

Green Mission News

December 2014

What's in the News...

The Circular Economy:
what does it mean for the
waste and resource
management sector?

[Read More...](#)



External Links:

Recycling Opens the Door to a Circular Economy

www.huffingtonpost.com/brian-kennell/recycling-opens-the-door-_b_6164314.html

Packaging World: Paper explores Extended Producer Responsibility challenges

<http://upstreampolicy.org/packaging-world-paper-explores-extended-producer-responsibility-challenges-11212014/>

The Case for the \$100 Turkey

<http://civileats.com/2014/11/25/the-case-for-the-100-turkey/>

Organic Thanksgiving on Monsanto's front lawn

www.revilly.com/thanksgiving

The surfing companies making waves with sustainable design

www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2014/nov/27/surfing-companies-making-waves-with-sustainable-design

New Zealand could be 'world leader' in nature

www.nzherald.co.nz/wanganui-chronicle/news/article.cfm?c_id=1503426&objectid=11361523

Laying the Foundations of a World Citizens Movement

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/11/laying-the-foundations-of-a-world-citizens-movement/>

Walking is Going Places: Foot Power, Happiness, and the Common Good

The unexpected rise of a powerful social trend

<http://www.commondreams.org/views/2014/11/21/walking-going-places-foot-power-happiness-and-common-good>

NOAA: Globe Sets 5th Hottest-Month Record of 2014

<http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/noaa-globe-sets-5th-hottest-month-record-2014-27053528>

and

<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/sotc/global/2014/10>

Can Whole Foods Change the Way Poor People Eat? By *Tracie McMillan*

www.slate.com/articles/life/food/2014/11/whole_foods_detroit_can_a_grocery_store_really_fight_elitism_racism_and.html

Beekeeping in Fla. increases, but bee die-off continues (2 min video)

www.firstcoastnews.com/story/news/local/st-augustine/2014/11/18/beekeeping-increases-bees-keep-dying/19244301/

Carlsberg faces up to 'tough' circular economy changes

www.edie.net/news/5/Carlsberg-Circular-Economy-Community-sustainability-CSR-report-2014/

Desso uses chalk from water companies in its carpet

www.cdrecycler.com/Desso-uses-chalk-water-companies-carpet.aspx

Water Markets: A False Solution to a Real Crisis

www.foodandwaterwatch.org/blogs/water-markets-a-false-solution-to-a-real-crisis/

Ellen MacArthur Foundation book: circular economy thinkers set out views

Theory's leading thinkers and practitioners call for end to fossil fuel use, monopolies and using GDP as the sole metric of success

www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/circular-economy-ellen-macarthur-foundation-book

Responding to Climate Change from the Grassroots Up

www.ipsnews.net/2014/11/responding-to-climate-change-from-the-grassroots-up/

A Health Check-up for Our Environment - Ignored at Our Own Risk

www.internationalrivers.org/blogs/227-1

The fossil fuel bailout: G20 subsidies for oil, gas and coal exploration

www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9234.pdf

Climate change expected to expand majority of ocean dead zones

smithsonianscience.org/2014/11/climate-change-expected-expand-majority-ocean-dead-zones/

Climate change and dead zones

onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/gcb.12754/abstract

'Dead zone' in the Gulf of Mexico is the size of Connecticut
news.yahoo.com/dead-zone-gulf-mexico-size-connecticut-181202438.html

Interesting article about Kansas-based Cedar Valley Farms aiming to build a non-GMO feed hub in Kansas with funding from Slow Money.

<http://www.kansascity.com/living/liv-columns-blogs/chow-town/article3685910.html>.

For organic meat and poultry USDA is allowing companies to add a “Non-Genetically Engineered” statement about the use of non-GMO feed.

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulatory-compliance/labeling/claims-guidance/procedures-nongenetically-engineered-statement>

Walmart's Dirty Energy Secret

How the Company's Slick Greenwashing Hides
Its Massive Coal Consumption

http://ilsr.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/ILSR_WalmartCoal_Final.pdf

How to scale up the circular economy in the business world - video (30 min)

www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/video/scale-up-circular-economy-business-world-video

The Circular Economy of Recycled Paper

www.nytimes.com/2014/11/19/business/energy-environment/closing-the-loop-on-recycled-paper.html?_r=0

The circular economy debate: examples of good practice in business

www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/veolia-partner-zone/2014/nov/27/the-circular-economy-debate-examples-of-good-practice-in-business

Mostly Plants: New Science Says a Healthier Diet is Best for the Climate

<http://civileats.com/2014/11/12/eat-your-veg-new-science-says-a-healthier-diet-is-best-for-the-climate/>

San Francisco Restaurant the Perennial is Facing Climate Change Head-On

<http://civileats.com/2014/11/11/sf-restaurant-the-perennial-is-taking-on-climate-change-head-on/>

Three Articles Below

1. GM Contamination cannot be contained - new paper

The GM Contamination Register:
a review of recorded contamination incidents associated
with genetically modified organisms (GMOs), 1997–2013.
By Becky Price & Janet Cotter

This article was originally published by the International Journal of Food Contamination on October 25, 2014.

Genewatch and Greenpeace have, for about 10 years, run a GM Contamination Register (www.contaminationregister.org).

They have now analyzed the cases on the Register and a resulting paper has been published in an open access journal. The GM Contamination Register database contains cases dating back to 1997 (the start of GM crops). It records nearly 400 cases (to the end of 2013). The authors analyzed the cases by crop and by country. Finally, they focused on cases of contamination arising from unauthorised GM crops (i.e. those without any authorization for commercial growing anywhere in the (cont.)

world). The paper makes a useful reference for these GM contamination cases.

The main points are:
GM contamination happens.

GM contamination from field trials/illegal plantings happens – there are 9 cases of GM contamination of unauthorized (non-commercialized) GM crops that haven't undergone any environmental or food safety analysis. GM rice tops the league table of contamination cases by crop, accounting for about a third of cases. This is despite the fact that there is no GM rice grown anywhere in the world. The authors suggest this figure might be related to the routine testing of imports of GM rice at national borders. Once GM contamination has happened, it can be difficult to contain it, e.g. GM papaya, GM Chinese rice (but US LL rice appears to have stopped – for now at least).

From these data, it's not clear what the main factors affecting contamination rates are. It's not only the GM contamination itself (cross-pollination, mix-ups etc.) that contributes to the number of cases, but also the testing regime (both routine and targeted). The highest rates of contamination are in imported foodstuffs to Germany but this is probably because they do a lot of testing. All EU countries have high rates because they report their findings of the RASFF database. The data for contamination exists – but not the factors to analyze what influences contamination.

Finally, for most (perhaps all) experimental GMOs there is no protocol for testing available, making detection of any GM contamination difficult, if not impossible.

2. How Much Pesticide Residue on Your Produce? FDA Doesn't Know

New GAO report reveals FDA doing scant testing for pesticides
by [Andrea Germanos, staff writer](#)

Published on

Friday, November 07, 2014

www.commondreams.org/news/2014/11/07/how-much-pesticide-residue-your-produce-fda-doesnt-know

The Food and Drug Administration is carrying out little testing for pesticide residues on fruit and vegetables, a new report by a federal watchdog reveals.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) [report](#) (pdf) found that in 2012, the FDA tested less than one-tenth of 1 percent of imported shipments.

FDA does not test for some commonly used pesticides—like glyphosate—for which the EPA has established tolerance levels, nor does FDA disclose in its annual reports that it doesn't do this testing, the GAO analysis states.

In addition, GAO charges, "FDA does not use statistically valid methods consistent with Office of Management and Budget standards to collect national information on the incidence and level of pesticide residues." (cont.)

The [Center for Biological Diversity](#), a nonprofit conservation organization, says the report shows that inadequate safeguards are in place and urged the FDA to take appropriate action.

"The FDA is supposed to be protecting the American people from dangers in their food and it's clear they've

dropped the ball when it comes to pesticides," Lori Ann Burd, endangered species campaign director for the organization, said in a statement.

"As scientists continue to uncover information regarding the harmful effects of pesticides on (cont.) human health and the environment, the American public deserves to be able to rely on FDA to provide the basic monitoring required to protect the health of people, wildlife and our waterways," Burd added.

3. Back-To-The-Future Agriculture: 'Farming Like the Earth Matters' by [Courtney White](#)

Published on Wednesday, November 12, 2014 by [Common Dreams](#)



Many young people in agriculture today are looking to the past and what they are discovering is this: nature's model works best. (Photo: [Ali Jafri/flickr/cc](#))

It is easy to forget that once upon a time all agriculture was organic, grassfed, and regenerative.

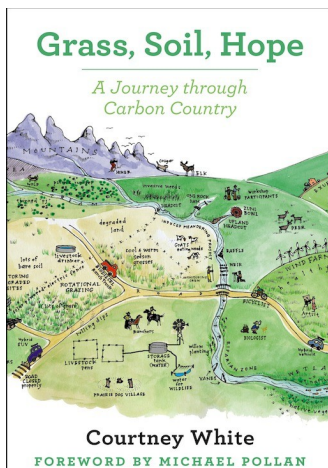
Seed saving, composting, fertilizing with manure, polycultures, no-till and raising livestock entirely on grass—all of which we associate today with sustainable food production—was the norm in the “old days” of merely a century ago. And somehow we managed to feed ourselves and do so in a manner that followed nature's model of regeneration.

**"Farming like water and soil and land matter. Farming like clean air matters.
Farming like human health, animal health and ecosystem health matters."**

We all know what happened next: the plow, the tractor, fossil fuels, monocrops, nitrogen fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, feedlots, animal byproducts, e. coli, CAFOs, GMOs, erosion, despair—practices and conditions that most Americans today think of as “normal,” when they think about agriculture at all.

Fortunately, a movement to rediscover and implement “old” practices of bygone days has risen rapidly, abetted by innovations in technology, breakthroughs in scientific knowledge, and tons of old-fashioned, on-the-ground problem-solving.

Take Dorn Cox, a young farmer in New Hampshire. He tossed away the plow, preferring to use no-till practices on his parent’s organic farm, then he developed a biodiesel alternative to fossil fuels (his sister and her husband use draft animals). He also measures the carbon content of the soil through sophisticated technology, aiming to raise the content as high as possible. And he co-founded [Farm Hack](#), an open-source, virtual café for young and beginning farmers. “Farming isn’t rocket science,” he often says, “It’s more complicated than that.”



Like Dorn, many young people in agriculture today are looking to the past and what they are discovering is this: nature’s model works best. After all, nature has been using evolution and the laws of physics to beta-test what works for merely millions of years—billions in the case of photosynthesis. Humans are pipsqueaks and upstarts in this process by comparison and the idea that we know what’s best is looking like a dangerous form of hubris. That’s why a new generation of agrarians is returning to the roots of agriculture—combined with advances in science and social justice—for a different approach.

Soil carbon is a good example. As gardeners know, building carbon stocks underground—the dark, rich soil called *humus*—via soil biology is critical to plant vigor, mineral uptake, and water availability. At the farm and ranch scale it helps prevent soil erosion. A short list of practices that build soil carbon include: cover crops, mulching,

composting, low or no-till, and planned grazing of livestock.

Building humus is also a great way to sequester atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the soil for potentially long periods of time, which means “old” practices can address “new” challenges like climate change. Recently, the level of CO₂ in the atmosphere rose past 400ppm for the first time in millions of years. However, it is possible to bring this level back down an old-fashioned way: with plant photosynthesis. Last spring, the [Rodale Institute](#), a research and education nonprofit, released a white paper—entitled [Regenerative Organic Agriculture and Climate Change: A Down-to-Earth Solution to Global Warming](#)—which states boldly that we could sequester more than 100% of current annual CO₂ emissions with a switch to soil-creating, inexpensive and effective organic agricultural methods.

Just a few years ago, the climate potential of soil carbon wasn't on anyone's radar screens, other than a few laboratories, soil scientists, and a handful of progressive farmers and ranchers. Now talk of soil carbon is everywhere. At a recent major grazing conference I attended, soil carbon was the most popular topic discussed (after cattle), with speaker after speaker extolling its virtues. And people are even talking now about slowing climate change with the stuff.

However, there are many obstacles to implementing these types of back-to-the-future solutions to food and climate challenges. Some are economic, but many are policy-based, which is why it is important to support groups like the [Organic Consumers Association](#) or the National [Young Farmers Coalition](#) in their efforts to create a policy environment that favors back-to-the-future farmers, ranchers, and eaters – which is all of us!

It all comes back to nature. I like the way the Rodale Institute put it recently: *farming like the Earth matters*. Farming like water and soil and land matter. Farming like clean air matters. Farming like human health, animal health and ecosystem health matters.

It all matters and regenerative practices are the way we'll get there.

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