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For your convenience, Lancaster Ag is offering High Mowing Organic Seeds for your garden in our Retail Store at 60 North Ronks Road. This gives you the opportunity to select your seeds while shopping for other spring garden products. We carry seeds for all the general garden vegetables and fruits.

High Mowing Organic Seeds is committed to providing growers with the highest quality seeds. Their seeds meet their own high germination standards, have been evaluated for purity and vigor, and screened for seed borne diseases. You will have quality assurance as you purchase these seeds.

March – May **Saturday Retail Store Hours** 7:30 am – Noon



Gardening is Good for You & Your Family!

- Provides healthy produce for tasty meals
- Bonds families when you work together
- Supports the fresh and local concept
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GARDEN NEWSLETTER

Naturally Interested
in Your Future



- Seeds
- Garden & Produce
- Human Wellness
- Soil Nutrients
- Animal Nutrition & Health

SPRING 2012

Volume 12 Issue 1

717-687-9222
60 North Ronks Road
Ronks, PA 17572
www.lancasterag.com

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Cash discounts on orders picked up at our store on North Ronks Road.

Over the Garden Gate A Spring Conversation With Gardeners

By Reuben Stoltzfus

As we start this New Year we are inspired to think about spring. My letters in past springs have focused on human health and nutrition and how nutrition needs to relate back to the food that we eat. I want to mention various subjects along those lines in this letter. These topics are fresh in my mind since the ACRES U.S.A. Conference I attended in December.

There is also a burden in my heart to share this information with as many people as possible through this newsletter, our catalogue, and the Real Health Conference that we host each year. My hope is to expose you to as much information about human health and nutrition as I possibly can.

ACRES U.S.A.

Two months ago we returned from attending the ACRES U.S.A. Conference in Columbus, Ohio. This conference is a highlight in my life and has been for 17 years. It was a week's worth of continuous echoing of why we need local food. It was the largest conference ever in 40 years – a great success. We learned a lot of new information and what we had already learned in past conferences was reinforced. We made new friends and enjoyed seeing old friends again.

Dr. Don Huber, Dr. Arden Andersen, and Dr. Richard Olree all proclaimed the same



messages: Buyer Beware! Consumers Wake Up! Clearly understand what is needed! These speakers stated that organics is not good enough. We need mineral-dense and nutrient-dense organic food.

There were also warnings about the radiation contamination coming from Japan and how that will impact our communities. Plus the glyphosate (Roundup) problem that has been with us for 25 years was discussed. There were new speakers who explained the un-layering of the glyphosate issue. It is like an onion - the more that is peeled off, the more tiers it has.

Spring Conversation

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Dr. Huber was awesome with the mature, calm, and collected way in which he was able to give us the latest information about the damage that glyphosate has done and is still doing. I do feel that it is not fair to life in general that this was not discovered before now. In a way, I access this damage to be as severe as the act of Holocaust. It is affecting people and contributing to deaths like we could never have imagined.

There were many other dynamic speakers such as **Jerry Brunetti** who reminded us to bring diversity back into our lives, and **Joel Salatin** with his favorite inspiration of bringing farmers back into popularity. My wish is to bring the ACRES Conference to Pennsylvania where many of you could join the 1,700 attendees. However, the ACRES group wants to keep their conference centrally located and is not willing to schedule it on the east coast.

REAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

That brings me to the topic of our winter meeting on **Saturday, February 18, 2012**. I have such a passion to organize this meeting in order to give you a taste of what I gather at ACRES every year. Last year 650 people attended our Real Health Conference and took part in 18 different training seminars on various topics, some of which repeated throughout the day.

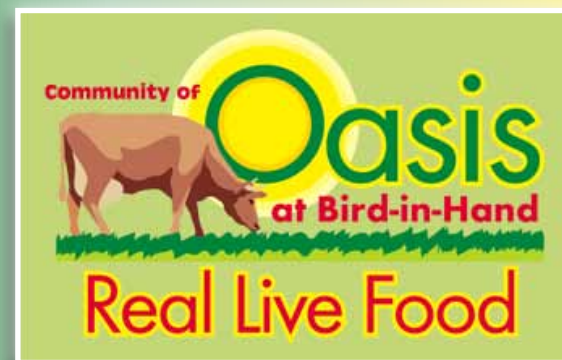
This year, by popular demand, we have invited **Dr. Don Huber** to come and talk to us about the glyphosate issue. **Dr. Richard Olree** will also be here to talk about minerals that protect us against radiation, cancer, and other death threats that come into our lives. **Mark Fulford** from Maine will be here to talk about 12-Month Gardening and how produce growers can extend their seasons and capitalize on profits year round. **Kent and Heather Fredricksen** from Iowa will be helping with food demonstrations. (See the enclosed flier) Bring your family and friends and enjoy the day!

On Saturday, February 18, there will be much to learn and discuss. Even if you are gardening and focusing on organic produce, it is important to understand the chemicals around us, especially the ones that are being used in agriculture. You may be growing organic and mentally saying, "My garden is clean. I haven't used any chemicals for years." But unfortunately, research has shown that chemical drift is a reality.

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1. **Till the cover crop:** late winter or early spring when soil is dry. Then let the soil rest.
2. **Prepare the soil:** work the garden into a finished seedbed.
3. **Apply SeedGro:** and then lightly till one last time.
4. **Apply Garden Top Dress:** either before or after seeds are planted to boost energy.
5. **Plant seeds or transplants:** when soil is ready and weather permits.
6. **Control weeds:** after seeds sprout, lightly till garden.
7. **Feed the crop:** apply SeedGro every 2 weeks during growing season. Foliar-feed with F-1 or Fruit Mix.
8. **Observe the plants:** look for proper general appearance, structure, color, growth, and reproduction. Watch for insects.
9. **Continue to control weeds:** use preferred method and lots of perseverance.
10. **Harvest the fruit:** give thanks for fresh food.



Community of Oasis at Bird-in-Hand

Retail store at
60 North Ronks Road, Ronks, PA 17572
(717) 288-2154
www.lancasterfoods.org

Hours: 9-6 Monday-Friday
9-12 Saturday

Spring Conversation

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about 12-Month Gardening. Twelve-Month Gardening is something that is important. Ideally speaking, we should have greens, such as spring mix, arugula, baby greens, cucumbers, grape tomatoes, and peppers every day of the year. Some may not be fresh or grown that week: peppers and tomatoes may be canned or frozen. But greens can be grown twelve months out of the year. If you are growing produce for resale, 12-Month Gardening is a marketing opportunity that can expand your diversity and diversity brings sales.

14. Do you have a recipe to share? Yes, enjoy! ■

Cut off fresh loose-leaf greens from the mixes in your cold frame. Add some radicchio (a mildly bitter tasting Italian leafy vegetable) and sweet grated carrots.

Mix up a basic vinaigrette salad dressing using ¾ cup olive oil, ¼ cup raw or balsamic vinegar, minced fresh garlic, sea salt, ground white pepper or freshly ground black pepper, and dried basil, oregano, and thyme leaves or other spices of your choosing.

Stir lightly and set aside for 30 minutes for the flavors to blend. Whisk just before serving over the greens.

Featuring Real Live Food

- Grass-fed meats
- Free-range eggs
- Cheeses from 100% grass-fed raw milk
- Seasonal Oasis-quality produce
- Full-flavored prepared foods
- Farm fresh milk and dairy products (2012)



Real Live Food is full, nutrient-dense food that is life enhancing.

Lancaster Agriculture Products warmly welcomes Oasis to our campus at 60 North Ronks Road. We encourage you to support this new local farmer coop initiative. Be sure to visit their Retail Store Open House when you attend our Real Health Conference on February 18.

Please do not forget fertilization this spring. Inoculate your cover crops with d-Compose. Turn in your cover crops well ahead of planting time. Do not plant without SeedGro and Garden Top Dress.

Speaking about nutrition, the reason we use d-Compose on cover crops is to break down the nutrition of our cover crops to make it available in spring plants. SeedGro and Top Dress are not necessarily fertilizers, but they are plant minerals and food for bacteria that are needed for plant health and human health.

If you are growing produce for resale, please consult with **Steve Hartzler** at our office about your produce-growing needs. If you need assistance with your garden, contact anyone in the Call Center at **717-687-9222** and our staff members can assist you with what is needed for spring planting.

Please keep in mind that food sources, such as growing plants, vitamins, minerals, and bacteria, are needed in our soils to grow nutrient-dense fruits, vegetables, and herbs. These fruits, vegetables, and herbs are needed for optimum human health. Our wish at Lancaster Ag is for you to have a rich, prosperous, and healthy New Year in 2012.

See you on February 18! Bring your family and friends. ■

- *Reuben C. Stoltzhus*

A Gentle Lesson in the Garden

Based on a true story; contributed by a Staff Writer

Ever since Minerva was young, she had enjoyed helping her mother in the garden. She loved working side-by-side with her mother planting seeds and later kneeling in the dirt to pull weeds and harvest vegetables. Now that she was 10 years old, Minerva's mother was putting her in charge of an important task.

Company was coming and Mother did not have time to run to the garden to gather fresh spinach for the salad. Busy with other meal preparations, Mother handed Minerva the large stainless steel mixing bowl and a knife and reminded her of where they had planted the row of spinach. Minerva hurried to the garden by herself to search for the dark green leaves.

Cutting the spinach took a long time, but when Minerva returned to the kitchen, her bowl was piled high to overflowing. Mother thanked her for her hard work, but suggested that they go back out to the garden together. There Mother pointed out

the ¼ row of spinach still intact. In error, Minerva had cut off two rows of young green bean plants down to the ground! Needless to say, she was devastated by her mistake.

Gently Mother assured Minerva that they could plant more green beans the following week. Her wise, godly mother had turned a potentially painful childhood memory into a tender, teachable moment. In the middle of stress and pressure she could have lashed out in anger and belittled her child.

Because of her patient mother, Minerva carries no bitterness or resentment as a result of this innocent mistake. Her mother's encouragement enabled her to develop her God-given gifts to their highest potential. Now years later, with a college graduate degree in horticulture design, Minerva still hears her mother's kind words and thinks of the lesson she learned. They come back to her every spring when she plants green beans in her own garden.

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Proverbs 15:1 ■



Cold Frame Gardening

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12. What about crop rotation?

Treat a cold frame like you treat a garden. For example, use crop rotations of three to four years. When your salad is done and you want your tomatoes to get a good start in the spring, put your cold frame over the tomatoes. Speed up your tomatoes in the spring because your greens no longer need the heat and can take the cold nights. Move it around to places according to what needs more heat or less heat.

13. How long does it take to learn about growing things in cold frames?

Going through one growing season will teach you what you need to know about the plants you choose to grow. You will find out what a cold frame's limitations are at that point. The first season will do well for you if you start with something simple such as loose-leaf salad greens.

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Spring Conversation with Gardeners

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Chemical drift occurs when chemicals are picked up while being applied and then drift through the atmosphere. They can be dropped on the garden that you cherish as far as 1,000 miles away. Therefore it is important that you attend this Conference and listen to Dr. Huber as he humbly explains in a subtle way the damages of today's agricultural chemicals. You will also learn what you can apply to your garden to replace whatever the chemicals have damaged.

This is not just a doom and gloom picture. There are also positives such as knowing the truth about the problem and that we are finally aware of how agricultural chemicals are killing us. It is also a positive thing to know that we can improve human health through nutrition. With high quality vegetables and fruits, even cancer symptoms can disappear if we pay attention to nutrition and the foods we consume.

Dr. Olree will also be present and give workshops following Dr. Huber. This is a speech that you will not want to miss. Dr. Olree has for years been studying the relationship between specific minerals and human health and the absence of a trace mineral, vitamin, herb, or amino acid. He has written a complete book about these essential resources and what they can do to correct human health.

After Dr. Olree was finished writing this book, he realized his language was too technical for the average person to read and comprehend. Nonetheless he has a tremendous burden to share this basic information that research has made so complicated in the English language. Because he discovered that these minerals, vitamins, and herbs need to be in our foods and also need to be understood by everyone, he searched for an English major who could translate his book into a common, readable language.

Dr. Olree's true passion is to get this book into the Amish and Mennonite schools so that even fifth graders can comprehend these vital ideas. He claims if we get this information to our children early, we will avoid spending time putting out fires and have more time and energy to prevent the fires from starting.

HUMAN HEALTH

This brings me to my personal passion of human health. In our country we are busy building hospitals and medical offices and staffing more ambulances, all of which are needed. The USA is probably more

medically advanced than most countries. When we have an emergency or catastrophe, we are grateful that we have these services.

However, I would rather have more human health education, more conferences about real health, and more teaching about what really makes a big difference in human health...before the ambulance is needed, before oncology, before radiation and chemotherapy, before antibiotics and infection, and before radiation in the atmosphere and fallouts occur.

We need to build an immune system that is strong and vibrant and a body that is physically prepped to endure and perform. In some respects our grandparents and even our parents had a better foundation for good health than we do. Those born in the 1920's, 30's, and 40's had a better food foundation and did not have the contaminations that face us.

However today is today, the past is gone, and the future is coming whether we like it or not. We have opportunities today that our grandparents did not have. Our situation is somewhat different. They had problems such as the dust bowl and the World Wars that took many friends and family members and created stress. They had situations to overcome and it took the whole community pulling together to have the strong survive. Unfortunately the weak did not. Today we have a similar situation. The strong immune systems will survive and the weak immune systems will be compromised.

I encourage you to attend our February 18 Real Health Conference and listen to several of these men speak about their passion for us to better our health, our children's health, and eventually the health of their families. Adversity will come. It is just a matter of when. Are we prepared for when it comes?

On Saturday, February 18, we plan to offer food demonstrations like we did last year. My wife Mary invites you to these food seminars where she and her friends will introduce you to real foods. They are not food professionals, but rather they are people like you who want to learn to prepare the healthiest meals possible for our families.

GARDENING

My hope is that Mark Fulford from Teltane Farm in Maine will be at our Real Health Conference to talk

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Note: Twelve-Month Gardening will be one of our featured topics during our Real Health Conference on Saturday, February 18. Extending the growing season is a cutting edge innovation for those growing produce for marketing purposes. There is a great demand for fresh greens all year long. Many of you have inquired about the information in Steve Hartzler's article about cold frame gardening. Thus, we are reprinting it from our **2011 Spring Garden Newsletter** so that you can reread it and file it for future reference. We encourage you to **keep this copy** to use as you begin your own 12-Month Gardening.

Extending the Seasons with Cold Frame Gardening

An interview with Steve Hartzler, Call Center Staff

A cold frame can be a simple structure with four sides and a clear plastic or glass top. It provides a favorable environment for growing cool-weather crops beyond the regular seasons. A cold frame relies on the sun for its source of heat. Even in a 4' x 8' cold frame you can grow an unbelievable amount of fresh garden salads. It is a joy to step outside your back door in the wintertime and find fresh greens readily available for dinner!

1. What are the benefits of cold frame gardening?

The benefits are that a gardener can grow cool-weather crops early or late into a season. You can gain several weeks at the beginning of the season and several weeks at the end. Otherwise the weather would be too cold. This is true in any of the USDA Plant Hardiness Zones. The growing zones are expanded.

2. Which vegetables grow best?

In general, the vegetables that work the best are greens. Salad greens in particular work really well. You can choose to grow small root crops like carrots, radishes, some small beets, and turnips. Small carrots are particularly good to grow. However, they must be vegetable varieties that mature in 30–50 days. Do not choose long-season varieties. For example, it is possible to plant the seed and get a fully developed turnip in 40 days. Remember to add two weeks to the number of days to maturity if you are growing a fall crop. In more severely cold weather, it will take a bit longer.



3. What types of greens can be grown?

The cold-hardy loose-leaf varieties grow very well. The hardier they are, the better they will do. Spinach, loose-leaf lettuce, land cress, miner's lettuce, mache, and mizuna are good choices for a cold frame. In a small space you can get a lot of leaves. You want to cut salad greens and have them grow back again. You can grow head lettuce in a cold frame, but when you cut it, it does not grow back again. Arugula and mesclun mixes are perfect for the cold frame. Mesclun means small salad greens cut at 2-3." There different types of mixes - spicy ones and mild ones. Swiss chard is rather large for a cold frame, but plant thickly and then shear small. In a cold frame, plant it for the leaves, not the ribs. When you plant mesclun mixes, you will find that the seeds sprout much quicker and grow more rapidly.

4. Who are the gardeners who might want to try cold frame gardening?

It is wonderful to have one or two cold frames to use in conjunction with any size of home garden that supplies a family. In general, commercial produce growers will use high tunnels instead of cold frames. Old-time market gardeners used the cold frames, but today it is no longer done. On a large scale it is too time- and labor-consuming.

An unheated high tunnel is essentially a large cold frame, which can work when raising fresh greens for a large family. This allows a person to walk in and harvest greens comfortably.

5. Specifically how can a cold frame be used?

You plant your seeds, such as carrots, so that they

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Cold Frame Gardening

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come up earlier in the season. In the fall you put the cold frame over the carrots and then you can dig them whenever you want to use them. It is more than just storage. The cold frame makes a difference because it keeps the carrots sweet right into the fall. And it does give more time for them to develop into the fall so that they are younger and sweeter as opposed to being a batch of old carrots that are in storage. The vegetables that you pull out of your cold frame in December and January are not really growing anymore. They grew in October and November and now the cold frame keeps cold winds and freezing temperatures from damaging the food value. It keeps the quality of the food high.

6. How is the temperature regulated?

Permanently vent the cold frame by opening it just a little bit and never closing it. This prevents rapid rises and drops in temperature. Venting is important as your temperature control. You must have a modern cold frame that vents itself (automatic) or you have to permanently vent it just a little bit. Venting is key. You never have to check the temperature of the cold frame if you keep it constantly vented by cracking it slightly. If your model automatically vents itself, you never have to check it. Either way works. The actual rule of thumb is never to close the cold frame. What destroys the plants is a wide range of temperatures, such as going from 5° at night to 90° on a bright sunny winter morning if the cold frame is not vented.

Remember: if the sun comes up, and the cold frame stays closed, everything will be ruined. You can permanently vent it just a little bit, and then you will be ok. Venting prevents overheating.



7. What type of cold frame is the least labor intensive?

Cold frames are infinitely variable from the homemade to the bought system. It is worth buying one that does not need to be tended. Purchase one that can be set and that you can then walk away from. For example, a slightly vented cold frame only needs to be checked once a week. Take a panel off, cut some greens, put it back together and stay away for another week. If you do want to make your own, look at plans and designs. Use untreated, unpainted lumber. Attach a sacrifice strip to the bottom that can be replaced as it rots on contact with the soil. There is white plastic

that is made for cold frame use, PVC, and some clear plastic ones. Usually glass is not used in the panels because it breaks.

It is possible to build one for around \$100. Bought cold frames run between \$200-\$300. The bought cold frames are very good and last a long time.

One model has a tempered glass panel that does not break. It lends itself to venting because it is very heavy and does not blow away. There are three other panes that have Plexiglas in them. It is advisable to use a cord over the panels so that they do not blow off. Even if you hinge them, they must still be locked in place because of strong winter winds. If a cold frame panel launches (flies off), it has potential to do damage.

8. How often do the vegetables need to be watered?

In the spring as it warms up and in the fall when you first put the cold frame on, you need to do serious watering. In the fall and spring when there are several warm days, then you need to open it up and water with a hose. But in the winter you need very little water. In the winter water once or twice with a sprinkling can.

9. Where is the best location to place a cold frame?

Although it depends on the use, if you can, face the cold frame toward the south. It is best to move the cold frame every year or rotate what goes in it every year. You need to work with crop rotation. It works best in a garden plot because you can simply move it around and set it somewhere else. For example, you can start your 4' x 8' section of greens in the fall and then a month or two later bring the cold frame over and put it on another section of greens for later use.

10. What about shade?

There is not much need for shade over a cold frame unless it is used for specialty plants in the summer. The cold frame should generally be in as much sun as possible.

11. What about insulation?

Typically in our region here in Lancaster County, insulation is not a big help. Most plants usually grow well, although there is a slight possibility that it will get cold enough that some will die. However, it is the overheating that is the issue, not the freezing. This is opposite of what one would expect. Overheating, not freezing, is the problem and causes crop failures.

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