It promises interesting ideas for children ages three to eight, such as creating a “pizza topping garden” or turning an old toy into a planting container.

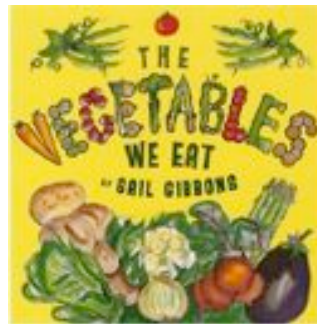
Some older titles are available from the library, in paperback or board book editions. Lois Ehlert has written and illustrated numerous books for toddlers through preschool-age children, and the following have colorful images of fruits,

vegetables, and gardens.

Look for *Growing Vegetable Soup* (1987), *Planting a Rainbow* (1988), or *Eating the Alphabet: Fruits & Vegetables from A to Z* (1989), all of which have been reprinted and are currently available.



Gail Gibbons has been writing and illustrating non-fiction books for school-age children for many years. Some titles to look for include *Nature's Green Umbrella* (2000) an introduction to the rainforests with facts about animals, medicines, and plants;



The Vegetables We Eat (2008) which shares how the eight

vegetable groups are planted, harvested, and eaten, as well as teaching the basics of tending a garden; or *Recycle: A Handbook for Kids* (1992), in which Gibbons asks the universal question, “but where does all this trash go?”

Check out also *The Adventures of a Plastic Bottle: A Story About Recycling* (2009) by Alison Inches. School-age children will expand their vocabulary with “polymerization,” “bottling line,” and “extruder,” as they learn about the manufacturing, use, and recycling of plastic bottles.



Even the popular TV star, *Dora the Explorer*, gets into the green action with *Dora Celebrates Earth Day!* (2009) by Emily Sollinger. Dora offers tips to save energy that empower children and involve families: recycling grocery bags, turning off lights when leaving a room, or planting a garden. A website follows with more tips at www.biggreenhelp.com



Reader Review

The Curse of Oil, a movie shown recently by the Social Responsibility Committee as part of the Exploring Global Culture film series, answers not 'why' but 'how' the people of the southern Arab oil-producing countries, along with the people of Ecuador and Venezuela, awakened to ask the following question: Why is it that their most precious natural resource is being sucked up and sold for the betterment of the Anglo-American nations and economy? French producer Jean-Pierre Beurenaut answers this question by tracing the Anglo-American hegemony of Middle Eastern, North African, and Latin American oil reserves and the economic and political struggles of each oil-producing

nation to nationalize its own oil reserves.

At the outset, James Akins, an oil expert of the Nixon administration, states, "To say the Iraq war has nothing to do with oil is naïve. It has everything to do with oil." To arrive at this conclusion, the movie begins in 1933 with the establishment of Aramco and the later agreement, in 1945, between President Roosevelt and King Abn Saud of Saudi Arabia to give the U.S. preferred access to Saudi oil. Thus began the race for oil.

From there, the story and the **curse** of oil unfolds through the 1950's, 1960's, 1970's, 1980's, Desert Storm, and the current Iraq War. With live film footage, the narration retells the struggle of each oil-producing country to wrest its oil industry

from Anglo-American control.

The **curse** of oil? Although the potential exists for economic and political modernization from oil profits for these countries, it is coupled with the debilitating results of war, embargo, political tensions, and the resulting social and economic inequity that come with the misuse of oil profits: think of the favelas of Venezuela, Saudi Arabia and its impoverished millions and elite billionaires, the Iraq War, and the Israeli/Arab conflict. "From the American perspective," says Akins, "We find ourselves in a very difficult position, albeit self-made: we have a political philosophy that makes the Arabs our enemies, but we have an economic policy that makes us dependent on the Arabs."

Sandra Carter, ESL

Student Senator Joins Sustainability Committee

Editor's Note: In this continuing series, we feature a student member of the Sustainability Committee.



Student Jerry Sypkens serves as Commissioner of Environmental Affairs for the CRC Student Senate.

A relatively new student at CRC, Jerry Sypkens previously attended CSU Sacramento. Finding it difficult to be involved on campus there due to the commute and to family responsibilities, he decided to see if Cosumnes River College would be a fit, and (not surprisingly, he says) it was!

Jerry's current plan is to major in Philosophy and Music Composition and to transfer to a four-year college (as yet undecided) next year.

This year he was given the opportunity to serve CRC's student body as the Commissioner of Environmental Affairs, which makes him the liaison person between the Sustainability Committee and the Student Senate, in addition to his

involvement in planning the many events on campus.

Jerry admits to being a relative neophyte when it comes to public activism on behalf of sustainability. Last year was the first year he attended sustainability conferences and club meetings, but they sparked his interest and prompted him to run for Commissioner of Environmental Affairs.

He offers his fellow students a practical approach to sustainability: "The most important thing ... is to start small and make sustainability practices a habit. Eventually it will become habit, and you will truly make a difference for yourself, the environment, and the future."



**Cosumnes River College
Sustainability Committee**

Members:

- Steven Coughran
- Ryan Connally
- Fred Deneke
- Julie Elliott
- John Ellis
- Cindy Erickson
- Dennis Hock
- Cath Hooper
- Christina Ocrant
- Julie Oliver (Co-chair)
- Ruth Oxman
- Andrea Salmi (Co-chair)
- Susan Scott
- Debra Sharkey
- Michelle Smith

Student Members:

- Elizabeth Gaylord
- Jerry Sypkens, Jr.

Newsletter:

- Cindy Erickson
- Cath Hooper

We're on the Web!
 Look for archived issues
 of the
GREEN SCENE
 on the CRC homepage.

News In Brief...

New Year's Resolutions

Our committee made some resolutions we hope are sustainable. Perhaps we can inspire each other!

Ryan Connally: take shorter showers.

Fred Deneke: increase my consumption of non-processed foods by eating more locally grown produce.

Cindy Erickson: walk or ride my bike to get places near my house.

Lizz Gaylord: move into a smaller house—mine is too big for two people, so we waste energy.

Cath Hooper: strive to eat more locally-grown foods.

Christina Ocrant: use reusable bags for everything: groceries, produce, and regular shopping as well.

Andi Salmi: bring my fabric shopping bags to the grocery store all of the time.

Debra Sharkey: compost the majority of our biodegradable waste.



New GreenForce Director Hired

Torence Powell will begin his position as Director of GreenForce Projects this week, pending Board approval. Look for more news about Powell in future issues!

SHAREfair Turns Recycling into Giving

CRC's SHAREfair focuses on sharing the gifts we have: our human resources and those extra things we can spare for the benefit of others. 2009's three-day event promoted volunteerism, recycling, and philanthropy.

The Social Responsibility Committee invited trusted volunteers and leaders of non-profit organizations to campus to promote serving local causes as a means to build skills, meet people, gain confidence, and find personal satisfaction. Participants received information and were asked to give unwanted clothing, household items, and canned foods to benefit local social service agencies. Over twenty community groups participated, ranging from our own Alpha Academy to Wind Youth Services. Groups benefiting from our recycling included the Sacramento Food Bank and Loaves and Fishes.



CRC faculty, staff, and students – including Toula Horiates, in photo - recycled three shopping carts full of clothing through the Sacramento Food Bank in just three days.

Mohandas K. Gandhi said: "There is a sufficiency in the world for [hu]mans' need but not for [hu]mans' greed." Through the 2010 SHAREfair (11/17-19) we will continue our commitment to informing the CRC community of avenues to share our wealth—time, talent, and recycled goods—with those who need it.



Green Scene Award: Kudos to John Ellis, who was invited to sit on a 'Blue Ribbon Panel' of community leaders to nominate recipients for the 34th Annual Clean Air Awards.
www.sacbreathe.org.