



D Acres of New Hampshire

Organic Farm & Educational Homestead

www.dacres.org

Quarterly Newsletter

Summer 2004

Well, this is it, the peak of the growing season in New Hampshire! The days are long, the sun is hot and a crew of excited work-traders are here to learn about **sustainable living**, **organic gardening** and **alternative building**. Since our last newsletter we have offered educational opportunities for kids and expanded our market of wood-crafts, value added garden products and baked goods. We have offered workshops on forest gardening, mushroom plugging, alternative energy, composting and herbal first aid. Details follow...

On-farm education...

Aside from a rotating crew of work-traders, weekend workshop participants and visitors, we have also hosted a number of young folks for a learning experience at the farm. Late this spring eight students and three chaperones from the Field School in Antrim came for three days of the good life: preparing garden beds, planting, hiking in the woods and harvesting their own dinner. They fed the pigs, sheep and chickens and watched from a safe distance while learning how the oxen help us around the farm. Last week a school bus full of kids from the White Mountain Adventure Camp in Campton came to the farm for a morning of farm exploration. Later this summer we will host another group of young folks in partnership with a Dancing Bones summer camp in Warren. Our objective in inviting young people to the farm is to build a connection between the food that they see in the store and the place where it is grown, acquaint them with plants, animals, ponds and forests. The more that kids (and adults) know about and appreciate the natural world, the more likely they are to respect it.

In addition to the education of young folks, we offer hands-on learning to tomorrow's leaders in environmental conservation and justice, agriculture, education, business, social services and government. To that end, apprentices and work-traders come to D Acres to contribute to the farm system on their paths to becoming responsible, environmentally conscious members of society.

In May a young woman named Megan Pulver joined us as an apprentice. Megan's interest in coming to D Acres was to supplement her Environmental Studies curriculum at college with experiential learning in the gardens. In the last three months her recognition of plant species, understanding of the properties of

medicinal and edible plants and ability to nurture plants from seed to harvest have grown substantially. Work in the gardens, use of the D Acres library and a tour that the D Acres crew took of several farms have provided a well rounded learning experience. Megan finds the physical work of planting, weeding, watering, building trellises, turning compost and harvesting to be truly satisfying work, which has solidified the concepts that she has learned in an academic setting. Especially enlightening has been the hands-on understanding of what it means to grow organically. Though Megan understood the meaning of USDA Organic before coming to D Acres, the concept became more tangible after identifying and hand-picking bugs from each plant individually. The hard work and knowledge base that are required to grow food without the use of pesticides gave her a new respect for the word organic. The knowledge that she gained at D Acres will have a practical application upon her return to college. Megan and other members of the cooperative at Binghamton University will offer workshops on topics such as herbal medicine to other students and community members, as well as contribute to the startup of a composting and organic gardening project on campus.

In addition to knowledge and skills acquired here, living at D Acres has addressed a more personal need in her life. Prior to her summer apprenticeship at the farm, Megan was aware of a social norm that concerned her. Waiting for a bus one day at a supermarket near her school, she was struck by the degree to which the people around her were bustling about in their individually focused bubbles. People were not working together, pooling resources or showing concern for those around them. The model of a community working together that D Acres offers has shaped her ideas of how to bring about more productive social and work environments.

If you know someone that might like to work hard and learn about living mindfully in a rural community, inform them about D Acres of NH. We are always looking for enthusiastic, energetic folks to share the vision!

Moving heavy rocks...

Southeast of the Community Building foundation work has begun on our latest Alternative Building Project. Weekly salvage runs throughout the Spring and Summer have supplied us with a bounty of salvaged windows; the oxen have tirelessly dragged large rocks from various parts of the property; cob and adobe have been mixed and the blueprint has been drawn. **The combination Greenhouse and Animal Husbandry building project is underway!** Two more Alternative Building Workshops throughout the summer will give folks from the public a chance to get in on the fun (weekend workshop on August 20-22 and one-day workshop on September 11). For more information on working with cob and adobe (and other useful articles written by the

Kids from the White Mtn Adventure camp in Campton learning about chicken tractors during their educational farm tour ▶



prolific folks at D Acres) visit the Articles & Useful Links page of our website (www.dacres.org).

Meet the Board...

As many of you know, D Acres of New Hampshire is overseen by a Board of Directors. The board assists us by making certain that our resources are managed effectively, ensuring that we are meeting regulatory requirements and monitoring our financial performance and the success of our products, services and strategies. Simply put, the Board of Directors offers advice and guidance to the organization, and promotes D Acres in any way they can. **The board brings a great deal of professional knowledge, experience and, most importantly, enthusiasm to the project.** We would like to introduce you to these men and women.

This quarter we present Chairman of the Board, Brian Marsicovetere. Don't worry if the last name doesn't roll off your tongue, after all D Acres is a first name basis organization. Brian is a criminal defence attorney serving in Vermont. For several years Brian, his wife Sharitha, twin boys (Gabe & Ben) and daughter Olivia have visited the farm regularly. This spring he contributed to construction of the new pig fence in the woods east of the Community Building. Brian finds that working and enjoying the natural rhythms of the farm complements his work as a professional and helps him to remain enthusiastic about the career that he has chosen. Participation on the board and in farm activities gives Brian the opportunity to express his belief in the philosophies of community, service, land stewardship, environmental awareness, respectful care of animals and healthy living. Brian and Sharitha appreciate that these values are then transferred to Gabe, Ben and Olivia, who love coming to the farm to see the animals and feel comfortable in the woods and gardens.

Brian is also a member of the D Acres Food Club, supplying his family with bulk natural foods each month. With two growing boys, it's no wonder he's looking to save a few dollars on the grocery bill! Bulk buying means less packaging waste that goes directly to the landfills. Less time spent shopping affords more time spent together as a family.

Despite a full time job and a family of 5, Brian is always there for us when we need advice on legal matters. We appreciate the devotion that Brian and our other board members have shown to D Acres of NH. With the help of our Board of Directors: community members, professionals and local businessfolks, the organization is in good hands.



► Oriental Poppy

That said, we are always looking for more enthusiastic individuals to lend a hand. If you, or someone you know, might provide expertise (in education, marketing, banking, etc.) and would enjoy serving on the Board of Directors, please let us know.

Summer success stories...

Sam has been hard at work on artistic endeavors in the woodshop. Several pieces of his furniture now grace the Community Building and our new store in the Red Barn. **All furniture is produced at D Acres using raw materials sustainably harvested on site.** We enclosed Sam's brochure for your perusal. Let us know if you see anything you like!

Micki has begun production of her line of **herbal products**. The line begins with five tinctures made from ethically wildcrafted and sustainably harvested herbs. This year's varieties include: Calcium Tonic, Women's Gentle Moon, end to Insomnia, Headache & Tension Relief and a simple tincture of Raspberry Leaf. Suffer no more...

Micki's herbal tinctures are available for sale at Peppercorn Natural Foods in Plymouth. Tinctures, furniture, crafts and D Acres T-shirts can all be purchased through the Merchandise page of our website (www.dacres.org).

We have also opened the doors of our **farm store**. All D Acres of NH products are now available in the barn just down the street from the Community Building. Watch for the sign when you come down Streeter Woods Road!

This summer has also seen a great increase in sales of our organic baked goods. Bread, sweet breads and energy bars made in our commercial kitchen are now available on the Plymouth side (at Peppercorn Natural Foods, Cafe Monte Alto, Samaha's and LongHaul Farm) as well as the Lebanon side (Lebanon Health Food store and the Upper Valley Coop in White River Junction). We also recently began selling quite close to home: Miller's on the corner of routes 118 and 25 is another stop on our Monday and Thursday bread runs. Don't forget though, that **baked goods are also available at the farm on Mondays and Thursdays** (call in advance so that we keep some on hand).

This summer Josh was accepted to show his crafts (wooden utensils, birch bark frames and mirrors) at a local gallery called **Artistic Roots** that opened in July in Campton, NH. One day a month Josh volunteers his time at the gallery and he is known to take his juggling paraphernalia with him. Check out the Campton collective, and you might just catch his performance!

He may also tell you about the way in which the wood used to make his crafts was sustainably harvested from our woodlot. In addition to producing revenue to support our educational programming, the design of our cottage industry programs (furniture, crafts, herbal products and commercial kitchen) is to provide information to people about the products that they are buying and how they relate to the values at D Acres of NH. As an organization, we support the production of value added goods and services based on locally available materials and resources.

Community involvement...

In late June the community gathered together to celebrate the life of Edith Gray. Edith lived on the property managed by D Acres for over fifty years with her family. We all enjoyed the opportunity to see old friends and family and to remember times spent with Edith.

In July folks at the farm enjoyed participating in [Dorchester Old Home Days](#), an annual event in our little town. Some of us helped serve a ham & bean dinner, some ran in a 10k race to raise money for our kids' scholarship fund and some worked a farmstand selling D Acres of NH products. The bands, kids' programming and endless supply of ice cream made just about everyone happy. It is a great thing to see Dorchester becoming a stronger community every year.

In pursuit of more community involvement we will be going to various [farmers' markets](#) throughout the summer. Last week we visited the Enfield Farmer's Market and we hope to have the chance to visit Canaan and Plymouth as well. The farm stand is a great way for you to hear about upcoming workshops or to see our display of quality D Acres of NH products.

If we don't see you at farm stand this year, be sure to come to the Pig Pickin' Party on August 28th. Dinner will be served at 5pm and Jim McHugh and his band will play bluegrass from 7-10pm. All are welcome. Come early and enjoy the Plant Walk with Micki (2-4pm).

Another endeavor to strengthen the local community and our economy is the launch of a new page on our website. The page features businesses from the area that we admire for quality product, service and support of the local community. The site was designed in an effort to provide affordable web access and to serve as a venue for the promotion of local businesses. We hope that you will visit the webpage to learn more about the locally owned businesses that serve our region. The page "Supporting Local Business," will be available to the public by the end of August.

Growing organically...

This week we are expecting the arrival of Vickie Smith from the NH Department of Agriculture for her annual Organic Certification Inspection. Each year Vickie comes to the farm to make sure that D Acres of NH, like the other organic farms in the state, is properly in compliance.

More and more farmers are making the choice to grow organically today. Organic certification ensures that no persistent chemicals, synthetic pesticides, genetically modified organisms, antibiotics, growth hormones and sludge are used. Organic farming promotes biodiversity, supports a true economy (by investing in the long-term future of our planet) and produces food that you can trust. For more information about growing organically in New Hampshire, visit www.nofanh.org. Another able partner in New England organic farming and gardening is the [Maine Organic Farmers & Growers Association](#). MOFGA hosts the Commonground Fair in Unity, Maine on September 24, 25, 26.

At D Acres of NH, growing organic food and herbs and raising our animals on organic feed is fundamental. The choices that we make in the gardens, the forest, in our building, baking and buying are about taking responsibility for the creation of the kind of future we would like to see: an educated public that understands the connection between farm and food; rural communities with the economic and political strength to defend their interests; a society committed to producing less landfill material and pollution. Many problems that society faces today can be ameliorated through education, awareness and skill development. At D Acres we strive to make such educational opportunities available to a wide range of folks interested in a cleaner, safer, healthier and diverse planet.

Come on up!

Just a reminder of the workshops still to come this year:

- ▶ August 7 - [Mushroom Identification Walk](#) (slideshow, mushroom gathering then fungi for dinner!)
- ▶ August 28 - [Plant Walk](#) (Micki leads a tour of edible and medicinal plants in the gardens and woodlands at D Acres)
- ▶ August 28 - [Pig Pickin' D Acres' Annual Party](#) (great food, great band, come enjoy!)
- ▶ September 18 - [Sustainable Forestry with Oxen](#) (spend the day with our ox team August & Henri and learn how to manage a small wood lot).
- ▶ October 2 - [Creating a Small Vegetable Plot](#) (learn a great technique to get an area ready for spring planting).
- ▶ October 9 - [Hammer In](#) (blacksmithing workshop focusing on tool repair)
- ▶ October 23 - [Costumes, masks & puppets!](#) (family workshop on crafting with recycled and re-used materials)

The full Calendar of Events is on the web (www.dacres.org). The Workshops & Events page includes time, cost and more details. If you have not received a calendar (including dates of our full-moon potlucks and Friday film series), call or e-mail us for a copy.

The solar powered irrigation pump is humming, the tree houses are creaking, and the oxen have been seen pulling the mobile chicken house around the property. These and many more marvels are yours to witness at D Acres of NH. Hope to see you soon!

Peace,

The D Acres of NH Community

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Josh, Sam, Joe, Alex, Jeremiah,
Miriam, Abby, Austen, Clayton,
Meg G, Meg P, Kellen & Micki

