

Organic Land Care *with*

"Everything is the product of one universal creative effort. There is nothing dead in Nature. Everything is organic and living, and therefore the whole world appears to be a living organism."

Seneca (Roman philosopher, mid-1st century AD)

"We must adjust to changing times and still hold to unchanging principles."

Jimmy Carter



Organic Land Care with SOUL is published ten times per year by the Society for Organic Urban Land Care.

Our Mission:

"To support our communities in their transition to organic practices"

This newsletter is distributed free of charge to all SOUL members. Please feel free to share this publication.

SOUL

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www.organiclandcare.org.

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Welcome to the February issue of the SOUL Newsletter. As we approach spring, there appears to be more information coming forth about all things organic. Be it food production, food distribution, household products, horticulture or greenhouse products and practices. The idea of "organic" is being promoted and discussed in many places and in many ways. Unfortunately, there also seem to be many uses and definitions for the word organic as it is now being marketed as "green" products, services or practices. Over the next year, we may be moving toward an even greater use of the word organic; therefore, those of us involved in organic land care will have to be vigilant in what this means for us and our practices and how this concept of can be usurped through incorrect use of practice, knowledge and marketing. Because of the momentum of change affecting land care product and practices, this newsletter will report on proposed pesticide bans in France and research about the detrimental effects of pesticide in the Australia environment. Interestingly, in 2003, SOUL produced its first Organic Land Care Standards "in response to the need for clear guidelines for the creation and maintenance of landscapes for environmental, recreational and ornamental reasons, following organic principles" (p. 5).

In the March newsletter, a new feature will be launched that will highlight sustaining and professional members. Professional members are asked to submit a short summary of themselves and their company/work from which one submission per month will be chosen by lottery and edited for inclusion by our editor. It should prove to be an interesting feature as these companies are examples of how organic services and products can be melded with ethical business practices.

I hope that you find the contents of this newsletter thoughtful and provocative.

Thank you,
David Greig

This information was taken from the Reuters website with information from Sybille de La Hamaide, reporting and editing by Chris Johnson.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idUKL3080402220080130>

In an article from The Australian (January 5, 2008) related to pesticides in the environment, Greg Roberts reported that since 1970 eight Queensland frog species have become extinct. Originally, it was thought a combination of climate change and the chytrid fungus were killing these amphibians. But research in California on its frog populations appears to be providing evidence that 4 commonly used pesticides and herbicides may be affecting the frog populations in Queensland. This research has "implicated three organophosphorus pesticides and the herbicide atrazine in frog population declines". Again finding exacting proof that it is pesticides causing these extinctions is a matter of debate, but researchers in Australia and California are focusing their attention on the use of chemicals in the environment. As mentioned in the article, what is causing these effects on the amphibian populations may be more than climate change and a fungus because in Queensland there "have been huge increases in the quantities of plastic PCBs, pesticides and all sorts of chemicals being generated."

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,,23008909-30417,00.html>

In a very short news release in a recent article from the Reuters news agency (Wed Jan 30, 2008), it was reported that France is banning the sale of more than 1,500 pesticides. Over the next 10 year period, France will work toward eliminating the use of 50 percent of phytosanitary (pertaining to the health of plants) products. Although not specific about which companies would be affected, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries will eliminate the use of 30 this year. The article did not clarify the process for how the French will do this. Nonetheless, it is encouraging that France views the need to stop the use of such products in their fields as important enough to warrant bans on such items. This information was taken from the Reuters website with information from Sybille de La Hamaide, reporting and editing by Chris Johnson.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idUKL3080402220080130>

As with both these stories, more information may come out in the coming months and years.

It seems that as our knowledge of the detrimental effects of chemicals increases, more bans may likely occur and the efficacy of organic land care practices will continue to be an important part of the change from "conventional" land care practice.



**SOUL welcomes
the new Organic Master Gardener students in
Burnaby, B.C.
Stony Plain, Ab
Victoria, B.C.**

You're making a difference!