

The Self-Sufficiency

Shoppe

Newsletter

Issue 17



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WE ARE BUT ANTS

Sometimes I feel I have come from another planet! When I look around me at the degradation of planet earth incurred by my own species I feel I do not belong. I am not able to comprehend how one species could exploit its only source for survival for mere short term self gain. Why are these people not able to see that we are destroying the very basis for our survival? Why is it so crystal clear for some people that 'respect for the Earth' is our very first priority while others see only personal material accumulation and wealth?

I believe that Planet Earth has its own innate survival mechanism. That when the 'going gets tough' and its crucial ecological balance is compromised it will take action to rectify the matter. Humans are therefore mere ants on the surface of a huge organism. In terms of Planet Earth's survival into the future human 'needs' are irrelevant. From the planet's view (and that of the remainder of the Universe) human survival is small price to pay for maintaining balance. The Earth will merely make the necessary shift or change to return its balance and continue its evolutionary journey – with or without humanity!

Ants versus Humans

Our view of ants is similar to Earth's view of humans. When ants become bothersome at a picnic or while basking in the sun (and upsetting our harmonious state) – we turn over or change position, to rid ourselves of the annoying little critters with no thought for their welfare – whether they survive or die. So too, will Earth 'turn' or make a shift when those little critters called 'humans' become bothersome and upset its harmonious state. There will be no consideration given to human welfare, for the land we own or houses we have built, the social/government structures we have established or the people we love. It's a terrible thought – not as though we do not know that this can happen – look at the areas of natural disasters around the globe – people's lives are destroyed by the mere actions of planet Earth with no consideration given to the consequences for the inhabitants.

Earth – A Member of the Galaxy

Earth is a member of a Universal system – its evolution is tied to the other planets in the solar system which are connected to our galaxy which is, in turn, a member of a universal system of other galaxies. Where do humans fit into all of this? Unfortunately the sad reality is: We are totally insignificant from



the perspective of galactic Law. So wise were past cultures such as the Mayans that knew our existence to be totally dictated by the movements of the planets and other solar systems in our Universe. Earth's ecological balance has repercussions for not only humanity (and all its living things) but for other members of the entire Universal system. And, in turn, do we think that other great bodies – such as Jupiter, Saturn, the Sun will not be affected by Earth's current ecological imbalance? All planetary bodies in our solar system are tied in evolution to each other. The movement/changes in one body (particularly a more evolved and powerful system) will have consequences for a smaller system such as Earth. The best thing humanity can do – as the Mayans realised - is to see ourselves as vulnerable to external forces and incorporate this into our vision of the future & way we live.

Planetary Adjustments

The other question that should be asked is: How much of what is happening on the planet at present – the drought, the earthquakes, floods, etc. – is Earth's very own process of elimination. Is the shortage of water in some areas, for example, a way of forcing humans from dangerously depleted areas (in terms of planetary balance) to other more fertile areas? Is it a means of 'culling' a population of species that is dangerously 'over-quota'? I have no doubt that the planet will do what is must to adjust to any imbalance via its own resources or via the influences of other factors in the solar system/Universe as it has done through eons of its evolution.

How to Survive

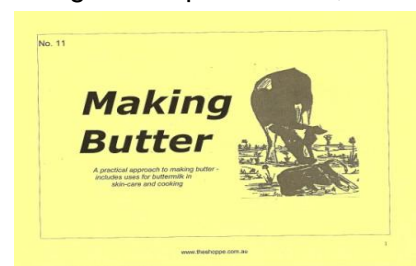
There are no hidden secrets to dealing with the evolutionary changes of our planet. When it comes down to it we are weak and vulnerable whether we want to face it or not. We can only make the necessary adaptations and 'go with the flow' as best we can when the time comes. However there is one thing we can all do to lessen the impact of planetary change. Live as 'simplistic' as possible – whether it be in the city or country – start now to lessen our dependence on artificial means, such as mass-produced items, 'mod-cons' and packaged/processed goods – these will all be the first to go when times become tough. If your survival and lifestyle is dependant on the creations of other people/industries (the 'modern world') then you are more vulnerable and susceptible to changes and will find it difficult to adapt. The key-words are: self-reliance and self-sufficiency. It doesn't have to be over the top or total alienation from society, but simply a more independent lifestyle relying upon your own means as much as possible.



Making Butter

I regularly make my own butter. It's very easy to make and is the simplest way to become even a little self-reliant.

Butter is cream 'over-beaten' to the point that the fat content of the cream separates from the fluid (butter-milk). The fat (butter) is removed and 'massaged' to remove any remaining pockets of buttermilk, washed in running water and salt added (optional). I demonstrate making butter on my 'Old Time Kitchen Skills Workshop' – people are often amazed at how simple it is. And even more taken with the flavour (we eat it on some fresh bread)! Any cream will do – however richer cream (with a higher fat content) will, of course, produce more butter and less buttermilk. Stale cream is fine – out-of-date cream offers a cheaper option. Buttermilk also has innumerable uses – besides being a therapeutic drink, it can also be used in place of milk in foods such as cakes, pancakes, etc. enhancing the flavour and improving the end-product. So nothing is wasted. I recently had the pleasure of making butter from fresh (unadulterated) cream from a farm. The flavour of the butter was quite different from that made from commercial cream and reminded me of the butter my mother made on the farm. I blend olive oil with my butter to make it softer for spreading and a little more 'healthy' (see also 'Butter Extender' recipe on page 4). If you want to know more about making butter – see e-booklet No. 11 'Making Butter'. Price: \$8.00 (download from www.theshoppe.com.au)



What do you really get with carbon credits?

CAMERON ENGLAND
CHIEF BUSINESS
REPORTER

WELL-MEANING consumers who buy carbon credits to offset greenhouse gas emissions often have no guarantee they will get what they paid for. The Advertiser has found.

In theory, we can offset the greenhouse gas-related impact of our energy use by buying carbon credits - this money is then invested in projects such as planting trees, increasing energy efficiency or subsidising green power.

But without a national standard, the definition of a carbon offset is open to interpretation.

Macquarie Bank global head of economics Richard Gibbs said companies and consumers were wise to be dubious about carbon offset schemes.

"The problem with those schemes... one has to be very careful that they are actually compliant in terms of the offsets that they are providing - that they are legitimate," Mr Gibbs said.

"The downside at the moment is that there isn't that level of uniformity there;

that's why we and others are calling for a national carbon trading scheme sooner rather than later."

Former Adelaide Thinker in Residence on climate change Professor Stephen Schneider said carbon offsets were fine if real.

"I have no in-principle objection to any of this if the tonnes (of carbon offset) are credible and verifiable as 'additional' to what would have happened anyway," Professor Schneider

Consumers can't really make a decision

said. "The latter will eventually require explicit rules and agreements among states, within countries and internationally. Nobody is sure what will settle out when we really get serious and negotiate in terms of what are 'credible tonnes of carbon' for offsets."

A survey by consumer watchdogs Choice found there were at least 17 companies in Australia offering carbon credits for sale.

But Choice media officer

Ri Voorhaar said the prices charged for the carbon credits varied wildly and the companies were not accountable to a regulatory body to ensure their carbon offsets were real.

A Choice survey in April showed the price to offset a flight from Melbourne to London varied from \$52.50 to \$220.95, with most companies also calculating different amounts of carbon produced by the flight.

While companies could seek accreditation under the Australian Greenhouse Office's Greenhouse Friendly scheme, this was on a voluntary basis, Ms Voorhaar said.

"We really believe that the industry at the moment is so new that consumers can't really make a decision because there's nothing to judge something by," Ms Voorhaar said.

"That's why we think either regulation or standardisation is so important for this industry, especially because it's such an emotional issue."

Prime Minister John Howard's Emissions Trading Taskgroup calls for a national emissions trading scheme to be established and to be running by 20

What a Wonderful Time of the Year!



There is nothing more wonderful than pottering in the garden and experiencing the first rays of the Spring sunshine and connecting with the wonders of Mother Earth. Even if you do not have the advantage of a back-yard plot (or larger!) then a tub or two of newly planted spring seedlings will do wonders for your sense of 'earth'. I am an absolute lover of home-grown vegetables. I plant my usual array every spring and I just revel in watching them grow. Every morning I sit outside with my coffee to observe the progress in the garden. It gives me a great boost to start the day!

I re-use and recycle what-ever I can get my hands on! This year I have filled a rusty old wheel-barrow with sweet peas, used white polystyrene tubs as flower pots for a front display and growing tomatoes. And I came across the idea of using recycled cat litter to create foot-paths. I use plastic drink bottle sections as seedling protectors - it deters creepy crawlies, cats and protects from the icy wind! I've put a lot of my ideas in the little booklet 'Recycling and Improving in the Garden' (No. 36) - \$12.00. Also available: No. 19 'Composting for Beginners' (\$8.00) and No. 21 'Safe & Organic Sprays' (\$12.00)

Buy 'Carbon Credits' - It's that easy!

It's truly a poor reflection on our affluent society when we believe we can simply 'buy' our way out of our environmental problems! Or that environmental responsibility is somehow fulfilled by swiping our credit card to pay for a quick fix.

There is a huge fashionable wave at present of using 'carbon credits' to off-set environmental damage incurred by our lifestyle or personal actions. But the issue of environmental change lies in changing our innate and thoughtless behaviour toward the planet. Everything we do, everything we eat, everything we use, must be changed or adapted to suite the planet's ecology. It's of process of changing our total lifestyle and making personal sacrifices for the sake of the planet. As a western society we are living way beyond our means. There is no easy way out - everyone is being asked to make lifestyle changes. If we do not then it will no longer be a choice but a necessity.



The planet sighs in relief and smiles in acknowledgement every time we refuse, reuse and recycle!



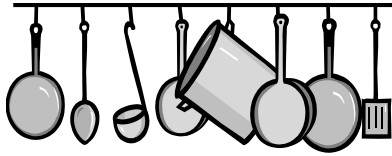
Backyard Self-sufficiency Booklet Set

For Safe Organic Economical Gardening

6 Booklets: Recycling and Improving in the Garden (No. 36), Composting for Beginners (No. 19) and Safe & Organic Sprays (No. 21), 'Growing Vegetables in Containers' (No. 76), Keeping Hens (No. 41), Companion Planting Guide (No. 78)

Price: \$42.00

(download at www.theshoppe.com.au)



My Favourite Recipes

Thanks for your ideas and recipes.

Please keep sending them in.

Budget Mayonnaise

Ingredients: 1 tablespoon each of plain flour, dry mustard and salt, 2 eggs, 1 cup each of sugar, white vinegar and water, 2 cups milk.

Method: Mix flour, mustard, sugar, eggs and salt – making sure there are no lumps. Gradually blend in the vinegar, milk and water. Gently heat – stir constantly. When mixture has thickened and coats the back of the spoon remove from heat. DO NOT boil. Cool slightly then pour into clean warm jars. Store in fridge.

Butter Extender

Place 250g butter in a basin. Pour in ½ cup boiling water. Cool. Pour in ½ cup sunflower oil and beat with electric beater until blended. Pour into container. Seal.

From a W.Aust. reader

Hot Weather Tips:

- Turn down your water heater temp. and reduce power usage. There's no need for hot showers during summer.
- Every evening fill a few jugs with cold water for use next day. No more running off water while waiting for it to become cold (on hot days)
- Attach a 'thermal' fabric layer to the back of curtains to reduce heat entering via windows. Hang a 'blind' of shade-cloth at windows - especially those facing west and north.
- Avoid air-conditioning – a fan should be sufficient if you wrap a damp towel around your neck. Sit with feet in bowl of cold water if heat is extreme.

Remember our feathered friends, they need cool water each day placed in the shade of a tree. Rocks in the water bowl allows small birds to drink while sitting on the rocks without fear of falling in.

From Mary of Klemzig SA

(Thanks Mary – Just following on from that: I am surprised how much cold water

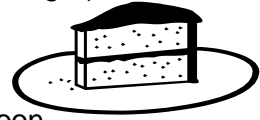
is wasted from the hot water tap whilst waiting for it to run hot – over 3 litres of precious water! So I collect it in containers to use for cooking, watering, kettle, etc. during the day. Every bit counts!

Pam)

Easy Fruitcake:

(Without butter, eggs or sugar)

- 1 kg mixed fruit
- 2 cups orange juice
- 2 cups SR flour
- 1 tsp cinnamon - teaspoon
- 1 tsp mixed spice - teaspoon



Method:

1. Pour orange juice over mixed fruit and allow it to soak approx 10-12 hours.
2. Mix in the flour and spices.
3. Cook in a 20cm (8") square tin for 1½ hours in a 300°F/155°C oven, or perhaps a bit longer.

Milton, Daw Park SA

Send in Your Favourite Recipe

to The Shoppe Newsletter
P.O. Box 390 Park Holme 5043 or
email: theshoppe@tpg.com.au



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Not all issues of the Shoppe Newsletter are posted to mailing list recipients. Over the years the Shoppe mailing list has grown substantially and mailing the Newsletter is now a mammoth task. Nearly all businesses & enterprises now offer their Newsletters only by email. I'm an 'old-fashioned girl' - not everyone wants/can join the 'computerised age' – so I plan to continue to offer the Newsletter via post when I can – i.e. as finances and time allow. All Newsletters are available on the website. Donations of postage stamps are appreciated and will ensure your name remains on the mailing list! Pam

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