

EAT First!

Colleen Tigges, Communications
503-358-2567 – info@eatfirst.org
www.eatfirst.org



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Thank you all

As the new year begins life is good and we at EAT First! have much to be thankful for. The response to our plea for help, sent in November, has been both overwhelming and humbling. It is so good to know that our efforts are appreciated and also that Collie gets to eat for the next six months. Thank you all! Along with editing the Ag in the Classroom magazine she will also be doing some research for a student/teacher website.

The response to our *Field Manual for the Green War* has also been fantastic – about 500 delivered already. We knew there would be a demand for the information, we just didn't realize how quickly word would spread. Thanks to those who both bought books and told others. They are still going like hotcakes.

Because of the book and word of mouth, Collie is getting more opportunities to give speeches and presentations, and I'm filling in whenever needed. She's excited to spend more time on the road this year, putting some of her own 'touches' on this organization – and I'm excited to spend more time on the road in the motor home with Dick and the dogs!

Remember to keep us in mind for classes, seminars and presentations... the green war continues to rage and we need to get everyone trained for battle!

Also remember to visit our website (www.eatfirst.org) – Collie changes it weekly and, since she has high-speed access, locates lots of good stuff out on the web. Living in the boonies has it's drawbacks, slow internet being one of them.

Russia says 'nyet' to Kyoto

Who would have guessed? It appears the Kyoto Treaty on global warming has been sunk by Russia, of all countries. The treaty calls for a reduction in CO2 emissions and, in order to take effect, countries responsible for at least 55% of the world's emissions must ratify. The US has already refused to sign. Treaty supporters needed Russia's 17%. They didn't get it. The Russian chairman of the World Climate Convention, held in Moscow a few months ago, opened proceedings by stating that, "All the scientific evidence seems to support the same general conclusions, that the Kyoto protocol is... based on bad science."

Kirill Kondratiev, the head of the Russian Academy of Sciences stated it best when he said, "The only people who would be hurt by abandoning the Kyoto protocol would be the several thousand people who make a living attending conferences on global warming." (we loved that!)

Kyoto would allow countries that want to produce CO2 emissions above what is allowed by the treaty to purchase "credits" from countries that have not exceeded their emissions limit. Based on the state of Russia only a few years ago, they would have made billions selling credits to countries in the west (like the U.S.).

But Russia is intent on growing their economy, and recognizes that CO2 emissions and affordable access to energy are part of economic growth. At their current rate of economic growth, Russia would far exceed Kyoto targets by the time the treaty would go into effect in 2008, meaning that rather than selling credits, they would have to buy credits from countries that are not exceeding targets (like other former Communist countries that have not seen economic recovery) – an economic burden that would hinder the growing country. Essentially in choosing whether or not to ratify Kyoto, Russia is choosing whether to continue to grow her economy or rely on a state of welfare dependency from the sale of CO2 credits. It should surprise no one that Russian President Putin has declined to sign the treaty, effectively choosing self-improvement of his country.

And regardless of their economy, Russia is one of the first European countries to openly criticize the dubious science behind the treaty.

Americans still want beef

As this letter goes to print the mad cow scare in the U.S. has been front page news for nearly a month. Thankfully the American consumer is either (1) finally believing our food supply is the safest in the world, or (2) heard so many bogus scares that they go in one ear and out the other. The scare stories haven't worked and beef consumption remains high.

Yes, one dairy cow infected with bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or 'mad cow disease') was found on a farm near Mabton in central Washington. But, the discovery is good news. That means that all the safeguards put in place are working!

Instead, the media, aided by the food police and fear industry, has taken what should have been a small story and turned it into one of the biggest of the year.

Here are three absolute truths about mad cow disease for you to tell your kids, neighbors and co-workers:

First, it's a bovine (cow) disease. Cows can't even give it to each other, let alone give it to people. It seems to be caused by deformities in prions, natural proteins in the brain. Cows may develop BSE spontaneously, or may become infected by eating feed contaminated with infected prions from parts of brain and spinal cord tissue from other infected animals.

Second, since it's a cow disease, it's not a human disease. Links between BSE in cows and a human neurological disease called Creutzfeldt-Jakobs disease have been studied because a new form of CJD, called variant CJD, or vCJD, appeared in England after their mad cow scare. However, while several studies claim to have found an association between vCJD and BSE, they are far from conclusive. Many researchers question the theory due to the fact that no one has ever established that any vCJD victim has ever eaten beef from an infected animal – in fact, no one has ever even proved that infected prions can cross the species barrier and cause disease in humans!

Third, even if infection can cross the species barrier, you would almost definitely not be exposed to infected prions because they aren't found in the muscle. Consuming cuts of beef such as steaks, roasts and chops poses virtually no risk. Even the risk of contamination through the processing of ground beef is infinitesimally small.

And, what if science eventually finds that the fear-mongers are right? Don't worry! Our USDA already thought of that and commissioned a study by the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis to study worst case scenarios. Their conclusion? Measures implemented by the government and industry over the last five years would almost certainly eradicate the disease with as little risk to humans as you can imagine. The risk isn't zero, but "it's as close to zero as you can get," said Harvard's director of risk communications. I might add that absolutely nothing is risk-free. You can't prove a negative.

The facts say there is basically no risk – so why all the alarm? Mad cow disease would be a non-story in the U.S. if it were not for the propaganda efforts of various organic, vegetarian, and animal rights groups. The National Council Against Health Fraud says, "EarthSave, PETA, PCRM, and the Seventh-Day Adventist website have seized upon the opportunity to frighten people into behaving in ways they find ideologically delightful." Couldn't have said it better myself!!

The organic industry jumped in immediately trying to sell organic meat by saying that organic farms have no BSE. Whoops! Consumer Freedom (www.consumerfreedom.com) shot down that in a hurry. The very first case of BSE in Germany came from an organic slaughter house and during Britain's mad cow crisis, at least 215 cases were found on 36 different organic farms.

Beware! POPS treaty is not what you think

Early this year the Senate is expected to vote on legislation implementing the Global Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs Treaty) that the Bush Administration signed in 2001. Heed this warning! This is worse than you think it is.

The Treaty is akin to the Kyoto Protocol, another UN effort pushed by large international Green groups to circumvent US sovereignty and American taxpayers. It imposes international bans on 12 chemicals, all of which have been regulated out of use or banned in the US for years – chlordane, DDT, dieldrin, aldrin, dioxins, endrin, furans, heptachlor, hexachlorobenzene, mirex, PCBs, and toxaphene.

The devil is not in the banning, it's in the proposed implementing legislation. The bill, S. 1486, was approved by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee in July 2003 and must go thru both the Senate Agriculture and Foreign Relations committees before it goes to the floor. This gives some time to reverse course. And, there are three main reasons this should be stopped:

1) Pres. Bush should never have signed it in the first place. Rich, western- world bureaucrats (and their Green handlers) have no right to make life-or-death decisions for poor third-world countries. This is Eco-Imperialism at it's worst (see book review this newsletter for an explanation).

2) The claim by Greens that there is no value to these banned chemicals is bogus. If no one wanted to use them there would be no market and bans would not be necessary.

3) And, the worst reason concerns what happens in the US under the proposed legislation. As a bill was being drafted, Democratic lawmakers proposed allowing EPA to implement bans or regulations not only for the 12 chemicals now listed but for any others that UN bureaucrats might list in the future – *without any congressional authorization or consent*.

The Bush Administration proposed granting EPA authority to regulate only the 12 listed in the treaty. The Senate would then have to ratify addition of any new chemicals and Congress would have to pass any necessary implementation laws.

However, both of these proposals were eventually discarded by Republicans on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and a compromise agreed upon. As it now stands, the bill requires EPA to consider bans or other regula-

tion for a year before making them official. EPA can decide against a ban or regulation but, as written, the bill makes it difficult to prevail. EPA is forced to give "substantial weight" to POPs listings which places the burden on EPA to prove them wrong. In addition, environmental groups can sue EPA if the agency decides against a ban or regulation. Courts could then order EPA to ban or regulate unless the agency proves that such action is unnecessary. This standard is impossible to beat since it asks EPA to prove a negative.

And, taxpayers will not only pay for EPA's litigation costs, but courts could also award attorney and witness costs to litigants – which will come from taxpayers as well. Since many environmental groups live on government funding, the federal government ends up subsidizing litigation against itself.

Stated simply, any bill that gives more power to EPA without Congressional oversight is a bad bill. And, any bill that gives foreign bureaucrats more weight than American taxpayers is even worse. Congress should call for the unsigning of the Treaty.

More salmon apparently not what they wanted

It's never enough! No matter how much things improve - safer, cleaner, greener, or whatever it is someone wants – the Greens will never be satisfied. The salmon fiasco proves once again the Green War is not about saving anything. It's about money, jobs and power.

More than 920,000 chinook passed Bonneville Dam counters this year, the biggest return since the dam was completed in 1938 and more than double the recent ten year average of 399,000. Other species were also above average: 364,000 steelhead, 126,000 coho and 39,000 sockeye. The figures were released in December by the Federal Caucus, the nine federal agencies working on salmon recovery in the Columbia River Basin.

All these agencies admit that the dramatic increase is mainly due to ocean conditions. In the past few years, colder water, more food, and fewer predators have allowed more fish to survive in the ocean. Oops! Apparently that solution was not the one they were looking for.

Many 'salmon savers' from these same public-trough agencies are now saying that the numbers don't mean fish are recovering. Come again? If fish numbers don't mean anything, what does? What are we looking for? When do we arrive at the point where the \$almon spigot can be turned off?

Last year the General Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative arm of Congress, tallied up \$3.3 billion in direct federal spending on Columbia Basin Salmon since 1982. But, that figure is so far wide of the mark it's laughable. That's just federal tax money. It doesn't include Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) costs, nor costs incurred by non-federal dams, nor money spent by states, nor private money spent defending property rights and the related loss of business, goods and service. BPA noted that the report didn't even consider the costs of purchasing power to replace power not generated because water was flushed down spillways instead of run thru generators. These costs are borne directly by Northwest ratepayers in higher electric bills. BPA estimates that from 1978-2001 their electric losses from spill were \$3.44 billion. Plus, they estimate they have spent another \$2.6 billion on fish and wildlife (70% of which went for salmon). When all these costs are added up salmon costs are nearing \$10 billion. To put that number in perspective, it is approximately \$1600 for every man, woman and child in this state.

And, according to the GAO report, no one, absolutely no one, can say whether all that money did any good. It might have helped, but then again it might not.

But, since fish numbers aren't important, it really doesn't matter anyway. What matters is to keep the public trough full. Over 20 years a whole new industry has arisen. Careers were built, green group budgets were enriched, tribal fish programs mushroomed. Salmon saving is now an institution, much the same as hundreds of other social welfare programs. The 'savers' suck at the public trough alongside the welfare moms, the indigent and the 'employment challenged'. And, they will continue to feed as long as we continue to fill the trough.

Healthy Forests Act: savor a small victory

That 'Green scream' you heard in December was the natural resource industry winning a small skirmish.

Sixteen years have passed since the devastating Yellowstone fires drew America's attention to the mismanagement of her forests. Amazingly, we are finally moving toward fixing the problems. President Bush signed the Healthy Forests Restoration Act in December. No one claims the Act is perfect. As with all politics, it's a compromise, and of course it's expensive. But.....it's the first compromise that's come down on our side for a long time. Savor the victory, no matter how small.

The high cost is mainly because environmental groups can not abide small loggers or timber companies making a profit. Greens do admit that our forests need to be cleaned out and thinned but heaven forbid that someone should cut and sell a marketable tree to pay for it. Since I doubt the Forest Guardians will be lining up to do the work someone else will have to pay for it. And, the job is huge. It took half a century to degrade forests to this point, it will take years to get them back in

shape. Forest ecologists are pushing for massive thinning projects on hundreds of thousands of acres. The costs for removing all that dead, diseased and insect-ridden debris will run far more than the \$760 million annual budget Congress allowed.

I can live with the high cost because the Act begins to change the broken process that got us into this mess in the first place. That's what all the enviro screaming was about. The Act took away some of their power. First of all, it improves the process of environmental-impact review, plus it limits litigation that enviros have so successfully used to stop anything akin to logging. To reduce long delays that formerly lasted for years, the new bill allows administrative appeals only by persons and groups who filed written comments during the planning stages of projects. And, federal judges are prevented from issuing preliminary injunctions for more than 60 days on such projects. Under the old system it took forest managers several years to maneuver a thinning project around environmental group delays, injunctions and lawsuits.

There are good articles available on forest management (or lack of it) and also on the new Act. For those interested, www.cei.org covers this issue, as well as www.privateconservation.org.

Fish farming in enviro crosshairs

It boggles the mind. After 40 years of crying about depletion of ocean fisheries one would think the Greens would welcome aquaculture with open arms. According to the FAO report "State of the World's Fisheries and Aquaculture 2002", farmed fish increased from 3.9% of total production in 1970 to 27.3% in 2000. That's an environmental miracle to crow about! In 2001 fish farming saved 37.5 million metric tons from being taken from the oceans. Genetically enhanced salmon, for example, grow twice as fast as regular salmon and eat 20 percent less food. This means that fish farmers can raise twice as much fish in the same amount of area while producing less pollution. So what is it about this environmental miracle that the Greens don't like?

Same old story - it's not about saving fish, it's about who feeds the fish. Farmed salmon have been in their crosshairs for a long time. Over the past few years several different scares have circulated including bogus environmental damage, and of course, the horrifying prospect of 'factory fish' breeding with wild fish. That was followed by the "fake pink color" scare and genetic engineering scare. Fortunately the public doesn't listen very well and fish farming is growing, not shrinking.

Their latest strategy is attacking farmed fish on a food safety basis. Actually this began in 2001 when Canada's favorite whacko, David Suzuki, tested 8 salmon and found higher levels of PCBs in farmed fish. That was followed by an Environmental Working Group study that tested 10 fish about six months ago. The EWG managed to get their non-peer-reviewed, unpublished, "study" covered in several papers including the New York Times. The first clue that this was more junk science was the fact that PCB levels were never given. They were simply identified as a "toxin" or "probable human carcinogen" and/or "a cause of cancer and nervous system damage".

PCBs are a now-banned chemical that was formerly used in industrial insulation and legally released into rivers and streams. And, there is absolutely no credible evidence that environmental exposure to them poses a risk of cancer or any other ailment. Even workers who were exposed to high levels over many years show no increased cancer rates. At high doses, PCBs can cause tumors in lab animals but so do thousands of naturally occurring chemicals found everywhere.

After the scare stories appeared the American Council on Science and Health called the National Cancer Institute asking if they knew of any evidence, new or old, that trace levels of PCBs in fish contribute to the toll of human cancer. The NCI said "no".

Furthermore, one needs to look at where the scare stories originated. The EWG is not a science organization, it's an advocacy group. In fact the group once conceded to the Weekly Standard magazine that they don't even have a single doctor or scientist on staff. They do claim David Fenton as a Board Member and, if you recall, he is the one who masterminded the Alar scare years ago.

Just this past week the PCB issue flared up again, fueled by another study, this one paid for by Pew Charitable Trusts. It was published in *Science*, "Global Assessment of Organic Contaminants in Farmed Salmon". Pew has been after fish farming for years and throws pots of money at researchers for 'studies' that can be used to further this end. They also support EWG and they have lobbied Congress for a moratorium on new fish farms. As Steve Milloy at www.junkscience.com says, "At least the Pew Charitable Trusts are appropriately named. Like their bogus salmon scare, they stink."

There has never been a single health effect associated with eating farmed salmon despite people eating literally tons of it over the past 20 years. The PCB levels in commercial fish are well-within the safe levels set by the FDA. Plus, the levels have been declining for years. The levels reported in *Science* are about 20 times lower than levels found by the FDA in 1989.

Oops! Wild salmon have higher PCBs

Today, just as I finished the above article, the Seattle PI (1/15) reports yet another study that shows Puget Sound's wild chinook have PCB levels just as high as the farm raised fish in the *Science* study and in some cases even higher. How's

that for timing? Some days I just love what I do. How are enviros going to cover their hypocrisy this time? Wild salmon are their icon, their god! When will intelligent people wise-up and quit listening to them?

As for the dangers from Puget Sound fish, they are the same as farm raised, as near to zero as you can get. In fact Washington state health officials, after studying Puget Sound salmon contamination for about a year, say they probably won't issue advice on how often the fish should be eaten. Why? They believe the heart-healthy benefits of salmon far outweigh the risks posed by PCBs. Well, doesn't that sound familiar – the benefits outweigh the risks. Enough said!

Global warming extinctions bogus

A story in Nature Magazine purports new scientific claims that global warming will doom over a million species to extinction by 2050, prompting world-wide headlines such as the BBC's "Climate (poses) risk 'to million species'". Pretty strong words for such a flimsy study.

In a word, the study is a mess. The researchers used a model that looked at only 1,103 species, which seems like a lot until you realize that we don't know how many species there are on the planet. Estimates range from 2 million to 80 million, and only 1.6 million have actually been documented. Using the 14 million number that the press has historically bandied about means that their sample size is .008 percent of the total species population of the planet, a statistically insignificant sample size that essentially renders the study invalid. And then you realize that the sample is also completely unrepresentative – 243 of the species sampled come from a family of shrubs in South Africa that totals only 1,000. Throwing 25% of one family of species into the sample is certainly not representative of the planet.

And regardless of sample size, the case on which their model calculations are made is also suspect. According to Iain Murray, a Senior Fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute, "...the theory upon which the entire article rests has been itself thoroughly disproved. The authors used a theory from 1859 that the absolute area of animal habitat controls the number of possible species, despite ample proof in recent years that that simply isn't true. Without that connection, any predictions about actual extinction rates are hogwash."

Further, analysis in the study assumed that a lot of things would stay the same during global warming, including the way animals migrate and respond to temperature change. Darwin taught us better than that – all species either adapt or perish. And since there have only been 1,000 extinctions recorded since 1600 – that's over 400 years during which climate has changed drastically (remember that the Vikings settled in Greenland to farm – not much chance of that today) – one might conclude that species are fitting in rather than giving in.

Making claims of a million extinctions over the next 45 years seems a bit dubious, especially when the claims are based on junk science. And that's not even taking into account that most of the "science" and claims surrounding global warming are complete rubbish – but for more information on that read the Global Warming chapter in the War Propaganda section of our book.

Eco-Imperialism: Green Power, Black Death

by Paul Driessen, 2003, Merril Press, Bellevue, WA, www.eco-imperialism.com, 180 pages, \$15.00.

Book Review

Paul Driessen has written an extremely powerful book that condemns the anti-people, genocidal tactics of "big green" environmentalists. Driessen effectively sheds light on the environmental movement that sees NGOs, large corporations and environmental activists working in concert under the guise of corporate social responsibility (CSR) to impose the environmental views of wealthy, well-fed people from developed nations onto poor, starving people in third-world countries – leading to prolonged suffering.

Driessen explains the deadly effect the world's \$8 billion environmental industry has on developing nations in chapters including, "Playing Games with Starving People," "Sustainable Mosquitoes – Expendable People," and "Sweatshops and Prostitutes." *EAT First!* highly recommends this book to everyone who wants to learn more about the death toll that radical environmentalism has exacted on Third World countries.

Some excerpts from the book:

"Ideological environmentalists worry about fossil fuels, global warming and barely detectable chemicals in water... so instead of having a voice in their country's decisions, says Gordon Mwesigye, a senior Kampala official, Uganda's poor will again have their choices dictated to them by developed nations. 'People will cut down our trees, because they don't have electricity, and the country will lose its wildlife habitat, as well as the health and economic benefits that abundant electricity brings.'"

“For Northern Hemisphere NGOs and policy makers to tell Third World nations that they must rely on wind and solar power... is to deprive the world’s poorest citizens of reliable, affordable energy. It condemns billions of people to continued poverty and misery.”

“The precautionary principle imposes the ideologies and unfounded phobias of affluent First World activists, to justify severe restrictions on the use of chemicals, pesticides, fossil fuels, and biotechnology by Third World people who can least afford being shackled. Opposition to biotechnology is ‘a northern luxury,’ says Kenyan agronomist Dr. Florence Wambugu. ‘I appreciate ethical concerns but anything that doesn’t help feed our children is unethical.’”

“What happens when the concerns and proposed solutions of pressure groups, and institutional investors result in additional problems for the poorest people on the planet – those who have not yet shared the dreams and successes of the developed world? Whose agenda then determines what are to be the ‘the goals of society as a whole’? Equally important, who has given these activists the moral or legal authority to impose their goals... on people who do not agree with the goals, must live with the consequences and had no role in making the decisions?”

“At best... blind adherence to current CSR doctrine puts the European Union, United Nations, many journalists, and World Business Council for Sustainable Development in league with some of the most radical elements of Western society. At worst, it make them guilty of silent complicity (or even active collaboration) in eco-imperialism and the misery and death of millions.”

ECO-SHORTS

Deformed fish not caused by pesticides

Oregon State University recently released a study that found that deformed fish in a portion of the Willamette River were cause by parasites, not by pesticides. Activists had previously claimed that pesticides and dioxins used by farmers, foresters and industry were to blame for the deformities. OSU also noted that exhaustive research on other possible causes for the deformities, including pesticides, dioxins, and PCBs, showed no concern.

American ‘poor’ living and eating well

The American standard of living continues to rise – even for those classified as “poor”. While the latest report from the Census Bureau claims that nearly 35 million Americans lived in poverty last year, close scrutiny of the “poverty conditions” might reveal some surprises. While it is true that real hardship can occur, America’s “poor” people today live at a level that might seem pretty comfortable compared to a few generations ago – and downright opulent compared to many other countries. Consider:

- 46% of all poor households own their homes and the typical “poor” home is a 3-bedroom house with 1½ baths and a garage.
- Over 75% of poor households have air conditioning, compared to 30 years ago when only 36% of the entire US population had air conditioning.
- The average poor American has more living space than the average individual in Paris, London, Vienna, Athens and other European cities(!).
- Almost ¾ of poor households own a car and 1/3 own two or more.

Aside from material possessions, the “poor” in America are eating well, too – thanks to safe, affordable food from American agriculture.

- The average consumption of protein, vitamins and minerals is virtually the same for poor and middle-class children.
- Poor children actually consume more meat than higher-income children do and have average protein intakes 100% above recommended levels.
- Most poor children today are actually supernourished, with the average male growing up to be 1 inch taller and 10 pounds heavier than the GIs who stormed the beaches of Normandy in World War II.

India plans to approve GM potato

India is expected to approve the commercial growing of a genetically modified potato that contains more of the nutrients that are lacking in the diets of her poorest people. Dr. Manju Sharma, head of the Indian government’s Department of Biotechnology, said the potato would be given free to millions of poor children at government schools in an attempt to reduce malnutrition.

The variety was created by adding a gene from the protein-rich amarantha plant and, among other essential nutrients, has one-third more protein than normal potatoes.

Of course, the “Frankenfood” fanatics describe the proposal as a propaganda tool to promote GM food in India. That’s typical. Rich, well-fed activists don’t need more protein. And, they would watch India’s kids starve rather than allow them to eat politically incorrect food!

Media ignores ‘green’ US made cars

Guess what car won the coveted North American Car of the Year Award this year? The politically correct Toyota Prius gas/electric hybrid, of course. Everyone knows that “Greener” is better and journalists know this better than anybody – and journalists vote the award.

But, is the Prius greener? No, it’s not. In fact the greenest vehicles sitting on the showroom floor are ignored by the media because they are an evolution of the most hated object of environmental scorn, the internal combustion engine.

The greenest auto technology to date is the PZEV engine available in the un-politically correct Ford Focus and Honda Accord. It was developed for states where lower emissions are mandated and the engine produces fewer nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbons that cause smog. In fact, the PZEV Focus produces only *one-tenth* the emissions of a comparable internal combustion engine. Even green California rates it less polluting than an electric car..

Not only is this technology cleaner, it’s cheaper and thus more likely to draw large numbers of buyers. A Ford Focus with a PZEV option and a 2.3 liter engine runs about \$13,455, just \$115 more than a base model four-door. That’s a lot more affordable than the \$20,500 four-door Prius. Ford projects they will sell 100,000 of the 2004 models. By contrast, only 56,255 Toyota Prius hybrids have been bought in the US in the past three years. The PZEV will have more effect on air quality than the hybrid simply because more of them will be on the road. Plus it accelerates from 0 to 60 in 9 seconds while the Prius hybrid requires 11 seconds.

Despite the cleaner and cheaper numbers, the US government subsidizes Prius buyers, but not PZEV buyers, with a \$1500 tax break. Why? Because the feds are now more obsessed with global warming than they are with health-related emissions and the hybrid gets better fuel economy so it produces less carbon dioxide. But global warming isn’t an issue in the US where the Senate voted down the Kyoto Treaty 97-0, nor is fuel economy. Only about 15% of US consumers even consider fuel economy when buying a car.

There is something wrong with this picture. We give tax breaks to status-seeking Hollywood celebs who buy Japanese manufactured hybrids to reduce a non-regulated, non-polluting gas, while American companies are producing models that actually address our worst environmental concern – urban air quality?

Greens set sights on paraquat

In spite of being approved for use in the European Union, global greens are determined to ban paraquat, the most heavily used herbicide in developing countries. The chemical is a vital tool for impoverished small farmers. Hoping to counteract misinformation, a group of 50 organizations from 13 different countries have released a new a study that shows most of the allegations to be false.

The claims of persistence and adverse effects on wildlife are untrue. Studies indicate paraquat is “environmentally benign”. It binds to clay soils, doesn’t affect soil life or leech into groundwater, and creates no toxic effects in the breakdown. Further, because it doesn’t destroy roots, it prevents erosion which is especially important in tropical regions. And, it is not hazardous to fish or birds. Health effects on humans, aside from suicide, are minor. While it may be absorbed through ingestion, absorption through skin is virtually nonexistent.

Affluence and agriculture

What’s the secret of our success? Why is America the richest nation in history? What do we do that everyone else doesn’t?

Man’s economic activity starts with food. You need food every day. With the money and time you have left *after* obtaining food, you can do other things. It’s these other things that ordinarily measure wealth and affluence – education, recreation, etc.

The easier it is to obtain food, with the least amount of time and income, the more wealth and affluence you can have. That’s true for individuals and it’s true for nations. And, that is why America leads.

The greening of America

Those reading this know as well as I do that our younger generation is pathetically deficient in agricultural knowledge (among other things). But if I had to pick the one thing that bothers me most it would be that they don’t learn about the Green Revolution. In fact, they’ve never even heard of it! Generally, one student in a class will take a wild guess and say that

it's about recycling, or about cleaning up pollution, or about fixing something else on the endless list of bad things we older generation are accused of inflicting upon this planet.

How tragic! Today's kids associate the miracle that built this country, saved billions from starvation, and saved millions of acres of wildlife habitat, with the farce that today goes by the name of "environmentalism". The word 'green' is now associated with advocacy, not with 'growing' things.

Joe Snyder, formerly of *People for the USA*, said it best: "The greatest gift to the environment in modern history has been the Green Revolution - "Green" as in farming, not "Green" as in environmental. Indeed, the real "Green Revolution" has completely passed by most of the loud, overbearing environmentalists whose grasp of the big picture and vision of the future extend as far as the end of their noses.

"While clueless activists hug trees, rail against "unnatural" farming, bray global warning theories they don't understand, and provide endless theatrics and lawsuits that are actually hurting their cause more than helping it, the real greening of the planet is quietly being accomplished by modern agriculture."

Thirty years ago history and social studies included the study of agriculture as the dominant factor in the settlement of America, her incredible surge to affluence, and her rise to influence in the world. At that time the miracle of feeding everyone and having lots left over to share was new, exciting and important. Today however, the abundance of food is a given. Agriculture is ignored simply because we do our job so well. Just look at a modern supermarket - three square blocks of food. Textbooks, television and teachers are indifferent to the reason America lives so well.

Technically the Green Revolution began in the U.S. during the 1930's when farming switched from 'horse'power to 'tractor'power. Productivity per man-hour increased dramatically as the latter could accomplish more in a day than the former could do in a week.

Within the first decade after the coming of tractors, 30 million acres previously used to feed horses could be used to feed people. This alone was a green miracle, but the best was yet to come. Yields were gradually increasing in the 1930s with the development of hybrid corn and synthetic nitrogen fertilizer but progress was slow. It took a war to make it a "Revolution".

Prior to 1940 America produced mainly for her own consumption. We didn't have modern refrigeration or preservation that allowed for transport over long distances. Food was eaten mainly in the area it was grown.

But with our entry into World War II in 1941, attention focused on agriculture. The country needed more food and fiber for our men and allies fighting overseas and, not only did we need it right now, we needed it way over there. Research money poured in and the entire country got behind the effort to "feed our boys". Every home had a 'Victory Garden', and the first-born sons of farmers weren't even allowed to go off to fight. They were needed here at home.

And, look what we accomplished! Plant breeders developed varieties that were faster growing, and more resistant to drought, pests and disease. Major improvements were made to the three main food crops, rice, corn and wheat.

Irrigation methods improved and federal dollars helped build more and better delivery systems which gave more farmers access to water. Synthetic fertilizers improved along with soil testing techniques.

Synthetic pesticides robbed the weeds, bugs and diseases of their half of the crop. Post-harvest losses were cut with the development of better processing and after-harvest treatment with new fungicides and bactericides.

All this went hand-in-hand with advances in animal protein production. Feed efficiency ratios improved, carcass yields shot up, animal death rates dropped dramatically with new vaccines and medicines.

The burst that began with the war effort continued as population grew. The improvements in America's diet had been matched with improvements in human medicine and disease control. People started living longer; populations began exploding. And, in the 1960s the revolution spread to the developing world with research stations funded by U.S. and European money. By 1990 world food production had tripled, keeping pace with population growth.

The miracle of all this is not just the human lives saved from starvation. The Green Revolution has been an environmental miracle. We tripled food production and we did it on the same amount of cropland. In 1950 the world was farming about 5.8 million square miles. Today, worldwide, we are still farming about the same and in the U.S. cropland has actually gone down.

If, however, land use had gone up along with food production the world would now be farming at least 15 million square miles. High-yield agriculture is already saving 10 million square miles from the plow. And, that's a lot of acres for wildlife, wetlands and rainforest.

Soil depletion

The organic food industry continues to pound the ill-informed urban public that we who use commercial fertilizers and synthetic pesticides are "killing our soil". A favorite marketing claim is that depleted soil yields less nutritious fruits and vegetables. Hogwash!

Let's clear up a few myths. Vitamins are not found loose in the soil just waiting for plants to soak them up. Plants synthesize their own vitamins from a variety of building blocks in the soil. They do take minerals up from the soil but if there is a

deficiency of a particular mineral, then the plant won't grow well enough to produce commercially viable fruit. In other words, depleted soil will not make a profit for the farmer.

Many people believe that commercial fertilizers (man-made) lack some nutrients that are present in organic fertilizers. That is simply not true. Most commercial fertilizers are formulated to give the highest yield of whatever crop they are designed to be used on. While there may be some variations in the mineral levels of various crops due to soil content these variations occur no matter how the crop is raised.

There is absolutely no nutritional difference in vitamins or minerals between crops grown conventionally or 'organically'. The organic claims are simply a marketing tool designed to separate you from your money.

Crichton tells it like it is

Michael Crichton, best-selling author of Jurassic Park, Timeline and Prey, was asked by the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco to deliver a speech about what he considered to be the most important challenge facing mankind. We have condensed his excellent speech below:

"The greatest challenge facing mankind is the challenge of distinguishing reality from fantasy, truth from propaganda. We must daily decide whether the threats we face are real, whether the solutions we are offered will do any good, whether the problems we're told exist are in fact real problems, or non-problems."

"As an example of this challenge, I want to talk today about environmentalism. And in order not to be misunderstood, I want it perfectly clear that I believe it is incumbent on us to conduct our lives in a way that takes into account all the consequences of our actions, including the consequences to other people, and the consequences to the environment. "

"I studied anthropology in college, and one of the things I learned was that certain human social structures always reappear. They can't be eliminated from society. One of those structures is religion. "

"Today, one of the most powerful religions in the Western World is environmentalism. Environmentalism seems to be the religion of choice for urban atheists."

"There's an initial Eden, a paradise, a state of grace and unity with nature, there's a fall from grace into a state of pollution as a result of eating from the tree of knowledge, and as a result of our actions there is a judgment day coming for us all. We are all energy sinners, doomed to die, unless we seek salvation, which is now called sustainability. Sustainability is salvation in the church of the environment. Just as organic food is its communion, that pesticide-free wafer that the right people with the right beliefs, imbibe."

"Eden, the fall of man, the loss of grace, the coming doomsday---these are deeply held mythic structures. They are profoundly conservative beliefs... I certainly don't want to talk anybody out of them... I know that I can't talk anybody out of them. These are not facts that can be argued. These are issues of faith."

"And so it is, sadly, with environmentalism. Increasingly it seems facts aren't necessary, because the tenets of environmentalism are all about belief."

"Am I exaggerating to make a point? I am afraid not. Because we know a lot more about the world than we did forty or fifty years ago. And what we know now is not so supportive of certain core environmental myths, yet the myths do not die. Let's examine some of those beliefs."

"There is no Eden. There never was. What was that Eden of the wonderful mythic past? Is it the time when infant mortality was 80%, when four children in five died of disease before the age of five? When one woman in six died in childbirth? When the average lifespan was 40, as it was in America a century ago. When plagues swept across the planet, killing millions in a stroke. Was it when millions starved to death? Is that when it was Eden?"

"In short, the romantic view of the natural world as a blissful Eden is only held by people who have no actual experience of nature. People who live in nature are not romantic about it at all. They may hold spiritual beliefs about the world around them, they may have a sense of the unity of nature or the aliveness of all things, but they still kill the animals and uproot the plants in order to eat, to live. If they don't, they will die."

"The truth is, almost nobody wants to experience real nature. What people want is to spend a week or two in a cabin in the woods, with screens on the windows... Nobody wants to go back to nature in any real way, and nobody does. It's all talk and as the years go on, and the world population grows increasingly urban, it's uninformed talk. Farmers know what they're talking about. City people don't. It's all fantasy."

"You may have noticed that something has been left off the doomsday list, lately. Although the preachers of environmentalism have been yelling about population for fifty years, over the last decade world population seems to be taking an unexpected turn. Fertility rates are falling almost everywhere."

"Okay, so, the preachers made a mistake... Unfortunately, it's not just one prediction. It's a whole slew of them. We are running out of oil. We are running out of all natural resources. Paul Ehrlich: 60 million Americans will die of starvation in the 1980s. Forty thousand species become extinct every year. Half of all species on the planet will be extinct by 2000. And on and on and on."

"With so many past failures, you might think that environmental predictions would become more cautious. But not if it's a religion. Remember, the nut on the sidewalk carrying the placard that predicts the end of the world doesn't quit when the world doesn't end on the day he expects. He just changes his placard, sets a new doomsday date, and goes back to walking the streets. One of the defining features of religion is that your beliefs are not troubled by facts, because they have nothing to do with facts."

"So I can tell you some facts... I can tell you that DDT is not a carcinogen and did not cause birds to die and should never have been banned. I can tell you that the people who banned it knew that it wasn't carcinogenic and banned it anyway. I can tell you that the DDT ban has caused the deaths of tens of millions of poor people, mostly children, whose deaths are directly attributable to a callous, technologically advanced western society that promoted the new cause of environmentalism by pushing a fantasy about a pesticide, and thus irrevocably harmed the third world. Banning DDT is one of the most disgraceful episodes in the twentieth century history of America. We knew better, and we did it anyway, and we let people around the world die and didn't give a damn."

"Most of us have had some experience interacting with religious fundamentalists, and we understand that one of the problems with fundamentalists is that they have no perspective on themselves. They never recognize that their way of thinking is just one of many other possible ways of thinking, which may be equally useful or good. On the contrary, they believe their way is the right way, everyone else is wrong... They are totally rigid and totally uninterested in opposing points of view. In our modern complex world, fundamentalism is dangerous because of its rigidity and its imperviousness to other ideas."

"I want to argue that... we need to get environmentalism out of the sphere of religion. We need to stop the mythic fantasies, and we need to stop the doomsday predictions. We need to start doing hard science instead."

"There are two reasons why I think we all need to get rid of the religion of environmentalism."

"First, we need an environmental movement, and such a movement is not very effective if it is conducted as a religion. We know from history that religions tend to kill people, and environmentalism has already killed somewhere between 10-30 million people since the 1970s."

"The second reason to abandon environmental religion is more pressing. Religions think they know it all, but the unhappy truth of the environment is that we are dealing with incredibly complex, evolving systems, and we usually are not certain how best to proceed."

"How will we manage to get environmentalism out of the clutches of religion, and back to a scientific discipline? There's a simple answer: we must institute far more stringent requirements for what constitutes knowledge in the environmental realm. I am thoroughly sick of politicized so-called facts that simply aren't true. It isn't that these "facts" are exaggerations of an underlying truth. Nor is it that certain organizations are spinning their case to present it in the strongest way. Not at all--what more and more groups are doing is putting out lies, pure and simple. Falsehoods that they know to be false."

"This trend began with the DDT campaign, and it persists to this day. At this moment, the EPA is hopelessly politicized. In the wake of Carol Browner, it is probably better to shut it down and start over. What we need is a new organization much closer to the FDA. We need an organization that will be ruthless about acquiring verifiable results, that will fund identical research projects to more than one group, and that will make everybody in this field get honest fast."

"Because in the end, science offers us the only way out of politics. And if we allow science to become politicized, then we are lost. We will enter the Internet version of the dark ages, an era of shifting fears and wild prejudices, transmitted to people who don't know any better. So it's time to abandon the religion of environmentalism, and return to the science of environmentalism, and base our public policy decisions firmly on that. "

EAT First! Calendar

January 20: Lunch Speaker, Alfalfa Seed Convention, Reno, NV

February 5: Seminar, Mid-State Co-op Growers Meeting, Ellensburg, 10:30

February 10: Seminar, Grant County Weed Dist. 3, George, 11:00

February 11: Seminar, Idaho Ag Summit, Boise, ID

February 17: Keynote Speaker, IFAO Conference, London, Ontario

March 2-3: Tri-Cities 5th Grade Farm Fair, Pasco

March 4: Speaker, WA/OR Golf Course Superintendent Meeting, Tacoma Country Club

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