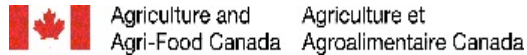




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## *PEI ADAPT Council Agri-Newsletter*

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Vol. IX; No. 4;

April 9, 2010

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### **Compost and Compost Tea Workshop**

The PEI National Farmers Union will host a workshop on Compost and compost tea with presenters from the Soil Food Web on Tuesday evening April 13, 8:30 pm. At the Dutch Inn in North River.

As an educational outreach and training company, SFW offers workshops, seminars, and training programs. This reduces costs and their dependency on outside suppliers. The main tools in the soil foodweb arsenal are compost, vermicomposts, compost tea, microbe foods.

Educational outreach programs show the grower or turf manager how to make their own compost or vermicompost, brew their own compost teas, and where to find and how to use the various other inputs they may need in their program.

For more information: Call (902) 368-1444

### **Margaret Webb**

#### **Canada's Broken Food System, Solutions for a Fix**

*Presented at PEI ADAPT's AGM, March 2010*

Margaret notes that "most of her best ideas come from farmers" or "tractor seat philosophers". In her book, "Apples to Oysters", she features a P.E.I. local, Johnny Flynn, an oyster producer, who she tasted his oysters for the first time in a Toronto oyster bar. She noted that she grew up on a farm which she actually described two farms in one: one that tried to make money and one that nourished the soul. Her father always taught her that "there is no such thing as an accident",

and she told of a medical link between the accumulation of pesticides in the body to neurological diseases such as Parkinson's, which her father acquired.

Margaret noted that the key to the future is to farm ecologically. In the next decade, approximately one third of our farmers will be of retirement age. Canadian agriculture is staring at a human resource crisis that the country has never experienced before. There are new farmers out there, but they want to farm ecologically and they want to connect with their eaters and they want to be responsible.

There is no plan for ecological farming. Government is waiting for citizens to create a new policy on food. She referred to International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), a group, where 59 of 62 countries supported IAASTD findings. IAASTD found that: world hunger is caused by food policy, trade favours high input farming, and the ecological footprint of agriculture today, that is already too large; contributing 60% of methane and 50% of nitrous oxide gases.

IAASTD concluded that we need a global a transition to ecological and organic farming to better feed the world, with agricultural food systems grounded in ecological policies.

They recommend: the development of local food policies, the reduction in the use of fossils fuels or fertilizers, eliminating factory farms, and promoting raising livestock on grass.

Webb alluded to several emerging diet trends:

“The Good Health Diet” - meet your new health-care workers: farmers!”. She said that: Thirty percent of illness today facing the healthcare system are food related. The Agriculture and agri-food sector contributes 8% to Canada's Gross Domestic Product, but health care costs now eat up 11% of the GDP. If Canadians ate 8-10 fruit and vegetable servings each day, this would save healthcare 6.4 million a year.

‘100 Year Diet,’ rather than the 100 mile diet - your grand kids will love it! The Food Security Diet - the new comfort food! We are all threatened by corporate takeover. Every farm acre is a valuable and a scarce resource.

‘The Truly Free-Market Diet’ - who decides what's on your plate? She claimed that: Monsanto controls approximately 90% of seed genetics and that most food is sold through two major store chains.

‘The Organic Diet’ - a report, Farming 2031, looked at yields from organic farms. It confirmed that Canada could be self-sufficient feeding the entire population by only organic farming and still have enough to export.

‘The Democracy Diet’ with alternative markets, public food verses private food, food decision making at local levels, food action at local levels, and a new school food policy. The shift is to community control.

‘The Canadian Diet’ a Made-in-Canada diet with environmental regulations, fair prices (for food and labour), and taste! Good food starts with good farming! When we are importing cheap food, we are supporting low wage farming in other countries and forcing down the wage of Canadian farmers. This would encourage fair prices for Canadian farmers.

Webb concluded by saying, ‘Food planning, is largely absent in Canada with the exception of a reactionary measures. Canada has a national identity crisis, and the solution can be in farming.’

### **Exploring Your New Farm Dream**

Exploring Your New Farm Dream is a course for people who are thinking about starting a commercial farm business (farming with the intent to make a profit rather than as a hobby or a pastime). Developed by the New England Small Farm Institute (NESFI), the course helps aspiring farmers learn what it would take to start and manage their own “farm dream” and decide whether this the right path for them.

#### Course Description

Over 12 hours (four three-hour sessions) and one day of farm tours, the Explorer course takes a learner-centered approach to exploring agriculture as a career. As a participant in the course, you will be guided through an in depth self-assessment process, designed to help you identify the specific aptitudes, interests, skills and resources that you can bring to a new farm business. You will receive support through the process of researching opportunities in agriculture. And you will meet other serious gardeners, livestock enthusiasts, and entrepreneurs who are also asking themselves, “Is starting an agricultural business right for me?”

For more information see:

<http://www.farmstart.ca/exploring-the-new-farm-dream/#winter/spring2010schedule> and  
[http://smallfarm.org/main/for\\_new\\_farmers/exploring\\_the\\_small\\_farm\\_dream](http://smallfarm.org/main/for_new_farmers/exploring_the_small_farm_dream)

### **Michelle Obama Confronts the Food Industry with 9 Unsavory Truths**

In a speech to the Grocery Manufacturers Association, she scolds the industry – politely and with humor – for making kids fat by marketing junk food for breakfast lunch and dinner.

March 17, 2010; by Marion Nestle

First Lady Michelle Obama spoke to the Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA) yesterday about her campaign to prevent childhood obesity. According to one witness, Marian Burros, she scolded them – politely and with humor – but told them in no uncertain terms "to stop fattening our children."

The GMA is a tough audience for messages about childhood obesity. It represents the makers of

processed foods and beverages who have much to lose from efforts to get kids to eat less of their products.

The speech itself is a masterpiece of tact, but Mrs. Obama clearly gets the issues loud and clear. Here are some excerpts:

Michelle Obama grocery manufacturers of america speech

‘We need you not just to tweak around the edges, but to entirely rethink the products that you're offering, the information that you provide about these products, and how you market those products to our children.’

‘This needs to be a serious industry-wide commitment to providing the healthier foods parents are looking for at prices they can afford.’

‘What it doesn't mean is taking out one problematic ingredient, only to replace it with another. While decreasing fat is certainly a good thing, replacing it with sugar and salt isn't.’

‘It doesn't mean compensating for high amounts of problematic ingredients with small amounts of beneficial ones — for example, adding a little bit of Vitamin C to a product with lots of sugar, or a gram of fiber to a product with tons of fat doesn't suddenly make those products good for our kids.’

‘This isn't about finding creative ways to market products as healthy.’

‘Parents are working hard to provide a healthy diet and to teach healthy habits — and we'd like to know that our efforts won't be undermined every time our children turn on the TV or see a flashy display in a store.’

‘What does it mean when so many parents are finding that their best efforts are undermined by an avalanche of advertisements aimed at their kids?’

‘What are these ads teaching kids about food and nutrition? That it's good to have salty, sugary food and snacks every day — breakfast, lunch, and dinner? That dessert is an everyday food? That it's okay to eat unhealthy foods because they're endorsed by the cartoon characters our children love and the celebrities our teenagers look up to?’

‘If there is anyone here who can sell food to our kids, it's you. You know what gets their attention. You know what makes that lasting impression. You know what gets them to drive their parents crazy in the grocery store.’

Read more:

[http://www.thedailygreen.com/healthy-eating/blogs/healthy-food/michelle-obama-food-0317?src=nl&mag=tdg&list=nl\\_dgr\\_got\\_non\\_031910\\_michelle-obama-food&kw=ist#ixzz0ie6R92Oq](http://www.thedailygreen.com/healthy-eating/blogs/healthy-food/michelle-obama-food-0317?src=nl&mag=tdg&list=nl_dgr_got_non_031910_michelle-obama-food&kw=ist#ixzz0ie6R92Oq)

**Retort Operators Training Course  
(Canned Foods: Thermal Processing and Container Evaluation)**

101 Belvedere Avenue, P.E.I. Food Technology Centre, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island

DURATION: 4 days (35 hours) April 14-17, 2010

COST: \$1,300, plus HST (less 10% discount for members of the Atlantic Food and Beverage Processors Association)

Instruction provided by the Marine Institute, St. John's, NL.

**COURSE AIMS:**

- To meet the employee qualifications (retort operators) section of the Quality Management Program of Fisheries & Oceans.
- To meet the training requirements of the Personnel Section of the Canadian Food Industry Code of Practice for the Heat Processing of Low-Acid and Acidified Low Acid Foods in Hermetically Sealed Containers.
- To provide training for other employees who have direct involvement with canned foods in hermetically sealed containers.
- To train post secondary students in the subject area.

**MAJOR TOPICS:**

1. INTRODUCTION TO SITE MICROBIOLOGY
2. PRODUCT PREPARATION
3. PROCESSING EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURE
4. CONTAINER INTEGRITY
5. POST CONTAINER HANDLING
6. INCUBATION
7. REGULATIONS AND CODES OF PRACTICE

For further information please contact Janet Docherty at the PEI Food Technology Centre;  
tel: (902)368-5226; e-mail: [jvdocher@gov.pe.ca](mailto:jvdocher@gov.pe.ca)

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