



JULY 2022



Welcome

Hello everyone,

Experienced biodynamic practitioners may get sick of reading definitions of biodynamics, usually under the heading "What is Biodynamics?" New BtL subscribers, however, may find versions handy as you attempt to master the theory and practice of biodynamics.

The below piece John recently wrote for a Landcare group is an attempt to simplify biodynamics addressing relevance. We are often asked to provide such "potted versions" for various organisations, and are always wary of couching them in arcane or complex terms.

It's so interesting to see accounts of how green energy generation can integrate with agriculture. Christo's article - ***Agrivoltaics - Integrating grazing pastures with solar farms*** enhancing pasture growth and animal production is a case in point.

We hope you are enjoying the stimulation of cold weather with sunshine, and feeling energised in your gardening and farming activities.

Have a good month.

Kaz and John



Landcare relevance of biodynamics

John Hodgkinson

Biodynamics has a strong vitalising effect on soil and plants, and thus on gardens, farms, and in any other environments where it is applied.

Generally speaking, conventional food production systems are dependent on external resources and are intrinsically entropic. This results in (unintentionally) degrading or destroying critical factors such as soil carbon, soil structure, and

soil food web biodiversity - all essential for soil fertility; leading to lower water holding capacity, increased susceptibility to extremes of weather and climate, and greater risk of erosion and loss of plant biodiversity.

To counter these entropic effects of conventional systems, ever-greater volumes of fertilisers and agrochemicals are applied. This is also true of most so-called organic systems.

When the biodynamic preparations and practices are applied properly in place of conventional inputs, soil biology is greatly enhanced, plants grow more strongly, resisting disease and insect attack, and input costs are radically reduced.

Biodynamics is essentially a method of utilising plant and mineral-based catalysts known as “the preparations”, described by Rudolf Steiner in the early 20th Century, to stimulate the soil food web and powerfully vitalise plant growth.

It is difficult for anyone first encountering biodynamics to accept that the minuscule quantities of substances used in practising biodynamics can have the tremendous effects that they do. Elevated crop Brix levels, accelerated accumulation of soil carbon, dramatic increase in rainfall infiltration and water holding capacity are just the more obvious benefits of biodynamics.

When, over a period of a few years one creates topsoil down to 350mm when a bare 4mm was present at the beginning of biodynamic treatment, any skepticism is abandoned as the potency of the preparations becomes evident.

In the case of land regeneration, mine site rehabilitation and aquatic system recovery, biodynamics can play a pioneering role in helping to repair and rebalance landscapes and ecosystems.

Biodynamics has enormous potential in Landcare programs ranging from erosion control, increasing habitat plant biodiversity, riparian zone rehabilitation, and improving catchment management for better water quality and boosting aquifer recharge.



Home garden kit

This small parcel delivers a big result in your garden and it's a great way to get you started in biodynamics.

Contains Soil Activator (500), Horn Silica (501), Summer Horn Clay, Fresh Equisetum (508) and 1g set of Compost Enhancers.

[Click here to learn more.](#)



Agrivoltaics – Integrating grazing pastures with solar farms

Dual-use solar is the simultaneous use of land for both solar photovoltaic power generation and agriculture.

Dr Christo Miliotis

Water will be the limiting commodity for agriculture.

In experiments testing evaporation levels under solar panels for shade resistant crops cucumbers and lettuce watered by irrigation in a California desert, a 14-29% saving in evaporation was found, and similar research in the Arizona desert demonstrated water savings of 50% for certain crops.

Besides the increased income from either leasing your land for solar farms or selling energy to the grid generated from the solar farm installation, the shade provided to animals improves their well-being and although there may or may not be a decrease in the pasture, their appetites are increased due to being less heat-stressed, so production is increased.

Cattle can be grazed if the posts are higher, as this increases sunlight below. Horticulture can definitely benefit from integrating shade-resistant crops with solar panels.

If this is of interest to your farm operations, contact me: growingbd@gmail.com or 0488061077 as I can refer you to a company that installs solar panels provided your farm can access the power lines.



Experience the most beautiful cherry blossom festival on an extraordinary tour



NZ Cherry Blossom Festival

**7-day and 3-day tours
in late Sep/early Oct 2022**

Itineraries include: NZ Cherry Blossom Festival, acclaimed Hamilton Gardens, glowworm caves, Hobbiton filmset, Sanctuary mountain, Blue Springs, Maori performance and meal, geyser, bubbling mud, volcanic landscape, spa pampering (optional), beautiful short nature walks with waterfalls, Hot Water Beach, fresh Coromandel oysters and green-lip mussels, giant Kauri trees, private gardens.

See www.blossfest.com for more details





Love lettuce

Who said there was a short supply of lettuce? Not when you grow it in your backyard! Lettuce grows all year round and most gardeners have an abundant supply which, when grown biodynamically, is often bigger, tastier, and contains a higher nutrient content than conventionally grown lettuce. It's easy to grow lettuce, so why not give it a go if you haven't already,

Check out the informative article by Colleen Vanderlinden, from The Spruce, 22.1.21.

[Click here to read more.....](#)



Why become a member?

Thanks for subscribing to receive our free ***Between the Leaves*** newsletter.

We want to inspire and motivate you to practice biodynamics, to live mindfully and lovingly, intuitively with good intentions, along with nurturing our soil, plants, animals, humans and environment. Due to people's busy lifestyles, there is a need for high-quality preparations and products, so we cater to this demand.

Members receive:

- Significantly reduced costs on products and workshops
- Quarterly *News Leaf* coloured journal with valuable information and articles
- Biodynamic Handbook
- Sample of Biodynamic Soil Activator with instructions to get you started
- Encouragement, direction and support

Our next *News Leaf* comes out soon, so consider coming on board and taking the next step in your biodynamic direction.

If your membership has lapsed, we would love you to join us again. Your ongoing support helps us to continue creating, sharing and promoting biodynamics. It's easy to renew. Simply log into your account on our webpage and update.

Your membership helps support our not-for-profit organisation in making and sourcing products, practicing, promoting and sharing everything biodynamic, while we support you towards creating optimal soil health and growing highly nutritious and delicious food.

[read more...](#)



Music is medicine for our soul

"The Earth has music for those who listen. - Shakespeare

Like good food and people, purpose and passion, exercise and gardening, music is medicine to our soul.

Here is some beautiful music from nature we hope you enjoy.

The beautiful image above by artist Suzanne Crate is called "Music and Nature"

[Click here to listen](#)



Thanks for reading our newsletter

Don't hesitate to contact the office, open Mondays and Tuesdays 9am-3pm, and Thursdays 9am-12.30pm.

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Please help us spread the good word by [LIKING](#) and [FOLLOWING](#) our [Facebook and Instagram page](#), where we share updates and good information.

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