



Winter in America 2009

Passing through the darkest period of the winter solstice, shrouded by the gloom and doom of climate destruction, war, and economic depression, making our way around the broken promises of “change we can believe in,” we nonetheless find ourselves celebrating life and the redemptive power of a global Organic Revolution. We at the Organic Consumers Association (OCA) are fired up for action, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with you and our sisters and brothers in the organic community, now millions strong, at this turning point in history.

We believe that 2010 and the new decade is the end of the road for chemical food and GMO agriculture. It is also the beginning of the end for non-sustainable, fossil fuel-based transportation and industry, and a “profit-at-any-cost” economy based upon over-consumption, war, and commercial conquest. We invite you to join us on the organic road, the Via Organica, as we dismantle the old system and rebuild the new, starting with our local households, communities, and regions.

Now is a good time to look back and evaluate our work over the past year and map out our goals and campaigns for the future. In 2010 we will continue to safeguard and enforce strict organic standards, fight for Fair Trade and labor justice, and take on Monsanto and Food Inc. But we also intend to broaden our campaign focus to include the full range of our suicidal industrial food and farming system: the chemical fertilizer industry, the solid waste garbage industry, and the toxic sewage sludge cartel.

As we plan and strategize, we must also raise the money we need to carry out our work. With virtually all of our support coming from grassroots contributors such as yourself, we need your help more than ever. Please send us a tax-deductible contribution now! www.is.gd/5CvXr

Beyond the Dark Days: Is This What Democracy Looks Like?

In 2009, indentured politicians, bought and sold by the corporate elite, crushed our hopes for peace and prosperity by spending trillions of our tax dollars on war, Wall Street, and corporate welfare, instead of funding organic transitions and a Green New Deal. In 2010 we must begin to reverse these warped and dangerous public policies and rein in corporate greed, before it's too late.

In *Organic Bytes*, the OCA keeps you informed on the corrupting influence of special interest money in politics. One of the most striking examples of this moral and political corruption is the number of “Monsanto Men” that Obama has appointed to his administration.

In the 2010 Congressional election year, we pledge to be your watchdog, keeping track of Big Biotech and Food Inc.'s campaign contributions to politicians, giving you the opportunity to defend the public interest and make your voice heard. www.is.gd/5szRI



The High Cost of So-Called Cheap Food

Over the past 65 years, chemical agriculture, factory farms, and now genetic engineering have devastated public health, wrecked the environment, and destabilized the climate. The US public now spends \$2.4 trillion dollars a year on health care, \$800 billion of which is directly attributable to consuming chemical-laden junk food.

After poisoning us with cheap food and destroying the environment, Big Food Inc. turns us over to Big Pharma and the Industrial Health Complex to repair the damage, or rather to keep us alive long enough to extract maximum profits. But from the warped perspective of the for-profit health insurance industry, overweight and diseased people aren't very profitable. That's why health insurance corporations spend \$350 billion per year trying to avoid coverage and deny claims. The vast, paper-pushing bureaucracy the for-profit insurance industry has created to help them avoid providing services soaks up 31% of all health care spending!

If we shifted the 31% of health care spending taken up by the administrative costs of the for-profit health insurance industry to a single-payer, universal health care system, we could cover the uninsured without increasing total health-care spending. The OCA supports single-payer, universal health care, with a focus on preventive health, diet, nutrition and stress-reduction.

However: If President Obama signs a bill that takes away our health rights, that forces Americans to buy overpriced, inadequate coverage from the for-profit health insurance industry, OCA will launch a boycott!

Eventually, we have to stop arguing over who's going to pay for out-of-control health care costs and restore public health! The real solution to our health care crisis is to stop subsidizing chemical and GMO food and farming, along with the destruction of our environment and our climate, and make the long overdue transition to organics. Then, under universal healthcare or Medicare for All, we can shift from health care that treats sickness caused by unhealthy food and an unhealthy environment and lifestyle to health care that promotes wellness.

Take Action: www.is.gd/5CvE5

Will We Survive the Climate Crisis?

World leaders left the UN climate talks in Copenhagen without an agreement to reduce the threat of deadly greenhouse gases. The level of CO² in the atmosphere already exceeds the dangerous tipping point of 350 ppm. We're currently at 387 ppm. Even if we were able to reduce CO² to 350 ppm, we would still experience a 2.7 degree Fahrenheit increase in temperature by 2100, but life on the planet would remain possible. If we continue with business as usual, in 2100 the level will be 965 ppm CO² (+ 8.6F). If the world acts on proposals for CO² reduction confirmed in Copenhagen, in 2100 the level will be 770 ppm CO² (+ 7F).

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That's the best-case scenario right now, a 7 degree temperature rise, and some predict it could come as early as 2060, in time for you or your children to experience Climate Hell first-hand.

Unless we reverse global warming, the earth, which is expected to have nine billion people in 2050, will have a carrying capacity for only one billion—or less.

With world leaders taking us off the cliff towards global suicide, the life-saving organic transition is up to us. We need to come together as like-minded people to make the changes in our own lives that will make survival possible. www.is.gd/5CvL2

The Sun Returns! The Future is Organic!

One way or another, either planned or through necessity, humanity will return to organic and traditional agriculture, because it is the only farming system that can supply the world with sufficient quantities of healthy food in the emerging era of global warming, erratic weather, declining fossil fuels and water scarcity. There is no other way. In 2009, the OCA spent a good part of our efforts focusing on the connection between global warming and industrial agriculture and the promise of organic agriculture to mitigate and reverse climate change by:

- 1 · Drastically reducing the global industrialized food system's 44-57% share of global greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2 · Sequestering billions of tons of CO². If we converted the world's 3.5 billion acres of farmland to organic, we would sequester 40% of global greenhouse gas emissions, removing excess CO² from the atmosphere and storing it in the soil, where it belongs.

If we also organically managed the world's 11 billion acres of pastures, rangelands and forests we could potentially sequester 100% of greenhouse gas emissions.

Take Action: www.is.gd/5CvOc

Making the Organic Transition: Taking on the Fertilizer, Garbage and Sludge Industries

The reason industrial agriculture erodes and depletes the soil food web, destroying plants, trees, and soil's natural capacity to clean the atmosphere and sequester CO₂, is the suicidal use of billions of pounds of synthetic nitrogen fertilizers, soil destroying pesticides, herbicides and fungicides, insecticidal GMO crops, factory farm waste, and toxic sewage sludge instead of organic compost and cover crops. In 2010 OCA will expose this deadly chemical and GMO attack on the planet's soil food web and make genuine certified organic fertilizer and compost the norm, rather than just the green alternative.

In the US, we throw away, as food waste, 40% of all of our food each year. Production of that wasted food accounts for more than one-quarter of the US's total annual freshwater consumption and equates to 300 million barrels of oil. Even worse, this enormous volume of non-composted food waste rotting in landfills emits tremendous amounts of methane, a greenhouse gas 20-70 times more damaging than CO².

In the US today about 80 gallons of water per day per person is flushed or drained into our vast and ill-designed sewage system, much of it being valuable potable water flushed down the toilet. In the sewage or wastewater stream, this household sewage (unfortunately, in most households, already carrying toxic chemicals from non-organic body care, home cleaning products and pharmaceutical drugs) is mixed with hospital and industrial waste, pharmaceuticals, street storm water run-off and chemical lawn and farm run-off as it enters into the so-called "sewage treatment" plant. After nominal "treatment" this wastewater is sent downstream for the next community to chemically treat it and declare it "safe," while billions of pounds of toxic sludge are left behind.



Instead of isolating and containing America's toxic sewage sludge as hazardous waste - which is what it is - industry and city governments save money by renaming this toxic sludge as "biosolids" and spreading it on non-organic farms (and backyard gardens and public lands) across the country.

One of the most outrageous practices is the sale (in garden supply stores) or giveaway (to schools and backyard gardeners) of toxic sewage sludge as "organic fertilizer" or "organic compost."

The EPA has aided and abetted this hazardous practice for several decades by claiming that the toxic chemical poisons, heavy metals, pathogens, pes-

ticides, and pharmaceutical drug residues routinely contained in sewage sludge are diluted to "acceptable levels." In 1998 OCA and the organic community successfully fought to keep toxic sewage sludge out of national organic standards, but we now need to ban sewage sludge on non-organic farms (and all land applications) as well.

In the organic future, valuable organic matter in the waste stream will neither be wasted nor mixed with other garbage or toxins. It will be separated at the source, at homes and businesses, mixed with animal manures and green wastes in a central location, and made into valuable organic compost (natural fertilizer or food for the soil). This organic compost can then be supplied to organic and transition-to-organic farms, backyard gardens, landscaping, and other land use applications. This is the only way we can eliminate the two billion pounds of chemical fertilizers applied to non-organic farms every year in the US which contaminate the atmosphere, kill the soil, and destabilize the climate with nitrous oxide; meanwhile polluting city tap water and killing fish and marine life, creating massive "dead zones."

Zero-waste recycling and the creation of an abundant, affordable supply of organic compost is an essential part of our organic future. In 2010 OCA will begin to expose and challenge business as usual in the fertilizer, garbage, and sludge industries. organicconsumers.org/sludge.cfm