



Rise Up! Regenerate!

“...the care of the earth is our most ancient and most worthy and, after all, our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of it, and to foster its renewal, is our only legitimate hope.” – Wendell Berry, *The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays*

It was a soil scientist who reminded me recently of something we self-obsessed humans often forget: We don't need to worry about saving the planet. The planet will save itself. Planet Earth will survive in one form or another, no matter what damage we humans inflict on it. The question is, will we survive with it?

Or will we destroy Earth's ability to sustain life, all life, as we know it?

We had that conversation sitting around a table in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, where about 100 people from 22 countries gathered in September for the second Regeneration International (RI) General Assembly. We were there to evaluate what the group had accomplished since our last gathering in June 2015, when we launched RI, and what we wanted—and needed—to do next.

We came from different organizations, different countries, different backgrounds. We were scientists, farmers, activists, business leaders, policy wonks, writers.

Our concerns ranged from environmental pollution, health, food safety and food sovereignty to economic and social justice, the global refugee crisis and global warming.

We had come together to renew our commitment to the one movement that we believe has the power to address all our individual and collective concerns, the movement that holds the most hope for resolving the multiple and deepening global crises of hunger, poverty, crumbling political systems and climate change.

The Regeneration Movement. The movement that begins with healing our most critical resources—soil, water, air—through better farming and land management practices. And ends with healing our local communities and global societies. orgcns.org/2AIRUSY

Rural Reality

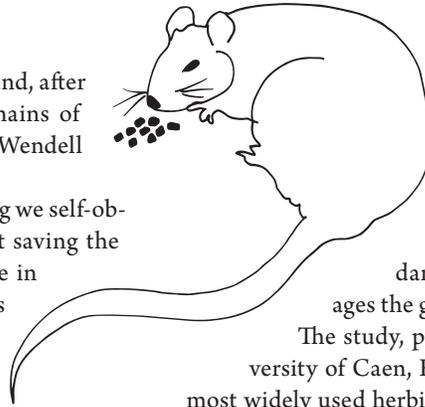
What better way to start the new year than by focusing on renewal and regeneration—in this case, the regeneration of America's struggling rural economies through support for organic food and farmers.

The stark reality is this: The rural communities that the vast majority of us depend on to grow our food suffer some of the highest poverty rates in the U.S.

The nonprofit Feeding America reports that 75% of U.S. counties with the highest rates of food insecurity are in rural areas. And 86 percent of the counties with the highest rates of child food insecurity are rural.

The statistics for rural farmers are even more bleak. A 2016 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that people working in agriculture—farmers, farm laborers, ranchers, fishers, and lumber harvesters—commit suicide at a rate higher than any other occupation. How do we turn these numbers around? How do we provide hope for rural farmers and communities?

One way is to take our farming system back from corporate agribusiness and return it to local farmers—by providing assistance and incentives to help those farmers transition to regenerative organic farming methods and build local and regional food hubs. Take Action: orgcns.org/2Ajoc3E



Rats!

We're only beginning to learn the importance of healthy gut bacteria to our overall health—and the relationship between healthy soil and the human microbiome.

Now a new study shows that Monsanto's Roundup® weedkiller, which we already know damages healthy soil microbial activity, also damages the gut microbiome of rats.

The study, published by Prof Gilles-Eric Séralini at the University of Caen, France, raises new alarms about glyphosate, the most widely used herbicide in the world despite mountains of research pointing to the weedkiller's damaging impacts on human and environmental health.

According to an article published this month by Mercola.com, 70 to 80 percent of your immune function resides within your gastrointestinal tract, or “gut.” Poor gut health is associated with autism, behavioral disorders, diabetes, gene expression and obesity.

If, as this recent article in the *Atlantic* claims, “The microbial community in the ground is as important as the one in our guts,” then the new Séralini study doesn't bode well for us humans—especially if we keep dousing the world's soils with glyphosate, and consuming glyphosate-contaminated foods. orgcns.org/2lF4BIO

Tempest in the Teapot

The folks at Bigelow tea aren't too happy that we're suing the company for calling its glyphosate-contaminated tea “natural.” They're also not happy that you're calling them, emailing them and posting on social media about the Roundup® weedkiller in their tea. (Thank you, by the way, for doing that).

So Bigelow put out a statement. We responded.

Bigelow is cashing in on the exploding market for “Natural” and “All Natural” foods by using those words on product packaging—even though the company knows its tea contains glyphosate, the active ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup® weedkiller.

The company also knows that consumers—at least 55 percent of them—will pay more for a product sold by a company that claims to be “socially responsible.”

Here's what we know. Any company that knowingly sells glyphosate-contaminated products is not environmentally friendly or “socially responsible.” And its products aren't “all natural.”

Take Action: orgcns.org/2B8jrya

True Costs

Leather is an agricultural product. We often forget that.

Leather is also a product that went from being highly localized and utilitarian—we made shoes to cover our feet—to highly industrialized. Most consumers no longer think about where the leather in their shoes or bags or car seats or furniture came from, much less what impact the production of that product had on the land or animals.

But as this video from the Savory Institute reminds us, everything we do—and everything we buy—has an origin and an impact. As consumers, we can make choices that minimize the exploitation of our land, animals and people. What do you know about where the leather in your shoes or couch came from? How can you find out more? orgcns.org/2DsXYAT