

Growing a Local Foods Culture



Rebecca George

The Community



- Founded 46 years ago on 750 acres
- Practical work in the Fourth Way tradition
- Spiritual development through three areas of work
- International community

The Property

- 300 acres of vineyard
- 30 acres of orchard
- 5 man-made lakes
- Palm nursery
- Vegetable gardens
- Ornamental gardens
- Three restaurants
- Museum
- Community center
- Elementary school
- Amphitheater
- Winery
- Performing Arts Org
- Animal Refuge...



Agricultural Initiative

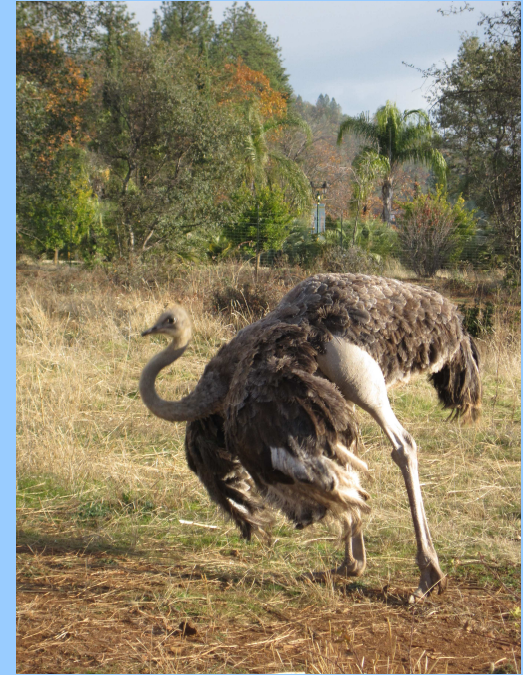
- 50% economic, 50% S-S
- 8 year plan, 6 month emergency
- 4 month analysis
- Began with distribution to restaurants
- Supported by CSA, farmer's markets

Existing Resources

- Fruit: 35,500 lbs
- Olives: 5,000 lbs
- Nuts: 200 lbs
- Vineyard: 32 acres
- Honey: 60 hives
- Livestock

Initiated by Project

- Scalable vegetable production
- Integrated use of livestock
- Managed fruit use
- Community education





Land management and
acquisition,
seeding, planting, gardening,
harvesting, sanitation, packing and
record keeping, storing,
Transportation, distribution,
preservation, and seed- saving
+
Finance, Human Resources,
Marketing and Sales

Vegetables:

Acres 1st year: 1.2, July to January yield: 8,000 lbs.
Acres 2nd year: 4.5, April to October yield: 14,000 lbs.

Fruits and Nuts:

1st Quality: 22,000 lbs.
2nd Quality: 5,000 lbs.

Goals

- Community participation
- Increase local food consumption
- Develop methods to maintain flow of production
 - Meet target production
 - Create a seasonal foods culture



- Demand oriented growing
- Cooperate with existing local farms
 - Experimental crops
- Planning community events

Practical Challenges

Finding the right scale

- Consistency
- Over-production
- Labor



- Costs
- Cultural distance from land





Cultural change depends on individuals
direct experiences of new possibilities which
positively reinforce new patterns of behavior



Cultural Context

- Community agricultural events
- 4,000 Independent CSA farm-projects started in 2009



Achievements



- Met and exceeded production and distribution aims for first year
- About 60% community participation, 10% >1x/wk, 4% >1 day/wk
 - Community CSA of 30, local CSA of 200 (fruit only)
 - Average monthly restaurant use of 750 lbs. produce
 - Monthly newsletter, educational events
- Community market on-site, farmers market, winter location
 - Seasonal agricultural fairs, giving the big picture

Future Generations



Thank you.

Rebecca George
bethewords@gmail.com