



The Post Carbon Clearing

Food Security, Resource Depletion & Climate Change

by Fredrick D. Carter, co-founder

Nourishment is a prerequisite for life. In a society where food is a commodity, many of us take food for granted. We assume that food will be forever present and that what we want to eat will be available when we want to eat it, indefinitely. There is mounting evidence that our food is not secure.

Resource depletion is threatening present and future food production. Rising fossil fuel prices, due to peak oil and natural gas, are reflected in the 75% rise in food prices over the past 2 years. Most of the food we eat is ushered over 1500 miles using massive amounts of crude oil. Embodied energy costs for production are chipping away at the bottom-line in commercial agriculture and food industry. After a crop leaves the farm, 2.5 times more fossil fuel energy is spent in food processing, packaging, transport and sales than what was needed to culture and harvest the crop.

Other natural resources that are necessary for food production and in limited supply are clean water and healthy soil. Dwindling amounts of both have led to chemically laden plants and animals in the food chain and soaring cases of environmentally related illnesses.

Thousands of acres of deforested lands contribute to

rising CO2 emissions, a main contributor to climate change and global warming. Unpredictable weather patterns and a rise in environmental disasters have affected food production world wide. The wide spread use of GMOs is a looming threat to food security. 90% of all U.S. citizens purchase their food from supermarkets. Processed foods account for 3/4ths of all food sales globally. In truth, our food is far from secure.

The Food Security Coalition of North America defines community food security as *a condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self reliance and social justice.*

The beginning basics of community food security are:

1. Local organic food production
2. Eating whole, natural, organic, local food
3. Low fossil fuel, organic gardening
4. Collective wholesale food buying

Care for the Black Oaks Day

by Jifunza Wright, co-founder

On an unusually warm October morning, Mama Roberta, parents and members of the Dr. Doolittle Science Club of Betty Shabazz International Charter School excitedly descended from the school bus on to Black Oaks Center soil. With drums, dancing feet and hands, everyone sang acknowledgements before beginning our mission: to care for the black oaks while learning more about the Black Oak Savanna. After encircling to discuss resource depletion and climate change, eager, young hands set out to care for the black oaks by gathering dead branches that could propagate fires and planting an abundance of

acorns in wooded areas. Worked up appetites were quenched by delicious organic soups made by Mama Roberta, locally grown apples & apple cider. Then the young earth scientists set out to be Black Cowboys & Girls on horseback at the *Boots & Saddles Ranch*. It was a memorable day that will become an annual fall event. The dead wood gathered will be used for homesteading at Black Oaks this winter.

Asante Sana Dr. Doolittle Science Club!!!

Inside this issue:

Food Security, Resource Depletion & Climate	1
Care for the Black Oaks Day	1
Ways to Secure Food for Your Family	2
Healing Tasty Indigenous Paw Paw	2
Black Oaks Center Chicago/E-WALES Update	3
Black Oaks Center on the Savanna	3
The Black Oaks Center Blog FYI	4

"I love to think of nature as an unlimited broadcasting station, through which God speaks to us every hour, if we will only tune in".

*George Washington Carver

Ways to Secure Food for Your Family

Grow your own food!!!

Encourage mosques, churches, schools and civic organizations to do collective organic gardening.

Create outdoor and indoor gardens that are maintained chemical free.

Plant berry bushes, nut and fruit trees and other perennial food crops. Grow herbs & vegetables by the door, in the back yard, in a vacant lot, or even in a sunny window.

Eat locally grown healthy food

Organic food that is grown within 100 to 200 miles of where you live is not only healthy for you but healthy for the local economy.

Eat foods that are in season.

Eating with the seasons helps to strengthen the immune system. It is very much a part of being "grounded" & in harmony with the nature around you.

Purchase healthy food collectively in bulk when possible.

Join a food buying club or a co-op. Go in with family and friends to purchase items that everyone needs in volume wholesale and split it up. This saves not only time & money in the long run, but frees you up to do other things besides routine grocery shopping.

Stock up on dry goods especially during inclement weather. Keep them in pest free containers.

Air tight glass jars, stainless steel or tin containers make it difficult for unwanted varmints to take advantage of

your stash. Store staples in cool, dry areas.

Keep some of your household savings as family food storage, at least 2 to 3 months worth.

The beauty of buying food in bulk is having surplus in the event of an emergency. You are now less vulnerable to any unexpected crisis.

Store what you eat and eat what you store.

This will make your family more safe, secure and in control during hard times.

Buy directly from farmers with healthy farming practices.

Not all farmers can afford the expense of being a certified organic farmer, but they do practice organic farming. Seeking out and purchasing food grown from such farmers in your area is a cornerstone to community food security and a beginning of economic relocalization.

Learn how to process foods in ways that do not require ongoing energy use like a cold storage, dehydrating, pickling, brining and canning.

These are low energy, safe ways to store food in the event of power outages.

Save & preserve organic, heirloom seeds, plants and animals.

Over 50 % of the seeds available are genetically engineered and will not reproduce. This is a constant threat to food security. Heirloom husbandry is another way to secure local food.

Tasty, Healing, Indigenous Paw Paws

Little, loving hands have been planting the first of cultivated indigenous, medicinal trees at Black Oaks Center on the Savanna. Paw Paws are the Midwest region's banana. They are also called Prairie bananas, Indiana Hoosier bananas and Michigan bananas. *Asimina triloba* is the only of its kind that are deciduous and grow in a northern, cold climate. Its cousins: sweetsop, soursop, custard apple and cherimoya are all evergreens and grow in tropical areas.

The tree has a deep taproot that takes off after 2 to 4 yrs growing as tall as 20 feet. Paw Paw trees are found in nature as an understory tree or brush, reminding us of the folksong "Way Down Yonder in the Paw Paw Patch". Its tropical green leaves are large and oblong shaped. They turn a golden yellow brown in the fall.

The blooming of an orchid looking flower occurs from March to May before its leaves return from winter slumber. Varying from white to a red purple, these flowers require cross pollination by flies or beetles as its aroma is not attractive to bees. Once fertilized,

several fruits can come from one bloom. The paw paw berry is the largest fruit native to North America growing to as long as 10 inches and weighing as much as a pound. Its shape and taste are like a cross between a banana and a mango. Packed with more nutrition than most fruit, it is loaded with protein and potassium. The custard like pulp has 4 to 20 times more magnesium, 20 to 70 times more iron and 10 times more calcium than a banana, apple or orange.

Asimicin is a compound found in the fruit, bark and twigs that has prevented the production of cancer cells at a concentration far less than most chemotherapeutic agents. Ancient native civilizations used the bark as medicine and for making fiber. Homeopathically, pawpaw has been used to treat scarlet fever and rashes.

Thank You CMECCA School, Janine and Johnathan Arther and our son Akin!



Paw Paws were found growing abundantly in fertile soils east of the Mississippi Valley long before settlers came.

Black Oaks Center Chicago

2008 is bound to be a "Green Season" splattered with E-WALES activities and events.

February, Black History Month: E-WALES Environmental Consortium Movie Series, Center for Inner City Studies

It will be Friday night at the movies featuring documentaries that will inform the community about critical environmental issues along with panel discussion and audience interaction.

May: The Green Festival 2008

The Green Festival is coming to town again and E-WALES plans to have a booth. Contact Fred Carter if you are interested in participating.

May/June: The Southside Green Tour

Stay tuned for Southside Green Tour! It will be a mix of Southside residences and businesses that are reducing their carbon footprint, diversifying energy use and practicing E-WALES. Transportation will be provided by our very own Southside biodiesel buses of *Beckhan Bus Company*

July/August: Black Oaks Center w/ Fred & Jifunza

Intro to Sustainability & Permaculture will impart tools to prepare for an energy decent while improving quality of life.

Please check the blog for details on all these events.

E-WALES Environmental Consortium

We as African Americans have a God given right to live, work, play, learn and worship in a healthy environment, sustainably. We as have a responsibility to do all that we can personally and collectively to revitalize our communities, to care for and utilize the life sustaining resources of energy, water, air and land (the earth) wisely. Doing so side by side with other communities, will secure present and future resources for our children.

E-Energy

To conserve and efficiently utilize all sources of energy, in every aspect of our lives including: housing, transportation, heating, cooling, our day to day activities and our own personal energy. To learn skills of reducing energy consumption and diversifying energy use including the use of renewable energies such as solar and wind in addition to fossil fuels.

W-Water

To conserve water in our daily lives. To do what is necessary personally and collectively in community to contribute to cleansing our water supplies of pollutants.

A-Air

To personally and collectively alter our day to day activities to contribute to significant reductions in CO2 emissions and other harmful air pollutants.

L-Land

To reconnect our communities to the land, nature, the Earth. To do what is necessary to care for the Earth to rid it of harmful pollutants and to work with the Earth to feed our communities. To ensure food security and safety for our families. To live in beauty and balance

E-Economic Relocalization

In reducing our energy consumption and acting responsibly in our environment, we commit to building local economies with and for our children. To be producers of goods and services. To learn skills of self sufficiency.

S-Sustainability

As the San Kofa bird returns and fetches, we acknowledge our Ancient Ancestors who mastered living in balance and harmony with nature. We call upon the higher aspects of ourselves to embrace neighborliness over competition as we live for the greater good of our communities, not individualism. In the transformation of ourselves and our relationships we will in unity, transform the quality of our lives and the quality of our environment. We commit to live the highest expression of our humanity in the face of resource depletion and climate change.

To join E-WALES, please go to the blog

Black Oaks Center on the Savanna: Pembroke Township

A step towards energy security in our community started brewing this past fall. A class was held out doors on the savanna with 15 folks from young to old from as far away as Detroit and Brazil in attendance. The class was taught by Lawrence, senior faculty at Solar Energy International, in Carbondale, Colorado.

The Black Oaks Bio-Energy Coop will serve the Southeast region of the greater Chicagoland area extending from the Southside of Chicago to rural areas in and around Kankakee and Momence. Production will be based in Pembroke Hopkins Park Township at the Black Oaks Center for Sustainable

Renewable Living. This is the initiation of the production of 100% biodiesel made to ASTM standards for members purchase which includes farmers, transportation businesses and residents relying on diesel fuel for machinery, heating and transport. In addition, members will have access to ongoing education and training in energy conservation, energy efficiency and effective utilization of the fuel that they purchase from the cooperative.

For more information and updates check the blog

1647 W 105th Place
Chicago, Illinois 60643-2915

14485 3000S Road
Pembroke Township, Illinois 60964

Phone: 773-410-3446
fax: 773-239-1896

Email: fredcarter_blackoakscsr@yahoo.com



*Special
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&
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*A clearing for transitioning
to a post carbon world*

The mission of the Black Oaks Center for Sustainable Renewable Living is to heighten awareness of resource depletion and our dependency on fossil fuels. Our focus is Indigenous communities from urban to rural. Training in energy conservation, energy efficient housing, permaculture, renewable energies and survival wilderness training are offered to reduce our dependency on fossil fuels as well as production of CO2 emissions. Experiences in being collective and team building are fostered to transform attitudes of individuality into one with the best interest of everyone in heart and mind. Our vision is to create a life boat full of families who have mastered the skills of sustainability that will assist our people and humanity in successfully transitioning to a post carbon world.

www.blackoakscenter.blogspot.com

F.Y.I.

For almost 5 years now I've watched my husband Fred daily comb volumes of information: books, curriculum, classes, workshops, conferences, documentaries and of course endless surfing the net for information about sustainability and what threatens it. In these years I have been taught by email attachments, conversations during meals. Even in the wee hours I have been spoon fed while tending to my overstuffed life of being a mother, a physician and an entrepreneur. All this time I have been wanting to find a way to have the same thing happen for everyone, for all of you to be fed as I have been fed information that my life would not allow me to cultivate. At last, we have the Black Oaks Center Blog. Please check in and get your routine dose of what's going on outside the matrix. After all, our true quest is to live in Zion, not the red or the blue pill ! -Dr. J.....remember this...>>>>>>



EVACUATION CRUSH. People shove and argue as they try to line up for evacuation by bus from the Superdome in New Orleans on Thursday as a fire burns out of control in the background.

Photograph by Michael Ainsworth-Dallas Morning News