

# Section One

## Workplace

## Section One: Workplace

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## Consultation

### Seven Virtues of Consultation

1. Happy spirit – Joyfulness, Humor, Laughter
2. Enthusiasm
3. Patience – No quick and easy answers; waiting your turn, no complaining or getting angry.
4. Purity of motive – Never mind who had the idea or who said what.
5. Detachment – Let go of your idea, listening to others carefully.
6. Service – Good of the group is put ahead of your own interests.
7. Humility and Modesty – Gems of wisdom may come from anyone.

### Pre-requisites for Effective Consultation

Absolute love and harmony between the individuals.

Free expression of views without fear of judgment.

Patience when dealing with others concerns and viewpoints.

Acknowledgement of the needs and rights of individuals concerned.

Identification of relevant issues.

Unbiased assessment of issues raised.

Co-operation in approaches to working together.

Tolerance and respect for diversity.

## Bahá'í Consultation

A democratic and creative process for decision making and problem solving.

Notes for the second year students of the Education for Peace Program prepared by Jacqueline Medvecka.

### **WHY should we learn about Bahá'í Consultation?**

The process of Bahá'í Consultation is an essential tool for peace making. It is often misunderstood even within the Bahá'í community. Sometimes it is seen as a lengthy process useful only when complex decisions have to be made, or arduous problems to be solved. Or it is confused with common group discussion.

In fact Bahá'í Consultation is a jewel. Its 7 Prime Requisites, 2 Conditions and 5 Rules of Procedures are guiding lights for any group discussion.

Yet the uniqueness of Bahá'í Consultation and its considerable transforming power lies in its Prerequisite Requirements [prepare soul, attitude and behaviour] as well as in its Method.

"The principle of Consultation is one of the most fundamental elements of the divine edifice."  
Adbu'l-Baha

### **WHAT is Bahá'í Consultation?**

Bahá'í Consultation is a system to conduct human affairs, to solve problems, make decisions, settle differences.

Bahá'í Consultation is a creative process of sharing, understanding and interacting of thoughts and feelings that allows an idea to grow and leads to truthful results such as new vision, solution, decision.

Bahá'í Consultation requires what I call "intellectual rigour and emotional vigour" and deals effectively with doubt and ego, two barriers to spiritual transformation.

Bahá'í Consultation shies away from using clash of muscular strength, clash of will/ego or clash of interests and grounds its strength in the clash of ideas. Different views are not seen as competitive but as complementary.

"The shining spark of truth comes forth only after the clash of differing opinions."  
Adbu'l-Baha.

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### HOW to do Bahá'í Consultation?

Develop the essential qualities required for the 7 Prime Requisites, the 2 Conditions and the 5 Rules of Procedures

The 7 Prime Requisites (qualities of the soul):

- purity of motive
- radiance of spirit
- detachment of all else save God
- attraction to His Divine Fragrances
- humility and lowliness
- patience and long suffering in difficulties
- servitude to His exalted Threshold.

The 2 conditions (spiritual attitudes)

- absolute love & harmony amongst participants, being wholly free from estrangement, thus manifesting the Unity of God
- total surrender to God, turning faces to Him and asking for help.

The 5 rules of procedure (qualities of behaviour)

- devotion (turning to God)
- courtesy (grace, consideration)
- dignity (of manner & bearing, respect for self & others)
- care (attention, thoroughness)
- moderation (no forcing, yet be strong & convincing)

Follow the 3 steps of the Method of Bahá'í Consultation

Before the consultation takes place

1. Define roughly the object of consultation.
2. Elect a Chairperson.
3. Allow time for small talk before the consultation begins.
4. Ensure there is ample opportunity for prayers prior to the consultation.
5. Trust that pure motives and intention will result in quality consultation.

Step 1. UNDERSTANDING

- search out the truth
- with all freedom express your own thoughts.

1.1 Establish the full facts (problem identification and clarification)

- gather the facts
- explore the background
- consider the facts from different perspectives
- review the Writings (any guidance?)
- synthesise information

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### 1.2 Search for the truth

- offer and receive opinions as gifts contributing to the process. These gifts can be changed, developed, adopted, rejected
- detach the opinion from the person
- detach the person from the opinion
- don't insist with your own opinion
- don't belittle your thoughts or the thoughts of others
- don't object to or censure opinions, regardless of their perceived quality.

### 1.3 Discuss the matter

- express your opinion: you have a duty to do so, holding back is not on
- speak frankly and vigorously, yet with courtesy and moderation
- do not repeat a point of view already stated
- listen to all opinions with open mind and interest.

*The shining spark of truth comes forth only after the clash of differing opinions.  
Look at the spark, not the clash!*

## Step 2. DECIDING

*With moderation set forth the truth.  
Should differences arise, the majority prevails.*

### 2.1 Make a decision

- possible solutions are suggested, discarded or modified
- decide by consensus or majority
- if majority prevails, all have to submit wholeheartedly to the majority.

## Step 3. IMPLEMENTING

### 3.1 Implement the decision

- devise a plan of action
- implement the plan of action obediently and confidently (It is not permitted to criticise the decision. It is a duty to help carrying it out and making it work)

### 3.2 Move on

WHAT IF we used Bahá'í Consultation, as we breathe air, in our daily life?

"True consultation is spiritual conference in the attitude and atmosphere of love... Love and fellowship are the foundation." "Abdu'l-Baha.

Background reading: Consultation, a universal lamp of guidance, John E. Kolstoe, 1990

## Spiritual Virtues

The following are a few examples of spiritual virtues.

**Assertiveness:** Being assertive means to be positive and confident. Assertiveness begins by being aware that you are a worthy person. Only you have your unique combination of qualities.

**Compassion:** Without compassion the world is a hard and lonely place. With compassion, we are all connected and hard times are much easier because others understand and care.

**Confidence:** Confidence is being certain and feeling assurance. It comes from knowing and trusting someone. Self-confidence means you trust yourself. You can do things without doubts holding you back. You know your own strengths and weaknesses.

**Courage:** Courage is personal bravery in the face of fear. It is doing what needs to be done even when it is really hard or scary. Courage is going ahead even when you feel like giving up and quitting. Courage is a quality of the heart. Courage comes from what you feel in your heart rather than just what you think.

**Detachment:** Detachment is experiencing your feelings without allowing your feelings to control you. It is choosing what you will do in a situation rather than having the situation dictate what you will do. Detachment means to feel what you feel but not have to act on the feeling. It's kind of like standing beside yourself and watching what you are feeling as well as feeling it.

**Faithfulness:** Faithfulness is being true to someone or something, It is holding to what you believe is important no matter what happens. Faithfulness is belief that stands up to the test of time. It is starting out on a path and staying on it no matter how many times you stop or get distracted.

**Honour:** Being honourable is to live with a sense of respect for what you believe to be right. It is living by the virtues, living up to the gifts that God placed within you. When you are honourable, you are worthy of the respect of others. You set a good example.

**Idealism:** A person with 'high ideals' is a person who really cares about what is right and meaningful in life. When you practice idealism, you have beliefs that mean something to you and you follow them. You don't just accept things the way they are.

**Trust:** Trust is having faith. It is relying and believing in someone or something. It is having confidence that the right thing will come about without trying to control it or make it happen.

**Unity:** Unity is a very powerful Virtue, and it brings great strength. It is a way of seeing the universe as one, designed by the One Who created us all. When you practice unity, you allow yourself to see how everything is connected and depends on one another.

Linda and Dan Popov, Dr J. Kavelin, *The Virtues Guide*, ISBN 0646228463

Recommended books for developing spiritual virtues:

- A Pace of Grace: The Virtues of a Sustainable Life
- Sacred Moments: Daily Meditation on the Virtues
- Family Virtues Guide.

Available from The Virtues Project, <http://www.virtuesproject.com/index.php>

## Principles for a Workplace (Example)

### The Carrington: Our Core Beliefs

1. Respect for Each Other

The Spirit of the staff is our primary source of success.

Within that Spirit we treat each other as partners with dignity and respect.

We encourage each others aligned involvement, development, fun, motivation and welfare.

2. Dedication to Customers

Our customers are the focus of our awareness and our work.

We are dedicated to giving even better service than expected with friendliness and efficiency.

3. Assurance of Quality and Value

Every service we provide is true to what is expected, and exceeds the value expected.

4. Uniqueness and Innovation

We regard change and innovation as a major and continuing source of advantage.

The creative potential of each of us comes as much from our intuition and feeling as from our rational thinking.

5. Excellence, Leadership and Responsibility

At all times we lead and excel in every activity we undertake and for which we are responsible.

We take responsibility for ourselves. We lead and teach by example.

We support each other to succeed.

6. Market Leadership

In our highly competitive market place we are committed to being the best.

7. Generating Wealth

The generation of profit is our means to create all that is better for our staff, suppliers and the community.

8. Good Community Awareness

Our ethical behaviour and contribution to the community are important to us personally and to our business.



## Goal Setting

### Quality of Life

A well-thought-out statement of the quality of life people want from an ecosystem can often highlight what they value. For instance, a family might set out to "create a warm and stable environment for family and staff that will enable each of us to reach his or her potential." To achieve this they may decide that they need to introduce changes like working from home or allowing family members greater flexibility and responsibility.

### Production

These goals will incorporate land management objectives. A description of the form, or forms, of production required from the ecosystem in order to deliver the quality of life sought. This may be profit, recreation, culture, aesthetics or some other product. If profit is part of the production goal describe whether from crops livestock, timber or other forms but not the specific crop. An aesthetic production goal could be stated as 'preserving a native area for aesthetic purposes' or 'profit from anything not conflicting with our values'.

### Landscape

"In setting landscape goals the quality of life of all living organisms must be considered. The form of production must sustain the quality of life which is sought and be sustained by the landscape."

Allan Savory, *Holistic Resource Management*, Island Press, p57, 1988

## Landscape Goals

When determining landscape goals consider maintaining, where possible, a minimum of 5-10% treed areas (unless land area is less than 4 hectares) for environmental protection and conservation. Special regards should be given to areas that encompass threatened species or are habitats for endangered ecological communities.

"In much of the world agricultural goals are only production goals, with little thought for landscape or quality of life. Both have suffered drastically as a result and often that has wrecked production in the long run. The form of production must sustain that quality of life and be sustained by the landscape or it will fail"

Allan Savory, *Holistic Resource Management*, Island Press, 1988

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### Example: Generic Family Goals

#### Quality of Life (Values)

We wish to enjoy a prosperous, secure, and cultured rural lifestyle which could sustain multiple generations from our resource base, and maintain good relationships between us all – and between the people we work with and ourselves. We will have meaningful work for us all. We desire leisure time of quality, with each person free to pursue their own interests and personal needs both within and outside our family. We will promote diversity in all our actions.

#### Forms of Production

Profit from livestock, wildlife and others sources not in conflict with our values, aesthetic surroundings and with abundant diversity, development of our cultural environment, meaningful employment for our people, leisure time with freedom and tolerance to pursue our individual interests, open communication between ourselves – and those with whom we share contact.

#### Future Resource Base

Customers (and the people we work with):

We see us as always consistent, honest, professional, keeping our word, producing an absolutely clean product which is free from all chemical and hormone contamination

#### Landscape (map not included)

Our farm will generally be open grassland in appearance, with very high diversity and stability. The eco-system processes will be fully effective, maximizing the production of vegetation, livestock and wildlife. The areas marked on the map will include dense bush for livestock and wildlife cover. Along the streams there will be large poplar trees and thickets.

#### Infrastructure

Our infrastructure will be aesthetically pleasing, accessible, functional, maintained and relevant.

#### The Community in Which we Live

Will have a diversity of prosperous businesses and ways for people of all ages to participate in its life. Community services, business services and entertainment opportunities will be readily accessible.

Allan Savory, *Introduction to Holistic Management*,  
Setting an Holistic Goal.

## Better Records = More Profit

*Richard Wiswall and his partner Sally Colman, are the owners of Cate farm in Montpelier, Vermont. They cultivate 22 acres of certified organic vegetables, herbs, flowers and cover crops and sell at the Montpelier Farmers Market, through a CSA, and wholesale through Deep Root Organic Truck Farmers Co-op. Richard and Sally have three children ages 17, 13 and 11.*

To most of us, the subject of record keeping and profitability is pretty dry and boring. And yet, of all the tools in our farming toolbox, it is probably one of the most important.

For years I didn't pay enough attention to it, but somehow survived, owing in part to very long hours over ten years. I knew that I wanted to work less and make more money – something most people want – but I wanted to work A LOT less and make A LOT more money.

It is ludicrous to any other business person to think that farmers don't keep track of where their money comes and goes. Farmers may handle large sums of money – \$50,000, \$100,000, \$200,000 per year yet only keep \$10,000 to \$20,000 in a good year and break even or lose money in a bad year. And that's still working your tail off. Why?

I personally wasted lots of time and money, only to be too stubborn to face up to the reality of the situation.

Over the years, I did get better grasps on which crops were paying for themselves and which weren't, but it wasn't until I become extremely frustrated that I really made a job of it.

What amazed me was my own internal resistance to actually crunching the numbers for this fine-tuned analysis. It's not that I dislike math – on the contrary, I enjoy it. I was scared of change – the change that these numbers may show me – that farming was indeed unprofitable, and that my livelihood, identity and a decade of blood, sweat and tears would go down the drain.

Well, I forced myself, and did it and spent three days in front of records and calculators and crop sheets. Ever since then, I have felt transformed, and as importantly, I've become much more profitable and consistently so.

Before getting into the nuts and bolts of record keeping and profitability, I want to address two concepts that need to be laid in the foundations: true sustainability and goal setting.

Imagine your farm with a mile-high fence around it. The fence is open at the top so sun, rain, wind, birds and bees are present, and you have soil full of microbial life. The fence is continuous except for one small gate in it. Your job as farmer is to monitor what comes in and goes out of that one gate. Most farms begin in lots of material, mix it up and change it a bit, and send it back out the gate. When you think about it, that is not much different than a plastics factory. Farms should not be a place where petroleum is turned into food.

The ultimate job as farmers is to use what we have free to us and generate TRUE wealth. In this light, I see farming as one of the noblest endeavours – a real generator of healthy products using natural cycles.

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### Be Happy

Happiness, I believe, is something we all strive for. I see it as getting what you want. If this is true, it sounds simple enough. Well, here lies the key to sound decision making – it is not that simple.

Getting what you want may not be that easy, mostly because we don't have a clear grasp on what exactly it is that we want. What we want is not a new tractor or a late-model pickup truck. Wants need to be defined as a deeper, value-based set of goals: things that are held very dear, such as family, creativity, leisure, health or economic security.

Here is an old goal statement of mine from five years ago. It's nothing fancy, but it is written down.

I want a healthy life with family and friends, to earn a living that I have passion for and that doesn't compromise my values of a healthy planet, environment, community and family. I want to be able to afford to travel, not work very long hours, have money enough not to worry about it, feel more spirituality, play more music, spend more time with family and friends.

Look! No farming in there! What I wanted at that point was more economic security and time for family and friends.

A clearly defined goal should define your quality of life. We all have a quality of life. It may be good, or not so good, defined or not defined. But we all have a quality of life. And given the choice to seek a certain quality of life or just let it happen are very different things.

Whether we define our quality of life or not, we know when actions are going toward or against it. People will put up with tremendous hardship if they feel they are working towards their quality-of-life goals. Conversely, when things go against your goals, tolerance is very short.

Farmers tend to survive very tough economic times because they believe in what they are doing: i.e., working towards their quality of life. Having a defined quality of life statement makes all the difference in your attitude – it keeps the big picture in focus. One late winter I had just finished washing my 10 zillionth carrot and had had it. This is it, I thought – I hope I lose money this year so I have a reason to exit this farming madness. But after defining my quality of life, I found that going to the barn to wash carrots was a totally different occupation. Before, I was washing carrots to wash carrots. Now, I wash carrots knowing that I am supporting my family, enabling leisure time, planning for retirement and my kids' future, building community and living the life that I want.

A lot of this thinking stems from courses in Holistic Management, a useful tool in decision making. It could be labeled anything, but all it is, in essence, is having a clearly defined, written, value-based goal and using a series of testing guidelines that cover environmental, economic and societal aspects and then monitoring to keep on track. I highly recommend Holistic Management; courses are offered throughout the United States. For more information, contact the Centre for Holistic Management at 505-842-5252 or visit the web site: [www.holisticmanagement.org](http://www.holisticmanagement.org)

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### **Making Money**

Still with me? Finally, I'll talk about the subject of profitability and record keeping.

First of all, farmers are in the business of farming. Aside from the growing, personnel management and marketing, farmers are also business people. If you want your farm to make money, you need to be profitable. Basic rule of business: Stop doing things that lose money (if you can't then contact me about the 12-steps program called Vegetable Growers Anonymous). Farm for profit, not production. A simple phrase, yet it took me 10 years to figure it out. In the years-end picture, Income minus Expense equal Profit. This equation, though, is usually a compilation of many different smaller enterprises. It is necessary to figure out which enterprises generate profit and which ones don't. The tools I use fall into two basic groups: Production tools and Analysis tools.

**First Production.** I start with the marketing end – what do you expect to sell, to whom, and at what price? Be as realistic as you can – research it. Where will the gross sales come from? Use past records of estimate what each account will buy for each crop. With these totals, you can make a production plan.

I take each crop and determine how much land it will need by using my past yield records or using Knott's Handbook or Johnny's catalog. (Editor's note: Knott's Handbook sale in the Johnny's commercial catalog – call 027-437-4395 if you don't have one.) I also figure different planting dates, amount of seed needed, number of transplants if needed, and projected gross sales. Again, research it and take time to do it.

Next, take your land base and see if you can map out your production plan. Refine your map; it is a great working tool. Be very specific. Take into consideration such factors as crop rotations, cover cropping, access to water, deer pressure, frost sensitivity, etc. Write on it during the season. All my maps for the past five years are layered on my office wall and are a wealth of information. The map is a visual farm plan of everything you will grow. Once complete, I refer to it ones a week at least and follow the plan.

I also make a seedling chart. In order to have 1,200 lettuce starts on May 22, I need to have started them on April 22. Work backwards in time from your production plan for any transplanted crops and chart it out. Refer to it during the season and follow the plan.

### **How to Analyse Data**

That's it for production tools; next, Analysis tools. The most important book on the farm is the crop journal. If you do nothing else, keep a crop journal. This is just a looseleaf binder with a page for each crop, arranged alphabetically. Any time a task is performed on a crop, it is written down on the crop page. It's simple to do once you get in the habit. My crew chief was startled when I said very few farmers do this. She said, "It's so easy!"

I have all employees carry a pen, some paper and a watch as part of their job. I find that my employees like that added responsibility. Managerially, I tend to focus work in blocks: everyone weeding carrots in the morning, trellising tomatoes in the afternoon. At lunch and at day's end my crew chief or I write down what happened that day. It is important to keep up with it. Everything should be in your crop journal – plowing, disking, spreading compost, weeding, harvesting. All inputs or costs for each crop need to be recorded. This will provide the very necessary Expense part of the Profit equation. See example below.

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<b>Crop Journal</b> A separate page for each crop, in alphabetical order <b>Carrots - 1 acre</b>			
Date	Task	Labor	Tractor
4/23	spread 500# plantrite, 200# sulpomag, disk 1x	2	1.5
4/24	chisel 1x, bedform 2x	0.5	0.5
4/25	seed 100,000 Napoil, Planter hole # 10: seed 500,000, Rondino, Planter Hole #9	2.5	2.5
6/6	cultivate, buddings	1	1
6/9	hand weed	11	
6/10	irrigate	5	3
6/20	cultivate, buddings	1	1
6/239 - 6/30	hand weed	120	
7/3	irrigate	1.55	3
8/3	bedlift 1 bed	0.5	0.5
8/4	dig 1 bed - 45 bushel	12	
8/4	wash, 30 bags #1, 8 bags, #2 to cooler	6.5	
8/5 - 9/15	lift, dig, wash, bag 11 other beds	286	10.5
9/20	spread manure, 20 tons/acre	3	3
9/20	disk 1x	0.5	0.5
9/20	seed rye and vetch	2	

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I also keep a Page of Standards for rates of tasks that are done repeatedly. It is always updated and great to give employees an idea of what is expected; for example: bunching cilantro, 150–200 per hour; spinach, 3 to 4 cases per hour; filling 3–inch pots, 60 trays per hour.

An important thing about record keeping is that it is a lot of hindsight. The numbers from this year will give you a lot of information at the end of the year and in the years to come.

Now for the Income side of the Profit equation. To accurately track yield, I use three things:

- Triplicate receipts to track all wholesale sales. Once copy goes to the buyer, one gets reconciled with payment and the last copy is used in the sales spreadsheet, described later.
- A farmers market book to track everything that is sold at the market each week.
- A CSA book to track everything distributed through the CSA.

This represents everything that is sold off our farm. I compile a spreadsheet with all the sales information. It has year-end total sales of each crop to each market, with subtotals both by crop and market.

Now you have accurate yields and expenses for each crop and can find out true costs of production and what kind of profit you made – or didn't make – for current prices. I create a crop enterprise sheet for each crop. See box below.

<b>Crop Enterprise Sheet</b>	
not including all fixed cost; for comparing crops only	
<b>Peppers</b>	
<b>Per bed</b>	<b>\$ cost</b>
manure and disking	constant
chisel and bedform	5
buy plastic	20
lay plastic	10
seed, soil, trays	73
4 hours seeding, pricking	40
heat, watering, overhead	80
3 hours transplanting	30
4 hours Remy on and off	40
3 hours hand weeding	30
buy hay mulch	8
1 hour apply mulch	10
1 hour remove plastic	10
harvest to washroom 140 cases @ \$2/case	280
Total expense per bed	\$3636
1996 sales from 1 bed = \$2,549	Net per bed = \$1,913 Net per acre = \$22,956

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The crop enterprise sheet for peppers opened my eyes. I never thought peppers an important crop, but this changed my mind. This example represents a good yield of peppers on black plastic with hay mulch, sold through the farmers market, the CSA and wholesale accounts. Fixed costs are not included; I use the enterprise sheet as an index to determine relative profitability. I compare crops side by side using direct variable costs and then only grow crops on the top of the profitability index. I extrapolate crop profits to an acre to more easily measure them.

For figuring labor costs, I use the average wage of \$7 an hour plus 8 percent workers comp plus 7.5 percent employee tax plus 15 percent retirement benefits (SEF IRA). When I work as one of the crew, I get paid on the crop enterprise sheet the average hourly wage, plus I get any profit generated by the crop.

For every tractor, I take the purchase price and any interest cost divided by the useful life (usually 10 years) and add in the annual fuel cost and average annual repair costs. This sum is divided by the average hours used per year.

I used to calculate all the costs for each crop but realized that it was more work than I needed to do. A lot of the costs are spread out over the entire farm operation and some costs, like general tillage practices, are similar for every crop. These costs are constant for each enterprise budget. The resulting net profit per acre is used to compare crops, and does give an idea of what you keep before paying fixed and non-direct costs (telephone, electricity, mortgage, insurance, coolers, people driving over irrigation pipe...). These bottom-line profit values have nothing to do with what you gross per acre, but rather what you keep. Gross revenue and profit are unrelated! Well, almost unrelated.

*Farm for profit, not production.*

There were a lot of surprises when I first did this analysis. For years, my average gross per acre was around \$5000. Some crops bombed, some did well. Now I have crops that NET me \$5000 or more per acre. With peppers as an example, that is a lot of money! It is something I never thought possible until I took the time to figure it out. Real farming happens from the neck up.

Some of my high-profit crops are small acreage. Some are 1/12th acre, some 1/10th acre, some 1/2 acre. But if I can piece a few acres of these together, it drastically increases my overall bottom line.

Once you compromise crop enterprise sheets for each crop, you can create an incredibly important piece of paper for your farm – an index of profitability. This index lists all crops in order of net profit. Be profit driven, not market driven, or production driven, or by gross sales figures. By growing crops that are the most profitable for you and your markets, you can't help but become more profitable. If you feel you have to grow certain less profitable crops for market synergy, challenge that paradigm. I sell at a farmers market and through a CSA and grow no sweet corn, and do fine. When customers ask why I don't grow sweet corn, I tell them I lose money growing corn and I buy it for personal use from my neighbors who feel corn is worthwhile to grow. Customers continue to support us, and purchase the crops that we do grow.

The last thing I want to do is brag or sound like some sensational article that says you can make 5 million dollars on a quarter acre. I just want you to realize that this seemingly confusing array of record keeping is worth the effort.

Written by Richard Wiswall



## Diversifying the Farm Business

### What is farm diversification?

Farm diversification is the introduction of non-traditional sources of income to the farm business. These income sources can come through developing other agricultural or non-agricultural enterprises. Diversification through alternative agriculture occurs when additional income is derived from a broader range of outputs, based on existing farm resources; examples are aquaculture, farm forestry and specialized crops or livestock production.

Diversification through non-agricultural enterprises occurs when additional income is derived from developing new service or processing opportunities; examples are farm tourism and accommodation, timber processing, distilling essential oils and manufacturing products from an existing farm. This last form of diversification includes value-adding. Value-adding occurs when farmers begin to manage their product further along the production-processing-marketing-supply chain. It is called value-adding because the farmer's income is increased by capturing the 'added value' as a raw product is transformed into a product with higher value.

### Why diversify your farm business?

Both federal and state and territory government agencies encourage farm diversification as a valid form of rural adjustment in response to the increased risk and uncertainty that has characterized the Australian farming sector since the early 1980s. Ultimately, a farmer's decision to diversify may be motivated by a number of factors. More often than not, the farm's long-term financial viability is a critical factor, but lifestyle and family goals, along with environmental factors affecting the farm, are also common reasons for deciding to diversify.

Whatever the reason for diversifying, successfully implementing alternative farm enterprises is a risky business. It is not surprising therefore that all farm-management textbooks and case studies dealing with farm diversification emphasise the need for thorough planning and a realistic assessment of personal objectives, skills, resources and market prospects (see, for example, Hardaker et al. 1997; Haines & Davies 1987; Cahill 1993).

*Options for Change, New Ideas for Australian Farmers*, Rural Industries Resource Development Corporation, 2003, ISBN 0642 58598 9

## Agricultural Labor

In California, the conditions of agricultural labor are generally far below accepted social standards and legal protections in other forms of employment. Policies and programs are needed to address this problem, working toward socially just and safe employment that provides adequate wages, working conditions, health benefits, and chances for economic stability.

The needs of migrant labor for year-around employment and adequate housing are a particularly crucial problem needing immediate attention. To be more sustainable over the long-term, labor must be acknowledged and supported by government policies, recognized as important constituents of land grant universities, and carefully considered when assessing the impacts of new technologies and practices.

Sourced from <http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu/concept.htm#Themes>

## Legal and Licensing Requirements

Legal, legislative, statutory and quarantine requirements relevant to biodynamic workplace practices could include:

- taxation and superannuation
- relevant union bodies and employment contracts
- contractual arrangements for partnerships, trusts and other agreements
- corporations law
- award and enterprise agreements
- relevant legislation from all levels of government especially in regard to OHS, environmental issues, equal opportunity
- industrial relations, anti-discrimination
- requirements for land use
  - agistment and leasing agreements
  - licensing requirements for water use (irrigation)
  - district strategies of landholders and authorities for pest, weed and disease management
  - legislation relating to prohibited and restricted plant species
- statutory requirements for the handling, labelling and transportation of produce
- common law principles relating to property, stock, duty of care and due diligence
- common law principles relating to duty of care and due diligence
- licensing requirements for:
  - waste water
  - soil disturbance and conservation
  - irrigation, water allocations, underground water
  - landscape construction
  - land-use regulations and requirements for site development and work activities
  - natural bush clearing
  - transport and equipment operation
  - firearms
  - chemical purchase and use
  - access to and activities on private or protected lands
  - management activities related to particular animals and plant species
- National standards, international agreements and relevant Codes of Practice:
  - Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals, Land Transportation of Animals, Export of Animals where applicable
  - handling requirements for animals
  - stocking density for housing of animals must comply with biodynamic certification standards
- insurance requirements which could include:
  - public and professional liability
  - product liability
  - workplace structures
  - areas of risk
  - personal accident and sickness
  - income insurance and superannuation
  - life insurance
  - workers compensation
  - coverage for all assets, buildings, plant, crops and vehicles.

## Hazards in the Workplace

Hazards could include but are not limited to:

- biological organisms
- diseases and safety when working with animals
- injury while using workplace tools, equipment and machinery
- damage, faults, malfunction or breakdowns of tools, equipment and machinery
- slips, trips and falls
- uneven surfaces
- manual handling
- noise
- air quality in the work environment
- burns including solar radiation.

## Emergencies in the Workplace

Emergencies could include but are not limited to:

- drowning
- poisoning
- snake and insect bite
- electrocution
- gas leaks
- personal threats
- animal attacks
- effluent and water supply breakdown
- leaking roofs
- falls from trees, buildings and large structures
- natural disasters (floods, fires and earthquakes)
- burns and smoke inhalation
- inappropriate use of firearms.

## Risks

### Possible Risks to Production

#### Changes to personal factors

- Health factors.
- Availability of labour.

#### Business

- Financial resources.
- Changes in market conditions.
- Changes in commodity prices.
- Interest rate changes.
- Changing economic conditions.

#### Property resources

- Theft of property resources.
- Equipment and machinery breakdown.

#### Production, crops and livestock

- Availability of genetic materials.
- Availability of resources.
- Market changes.
- Pest and disease problems.
- Chemical contamination of the site from spray drift, water pollution, etc.

#### Changes in the physical environment:

- Availability of water.
- Weather and seasonal influences.
- Climatic influences such as floods, fires, droughts.
- Land degradation.

#### Biological and chemical contamination

- Soil, water and/or air pollution on the site or which cannot be controlled.
- Cross pollination from G.E. crops planted in the region.
- Contamination from chemical usage in local and regional areas.
- Pollution of the catchment areas in which the site is situated (air, soil and water).
- Prior land use resulting in soil degradation, soil erosion and chemical residues affecting which crops can be produced.
- Pest, weed and disease outbreaks on the site and in the local region.
- Contamination from inputs such as seeds, plants, plant materials, animals and food for animal and/or human consumption.
- Diseases affecting plants, animals and humans.

#### Legislative and licensing changes

- Affecting land use and the physical environment which includes rezoning of land, changes to biodiversity legislation, water allocation, natural bush clearing, and activities on protected lands.

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## Section One: Workplace

### External influences from the local region

- Impact of land clearing in the region.
- Impact of activities in the region.
- Electro-magnetic pollution from overhead electrical transmission lines, mobile phone towers.

### National and international trends for likely risk factors

- Gather information and list other risk factors relating to national and international factors.

## Risk Management Strategies

Risks	Possible Strategies
General requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• using equipment according to guidelines and operating manuals</li><li>• ready access to all reporting and workplace documentation</li><li>• making required resources available to manage OHS</li><li>• regular time spent in the workplace</li><li>• talking to employees and people who come into the workplace about the safety issues in their role</li><li>• assessing level of risk to determine how likely or how serious the effects are in the workplace</li><li>• encouraging and supporting the use of the new skills/knowledge in the workplace</li><li>• others:</li></ul>
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• gaining a first aid certificate</li><li>• developing an emergency response plan</li><li>• ensuring access to emergency communication</li><li>• access to appropriate medical treatment</li><li>• ensuring there are first aid kits in every vehicle, residence and workplace</li><li>• developing procedures to follow if an accident happens</li><li>• having directions to your worksite and paddock plans available for emergency personnel</li><li>• others:</li></ul>

*Continued over page*

## Section One: Workplace

<p>Production; Crops and livestock</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• changing cropping strategies and planting times</li> <li>• cover crops</li> <li>• minimal tillage to reduce resource degradation risk</li> <li>• crop rotation</li> <li>• diversifying production:</li> <li>• developing new plant products</li> <li>• developing new animal products</li> <li>• value adding to produce</li> <li>• expanding range of crops</li> <li>• seed production</li> <li>• establishing a nursery for plant production.</li> <li>• maintaining secure water and food supplies</li> <li>• provision of shelter for livestock</li> <li>• moving stock</li> <li>• insurance cover</li> <li>• security systems</li> <li>• use of integrated pest management systems</li> <li>• others:</li> </ul>
<p>Financial and property resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development of financial buffers</li> <li>• risk management strategies to minimise or protect financial situation;</li> <li>• manage price selling through forward selling</li> <li>• insurances</li> <li>• good management and proper maintenance</li> <li>• use of auxiliary power supplies</li> <li>• securing equipment and buildings</li> <li>• security systems</li> <li>• making full range of biodynamic preparations on-site</li> <li>• establishing a self-contained system</li> <li>• others:</li> </ul>
<p>Floods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• soil cultivation and planting practices to maximise water penetration</li> <li>• improving soil structure</li> <li>• maintaining good soil humus levels and organic matter</li> <li>• maintaining vegetation</li> <li>• maintaining flood mitigation works and drainage controls</li> <li>• maintaining feed supplies</li> <li>• changing stocking rates</li> <li>• access to higher land in flood conditions</li> <li>• removal and/or relocation of stock</li> <li>• provision of shelter for livestock</li> <li>• others:</li> </ul>

*Continued over page*

## Section One: Workplace

<p>Biological and chemical contamination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plan to use quarantine areas for plants and animals from non-biodynamic production systems (min. 3 weeks)</li> <li>• encouraging bush regeneration, re-vegetating areas and/or establishing shelter belts to act as buffer zones for spray drift</li> <li>• maintaining buffer zones such as roads, rivers, forests</li> <li>• use of non-food crops to take up residues from contaminated soil</li> <li>• increasing the biological life of the soil</li> <li>• physical removal of soil</li> <li>• planting water loving trees, shrubs and/or reed beds to filter contaminated water</li> <li>• establishing drainage ditches</li> <li>• using alternative water supplies</li> <li>• establishing and maintaining a self-sustaining closed system</li> <li>• implementing procedures to address source of contamination</li> <li>• consulting with appropriate personnel to encourage the use of non-chemical production methods and to change adverse practices</li> <li>• use of Packaging Codes to trace products</li> <li>• for contamination through equipment and vehicular usage;</li> <li>• use of specially designated areas for parking</li> <li>• use of decontamination procedures for vehicles entering designated areas and/or quarantine site</li> <li>• designated tools and equipment for use only in the quarantine site</li> <li>• for contamination through use of personnel clothing/footwear</li> <li>• use of appropriate hygiene procedures</li> <li>• use of appropriate specially designated clothing</li> <li>• foot baths (see photo)</li> <li>• others:</li> </ul>
<p>Droughts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• soil cultivation and planting practices to maximise water penetration</li> <li>• improving soil structure</li> <li>• maintaining good soil humus levels and organic matter</li> <li>• maintaining vegetation/ground cover</li> <li>• maintaining feed supplies (min 18-24 months storage)</li> <li>• reducing stocking rates and production activities</li> <li>• adjustment</li> <li>• conserving and maintaining water supplies</li> <li>• others:</li> </ul>
<p>Fires</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clearing and maintaining fire breaks</li> <li>• limiting fuel in vegetated areas</li> <li>• planting of fire retardant species</li> <li>• providing fire fighting equipment</li> <li>• establishing secure water supplies</li> <li>• identifying safe havens for stock</li> <li>• others:</li> </ul>

## Marketing

### Marketing Options

- potential for greater penetration of existing markets with existing products or services
- new products or services for existing markets
- new products or services for new markets
- extending, expanding or changing an existing business
- export markets
  - non-certified production
  - fully certified production
  - value adding of produce
  - direct sales from on-farm selling or market stalls
  - community supported agricultural systems
  - regional markets such as shops, hotels, restaurants, processors
  - large retailers such as supermarkets and wholesalers
  - marketing opportunities brought about through joint ventures, cooperative ventures, strategic alliances, franchising
- identifying the resources required for identified market options include:
  - transport
  - time and labour especially if value adding to produce
  - financial
  - storage facilities
  - sufficient quantities of high quality produce
  - farm shop or stall
- undertaking a risk assessment to assess quality and integrity for marketing method.

### Diversifying Marketing

Diversifying marketing to reduce the economic risk

The income of many farmers depends directly on the sale of the harvest of one or two crops. If prices for these commodities drop, these farmers inevitably face tremendous problems. Even with stable prices, large losses can occur when yields suddenly drop, e.g. due to pest or disease incidence which could not be sufficiently controlled.

Diverse farms with a range of crops will suffer less from price fluctuations or yield reductions of single crops. Crop diversity therefore is not only helpful for establishing a balanced ecosystem and avoiding the spread of pests and diseases. It also helps the farmers to avoid taking a high economic risk.

*IFOAM Training Manual for Organic Agriculture in the Tropics, 2003,*  
Complied by FiBL, ISBN 3-934055-25-7  
Performance of Organic Farms



## Section One: Workplace

### Tips on Marketing

Sell to your local area first, then sell to the big markets

Set your own price and insist your farm be advertised

Don't sell more than 15% to supermarkets

Be careful about selling to large organisations – if you have a good product they will want to take the lot – this means your local markets will miss out (and they are your more reliable source of a steady, fair income)

Selling out to large companies allows them to dictate the market price and before long prices drop.

### Tips on Marketing Locally

Establish markets for first grade produce in restaurants, hotels, organic food outlets, etc.

Establish a 'seconds' market – for jams, sauces etc.

Develop varied packaging to suit different product outlets – e.g. individual packs, bulk (always check prices)

Be innovative with your products

The secret is to be able to maintain a regular supply

### Value Adding

In order to increase the market value of the farm products, farmers can:

- Choose products which are of high market value (e.g. medicinal plants, spices, etc.).
- Achieve a better quality for the products, e.g. by improved handling.
- Engage in simple on-farm processing like threshing, milling, fermenting, grading, cleaning etc.
- Produce processed goods, e.g. jams, dried fruits, pickles etc. Produce dairy products (cream, butter, cheese, yoghurt, curd etc.).
- Store products, as off-season prices are sometimes considerably higher for certain crop.

*IFOAM Training Manual for Organic Agriculture in the Tropics, 2003,  
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Performance of Organic Farms*

## Marketing Strategies

Direct Marketing	Intermediary Distribution
Community supported agriculture Farmer's markets Home delivery services Internet service Pick-your-own Mail order Roadside stands	Retailers Wholesalers Distributors Brokers Co-operatives

## Section One: Workplace

### Advantages of Marketing Strategies

Direct sales from on-farm selling or market stalls including community supported agricultural systems:

- direct contact with customers
- building personal trust
- higher prices by avoiding retailers or wholesalers
- independence
- permanent income.

Regional markets such as shops, hotels, restaurants, processors:

- direct contact to buyers
- contracts for purchases
- adaptation of production to meet demand.

Large retailers such as supermarkets and wholesalers:

- large quantities can be sold
- regular demand
- contracts for purchases
- possible collection from the farm.

Export:

- possible higher price level
- access to large and growing market
- contracts for purchases.

### Disadvantages of Marketing Strategies

Direct sales from on-farm selling or market stalls including community supported agricultural systems:

- small potential clients
- extra workload
- required broad range of products
- investments in shop and storage facilities
- no guarantees.

Regional markets such as shops, hotels, restaurants, processors:

- lower prices
- irregular demand
- transport requirements.

Large retailers such as supermarkets and wholesalers:

- no contact with customers
- risk of dependency
- low prices
- production to meet buyer demands.

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## Section One: Workplace

Export:

- no contact with customers
- risk of dependency
- low prices
- production to meet buyer demands
- very high competition
- transport miles causing spoilage
- certification requirements.

### Accessing Better Markets

The income depends on the quantity of yield and on the prices of the products paid in the market. In some countries, farmers get exploited by middle men who pay low but sell at a high price. If this is the case, direct marketing of products can be an option.

Many farmers expect to get a premium price for their organic products, as they are of better quality (less pesticide residues, better taste etc.). In many countries, however, the market for organic products with premium prices is still very small. Wholesalers may offer sales guarantee in return for a regular supply of certain items. As a single farmer may not be able to provide a sufficiently big quantity to the wholesaler, forming producers association can be advantageous. Export markets are promising due to the sometimes high premium price paid for organic quality. However, it is very difficult to meet the requirements of these markets, and usually only groups of farmers linked with professional traders are capable of surpassing the hurdles.

*IFOAM Training Manual for Organic Agriculture in the Tropics, 2003,*  
Compiled by FiBL, ISBN 3-934055-25-7  
Performance of Organic Farms

## Successful Marketing

There is no 'correct' path that will ensure success in undertaking farm diversification, but there are a number of elements that can help to reduce the risk. Three factors that are critical to success are thorough planning, investigation and assessment of the options; good management; and effective marketing.

### Thorough planning, investigation and assessment of the options

- Assess your personal and family goals, skills and objectives, as well as you farm's resources, the possible complementarities and the potential impacts of the proposed new business on the existing farm business. Some of the questions that need to be asked are: How much time will be taken up running the new business? How will this affect the management of the rest of the farm business? Will you need to employ staff or contractors?
- Develop budgets and carry out cash-flow, break-even, cost-benefit and other financial analyses of the diversification option. Seek advice from independent consultants and peers. Assess markets for the new business by speaking to potential clients, and gain a good understanding of their needs and your ability to meet those needs.
- Create a business plan. This should be the basis for developing the business and will help in obtaining finance. Decide on the most suitable business structure, keeping in mind the relationship with the existing farm business. A common pitfall in developing budgets for new businesses is to overestimate income and underestimate the costs of running the business. Be realistic in your budgeting.

### Good management

- Once you have decided to go ahead with the venture, good management becomes the critical success factor.
- Good management includes developing good business relationships with staff and clients. It also requires continual assessment and evaluation of the business's financial health and whether you are meeting your goals and objectives.

### Effective marketing

- Marketing your product is essential if the business is to survive. Your marketing strategy needs to identify who your clients are, what sort of product they are interested in, how you can best promote your product to them and, most importantly, how you can provide your product to them in a way that satisfies their needs.

*Options for Change, New Ideas for Australian Farmers*, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, 2003, pgs 6,7, ISBN 0642 58598 9

## Marketing Possibilities

A program can be set up for any degree of participation or non-participation by the customers, depending on the desires of a particular group.

- The customers could help with harvesting and distribution as in a food co-op, or the farm could hire interested customers or outsiders for picking and packing.
- The vegetables can be made available "as picked", or the farm can wash and bunch for a more professional presentation.
- The customers could come to the farm (say, twice a week) to pick up their food supplies, or the farm could deliver to a centralized pick-up spot (in a town or a city) or to individual customer on whatever schedule was selected.
- The farm could provide just the raw materials, and the customers would be responsible for any processing. Or the farm could freeze or can the storage items for the customers and provide them with the finished products.
- The customers could store out-of-season foods in their own freezers and cellars, or the farm could provide bulk facilities for freezing and storing that the customers could draw upon as needed.
- There could be a specialized list of products supplied each week throughout the year, and customers could have the flexibility to request greater quantities of one or the other item, either by paying more or by trading off against something else: more Chinese cabbages, less lettuce; more chicken, less pork.
- The length of the fresh produce season can vary. Growers in a summer-vacation-home area may find a perfect match between the outdoor production season and when potential customers are in residence. If customers are available, the production season can be doubled with simple greenhouse protection at either end. Obviously, the longer the season of availability, the more attractive the program is to potential customers.
- A program could also be conducted in partnership with another organisation. Back in the late 1970s we set up such an arrangement with a nearby food co-op. We called it the "organic grab-bag." It was a bag of vegetables at fixed price, but with no guarantee of the contents other than that it represented a great value for the money. People would sign up in advance and we would fill the bags with whatever kinds of crops were plentiful that week. We deducted an annual 10 percent when the co-op began supplying the pickers (who received co-op work credit for their participation). It was a wonderful arrangement. We got paid for excess crops that might otherwise have gone unsold. The buyers got a great value and took care of the harvesting, packaging, and delivery. All we had to do was show them where to pick and provide the minimal amount of instruction. The opportunity exists to make similar arrangement with any organized group.
- From my marketing experience I would suggest that the more services a subscription program provides, the more attractive the program will be in a world ever more attuned to supermarket convenience. Although as a producer I know that quality is my first consideration, I realize that for many potential customers – those who are not aware of differences in quality – service and convenience rank higher. If I want their business, I must take account of that reality.

Coleman, E., *The New Organic Grower*, Chelsea Green Publishing, White River Junction, VT 05001, 1995, pgs 201-202

## Marketing – The Community Farm

In search of economic sustainability on the farm, many marketing options are available to us at Tarremah Community Farm in Southern Tasmania. There has been a continual fine tuning of the methods of selling vegetable produce.

The decision to market one way or another will influence many facets of your farm enterprise, what to grow, how much to grow, crop rotations, diversity on the farm, farmers time away from the farm doing marketing, number of phone calls at night, cash flow, level of contact with consumers and on it goes.

Generally the more time marketing, the time and energy available to produce the goods. Also biodynamic sustainability will need to encompass cultural and social expression. The farms decision making cannot be sustainably dominated by economics. If this is the case, the result will be monoculture. The nuances of nature, the indications gleaned through observation are likely to be blurred if we see a crop purely from a dollar point of view.

Marketing is mostly about developing relationships between the consumer and the producer. The closer these two become, the greater the appreciation for the product and the greater the level of support. There can develop an understanding of each others needs, so as to continue the marketing relationship. The closer the consumer of our produce is to the farm, the shorter the distance between sourcing inputs, that is; labour, fertility, energy, seeds etc. the more profitable the farm becomes. The ideal being a closed farm system where the farm generates its sustainability.

The marketing option that works for you and the farm organism will ideally mirror your values and needs. An outline of some points to consider in these options follows:

### **Wholesale/Supermarket**

If your farm is structured to specialise in a few lines, you may be tempted to seek the larger markets to take all your produce in one hit. Be wary of relying on a few outlets, it may be better to spread your risk in the marketplace by distributing to numerous suppliers. This is a scale related to strategy, obviously you don't want to do a lot of running around with small quantities of produce to many outlets. However if you do supply only a few supermarkets or wholesalers, the loss of one of these markets will be significant in your turnover. Clearly, monoculture on you farm is high risk. The wholesaler/supermarket direct option may be the outlet to turn over greater quantities. They will demand reliability and continuity of supply and uniform size of product. The Woolworth's chain in Tassie is pushing for a quality assurance accreditation stamp, (over and above our certification standard): specific packaging may be required, often in small take-away size (consider your own packaging sustainability in this one).

Any price or quality negotiations with the wholesaler/supermarket is generally by phone – quite disempowering for the farmer. Also, the wholesaler/supermarket manager is dealing with many suppliers, so as they can ensure large turnover – it is common for growers of the same product to be played off against each other to reduce the price paid to the grower. Contracts are rare in our business – to deepen the relationship mentioned earlier is what to aim for. In negotiating price, be sure to determine who is paying the freight costs, and how long it takes for you to receive payment. In the early years, your cash flow will depend on quick payment – this is negotiable, generally, with the finance manager of the supermarket.

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## Section One: Workplace

### Restaurant/Small Stores

If it is practical to supply these smaller outlets try to develop permanent weekly orders, to reduce phone calls. Chefs and shopkeepers are as busy as farmers and don't want to deal with too many suppliers. It's easier for them to go to a wholesaler and get all they want in one place. However, your biodynamic quality and freshness will be the edge to get the sale. Also offer them something different which they cannot get from wholesalers - i.e. crookneck zucchini, purple beans, striped tomatoes.

In approaching a small store with biodynamic vegetables, you may be able to recommend other suppliers to compliment your produce and thereby develop an organic section in the store. Payment for produce at these smaller outlets may be over the counter, or weekly. You can control this fairly tightly as you are dealing face to face. Packaging can be kept to a minimum with the self serve veggies section of a small store, and even less packaging for the chef who will recreate our produce. The cleanliness of presentation is a more important factor for the restaurant, to save them some preparation time.

A refrigerated van may be necessary to deliver if you need to travel a distance and have chosen leafy vegetables to market. In the early years, you can get away with wet newspaper or cloth wrapped around the fragile vegetables, to keep them cool in transport.

### Retail Sales

Direct to consumer- including on farm stall, home delivery, weekly market stall, mixed box pick up, shop.

Direct customer contact will develop loyalty and repeat business. Pricing will be very competitive, however don't undersell yourself. The produce comes straight from the farm with superior quality and must account for the extra work involved in taking on retailing yourself. You receive invaluable feedback from direct consumer contact; this gives you the edge to adjust, if necessary, the varieties and quantities you grow on the farm.

If sales are at farm stall or markets, the weather can influence sales unless you have a weather protected shopping area. To extend your range, you may consider buying other growers produce to supplement yours. That brings with it further consideration of who carries the cost of unsold produce at the end of the day to avoid waste.

The home delivery/mixed box pick-up is a more definite market, in that you can plan to grow more for the needs of your customers. You are in direct contact weekly and customers preferences can be understood.

If it is a once a week sale, refrigeration may be necessary, and also storage facilities for some produce which needs to be harvested 2-3 times per week: i.e. peas, beans and zucchinis.

In determining pricing of your produce, I have experienced wholesale/supermarket price received to be 20% less than from the small stores/restaurants, and 60% - 100% less than retail price. For example:

	Wholesaler	Restaurant	Retail/farm gate
Salad mix	\$9 per kilo	\$11	\$15
Carrots	\$1.50 per kilo	\$1.80	\$2.50
Beans	\$2.00 per kilo	\$2.50	\$3.50

I hope this helps in your decision as to where you can fit into the market place.

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### **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)**

I have placed this at the end of the article because I think that Community Supported Agriculture is more about marketing the farm as a whole, than marketing the produce. When the CSA is established, there is no marketing necessary. The produce is in effect, presold prior to planting the seed. At Tarremah, we are in our second year of CSA whereby we provide fresh produce all year (weekly pick-up) on a prepaid basis to 48 families. This is a bare-bones description: What has come about for many of the subscribers of the farm is a reconnection to their food service, an appreciation of seasonal vegetables, an understanding of the workings of nature and the realities of farming.

A deeper relationship between the farm, the farmer and the consumer has been created and it is sustainable.

The price of each share is reflective of the needs of the farmer to produce the product long-term. The produce is not the sole focus of the consumer, the farm organism is respected.

*Newsleaf, Journal of Biodynamic Agriculture Australia, Issue No. 38, p12-15*

### **Report on Community Supported Agriculture**

Mark Patton of Tarremah Community Farm, Tasmania, writes "This C.S.A. project we have undertaken is guided by the idea of creating associations out of the needs of producer/farmers and the interests of consumers. By developing this association and taking the production of our food out of the purely economic sphere – supply and demand – we are able to also develop the farm culturally."

With this associative economy model, the community along with the farmer share the responsibilities of environmentally sound agriculture in an innovative economic arrangement. This partnership requires direct connections between producers and consumers, between farmers and the land and between community and the farm. It's about farmers being supported to carry out good land stewardship while they produce food for their local community.

### **Community Supported Agriculture**

Community Supported Agriculture, CSA, is a direct marketing alternative for small-scale growers. In the CSA, the farmer grows food for a group of shareholders (or subscribers) who pledge to buy a portion of the farm's crop that season. This arrangement gives the growers up-front cash to finance their operation and higher prices for produce, since the middleman has been eliminated. Besides receiving a weekly box of bag or fresh, high quality produce, shareholders also know that they're directly supporting a local farm.

*Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas, written by Steve Diver*



## Section One: Workplace

### Community Supported Agriculture

A supporter agrees to share the risks and benefits of food production by providing the farmer with monthly, quarterly or yearly income in return for a box of vegies weekly (this hunger for connection is satisfied through reciprocal nurturing of our Earth). Community owned or responsibility shared farms provide the opportunity for children and adults to reconnect to their food source and to learn and grow together.

People are encouraged to spend time on the farm; to develop the landscape of the farm so it is pleasing to the senses, to develop the soils and plant diversity so that life forces are abundant – indicated by worms, bees, and bird life. This "life" of the farm is reflected in the taste and nutritional quality of the produce and in the satisfaction and well-being of its caretakers.

The farm and the farmer educate consumers as they become involved in the farm. The consumer pays the real cost of food production allowing the farmer to maintain ecologically sustainable farming practices. Consumers begin to value natural resources and to accept an "imperfect" product rather than discard. Gluts are dried or preserved. Recipes are shared. Surplus from one farm can be used to offset crop failure on another giving rise to farm-to-farm co-operation. Recycling of boxes and bags reduce or eliminate the need for packaging. Consumers collect their produce at the farm gate or from some other collection point. A community bonded in this way is also empowered as a lobby group. Cultural identity can evolve from this kind of a pool of skills and resources.

With the market economy model, government support for farming is export driven. The local market is irrelevant. Prices are regulated by supply and demand. "Best practice" takes a back seat to "best price" on the world market as well as the national market. Governments subsidise farmers with drought relief and flood relief to continue farming on marginal land. Farmers are pressured into specialisation and mechanisation to be competitive. Broad-acre monoculture reigns with no place for people and animals (in the case of vegetable production) and the compromised farming practices are ecologically unsustainable. The whole system requires regulations, consultants, wholesalers, retailers, storage, advertising, refrigeration, packaging and transportation. The wholesaler has the balance of power, dictating terms and playing off farmer with farmer for the best price. Consumers don't provide feedback to the farmer on quality or kind of produce as there is no connection. Commercially viable varieties need to be able to travel far, have extended shelf life and still look good. Taste and nutrition are far lesser priorities.

On Mark's farm, an annual payment or share is \$1040.00 for a weekly box for a family of four. He currently provides for 48 families. In summer the box includes beans, beetroot, turnip, basil, carrots, garlic, celery, salad mix, zucchini, onions, parsley, peas, potatoes, radish, spinach, corn, tomatoes and squash as a seasonal example. Half-shares are also an option. Adults and children are invited to help harvest, attend Family Sundays and participate in seasonal festivals. Mark budgets on one day of work a year being given by his supporters.

*Newsleaf*, Journal of Biodynamic Agriculture Australia, Issue No. 39,  
pp39-40

## Section One: Workplace

### **Biodynamics Value Adds Up**

By Mark Gallagher

"Money for jam" the Concise Oxford Dictionary tells us, this means "a profitable return for little or no trouble". In our experience of turning Biodynamic citrus into marmalade, that is not the whole truth.

A few thoughts follow on the value adding process for Biodynamic growers/producers.

My wife Ruth, and I run a certified Biodynamic citrus orchard, Harmony Farm at Kendall on the NSW Mid North Coast. Some four hectares of the 51-hectare property are planted with citrus. Our main varieties are Blood Oranges and Kaffir Limes.

We have been Certified Biodynamic with Biological Farmers of Australia/Australian Certified Organic since 1997 and Certified Organic since 1993. Several years ago we began to wonder what to do with the many large and juicy fruit produced on our Kaffir Lime trees, which were planted mainly for their leaves (an essential ingredient in many South-East Asian dishes).

Although the zest and/or juice are called for in a few recipes, most 'authorities' say the fruit are too dry and sour to be of any culinary use. Since we liked lime pickles and lime marmalade we wondered what would happen if we substituted Kaffie Limes for the more common varieties. We got hold of books on making preserves and began experimenting.

It soon became apparent that one can indeed make a very appetising marmalade with Kaffir Limes.....the lure of value adding dangled enticingly before us. Like a hungry fish we went for it.

Couldn't be too difficult could it? Stick a stove in the corner of the shed, get a few jars together, whip up some labels and you're laughing. Well sort of. We now possess a commercial kitchen adequate for a flash restaurant, we buy jars by the pallet-load and we've considered and rejected more label designs than we want to think about. But we do still laugh occasionally. On the other hand we now produce Certified Organic marmalades that people rave about.

We've lost track of the number of people who have told us that ours is the best marmalade they have ever tasted. So it's not all bad news, it's just that there are a lot of hoops to jump through to get the finished product in your hand. And then you have to sell it. The really good news for Biodynamic producers is that you are starting out with top-notch raw ingredients.

It might be flattering for us to think that we are just fantastically skilled marmalade producers, but the truth is that our Biodynamic farm produces wonderful fruit, whose intense flavour and quality survive our attentions and just jump out of the jar.

That's the amazing bit, in my opinion. Meanwhile, some of the issues to consider if you are looking at value adding include:

- Time/ energy/ labour;
- Cost/ benefit issues;
- Ethic/ ideals; and
- The murky practicalities of marketing.

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## Section One: Workplace

To elaborate: Your time, obviously, is finite. Will you be able to spend the time and have the energy to go through all the value-adding processes on top of producing the raw materials? Will you have to employ people to carry out some of these tasks?

If you do start employing people, or employing more people, will the venture be financially viable? Suddenly you're not just a primary producer, you are a manufacturer, with all sorts of inputs apart from cartons for fresh produce. Since you will presumably want to produce Certified Biodynamic or Organic products, you will have to source appropriately certified inputs.

Federal, State and local Government food safety laws and regulations cascade from the letterbox and Internet, many of which appear to conflict with, or have never contemplated the possibility of, organic certification standards and requirements.

Do you really want to know about bar codes and product recall procedures? Is this what Rudolf Steiner was steering people towards in his Agriculture lectures (we don't have bar codes on our labels, but we don't sell through supermarkets).

Marketing – have a look at how many products offer giveaways and "Your Chance to Win" whatever to entice people to buy them. Do you want to get into that game? I'm not saying don't do it, but do have a good look at that lure before you chomp into it.

On the brighter side, value adding provides the opportunity to introduce a much wider range of people to the benefits of Biodynamic foods. Our Harmony Farm Organics marmalades are marketed (there's that word again) to buyers of Biodynamic/ organic/ health foods and to gourmet food purchasers. Every month we take our marmalades and fresh produce to the Sydney Morning Herald Good Living Growers' Market at Pyrmont – very much a gourmet venue.

I'm sure the vast majority of people attending these markets know nothing about Biodynamics, but every month a lot of them wander home with a jar of marmalade made from Biodynamic fruit, whose label tells them that it's "Naturally Better Biodynamically". A lot of them came back every month for another jar or two. As mentioned above, many of them rave about how good it is. Suddenly they are people who will begin to associate Biodynamics with quality. (Incidentally our marmalades are labelled and sold as Certified Organic because we are unable to obtain Certified Biodynamic sugar and instead make them using Certified Organic sugar).

In many ways, growing Biodynamic produce is already a form of value adding, when compared with conventional or even organic produce. As well, value adding takes many forms, some of which can be quite straightforward and clearly advantageous. The market for organic and Biodynamic products is clearly growing rapidly. If you factor in value adding from the start of a new venture, it may just be the perfect fit for you. And if value adding can increase the number of people farming Biodynamically and eating Biodynamic food then I'm all for it.

Here, try some of this marmalade.....

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## Networks

### Support and Information Networks

Support networks, labour and service requirements could be available through:

- Self
- Family members
- Employees, both casual and permanent
- Friends and neighbours
- Share farmers
- Seed savers networks
- Farmer networks and co-operatives
- CSA's (community Supported Agriculture)
- WOOFers (Willing Workers on Organic Farms)
- Trainees/apprentices
- Volunteers
- Consultants and/or contractors
- Local community groups
- Students on work experience
- Unemployed or retired people
- Affiliated organisations
- Government support employment and training programs.

#### Information Services

- Professional and technical
- Conferences and seminars
- Internet
- Biodynamic Associations:
  - Local groups
  - National associations
  - International bodies
- Associated organisations
- Organic associations
- Permaculture organisations
- Industry bodies associated with horticulture and agriculture
- Newspapers, magazines, books, videos, planting calendars.

## Establishing a Local Biodynamic Group

### Establishing Bio-Dynamics Tasmania: The start and early years

By Colin Cook

The birth of Bio-Dynamics Tasmania was really a three-day seminar held in Ulverstone early in October 1988. But as with all births, a lot had happened to get us to the live stage. I had seen, on ABC TV, the program "Clean Cuisine" and this prompted the thought that what was being done in New Zealand could equally well happen in Tasmania and that we should have some meetings/workshops/seminars to spread the word. With my family I emigrated from Sussex UK in late 1981 and had had a bio-dynamics small holding there. I had had some contacts with the Bio-Dynamics Farming and Gardening Association of Australia starting soon after arriving in Tasmania.

I assumed there would be some group who could set up some form of educational program in Tasmania but this was not so. Clearly, if anything was going to start it was down to me. I put an advertisement in Tasmania Country saying that some Bio-Dynamics seminars were being planned. "Send \$10.00 to help with costs, if you are interested"; a refund was promised if the seminars did not happen. But 30 folks sent their "seed" money and thus provided a guide as to where the interest lay. I assumed this represented the tip of the iceberg – and set about finding what could happen, where and who would do the talking. I cannot recall who and what led me to who and what! But quite quickly we had a comprehensive three-day program led by Terry Forman from Armidale and Peter Proctor of NZ – not then as well known as he is now.

From the beginning, Bio-Dynamics Tasmania was much influenced by Terry and Peter's approach – to be inclusive, to welcome all willing to start to look at things differently and learn about Steiner's teaching – no matter how imperfect they were in their applications and understanding.

Terry and Peter were supported by Hamish McKay from Sydney. Hamish – then the baker at the Waldorf bakery in Glebe – as a pre-cursor ran a "bake-in" at the Lilydale bakery using the wood-fired oven. Loaves baked were then used for the "open sandwich" lunch provided at the first two days at Ulverstone. For the third day we needed at least three times as many commercial "wholegrain" loaves to satisfy the lunch-time appetites!

As an aside, the Ulverstone seminar was a bit of a culture shock for some of us. Firstly, there were these wild looking guys from the hills, Phil, Greg, Neil, Steve, Leigh to recall a few – not looking particularly kempt to my pommy eyes! I wondered what we were in for. The attendees were pretty well blown away by Peter's telling of the bizarre preparations and posed some very direct questions. It was possibly Peter's first teaching outside NZ and he was not – he admitted later – used to such bluntness. It was an amazing three days for many.

The second seminar was held in Lilydale and the third at Cambridge east of Hobart. All seminars were well attended – some 300 people I recall – and the finances worked out well for we finished with a surplus of a few hundred dollars having paid all the expenses.

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## Section One: Workplace

The question "where do we go from here" was asked at each location. Terry and Peter's answer was, "go back to your farms and gardens and start applying what we have been discussing, especially looking at things differently". This was fine but how to work together, to share information and experience? At the time the Organic Farming and Gardening association had numerous branches around Tasmania and were always in difficulty finding officers to run the branches. I concluded that Bio-Dynamics Tasmania did not need a parallel, hierarchical group structure but that a newsletter would be valuable. (I had published a newsletter for the Lilydale Progress Association for some years though that was my only experience in publishing.) The first four issues were to be funded from the surplus generated by the seminars – thereafter some subscription would be required.

Thus "ELEMENTALS" was born. The first was published in November 1988, the second on January 14th 1989. It was soon obvious that a monthly schedule was too onerous for my circumstances and a quarterly seemed too infrequent so I settled for every two months. But then, to emphasise Terry Forman's contention, "that the real calendar is up there – "Not that thing on the wall", I opted for a bi-monthly. It was published on the first quarter of alternate moons and the copy deadline was the preceding new moon. It worked well for me and avoided the rather ordinary spring, summer, autumn, and winter schedule. When I saw the new moon – well, every other one – I knew I had seven days to get the issue out.

We did have Public Liability Insurance for the seminars but Bio-Dynamics Tasmania was not incorporated until some years later. We had developed our own constitution by late 1992 as a set of rules to help us function. I had read a book inspired by anthroposophy – but I have forgotten the name of it – which recommended a form of organisation, based on mandates being given to individual "officers" to conduct the affairs of an association with personal responsibility within the terms of the mandate. The activities of the whole group being harmonised by council meetings – regular but not frequent – presided over by a coordinator. We followed this idea and eschewed the title of president, chairman, CEO and the like. The wisdom of this arrangement, and its appropriateness for a state-wide group, can be seen from Bio-Dynamics Tasmania today. Still the same form with council members having become very experienced and expert in their fields and not calamitous "burn-outs".

I have written this without due and proper recognition of all those who helped the formation and early growth of Bio-Dynamics Tasmania. They are too numerous to mention and the passage of time has dimmed the role and names of many of my helpers and those with whom conversations led to significant moves and decisions. For this I apologise but the early copies of Elementals are revealing for those who would like to pursue the subject – and see the step-by-step progress. There are however two people whose contributions were critical. Mark Chinn offered the free use of his photocopier for the production of ELEMENTALS. Without this we would not have got off the starting blocks. The other is my wife Carol. She designed the logo and Elemental's masterhead and provided artwork "on demand" for the copies I edited, 22 in all. Her drawings of the "prep" herbs for the A3 sized posters that were a feature of ELEMENTALS No. 16 et seq, were a major contribution in familiarising the preparations. Her coloured and laminated versions of these are probably collector's pieces by now!