

# The Past Was Organic; the Future Will Be More Organic

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building people-to-people ties



# Global Exchange & Green Festival

- Global Exchange: 22-year-old human rights organization with fair trade stores, Reality Tours, events, publishing, corporate pressure campaigns . . . .
- Our Fair Trade stores and Green Festivals give us direct experience with commodity chains: we care about the natural and human base of the economy...
- GreenMart eco-mall will combine green retail and green community development . . . .

# We Confront Monumental Challenges

- All biological systems are collapsing: fish catch plummeting, deforestation, species destruction, topsoil eroding, glaciers and polar ice caps melting, ocean levels rising, etc.
- People will feel the climate crisis in their daily lives as energy prices go up, droughts cause water rationing and higher water bills, weather instability and coastal erosion push up insurance rates, etc.

# **We Can't Continue on the Present Path**

- The current system is NOT sustainable: Is there a business case for destroying the planet's capacity to support human existence? We are at a tipping point....
- Rights of Nature should become a core issue of our politics.
- First ever global revolution: we are going from money values ruling the life cycle to life values ruling the money cycle....

# Organic is a Great Starting Point

- ... but it still depends on dirty energy and petroleum-based packaging, using globally sourced ingredients, and producing processed foods that must be packaged, temperature controlled, and shipped long distances.
- Organic does not control labor practices, business ethics/governance, community relations, and it includes limited standards around animal care.

# Organic Is Superior

Organic is a better system than the chemical, industrialized system. Organic keeps persistent, synthetic chemicals out of people and rest of the earth. Organic farming is less dependent on fossil fuels. Organic soils sequester more carbon.

# Organic Food Outperforms

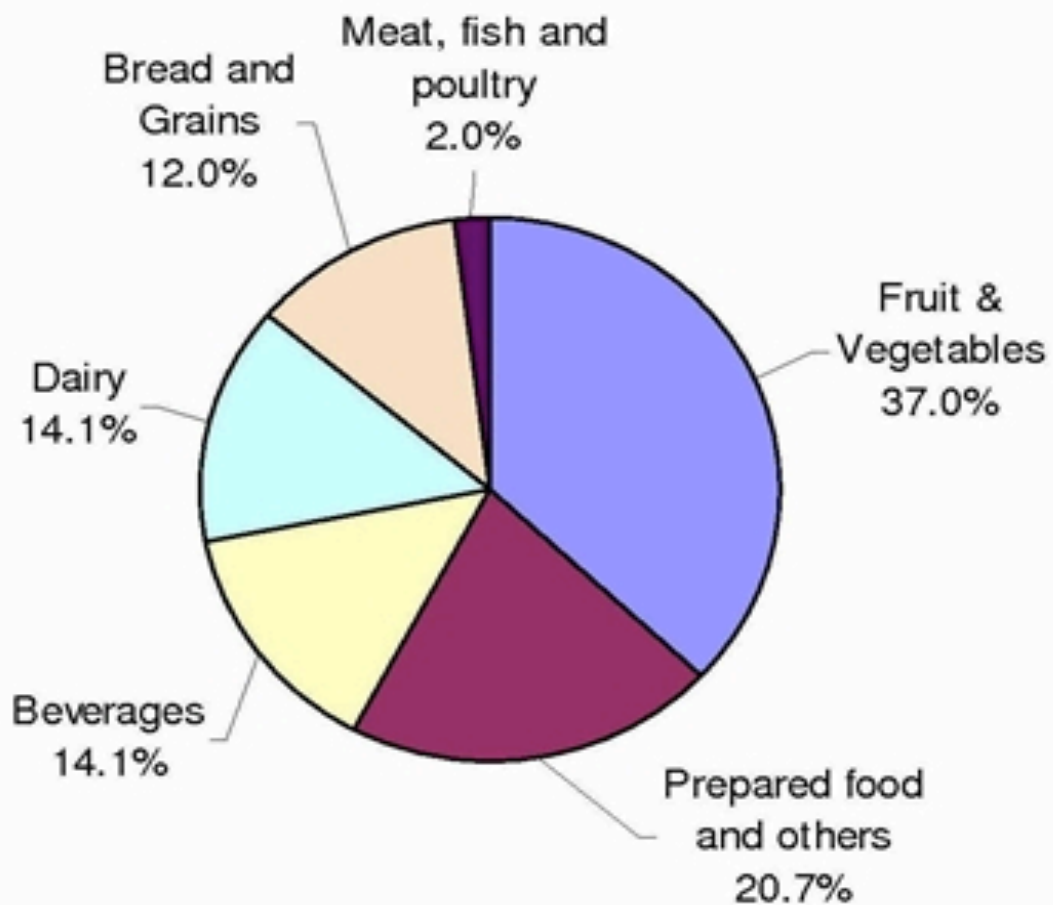
- Average levels of 11 nutrients are 25% higher in organic foods compared to conventional foods, based on 236 scientifically valid comparisons. Source: *New Evidence Supports the Nutritional Superiority of Organic Plant-based Foods*, C. Benbrook, et. al., *The Organic Center, State of Science Review*, March 2008.
- *Organic fruits and vegetables are 30% higher in antioxidants than conventional.* Source: *Elevating Antioxidant Levels in Food through Organic Farming and Food Processing*, C Benbrook, *The Organic Center State of Science Review*, January, 2005.

# US Organic Market Growing

- U.S. sales of organic food and beverages have grown from \$1 billion in 1990 to \$25.7 billion in 2009.
- Experiencing the highest growth in sales during 2009 were organic fruits and vegetables, up 11.4% over 2008 sales
- The fruit and vegetables segment generated 37% of the U.S. organic market's overall revenues.

Source: *Organic Trade Association's 2010 Organic Industry Survey*

**Figure 2: United States Organic Food Market Segmentation I: % Share, by Value, 2009 (e)**



Source: Datamonitor

DATAMONITOR

# Organic Getting Bigger

- Total U.S. organic sales, including food and non-food products, were \$26.6 billion in 2009, up 5.3% from 2008.
- In 2014, the U.S. organic food market is forecast to have a value of \$42 billion, an increase of 63.3% since 2009.
- The United States accounts for 42.9% of the global organic food market's value.

## Growing.... but still small

- Certified organic acreage in the United States has reached more than 4.8 million acres (cropland 2.6 million acres, organic pasture 2.2 million).
- But certified organic cropland and pasture accounts for *less than one percent of total U.S. farmland.*

## More System Integration Needed

Retail sales of **organic poultry** have almost quadrupled since 2003, with growth rates from 23 to 38 percent annually. *BUT* the growth of poultry and egg markets is slowed by high costs and shortages of organic feed grains coupled with a *lack of processing capacity*.

# Market Trends

- The Pacific and Northeast regions of the U.S. buy more organic products than other parts of the country.
- At Trader Joe's, private label organics account for an estimated 80% of all goods sold.

# Market Trends

The higher the income, the more likely the consumer is to buy organic. Among consumers with incomes above \$150,000, 35.4% seek out organic products.

# Consumers Respond to LOCAL

- Applied Research Northwest found that 58 percent of respondents in Whatcom County, WA are patronizing locally owned businesses *more than they did* before they were exposed to the “Think Local, Buy Local, Be Local” and “Think Local, Buy FRESH, Be Local” logos.
- Local is more sustainable: the concept of “food sheds” gaining currency...

## The Most Basic Food is Not “Food”

- The global water crisis is the greatest threat humanity has ever faced.
- Dirty water is the biggest killer of children (one every three-and-a-half seconds); more children die of water borne disease than HIV/AIDS, malaria and war together.
- *Producing 1 lb of beef requires 5,214 gallons of water = 7 min. shower every day for a year.*

# Trends to Watch

The popularity of **gluten-free** foods is growing fast, with more than 2,500 gluten-free products. At least 1 percent of the population has celiac disease, a chronic inflammation of the small intestine triggered by eating foods containing gluten, and many more people have an intolerance to gluten.

# Trends to Watch

- **KIDS' HEALTH: Knowledge Is Power for Parents.** Hundreds of scientists, (nutritionists, pediatricians and toxicologists), verify that the impact of environmental toxins on kids has been significantly underestimated.
- As this knowledge spreads—especially among well-educated consumers—the organic market will expand.

# Trends to Watch

Fair Trade certification: a Fair Trade certified label on a product represents a movement to improve people's lives and protect the environment globally. Even when they are not certified as organic, Fair Trade crops have usually been cultivated with fewer chemicals than conventional crops.

# Retrieving Value from Waste

Terra-Cycle story in our book (*Building the Green Economy*). A 24-year-old college dropout, Tom Szaky, created Terra-Cycle.net, organic plant food made from liquid worm poop (compost tea) in recycled soda bottles. Now has dozens of products in Target, Home Depot, Wal-Mart, etc., and is creating jobs and profits by selling garbage wrapped in garbage.

# Onion Fuel

Gills Onions (Oxnard), an onion processor & distributor, has a methane capture system converting onion waste into renewable energy. Burning the methane powers two 300-kilowatt fuel cells, powering the refrigeration and lighting. This creates annual savings of \$700,000 in electricity costs, \$400,000 in waste disposal costs, and led to \$3 million in government and power company incentives. It also eliminates 30,000 tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions per year.

# Bio-Plastic from Agricultural Waste

Eden Bayer on Ted.com shows his revolutionary method for replacing styrofoam . . . with agricultural waste injected with mycelium spore. Endless uses as packing material. After use it can be put in the soil as a nutrient.

# Among the Top Green Jobs

**Farmer** – U.S. has only two million farmers, and average age is over 55 and rising. Sustainable agriculture requires small-scale, organic methods, so there is a huge need for more farmers. (also urban gardener; farmers market and CSA coordinator).

**Forester** - Deforestation causes some 25% of global warming, and is likely to be a recipient of billions of dollars of carbon credits. Foresters help local people by teaching cultivation of higher-value, faster-growing species for fruit, medicine or timber.

# Let's Be Solutionaries

- How can we go from having an organic food “movement” to creating an organic food “system”?
- What do we need to change—in our hearts and in our institutions—to save humanity from itself? I.F. Stone?
- What can my organization do to build more unity in this movement?

# Collaboration is Essential

- The Power Foods Group is a collaboration including Sambazon, Dagoba, Guayaiki, and Manitoba Harvest. The companies share resources on ads, exhibit booths, event sponsorships and communications.
- For-profit companies benefit from alliances with non-profits.

# Nature's Core Principle

- Unity-of-diversity ...
- Our movement is not united – mostly silos.
- Put the natural world back into the center of our existence
- Technology brings the possibility of “global brain”—democracy from below....

# Our Market Advantage

- Would we benefit from the story of our products being told to the public? Would that add value, just as a farmers market can charge more?
- Each organic or Fair Trade product is really two products: the product itself and the story of the producers and their lives.

# New Technology Favors Us

Technology now exists for customers to shoot the bar code of a product and stream social and environmental information about the product. For example, Organic Valley could stream video interviews with its farmers.

# Policy Collaboration is Essential

- Oppose USDA Secretary Vilsack's approval of GMO alfalfa
- Stop purchasing GMO-based fuels and packaging
- The 2012 farm bill – we will all get more of what we want if we subordinate corporate ego to the movement's goals.

## Final Thoughts

- To save the Eco-System, we must transcend the Ego-System . . .
- The Golden Rule is universal ... the word “*other*” means all living things.
- Science and spirituality are merging.
- The Titanic (unsustainable economy) is sinking . . . Let’s create the next boat.

# ***PRIME DIRECTIVE***

***“How do we love all the children  
of all species for all time.”***

***William McDonough***



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