



# News & Notes of the UCSC Farm & Garden

Issue 106, Summer 2005

## Easy-To-Grow Tarragon Adds Sprightly Flavor to Summer Dishes

- Orin Martin

In Latin it's *Artemisia dracunculis*; the French dub it *herbe au dragon*; and we call it tarragon. *Dracunculus* is also affectionately known as "little dragon," referring to the brownish-red, gnarled, coiled roots of the plant and its serpentine-like appearance. Tarragon is a corruption of the French word *esdragon*, or dragon.

There are written records of tarragon being in cultivation during Greek times (500 BC). Like garlic, there has never been any evidence of tarragon producing flowers and viable seed. It is exclusively propagated asexually (and quite easily) by root divisions or succulent cuttings. There exists a variety of "tarragon" grown from seed and often sold as Russian tarragon, which is to be eschewed. It is, to quote Mick Jagger and the boys, "rather common and coarse," having the aroma of puppy breath and the taste and texture of bicycle inner tubes.

In the Middle Ages, tarragon was thought to increase stamina. Twigs tucked into pilgrims' shoes before long journeys were said to quicken the pace of walking and focus the mind to the task at hand. It was also thought to be useful for drawing the venom from snake bites and for treating the "bite of the mad dog."

At any rate, tarragon is nowadays esteemed for its sprightly flavor. Its essential oil has a zingy, almost effervescent quality. The leaves are used both dried and fresh (fresh is much preferred). Tarragon is the herb of choice, along with fresh dill, on and in fish dishes. And of course it is "de rigueur" in béarnaise sauces. (Question: Has anyone who is not a top notch cook ever really made a béarnaise sauce?)

Probably the most utilitarian manner in which to extend the "fresh" tarragon season is to concoct your own tarragon-herb vinegar. The fresh leaves are steeped in apple cider or white wine vinegar at a heavy concentration for 1-3 weeks. Then the concoction is decanted, that is, poured through a sieve and diluted to the strength desired with straight vinegar. It can then be bottled with a fresh sprig of tarragon in each bottle to enhance the "cutesy herb" look, labeled, and kept at the ready on the kitchen counter next to the highest quality bottle of olive oil. Add a dash of bleu cheese, some fresh sea salt, and you've got an exquisite salad dressing to go with your home-grown salad mix (see page 2).

Tarragon cultivation tips -

- Available in 2" pot starts in May-June in local nurseries
- This perennial, a member of the Asteraceae family, likes light (sandy), well-drained soils, in full sun or partial shade
- Apply compost to the surface in spring and again after the second round of harvest (May-June)
- Tarragon has extensive lateral surface roots, so mulch to protect them
- Make 3-5 cuttings a year for commercial harvest or a sprig or two continuously over the summer
- Subject to leaf fungus along the coast during foggy stretches
- Goes partially to completely dormant in winter; mark the plant's location with a stake so that you can locate it again in spring
- Propagate by dividing root/crown into 2-4" pieces at the end of the winter dormant season just prior to resumption of growth
- Take 3-5" tip cuttings for propagation from June-August
- Moderate nitrogen fertility coupled with ample water, associated with warm sunny weather equals sub-lime quality and quantity of harvests
- If you choose to dry a portion of your crop, harvest leaves in June; be careful to avoid bruising them. Dry them in a single layer in a warm room.

# Some Thoughts on Salad Mixes

## – by Orin Martin

However you assess it—dollars earned, visual and taste delights, and especially as a nutritional bonanza—salad mixes offer huge dividends from small spaces.

The concept is basically simple: a mixture of diverse greens and edible flowers grown quickly with the aid of temperate weather, and ample water and nitrogen. This concoction yields the essence of succulence when combined in various proportions for creative improvisational salads.

Often associated with fast-paced, upscale lifestyles (“yuppy chow”), salad mixes have in reality been a staple of the masses for millennia the world around. An oft-overlooked aspect of salad mix is its high nutritional profile. More conventional salads tend to be exclusively or primarily lettuce based. While tasty, lettuce has a low nutrition rating.

Conversely, salad mixes (mesclun in France, misticanza in Italy) offer ingredients from a wide array of plant families –

- Amaranthaceae (amaranth family)
- Apiaceae (carrot/ parsley family)
- Asteraceae (sunflower family)
- Brassicaceae (cabbage family)
- Chenopodiaceae (goosefoot family)
- Polygonaceae (buckwheat family)
- Valerianaceae (valerian family)
- ... and others

As constituents in a mix, members of these far-flung families offer both a stronger nutritional foundation and a better blend of tastes and textures than lettuce-based salads. Some examples of the above families that can be used in a mix –

- Various leaf amaranths
- Dill, cilantro, chervil, fennel, finocchio, parsley, cutting or leaf celery
- Lettuces, endive, radicchio, dandelion, chicory
- Kale, mizuna (sweet mustard), osaka, purple and red giant mustard, tatsoi, mei, quin choi, pak choi, broad and curly cress, arugala, hon tsai, tai
- Spinach, beet leaves, chard, orach, lambsquarter
- Sorrel
- Mache (corn salad)

Beyond nutrition, the appeal of a salad mix is in its blend of ingredients for visual effect, variability and depth of tastes and textures. The aim is to stimulate the full range of your taste buds. There are four major taste groupings –

- Tangy, spicy, or piquant – many herbs such as basil, sweet marjoram (especially the flower heads), oregano, the hot mustards, pak and bok choi, cresses, sorrel (with its high oxalic acid content), mature arugula, shungiku, orach, amaranths ...

- Bitter – radicchio, endive, dandelion, chicory
- “Sweet” – lettuces, fennel, chervil, anise, hyssop, lavatera flowers, tarragon
- Mild – mizuna, spinach, beet greens, kale, chard, mache (corn salad), tatsoi, mei quin, tah tsai, misome, pak choi

Texture can be divided roughly into two categories –

- Smooth – lettuce (leaf and butter), mache, spinach, young arugula, chard, kale, beet greens
- Crunchy – mei quin (stems or petioles), pak choi, endive, raddichio, chicory

When all factors are combined, the result is a veritable symphony for the palate!

I have always puzzled at most pre-mixed mesclun collections offered by seed companies. A typical mix often contains –

- Lettuces – maturation = 30–40 days
- Arugual – maturation = 20–30 days
- Radicchio and endive – maturation = 90 days
- Chervil and mache – maturation = 70–90 days
- Cresses and mustard – maturation = 20 days

Basically, the quick-germinating, tall and fast-growing species will dominate the early harvest period and then go to seed, outcompeting the slow- and low-growing ingredients. The true, intended, full flavor of the mix will never be realized because of the extreme disparity in growth and maturation rates. Notable exceptions are several of the mixes from Renee’s Garden, including “Italian Misticanza,” “Paris Market Mix,” and “California Spicy Salad Mix” (available from [www.reneesgarden.com](http://www.reneesgarden.com) or in local retail nurseries).

One option is to buy the constituents individually (this may also be more economical) and create a sensible mix yourself. Or better yet, sow separate species (slow-growing and faster-growing) in separate rows or blocks. The separate-species approach affords gardeners the luxury of being creative in an impromptu fashion at harvest time.

*Adapted from an article that originally appeared in Issue 70, Summer 1996 News & Notes.*

# Summer/early Fall Calendar

## Building Garden Structures

*Saturday, July 23, 9 am - 1 pm*

*Louise Cain Gatehouse, UCSC Farm*

Farmer and builder Thomas Wittman shares his knowledge and plans for gazebos, benches, trellises, garden sheds and more at this workshop. Learn how to enhance your garden with wonderful hand-built structures. Appropriate for beginners as well as those with construction experience. No pre-registration necessary. \$15 for Friends' members; \$25 for non-members, payable the day of the workshop.

## Bat Walk and Talk for Kids and Adults

*Saturday, July 30, 6 pm - 8 pm*

*UCSC Farm*

Come see live bats and learn about the important roles that bats play on the farm. Bring a bike light or a flashlight for the walk back to your car. \$5 admission. See [www.lifelab.org](http://www.lifelab.org) or call 459-4035 for details.

## Perennials in the Landscape

*Saturday, August 27, 10 am - 12 noon*

*Louise Cain Gatehouse, UCSC Farm*

Ken Foster, owner of Terra Nova Ecological Landscaping, shares his ideas on incorporating perennials into your yard and garden. Get ready for the fall perennial-planting season (and get ideas for the upcoming Fall Plant Sale!) as you learn about best-performing varieties, drought-tolerant plants, and much more. No pre-registration necessary. \$15 for Friends' members; \$20 for non-members, payable the day of the workshop.

## Life Lab's Benefit Dinner & Silent Auction

*Saturday, August 27, 4 pm - 8 pm*

*Life Lab Garden Classroom, UCSC Farm*

A seasonal farm feast benefiting Life Lab's Garden Classroom programs. Enjoy your five-course meal and wine in the beautiful Garden Classroom overlooking the Monterey Bay. See [www.lifelab.org](http://www.lifelab.org) or call 831.459-4035 for details.

## Farm & Garden Fall Plant Sale

*Friday, September 9, 12 noon - 6 pm*

*Saturday, September 10, 10 am - 2 pm*

*Barn Theatre Parking Lot, UC Santa Cruz  
(corner of Bay & High Streets)*

Fall is a wonderful time to plant vegetable crops that will extend your gardening season and to give perennials a good head start for spring. The region's best-suited varieties of organically grown winter vegetables and landscape plants will be available. Friends' members receive a 10% discount on all plant purchases. Proceeds support the Farm & Garden Apprenticeship training program.

*Note the days: Friday and Saturday.*

## Eat, Drink, and Be Merry!

*Saturday, September 24, 5 pm - 7:30 pm*

*A University Center event at the UCSC Farm*

A four-course dinner with fascinating wines in the UCSC Farm's apple orchard. The University Center's Executive Chef will prepare innovative cuisine using the Farm's produce and herbs to accompany the wines of Caviglia Vineyards. Clint Marsh of the brand new Caviglia Winery will be on hand to discuss his wines with each course. Wine will be available for purchase at the event at tasting room pricing – a wonderful deal. Enjoy a tour of the UCSC Farm before dinner. \$75.00 for members of the University Center, \$85.00 for non-members. Call 831.459-4321 or email [clarkj@ucsc.edu](mailto:clarkj@ucsc.edu) for more information and reservations.

*Also coming up –*

**July 29–31: Gilroy Garlic Festival.** Profits support the community projects, charitable groups, and service organizations of Gilroy. See the garlic festival website for more information: [www.gilroygarlicfestival.com](http://www.gilroygarlicfestival.com)

**August 6–7: Monterey Bay Strawberry Festival, historic plaza, downtown Watsonville.** See [www.mbsf.com](http://www.mbsf.com) for details, or call 831.768-3266.

*If you'd like more information about these events, need directions, or have questions about access, please call 831.459-3240 or see our web site, [www.ucsc.edu/casfs](http://www.ucsc.edu/casfs).*

*Please note that we cannot accept credit card payments for classes (cash or check only).*

*Co-sponsored by the Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems at UC Santa Cruz, and the Friends of the UCSC Farm & Garden.*

## Book Reviews

### California's Wild Gardens: A Guide to Favorite Botanical Sites

edited by *Phyllis M. Faber*

University of California Press 2005

This is the kind of coffee table book that will have gardeners and wildflower enthusiasts reaching for their roadmaps. Over one hundred different botanical sites in California are depicted here, documenting the diversity of the flora in the Golden State, one third of whose 5000 native species grow nowhere else in the world. Captivating color photos capture each site's unique character, enhanced by brief but enticing commentaries provided by some of California's best biologists and ecologists. This book is a must read, must have, and must share!

### The Conquest of Bread: 150 Years of Agribusiness in California

by *Richard A. Walker*

New Press 2004

This history of California agriculture should be on the bookshelf of anyone with a passion for sustainable agriculture, if only as a warning of what not to repeat, for the history of agriculture in California has always been the history of agribusiness. Particularly fascinating is Walker's account of California agriculture's contribution to the eradication of the idea of "seasonality" in the American diet, which started in the 1930s with the year-round availability of iceberg lettuce from Southern California.

## Gardening is Good For You

Research shows that toiling in the soil offers a variety of health benefits –

In a 2002 study of 3,130 women, University of Arkansas scientists found that strenuous yard work (pushing a lawn mower, pulling weeds) had the same beneficial effects on bone density as weight training.

In 2000, researchers in Denmark reported that 30 minutes a day of moderate exercise such as gardening decreased the risk of heart disease by lowering blood pressure and cholesterol.

Exercising mind and body has been proved to reduce dementia risk. Gardening does both. It's an excellent mental workout that requires planning and foresight and encourages learning, says neuropsychologist Paul Nussbaum.

A 150-pound person burns 162 calories pruning, digging, or weeding for 30 minutes. Kids benefit too. A 2003 study showed that non-competitive activities like gardening lure children away from a sedentary lifestyle.

## Visit the Westside Farmers' Market and the Farm & Garden Market Cart!

Folks living in Santa Cruz are blessed with an abundance of choices when it comes to buying fresh, locally grown organic produce. Those choices include food and flowers grown at the UCSC Farm & Garden. Twice a week, the Farm & Garden's Market Cart is open for business at the base of the UCSC campus (corner of Bay & High Streets) from 12 noon to 6 pm.

Now you can also enjoy the Farm & Garden's bounty when you shop at the new Westside Farmers' Market. The market takes place in the parking lot of the Swift Street Courtyard (home of Kelly's Bakery and Bonny Doon Vineyards) at the corner of Swift and Ingalls streets, and is open from 2 pm to 6 pm every Friday. Vendors include a number of small-scale, local, organic growers, many of whom learned their craft through the Farm & Garden Apprenticeship training program.

Come to the markets and support your local growers—it's a great way to learn more about how and where your food is grown, meet the folks who grow it, and keep these small-scale growers in business. And if you want more reasons for "buying local," take a look at Jason Mark's article at right.

## Rose Cutting Tips

*When to cut:* When rose bud has full color and sepals are at least horizontal to buds 1/4 open.

*Time of day:* Cool portions, early morning or late afternoon adds to vase life.

*What with:* Sharp bypass pruners (Felcos).

*How:* Cut long stems above a five-parted leaf that faces outward. Don't leave a stub longer than 1/4-1/8" above the leaf as this contributes to die back. Cut stem bottom at 45° slant.

Immerse flowers immediately in cold water and put in shade in a location with still air to condition or harden flowers, or immerse in warm water (90–100°F) for 1 hour and then transfer to cold water.

You may wish to recut stems underwater to avoid an air lock that will prevent water from moving into the stems.

Recut stems 1/4-1/2" every 1–3 days to extend vase life.

Change water in vase every 1–3 days and wash out vase thoroughly.

Other ways to extend vase life: Combine 1 teaspoon sugar and 1 teaspoon bleach per gallon of vase water. Or use 1 teaspoon of any soft drink with citric acid and sugar per gallon of water.

# Organic, Inc.

— by Jason Mark

At last you can enjoy your movies at home without worrying whether the popcorn you made is genetically modified, pesticide laden or grown using sewage sludge. Early last month, Orville Redenbacher announced that it will begin selling organic microwave popcorn -- more evidence that the organic movement is going mainstream.

The Redenbacher news was coupled with an announcement by Hunt's that later this year it will sell six kinds of canned organic tomatoes. Both brands are owned by ConAgra, one off the largest food-processing corporations in the world. The fact that ConAgra -- a company more often associated with the predations of agribusiness than the promise of organics -- is embracing organic foods raises questions about whether the values of organic agriculture and the motives of big business can co-exist.

Does the mainstreaming of organics represent a victory for farmers and the environmentally minded, or is it a case of corporate co-optation? Can success be reconciled with the organic movement's original intent to bring people closer to their food, or will the very term "organic" be rendered meaningless? How can the organic food industry be at once popular and principled?

"Organic has gone conventional," Jim Leap, manager of a 25-acre organic farm at the Center for Agro-Ecology and Sustainable Food Systems at the UC Santa Cruz, told me recently. "The big companies see a market niche, they see an opportunity, they say, 'Let's Go.' It's become very ruthless with folks grabbing market share."

Leap is right. According to figures supplied by the Organic Consumers Association, a significant and growing percentage of the organic food market is owned by conventional food processors. General Mills owns the organic brands Cascadian Farms and Muir Glenn. Heinz holds a 20 percent equity share in food distributor Hain, which owns Rice Dream soy milk, Garden of Eatin', Earth's Best and Health Valley, along with 15 other brands. Kellogg owns Sunrise Organic, while Philip Morris' Kraft makes the popular vegetarian Boca Burgers. The largest organic seed company, Seeds of Change, is controlled by M&M/Mars, and just five farms are consolidated to market half of the organic produce sold in California. Your morning Odwalla juice is brought to you by Coca-Cola. Some of these brands are 100 percent organic; others are made with organic ingredients. All try to cash in on the cachet of organics.

The large conventional food processors are entering the organic market because it's smart business. Although organics represent a sliver of the U.S. food market -- about 2 percent -- organics are the only sector of the industry experiencing sustained growth. Since 1997, total U.S. food sales have grown between 2 and 4 percent, according to the Organic Trade Association. During that same time, sales

of organic foods grew about 20 percent. Total organic sales are now at \$13 billion, and projected to reach \$30 billion by 2007. General Mills and Heinz are simply doing what any savvy business does: They are following the green.

The entrance of big business into organics has real benefits. The availability of organic products has improved greatly, with some major grocery chains such as Safeway and Kroger's dedicating entire aisles to organics. More organic foods are accessible to more people than at any time since the start of the industrial food era, and for anyone concerned about the environment or public health, this is progress.

At the same time, some farmers and consumer advocates warn, there is a risk that large corporations are seeking to weaken the definition of organic in order to make business easier for themselves. For example, in April 2004 the USDA, at the prompting of large processors, suggested allowing farms to retain the organic seal even if they used animal-growth hormones, fed cattle nonorganic fishmeal, or sprayed some kinds of pesticides. The USDA only backed down after intense consumer complaints.

Critics also question whether the agribusiness model can harmonize with the organic ethic: A 100-acre monocrop planted with a single variety of vegetable and picked by migrant workers hardly fits with the organic vision of ecologically sustainable and socially responsible farming. The challenge is how to reconcile organic agriculture's emphasis on biodiversity and small-scale production with corporations' emphasis on uniformity and mass-marketing.

So what's a consumer to do? If you value foods free of pesticides and genetically modified organisms, by all means look for the USDA organic label and let your dollar be an expression of your values. At the same time, remain vigilant about efforts to water down the organic standards and work to ensure the integrity of the organic name.

But the best guarantee that your food will be produced according to environmental and social principles is to meet the people who grow it. Support your local farmers' market and become friendly with the vendors there. Or get a subscription with a Community Support Agriculture program, in which you get weekly food deliveries from a specific farm. Those outlets represent the original ethic of the organic food movement: That by knowing your farmers, you will truly get to know your food.

*Jason Mark is a student in this year's Apprenticeship training program, and is the co-author, with Kevin Danaher, of "Insurrection: Citizen Challenges to Corporate Power" (Routledge, 2003). He is researching a book about the future of food. This article originally appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle's editorial section on June 9, 2005.*



### Meet the 2005 Apprentices

Here's a brief introduction to the second half of the group of apprentices who joined us on April 11 to begin the 6-month training course in organic farming and gardening (we profiled the other half of the group in the *Spring News & Notes*). This year's group comes from across the U.S., as well as Mexico and the Netherlands.

Your membership in the *Friends of the UCSC Farm & Garden* helps support this internationally known training program by providing funds for scholarships, teaching staff, equipment, and facility improvements. Come meet some of this year's class at the Market Cart or drop by the Farm and Chadwick Garden to say hello.

**Jen Miller:** Growing up in the Boston area, I lived on cement until high school when I went to work for The Food Project and, consequently, became addicted to organic agriculture. Since then I've worked for another agricultural nonprofit, a few farms (including one where I discovered the endless amusement of watching chickens), and at an educational dairy farm. My goal is to educate people about the importance of sustainable organic farms and local food systems.

**Judith Moran:** I have experience in backyard and community gardening. This is my first apprenticeship and I'm looking forward to learning a lot. I've lived in the Midwest, Alaska and New England, most recently Providence, Rhode Island. I've worked mainly at non-profit social services. I like slow food and making goat's milk soap. One day I hope to have a small but diversified farm with a barn that has space for a yoga studio.

**Henry (Har) Ondunk** (The Netherlands): Unfulfilled by the hyper-materialistic way "life should be lived," I have now, mid-career, mustered energy and guts to make a change. From personal experience as a contract worker in the tulip bulb industry, as well as by just looking around, I have witnessed the dangers and problems of industrial agriculture. It is my dream to assist my partner with establishing agroecology centers in the Philippines and the Netherlands.

**Coria Pierce:** I grew up working on a small fruit and vegetable farm in New Hampshire. Over many years on the farm, I developed my dream of eventually opening a farm school. Since college, I have taught, coached, tutored students of all ages in Vermont, San Francisco and Los

Angeles. I am excited to continue to develop my experience in organic farming and ultimately combine my passion for sustainable farming and teaching to open a Farm School.

**Virginia Ramos:** I am interested in urban gardens and agriculture, issues of food security and justice around the world, and in environmental education of K-12 students through experiential learning. I've done work in natural habitat restoration in urban parks, mentored kids through the East Bay Conservation Corps, volunteered at community gardens, and most recently completed a training program in Thailand on permaculture, deep ecology and natural building and design.

**Blair Randall:** I come to the CASFS Apprenticeship from Kindergarten at the Nueva School, where for the last three years I have been a Teaching Assistant (and Garden Manager for the last year). I graduated from UCSC in 1999 with a degree in art and have, ever since, been working to stitch together my interests in functional art, progressive causes, teaching and growing food. My current plan is to be a Garden Specialist Teacher for elementary age children.

**Molly Rockamann:** From St. Louis originally, I did my undergrad in environmental studies at Eckerd College (Florida). I spent this past year studying towards a Master's in Development Studies at the University of the South Pacific. My hope is to return to Fiji next year to help convince their government, sugar companies, and farmers to shift to organic production methods to revive the sugar-driven export business that is the backbone of their national economy.

**Jamie Self:** From a sweet family in Davis, California, I am a naturalist, gardener, educator, cook, artist, and humanitarian. My work experience includes restorative and edible landscaping, organic farming, and environmental education. I am a natural scientist with passionate interest in conservation, FOOD, agrarianism, organic agriculture, community food security, human health and equity, appropriate technology, and issues of sustainability. My future may include graduate studies and work in ecological stewardship aimed at nurturing whole communities.

**Karina Serna:** Since Summer 2002, I have worked at Farm Fresh Choice, a South and West Berkeley-based food justice program. I worked alongside farmers, youth, and community members to increase support for local sustainable agriculture and access to healthy fresh foods in Berkeley's low-income neighborhoods. Prior to this, I studied Permaculture in Hawaii and Central America, and taught organic gardening to children. I hope to increase my skills as a farmer and educator.

**Dave Shaw:** I am a specialized generalist. I have limited experience with horticulture, though I consistently engage with permaculture, ethnobotany, agroforestry and rare tropical fruit. Some of my activities in Santa Cruz include: food canning, dehydration, fermentation, nutrition, and cooperative distribution; organizing biofuels coopera-

tives in California; appropriate technology for local self-reliance; Marxism; documentary film; new economy; anti corporate globalization; food, energy and water security; dumpster diving and food not bombs; homesteading; comprehensive education; and love.

**Elizabeth Sipple:** I grew up in the cradle of Vermont's Green Mountains in a farming community. After experiencing industrial farming in South Carolina and the exhausted soils of Haiti, my appreciation for the family farm grew into my commitment to help recreate the viability of small-scale agriculture. I plan to work to rebuild the soils of Haiti in the future.

**Jen Smith:** I grew up in Washington, DC, and have worked on organic farms and gardens in Virginia, Ohio and California. I have spent this past year on a small garden in the Santa Cruz Mountains, growing fruits and vegetables, preserving food, milking goats, making cheese, teaching kids and learning about beekeeping. I studied art history in college and I dream about starting a farming collective on the East Coast.

**Violet Stone:** I grew up on a 600-acre wildlife preserve in a small dairy farming community in Pennsylvania. After graduating from Oberlin College, I worked for a season on a small organic vegetable farm in Washington State and sold at the Pike Place Farmers Market. I've spent the past three years in New York's Hudson Valley organizing and operating farmers markets. Besides local food, I am passionate about music and enjoy taking long walks.

**Sandy Thiel:** I am enchanted by the miracles and beauty of the natural world. I grew up in Lake Tahoe, California. I enjoy being outside and leading a healthy active lifestyle. I have a degree in kinesiology from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. I've interned on organic farms in SLO, Sierra Nevada Mountains, and Big Island of Hawaii. I desire to farm and garden organically in my future and provide people with healthy living food.

**Giovanni Villarino (Mexico):** My interest in the Apprenticeship emerges from my deep-rooted passion for nature. After I acquire the knowledge this course offers, I plan to have an organic farm, which would be the base to build an ecovillage, I have also a project to build a centre of well-being which would include: a nature shop, a greenhouse of medicinal herbs, a healing centre and ecological consulting. Building this business in Mexico has been a lifelong dream.

**James Ward:** I live in Santa Rosa, California. I have been taking classes in Sustainable Ag at Santa Rosa Junior College. In 2003, I completed a certificate program in agriculture/horticulture through the Sonoma County Office of Education. After the apprenticeship I would like to go into the Peace Corps to teach children in third world countries about sustainable ag. Eventually I want to have my own farm in Northern California.

**Sacha Webley:** I have managed and worked in community gardens and small farms for the last few years,

teaching teenagers about seeds, plants and compost. I grew up in Portland, Oregon but have lived in the San Francisco Bay Area for the last six years. In addition to growing things, I am also a writer, drawer and really into trees. In the future, I hope to farm and write books.

**Kirstin Yogg:** My longtime interest in agriculture has taken a more practical form over the past couple years with "Tierra Lucero," a non-profit dedicated to community outreach through agriculture and education. Originally from the East Coast, the landscape of Taos, New Mexico is now my home. I enjoy backcountry skiing and hiking in the mountains with my dog, and I plan to continue to address issues of food security and nutrition in New Mexico.

**Zane Young:** I have no prior experience with practical organic gardening/farming, but I am extremely excited and passionate about experiencing it first hand. From everything I have learned in my short time on this planet about environmental change and human ecological impacts originating and proliferating from the "developed" north, it makes sense to pursue a lifestyle that improves the environment, starting with myself and the land.

## Alumni Updates

**Alex Moore** (class of 2004) checks in from southern California with this update from his new job:

I'm working as the Education Program Coordinator at UC Hansen Trust, a trust that was established through the donations of Thelma Hansen to sustain the economic and cultural future of agriculture in Ventura County, California.

As the Education Program Coordinator I create and implement education and outreach programs in agricultural literacy. Currently our education program runs field trips for grade schoolers, awards grants and awards, puts on community events and hosts an agricultural seminar for teachers each year. We collaborate with community partners such as: Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), Ag Futures Alliance, Future Farmers of America, Master Gardeners and California Women for Agriculture.

**Greg Peck ((1996) and Kathi Colen (1995)** write from upstate New York:

We moved from Washington State to Ithaca this past January when I started my PhD program at Cornell. I am working on organic and integrated apple production systems for the Northeast. Kathi has recently landed a job as the Executive Director of the Ithaca Children's Garden. And Ethan, who will turn 3 on July 3, is busy at a Montessori school 4 days a week working on blocks and trikes. Overall we're doing well, but really busy—especially during the summer growing season. I saw Sean Swezey at a conference last week, sounds like the apprenticeship is doing well. Do say hi to all your cohorts!

## *Marinated Veggie Kebabs*

Choose among the following –

cherry tomatoes  
red or yellow onions, cut into chunks  
big cloves of garlic  
globe eggplant, cut into chunks, or sliced Japanese eggplant  
mushrooms  
bell peppers, cut into squares  
extra-firm tofu, cut into cubes and patted dry  
tempeh, cut into cubes  
broccoli, separated into separate stalks  
new potatoes  
summer squash  
ETCETRA!

1. Choose about 2 pounds of whatever looks good!
2. Make marinade (at right).
3. If you're using tofu or tempeh, place it in a medium bowl and pour 1/3 of the marinade over it. Toss it gently to coat, cover, and refrigerate for 4–8 hours, stirring occasionally.

4. In a large bowl, combine the vegetables, pour on the remaining marinade, and follow the directions in step 2.

5. Thread the veggies and tofu or tempeh in a pleasing, alternating sequence on skewers. Cook over hot coals for 15 minutes or so, turning the skewers every 5 minutes, and brush with leftover marinade a few times while cooking and once again just before serving. Serves 4 to 6. Great with steamed brown rice or pilaf.

Marinade –

1/2 cup olive oil  
4 tablespoons lemon juice  
5 tablespoons tamari  
2 1/2 tablespoons sesame oil  
4 garlic cloves, pressed or minced fine  
1 teaspoon ground ginger  
1 teaspoon fresh or dried basil  
2 scallions, thinly sliced  
salt and pepper to taste

Combine all the ingredients in a jar with a lid and shake.

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