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2012-2013 ONE-YEAR / PART-TIME Practical Training in BIODYNAMICS

A Scientific & Spiritual Approach to Farming and Gardening



The Pfeiffer Center



The Pfeiffer Center
260 Hungry Hollow Rd
Chesnut Ridge, NY 10977



The Pfeiffer Center is a Program Affiliate of the Biodynamic
Farming and Gardening Association. To learn more, visit
www.pfeiffercenter.org and www.biodynamics.com

The natural gifts, naturally inherited knowledge, traditional medicines, and so on that have been passed down from ancient times are all losing their value. We need to acquire new knowledge in order to be able to enter into all the interrelationships of these things. . . Today, no less than in ancient times, we are in need of knowledge that can really enter into the inner workings of nature.

—RUDOLF STEINER, *Agriculture* (1924)

As our knowledge of the physical world has become ever more detailed, we have sought to master nature with a science based only on the material and quantifiable aspects of life. However, many advances arising from this thinking have brought destructive and unforeseen consequences. Once we acknowledge the limitations of the purely materialistic view of nature, where can we turn for a more complete understanding of the living Earth?

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) was dedicated to developing a new science that accounts for all aspects of life—the material and the supersensible. The biodynamic method, which Steiner outlined in his *Agriculture Lectures of 1924*, brings to bear a spiritual understanding of nature and humanity's relationship to the natural world. Responding to farmers concerned about the declining vigor of their crops and animals, he described an approach to plant and land care that combines building up healthy soil with a renewed awareness of all the forces at work in the farm organism: among and between the soil, plants, animals, and humans, as well as the cosmos itself. The result: a modern, organic way of farming that raises the vitality of both soil and produce, going beyond sustainability to create a thriving agriculture...and a future for our fragile planet.

Now entering its sixteenth year, the Pfeiffer Center's One-Year, Part-Time Practical Training in Biodynamics consists of thirteen full-day workshops beginning in September 2012 and ending in June 2013. Workshop days run from 9 am to 5 pm, and feature an engaging mix of classroom talks and field activities covering • making and applying the biodynamic preparations • working with compost • the rhythms of nature and planetary influences on life and growth • agricultural handwork and pruning • weed and pest control • the honeybee • and much more.



The Director of the Pfeiffer Center, **Mac Mead**, is the principal instructor. Mac has worked with biodynamics since 1975, when he first learned about

biodynamic methods from former colleagues of Ehrenfried Pfeiffer at the Fellowship Community. He was resident farmer at Duryea Farm of the Fellowship Community until 2005, and has directed the Pfeiffer Center since 2006.

OTHER FACULTY

Megan Durney, Head Gardener at the Pfeiffer Center



Jairo Gonzalez, co-worker and farm work leader at the Fellowship Community in Chestnut Ridge, New York



Jennifer Greene, Executive Director of the Water Research Institute of Blue Hill, Maine



Craig Holdrege, PhD, Director of The Nature Institute in Ghent, New York



Steffen Schneider, farm manager at Hawthorne Valley Farm in Ghent, New York



Sherry Wildfeuer, co-worker at Camphill Village Kimberton Hills, Pennsylvania, and editor of *Stella Natura*



Hugh Williams, owner of Threshold Farm in Philmont, New York



Front cover: Nettle, used in biodynamic preparation 504
This page: Making barrel compost
Next page: Seedlings in the Pfeiffer Center greenhouse



This training meets the classroom study course requirement in the North American Biodynamic Apprenticeship Program of the Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association. To learn more, visit www.biodynamics.com/nabdap.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2012 Evolution, Environment & Ecology

A brief sketch of the evolution of the earth from a spiritual scientific standpoint. What are our tasks at this time in relation to the environment and why do farming and gardening play such a vital role in ecological, economic and social issues? We will do some hands-on work with the horn manure preparation, raised beds, and season-appropriate planting. Presented by **Mac Mead**.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2012 Biodynamic Preparations

At the heart of the biodynamic method are the preparations used to treat the soil, compost and crops. **Mac Mead** and **Megan Durney** will lead us in making most of these preparations, as we discuss their healing effects on the earth and its produce.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2012 Soil Building & Composting

Healthy soils bring forth healthy plants. We will explore basic concepts concerning soil building and composting methods. In a hands-on session at our compost site, we will not only discover composts of different materials and stages of maturity, we will also get our hands good and dirty doing so.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2012 Farm Animal Husbandry

Steffen Schneider will share the gleanings of his 30 years of farm animal husbandry. This full-day session will touch on all domestic farm animals, with emphasis on the role of animals in the farm organism.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2013 Pruning Fruit Trees / Seed Saving & Rejuvenation

Pruning fruit trees is both a science and an art. The seed question is of vital importance for the future of our food supply. **Hugh Williams**, one of the best orchardists in the East and a biodynamic farmer with a large CSA, will be the main presenter. A few hours of hands-on pruning will be included.

SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 2013 Cosmic Forces in Relation to Nutritional Qualities / Seeing Nature Whole

We all know how the moon pulls the tides. What influences does it — or do the other planets — have on plant life? By learning how to strengthen and harmonize these influences, we can enhance the nutritional value of our food. Presented by **Mac Mead**. In the afternoon, **Craig Holdrege** will explore how we can better understand the world, and our place in it, by working with the living dynamic qualities of plants and animals, and will discuss the implications of this understanding for sustainability.

FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 2013 Barrel Compost / Weed and Pest Control Preparations

Half the day will be devoted to making the barrel compost preparation, led by **Jairo Gonzalez**, and weed and pest control preparations. The other half will be spent on an artistic activity and the progress reports on research projects.

SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 2013 Life Rhythms, Farm & Garden Tasks / Bees

In the first half of the workshop, we will look at the rhythms of sun and moon, and learn to work with nature, not against it. This enables us to compensate for extreme weather, making our task easier and improving the quality of our crops. Presented by **Sherry Wildfeuer**, editor of the *Stella Natura* planting calendar. The afternoon session focuses on the honeybee; given the drastic reduction of honeybee colonies in the last twenty years, we have to dig deep for the causes, and deeper still to discover the necessary means for reversing this trend.

FRIDAY, MAY 3, 2013 Preparation #501 / Compost Teas / BD Tree Paste

Making the horn-silica preparation involves grinding quartz crystals down to .2 microns. The day's other focus will be the making and applying of herbal and compost teas and the biodynamic tree paste. Artistic activity and research project presentations follow.

SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2013 Water: H₂O or Much More?

Water quality is fast becoming one of the world's most pressing environmental issues. Do we really know what water is, what tasks it has in life processes, or how it carries them out? **Jennifer Greene**, director of the Water Research Institute in Maine, will take us far beyond what we commonly know, or suppose we know, of this element.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, JUNE 7-9, 2013 The Final Weekend

Making nettle and yarrow preparations; taking out old preps; storing preps; various compost activities; presentation of research projects. We will bring together the year's work into a comprehensive picture of the theoretical and practical aspects of biodynamics.

2012-2013 One-year Part-time Practical Training in Biodynamics

Course sessions are from 9 AM to 5 PM (dates and presenters subject to change). A certificate of completion is awarded upon completion of all sessions and a special project.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Reasonably priced rooms with shared kitchens and bathrooms are often available on campus in Holder House; book online, and find information about housing alternatives, at www.threefold.org/housing.

TUITION: \$1,300. An early payment discount, installment payment plans and some tuition assistance are available. NABDAP Apprentices, visit biodynamics.com/nabdap for scholarship info.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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COURSE REGISTRATION

Send this form, with **\$25 non-refundable application fee**, to the address above. Upon acceptance, you will receive information on payment plans, suggested readings, and other details.

BDA MEMBERSHIP

Course registration includes a one-year introductory membership in the Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association (new members only).

Name

Address

City

State ZIP

Phone

Email