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Tom "Manure Man" Lynch

The True Story of a River Folk Hero

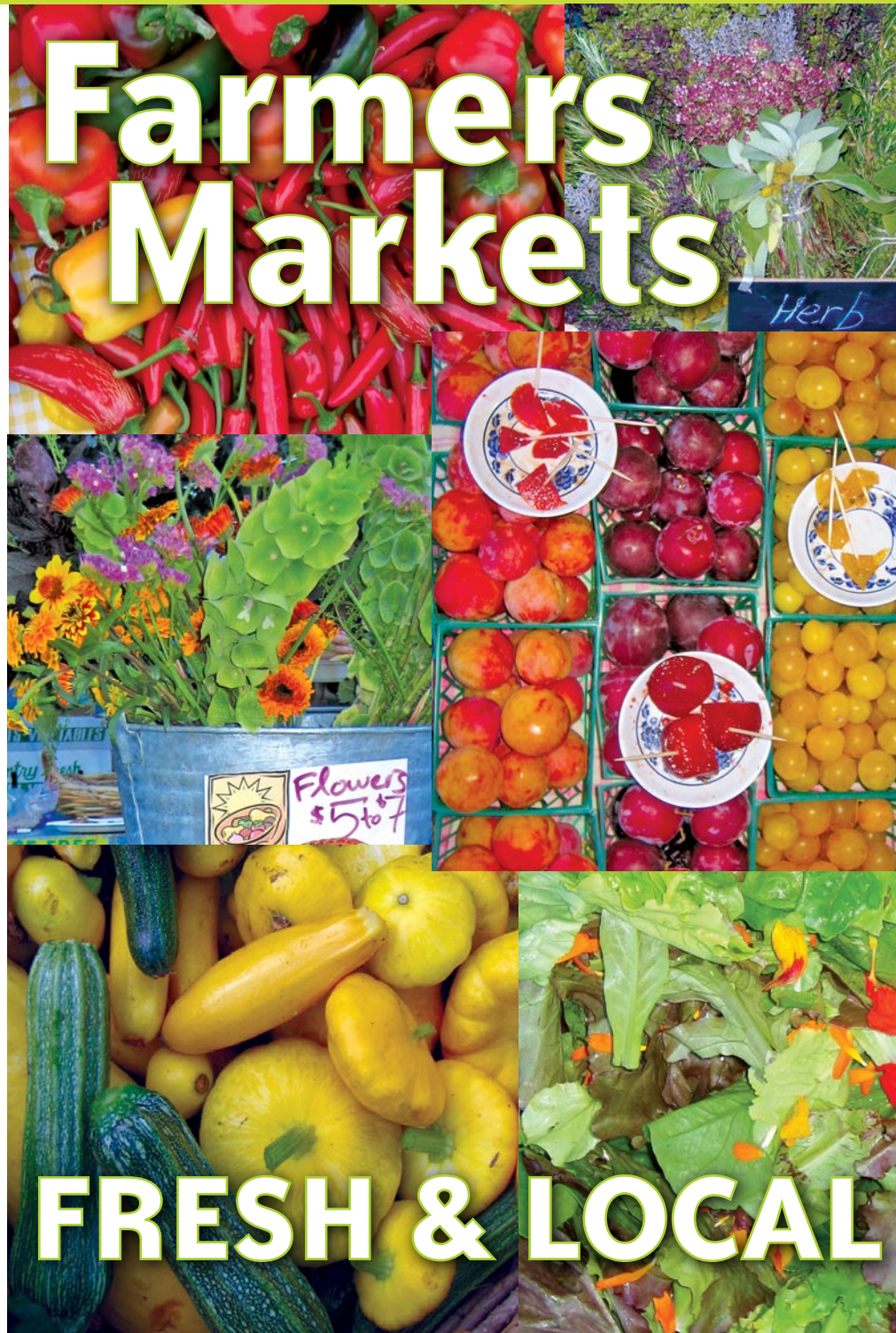
By Brad L. Smith

"Action from principle – the perception and the performance of right – changes things and relations;...For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be: what is once well done is done forever." Henry David Thoreau, 1849 Essay on Civil Disobedience.

22 years ago Tom Lynch, in an act of civil disobedience, invited the world to see what can happen when local government has no answer for population growth. It was after the 1985 "Big Spill", a time when 750 million gallons of effluent accidentally spilled into the Russian River. Our fragile tourist-based economy was in shambles with hundreds of thousands of people thinking the River was no longer safe to swim in. The City of Santa Rosa could only say they were sorry. Nevertheless, they continued dumping 90% of their secondary treated wastewater into the Russian River with no solution in sight. They appeared unable and unwilling to stop using the River like a toilet. There was no environmentally sound plan! The River and the economy of West Sonoma County were poised to sustain serious damage.

Tom Lynch, a 28-year-old builder from Guerneville, wanted people in Santa

FOLK HERO cont'd on page 9



Farmers Markets

FRESH & LOCAL

Delighting in Our Delicious Local Farms

By Patricia Dines

Today, I ate my first strawberry in many months, freshly picked from a local organic farm. From the first bite, my tastebuds and body were filled with joy about everything that's amazing in life. All was well.

But wait, you might ask, couldn't I have had strawberries over the winter? Well, sure, if I wanted them shipped from halfway around the world, puffed up, and tasting like cardboard. But why would I eat those, when this awaits...?

I'm even more delighted that this sinfully sensuous synchronizing with the seasons also nurtures the planet, my community, my health — and often my wallet! Plus I get to know and support my neighbors. Now *that's* the good life!

But Why?

We're often encouraged to buy from local farmers (especially organic ones), but it's been fun for me to understand more about how this really does help create a healthier life and world. This simple act allows us to:

1) **Savor deliciously-healthy treats.** Fresh means more tasty and nutritious, so eating healthy is a joy, not a burden, for ourselves and our children. Local Marlina Eckel calls Sebastopol's Laguna Farm, "the accomplice in my love affair with organic vegetables."

LOCAL FARMS cont'd on page 26

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Visit our On-Line Calendar at www.westcountygazette.com

Farmer's Markets

• HEALDSBURG

Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon; At North and Vine Streets. and Tuesdays 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

At the Healdsburg Plaza

May 6 through November

(707) 431-1956

Special events include kid's craft days, zucchini festival, pumpkin festival and more. Also, great, free music each week

• OCCIDENTAL

Fridays, 4 p.m. to dusk

June 6 through Oct. 26

In front of Howard's Cafe, downtown Occidental

(707) 793-2159

Occidental Bohemian Farmers Market opening day is Friday, June 6th. The market will run through the end of October, Fridays, 4pm 'til dusk, in front of Howard's Cafe. The season will close on Oct 31st with our annual harvest market festival Info: www.occidentalfarmersmarket.com.

• PETALUMA

Saturdays, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

May 24 through October 25

Wednesday Evenings June 11 ~ August 27 - 4:30 ~ 8 pm

Walnut Park, Petaluma Boulevard South and D Street, Petaluma

(707) 762-0344

- Farm fresh produce - Hot dinner foods - Baked Goods - Hand made crafts - Live entertainment

- Live music and other entertainment such as a lavender festival, quilt festival, yoga and massage day, etc.

- Children's Activity Days, free crafts projects for kids.

www.petalumafarmersmarket.com

• SANTA ROSA Wednesday Night Market

Wednesdays from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

May 16 through Aug. 29

(707) 524-2123

- Live music, food, crafts, kid entertainment, street performers and much more along 4th Street. The farmer's market is along Mendocino Ave between 4th and 5th Streets.

• SANTA ROSA Year-Round Market - organic produce

Wednesdays and Saturdays, 8:30 a.m. to noon at the parking lot of the Veterans Memorial Building, 1351 Maple Ave. and, Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon at Oakmont Drive and White Oak

(707) 522-8629 Rain or shine.

• SEBASTOPOL

Sundays, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

May through Nov. 25

Sebastopol Plaza at McKinley Street

(707) 522-9305

- Live music. Certified Organic produce - a great place to see people your rarely spend time with any more. Like a street party!

• WINDSOR

Sundays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; May 11 through November 23.

Thursdays, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.; June 5 through August

Windsor Town Green at Bell Road

(707) 433-4595

- Every Thursday night, with live concerts on the 1st, 3rd & 5th Thursdays at 5pm. Music, food & family lawn gamest. ON the 2nd & 4th Thursdays, they play movie classics on a big screen after dark

- Special events during the season. The Shakespeare Festival is on July 19, 20 and 25-27 and August 1-3 and 8-10 at 6:30 pm. Concerts on September 7 & 28.

(707) 838-5382, www.townofwindsor.com

LOCAL FARMS *con'd from page 1*

2) **Discover fun new fruits and veggies.** The mainstream food system prioritizes produce varieties that travel and store best, not those that are most delicious or nourishing. However, local farmers can experiment with different varieties, including heirlooms, offering diversity that reinvigorates our jaded palates.

3) **Save money** through reduced handling and transportation costs. Plus in-season food is cheaper because it's plentiful.

4) **Keep dollars multiplying locally**, supporting our friends and neighbors.

5) **Encourage food security**, by nurturing a local supply less vulnerable to fuel costs and global distribution problems. It's satisfying to respond proactively, not from fear, to news of international food riots and quotas.

6) **Shift support from our industrial food system to a healthier approach.**

Hidden behind mainstream produce bins is a long-distance industrial system that burns enormous amounts of fuel, regularly poisons people in foreign lands, requires significant packaging that becomes trash, generates serious food waste (more than 25%!), concentrates wealth and power in a few hands, and makes survival tenuous for small farmers. Did you know that conventional food travels an average 1,300 miles from the farm to your plate?

Yes, you can help change that! Plus supporting local farmers reduces their temptation to sell to developers, thus helping preserve our open space.

7) **Reconnect with the land.** Our culture is so disconnected from the planet's natural cycles that we can forget that food comes from the earth, not the supermarket. By reweaving nature again into our everyday life, we can help recover the physical and emotional well-being that only comes from the earth.



8) **Nurture children's healthy relationship with food and the planet.** Children love farms. Parents even find that children eat more vegetables after their visits! Plus it's smart for kids to know the source of their food, so they can make wise choices for themselves and the planet.

OK, so now you see why I get so excited about buying local food. It's a fun, practical, and yummy way to walk my talk, just by adjusting how I shop! So...

How Do You Buy from Local Farmers?

1) **Look for local products at your grocery store.**

2) **Visit local farms.** In addition to produce, many offer juice, jam, eggs, flowers, and more. Some even allow you to pick your own! Explore options with the free Farm Trails Guide (571-8288, <www.farmtrails.org>).

3) **Wander the farmers' market** and check out a variety of farmers. (See box for schedule.)

4) **Join a CSA farm**, and pick up or have delivered a weekly basket of farm-fresh food. It's almost like having a garden — without the work!

LOCAL FARMS *con'd on page 27*



Occidental Farmers Market

The CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) format is a powerful way to support local farmers. Your ongoing commitment offers them a regular sales outlet and income, thus reducing their risk, time spent marketing instead of farming, and unsold food waste.

CSA farms sometimes also offer a sample basket, flexibility on basket contents, activities (like tours and social events), a newsletter (with recipes and farm news), and the option to trade work for food. Many are even organic or pesticide-free. (Local CSAs are listed at <www.sonomaparentingcommunity.com/csas.html>.)

See You at the Farm!

So there you have it, a wonderful cornucopia of ways to shift your purchases to local farms, nurturing a healthier world for all!

Patricia Dines is a writer specializing in environmental and community topics. She is Editor and Lead Writer of The Next STEP newsletter; and Author of The Organic Guides, the Ask EcoGirl column, and various articles and reports that encourage constructive and informed action for the earth.

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GERARD'S FAMOUS PAELLA COOKED & SERVED IN OCCIDENTAL

Handy Reference Chart: What's in Season When!

Fruits & Vegetables	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Strawberries												
Blackberries												
Blueberries												
Peaches												
Plums												
Corn												
Raspberries												
Tomatoes												
Apples												
Figs												
Pears												
Pumpkins												
Wine Grapes (harvest)												
Persimmons												
Walnuts												
Vegetables												
Flowers & Trees												
Bare Root (plant trees & shrubs)												
Orchids												
Azaleas & Rhododendrons												
Iris/Daylilies												
Fresh flowers												
Lavender												

Graphic by Patricia Dines. Harvest schedule based on information from Sonoma County Farm Trails.

Our Industrial Food System's Hidden Costs

• **High Energy Usage.** Our current system depends heavily on petroleum — for transportation, food processing, even as feedstock for pesticides and fertilizers. Of all U.S. truck miles each year, 27% are used just to transport food, traveling over 45 billion miles.

• **Air and Noise Pollution.** These food trucks expel over four million tons of pollutants into our air annually, causing and worsening respiratory diseases like asthma, damaging the ozone layer, and creating an ongoing rumbling of noise.

• **Excess Packaging.** Shipping food requires extensive packaging to protect it. Producing this packaging uses significant amounts of energy and natural resources, and adds to the earth's pollution burden. Disposing of packaging afterwards adds to our already overflowing landfills. Overall, packaging is estimated to be 1/3 to 1/2 of all U.S. garbage, making it a key reason that the U.S. leads the world in solid waste!

• **Increased food spoilage.** High quantities of food in this system (about 25%) are damaged in transit and thrown out. Food that doesn't meet cosmetic perfection criteria can also be discarded, adding to losses, driving down supplies, and increasing prices — at a time when people are starving!

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