

KEEP MANITOBA WHALES FREE

Marineland Niagara Falls applies to capture 6 Beluga Whales

By David Nickarz

"Baby beluga in the deep blue sea..." Raffi's gentle and much-loved song has introduced countless children to these beautiful and affectionate mammals. Manitobans often don't realize that beluga whales are a vital part of our province's coastal ecology, in the waters of Hudson's Bay. Unfortunately, the belugas aren't always left to "swim so wild, and swim so free" as in Raffi's song. Dave Nickarz gives an overview of the latest plan to capture young beluga whales for a life in captivity.

Marineland Niagara Falls has applied to capture 6 Beluga Whales from Churchill, Manitoba, possibly this summer. Before issuing the permit the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) will be doing a review of its capture policy. A decision on the permit is expected soon.

The last capture took place in 1992 when the Shedd Aquarium of Chicago took 4 Belugas from the waters near Churchill. Shortly after they arrived at the aquarium two of the Belugas died after receiving an overdose of anti-parasite medicine. This, and aggressive opposition from animal rights groups, (including 5 activists who attempted to physically stop the captures in Churchill), caused the DFO to adopt a policy of no Beluga captures for export.

James Pearson, now with People Acting for Animal Liberation (PAAL), was part of the effort to stop the captures in 1992. "The public received the news with shock that Shedd intended to capture Beluga Whales in 1992. In 1999 Marineland's application seems all the more outdated," said Pearson.

Pearson and others have stated their intent to stop these captures before they happen. Pearson continues, "We already have a plan in place that features a multi-pronged attack on this issue whether Marineland is successful or not. As a last resort this includes physical intervention."

Animal rights advocates are not the only people opposed to this capture. Mike Macri is with Sea North Tours in Churchill. He runs an Eco-Tourism business that includes whale watching. Macri

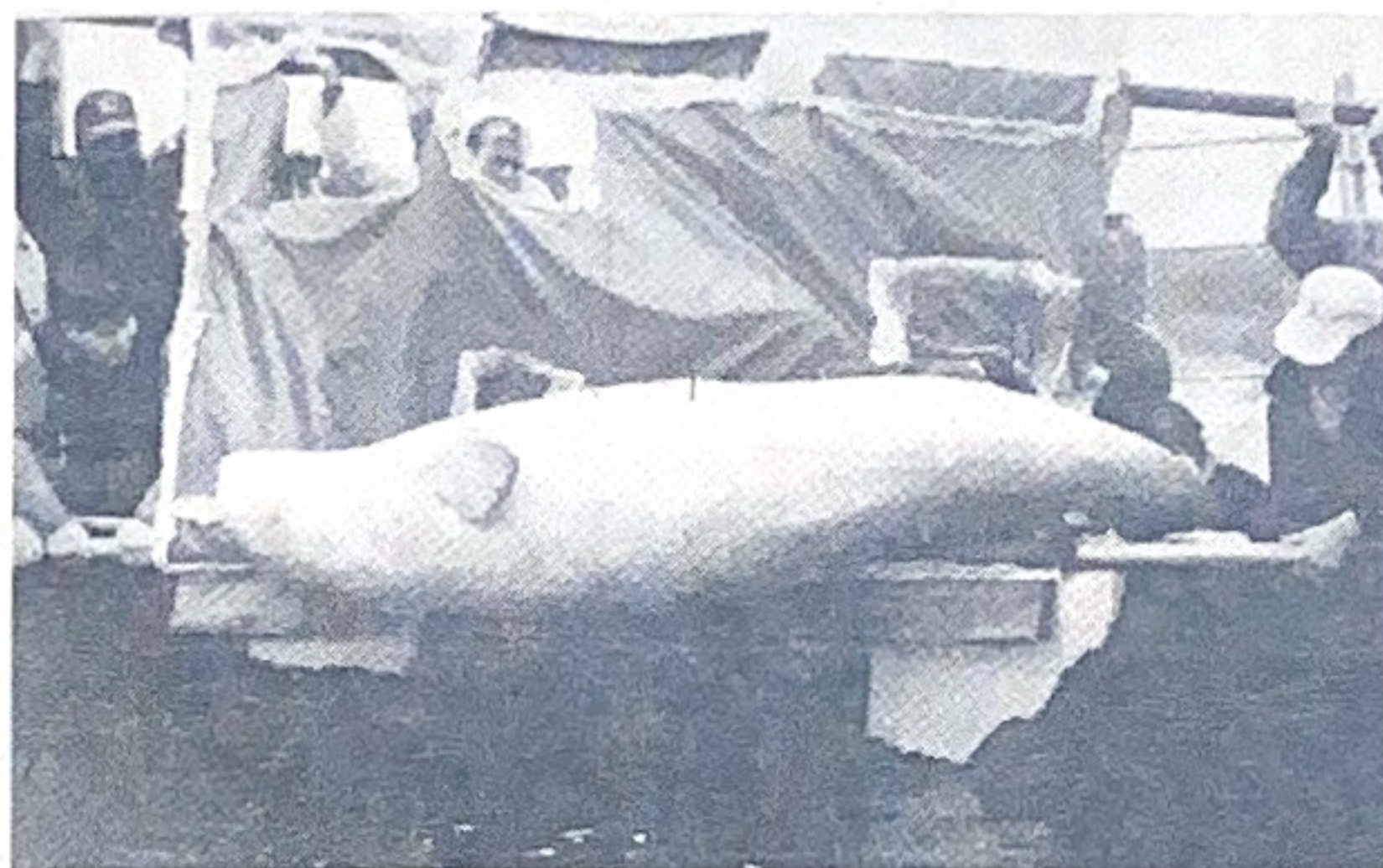
hopes the captures won't happen. I like to see whales in their own habitat, not taken out," said Macri.

"In the past, I haven't said anything. I didn't want to rock the boat because local people are involved. It's about time I spoke out about it. You hear enough from the pro-captivity side", said Macri.

Whale watching businesses have grown over the years. Although Macri does not believe the captures will significantly affect his business, he does look unfavorably towards the aquarium industry. And so do many others.

Since 1992 there has been a ground swell of disapproval towards marine mammal captivity. Celebrities like Jean-Michel Cousteau

(son of Jaques Cousteau) and Free Willy producers Richard Donner and Lauren Shuler-Donner have recently condemned the proposed captures by Marineland. Millions of dollars have been spent to return Keiko, the Orca featured in the Free Willy movies to his original home near Iceland. Public opinion has changed from the days when Orcas were thought of as "Killer" whales.



Churchill in August of 1992. A juvenile Beluga Whale is dumped into a holding tank. Ironically, this holding tank used to be a rendering tank for whale oil. Photo by James Pearson

Public Education

Public Education is a defense the aquarium industry uses to justify their actions. Pearson and others have visited aquaria like Marineland and have a much different view on the industry's claim.

"The capture industry holds up education as the defense of its wrongdoings. There are numberless educational sources upon which to draw," said Pearson.

Pearson continues, "Compare the vast vistas of cold Arctic water to endless days of boredom and loneliness in a tank. The educational value of that experience is obvious; there is none. There is no other reason for the captures but big-moneyed interest." **ECO**

How you can help

Help stop the captures before they happen. Please contact:
Prime Minister Chretien

Fax: 613-941-6900 or E-mail: pm@pm.gc.ca

David Anderson, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

Fax: 613-990-7292 or E-mail: andersond@df-mpo.gc.ca
both at House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6

For more information please visit the People Acting for Animal Liberation website at www.paal.mb.ca.

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Volume 9, Number 3
MAY/JUNE, 1999
(date of issue: June 1, 1999)

ECO-JOURNAL

is published five times per year by the
Manitoba Eco-Network/Reseau
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The Manitoba Eco-Network is affiliated
with the Canadian Environmental Network.

Individual Subscriptions to **Eco-Journal** are
available at a cost of \$20 or as part of a
supporting membership to the Manitoba
Eco-Network at a cost of \$25. Group mem-
bership dues are \$40. Advertising rates are
available upon request.

Canada Publication Mail Sales Agreement
#0530212, Postage paid at Winnipeg, MB.

The opinions expressed by contributors are
their own and do not represent the views of
the Manitoba Eco-Network or its member
groups.

ORGANIC STANDARDS ADOPTED

by Janine Gibson

After many years of discussion and ne-
gotiation, Canada now has a national stand-
ard for organic agriculture - one of the first
in the world. The Standards Council of
Canada, which is Canada's ISO liaison, has
been approached to accredit the Canadian
Organic Advisory Board through its sys-
tem of accreditation to administer the Stand-
ard on Organic Agriculture, in co-operation
with regional certification organizations
across the country (including the Organic
Producers Association of Manitoba).

A Certified Organic label means that con-

sumers can be assured of a number of food
quality issues, including the absence of
genetically-modified organisms (thus far,
certified organic is the only assurance one
can have on this difficult issue). Local pro-
ducers have for some years now, had the
opportunity to certify with OPAM, and will
continue to do so. This new development
is a positive one for farmers wishing to ex-
port to overseas markets. It is timely, as
Europeans become more and more adamant
about "GM" foods, and large food chains
there are explicitly seeking out organic
sources. **ECO**

TAKE ACTION ON PESTICIDES

Are you concerned about the over-use
of pesticides in the City of Winnipeg, but
don't know what to do about it? There is a
group in the city that is focusing its atten-
tion on getting a pesticide reduction by-
law in place for the City. Our name is Cam-
paign for Pesticide Reduction! Winnipeg.

We are affiliated with some of Canada's
most influential environmental and labour
groups, including the World Wildlife Fund,
Canada, the Sierra Club of Canada, the To-
ronto Environmental Alliance, and the Ca-

nadian Labour Congress. Locally, we are
affiliated with the Allergy and Environmen-
tal Health Association, Manitoba. We are
one of over 45 CPR! chapters across
Canada.

Our mandate is simply to share our con-
cerns about the overuse of pesticides in
this City, by homeowners, lawn care com-
panies, and the City of Winnipeg.

If you would like to join the Campaign for
Pesticide Reduction! Winnipeg, please call
889-6021 and ask for Ian Greaves. **ECO**

YOUTH ACTIVIST RETREAT

CHO!CES, the Canadian Centre for Policy
Alternatives, and the Canadian Federation
of Students (MB) are teaming up to plan a
Youth Activist Retreat at the end of Au-
gust. The Retreat is aimed at young people
between the ages of 17 and 23, who have
demonstrated an interest in community ac-
tivism, but who have not had the opportu-
nity to gain much formal experience or train-
ing in this area. It will consist of a six-day

series of workshops, held at Camp Manitou
at the western edge of the city.

The intention is to make the retreat as
accessible as possible, therefore, all
accommodation, transportation and food
costs will be covered. For more information
about this exciting project, or to obtain an
application form, please call the CHO!CES
office at 944-9408. **ECO**

1998-1999

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A PICTURE OF RURAL MANITOBA

Results of the Sustainable Communities Assessment Project

by Anne Lindsey

(The following is a modified version of the presentation Anne made at the recent Rural Forum workshop on Community Round Tables in Brandon)

Imagine this scenario: you are a southern Manitoba farmer. You wake one morning and go downstairs for breakfast. What you eat is locally and sustainably produced food. The bread was purchased at the bakery in town where they grind locally-produced grains. The coffee you drink is organically-grown, fair-trade coffee, bought from the general store in town.

Your daughter is here having breakfast with the family today. She came back to the community after college to set up a partnership producing cloth from Manitoba-grown hemp fibre with a small business loan. The fabric is shipped to a nearby town to be made into clothing for the retail market. You yourself are wearing one of the hemp shirts that very day.

Later in the day, you'll be hosting a mentorship day at your farm. You're part of a mentoring network which links new farmers and young people thinking about getting into farming with experienced farmers. You're expecting about a dozen people to come today.

But first, you are attending a morning meeting of your Community Round Table's eco-tourism committee. It's working on a plan to restore an old church property close to the woods into a guest house with nature trails. This is an exciting project. Today, an energy efficiency consultant is coming to the meeting to talk over ideas and plans for retrofitting the building for low energy and water use. Grade 12 students from the regional high school are coming to the meeting to hear and participate in the presentation and discussion. Some of them will probably be hired on as summer students to help with the retrofit project, if the grant which has been applied for comes through.

At the last meeting, elders from the nearby reserve attended to talk about the traditional medicinal plants in the area. A field trip is planned for the summer.

It feels good to know that passenger rail service is alive and well, and that future visitors to the centre will easily be able to connect by train from Winnipeg on the same branch line that carries grain and other area products out to the export markets...

Pie in the sky?

Sound like "pie in the sky" utopian ideas from some Winnipeg environmentalist? Maybe. But take a look at some of the more than 80 vision statements prepared by Community Round Tables all over this province, and you'll see the same underlying ideas. People want things like economic opportunity and growth, ways to keep young people in their community and on the land, clean water and air, the opportunity to continue to live a rural way of life.

These are some of the things we found during the Sustainable

Communities Assessment Project. This project surveyed people from 66 Manitoba communities which either currently have, or have in the past had a Round Table. It was funded by the Population Health Fund of Health Canada through the Community Animation Project of the federal Health and Environment departments, and carried out with the co-operation of Manitoba Rural Development.

The scenario presented above is one that almost any southern Manitoba community resident would see as helping to fulfill their vision for the future because it contains lots of the elements that Manitoba's people seem to identify as being important to them. (There are variations on this theme for the North of course, and for

the East and the Interlake, but the basics remain the same). Moreover, the scenario, albeit incomplete, also encompasses things like sustainability; local control of development; integrating health, environment and economics; partnerships; skill development - the principles with which the Community Choices Round Table program was launched back in 1991.

Survey developed

How well has this program moved Manitoba's communities towards their vision of a sustainable future? We wanted to find out how the Round Tables did and what they did. What went well,

what not so well. How community members thought that their communities could move forward using a program like the Round Table. How did the activities of the Round Table measure up against the principles of the Community Choices program?

We developed a survey of 13 questions designed to elicit answers to these questions. Four field researchers were engaged to carry out the surveys with community members in different regions of the province. They are Carl Braun from Nelson House, Mark Burch from Brandon, Janine Gibson from the Steinbach area and Dave Kattenburg, also from Brandon.

See *Places to Live, Work and Play* page 10 ►



illustration by Stephen Jackson

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WHAT'S HAPPENING...

JUNE 16 - BIOTECH WORKING GROUP MEETING, 5 pm at the Eco-Network Office, #2 - 70 Albert Street. If you'd like to take action to demand labelling on genetically engineered foods or work to prevent patenting of 'terminator' technologies in Canada, come by and get involved. Call Manitoba Eco-Network at 947-6511.

JUNE 16 - CAMPAIGN FOR PESTICIDE REDUCTION! WINNIPEG MEETING, 7pm at the Eco-Network office, #2-70 Albert St. All are welcome.

JUNE 19 - WILDERNESS PLANNING SESSION WITH PINE FALLS PAPER COMPANY - If you have concerns about the protection of Manitoba's Boreal Forest, join local forest activists as they sit down to promote the wilderness qualities on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg. Call Peter Miller at 786-9832 or 452-9017 for more detailed information, location and time.

JUNE 19, 18TH ANNUAL WALK FOR PEACE - NO to war! Assemble at the Legislature at 12 noon. Sponsored by Peace Alliance Winnipeg, call 775-8178 to: 1. add your group's name to the list of endorsing groups; 2. obtain pledge forms to raise funds for the anti-war movement; 3. volunteer for the day, or help before with poster.

JUNE 22 - DUTCH ELM DISEASE WORKSHOP, 7 pm at River Heights Community Centre. For more details, call Judy at Coalition to Save the Elms, 832-7188.

JUNE 21 AND 22. MANITOBA ABORIGINAL RIGHTS COALITION, PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO CHURCHILL-NELSON PROJECT, Knox United Church, Winnipeg. June 21, 9-5pm. June 22, 9-4:30pm and 7-10pm. Call 287-8583 for details.

JUNE 24 AND FRIDAY, JUNE 25. MARC PUBLIC INQUIRY. Cross Lake Cree Nation.

AUGUST 20TH TO AUGUST 26TH - WEEK LONG YOUTH ACTIVIST RETREAT at Camp Manitou outside of Winnipeg. Six days of Organizing Workshops for young Manitobans who want to work for positive change. This camp is designed for ages 17 to 23 years old. Contact Choices for more information 944-9408.

OCTOBER 12 - Y6B! World population will reach 6 billion on this date. Can we continue to consume and pollute at current rates into an indefinite future? Call RCM at 925-3777 for information about ecological footprint analysis and alternatives to reduce consumption and pollution.

Our Worst Fears: WORLD WIDE COMMERCIAL WHALING

by David Nickarz

In my last article "What I did Last Summer..." I wrote about the Makah of Washington State and their plan to resume whaling for the reason of 'cultural necessity'. The Sea Shepherd Conservation Society opposed this hunt because the claim of



cultural necessity would be used by Japan, Iceland, Norway and other whaling nations to resume commercial whaling. This would undermine the International Whaling Commission's 1986 moratorium on Commercial Whaling.

Our worst fears became reality on March 10, 1999 with the decision by the Icelandic Parliament to resume whaling "as soon as possible." The only thing preventing Iceland from whaling was the US Department of Commerce Regulations. Any nation that hunted whales for commercial reasons would be subject to sanctions—in Iceland's case their fish products.

Now Iceland has nothing to worry about because the United States has compromised its own principles by allowing a whale hunt that has not been recognized by the International Whaling Commission (the Makah hunt was never allowed by the IWC). With no threat of sanctions Iceland will now begin killing whales for luxury products in Japan.

In response the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society will be sending its icebreaker, the Sea Shepherd III to confront the Icelandic whalers. For more information on whaling please contact the Sea Shepherd web site at www.seashepherd.org. **ECO**

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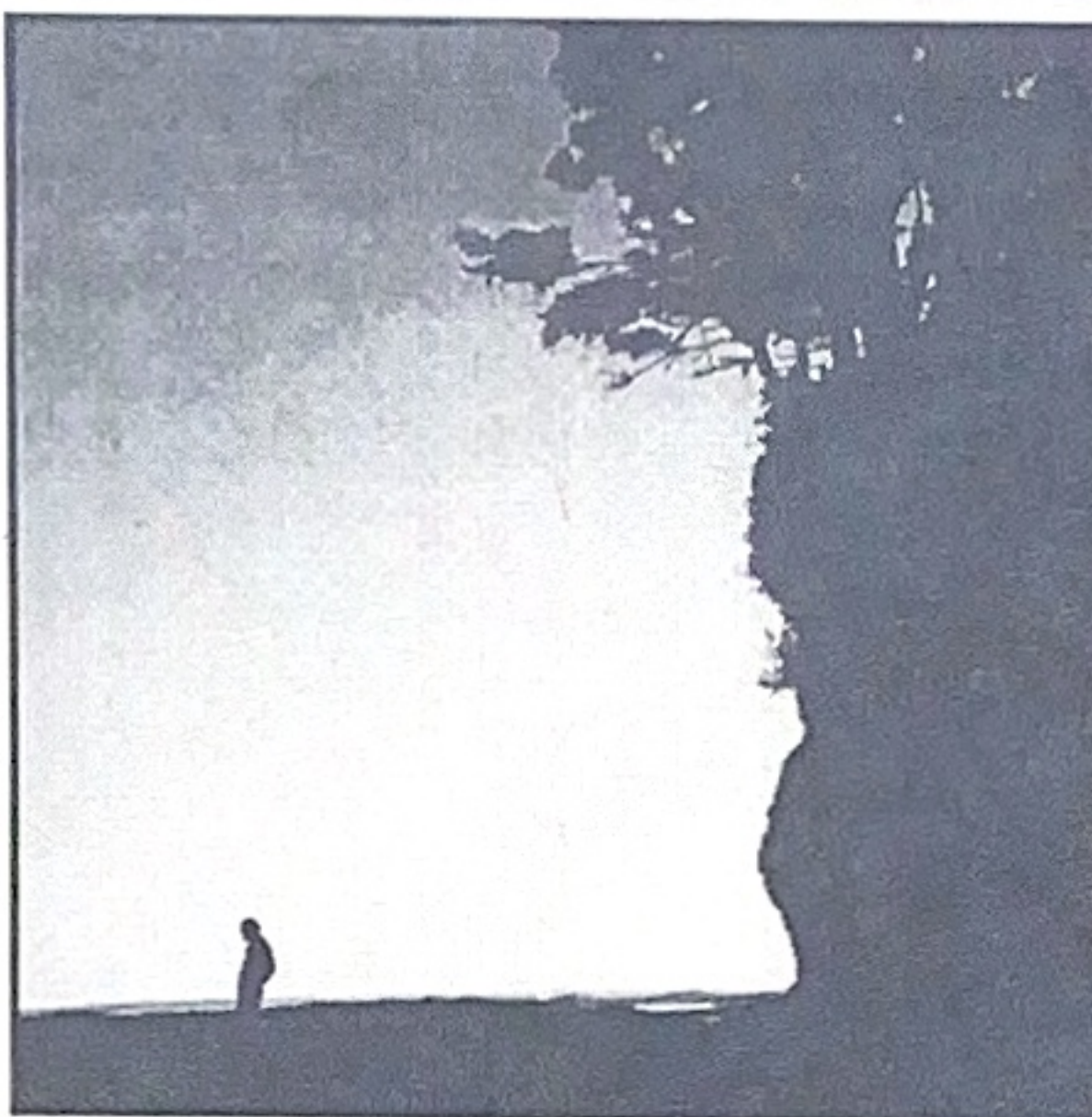
by Anne Lindsey

The Manitoba Model Forest hosted a Special Forest Products workshop on May 20 at the Brokenhead First Nation. The workshop was very well-attended, with about 100 people present from various parts of the province, including many First Nations people. A presentation on Eco-tourism by Ron Scott from Keewatin Community College in the Pas was the focus of the first part of the agenda. KCC has recently initiated a 2 year program in Eco-tourism, incorporating elements of its Natural Resources Management, Recreation services and Business Development programs. Its aim is to provide Manitobans with an opportunity to learn about and apply eco-tourism in their own communities, with an eye to helping to diversify local economies in rural and northern areas. The program is timely, given the burgeoning interest in tourism which is developing around the province (see Community Round Table story on p.3).

Conservation and respect

Eco-tourism provides a way for tourism based on the natural beauty and undisturbed character of an area to be respectful of the need to preserve that area. In addition, it allows for tourist activity

to respect the local population. Ron gave a general description of eco-tourism as follows: "an enlightening and ethically-managed nature- or culture- based travel experience, that conserves the natural environment while respecting local culture and traditions".



"People zoos"

One challenge will be to avoid the devastating impacts that high volumes of visitors can have on ecologically sensitive areas. Another was expressed well by one of the workshop participants who asked how communities can avoid developing "people zoos", especially in First Nations communities. Ron stressed that in order to uphold the ideals of conservation and respect, communities will have to develop guidelines and standards for their own eco-tourism activities. He noted too, that the eco-tourists themselves may help with standards development, as they often have high expectations for guidelines and operations. Community ex-

pectations can be built right into promotional materials, he suggested, as one way of filtering out less desirable clients.

Who are "eco-tourists" anyway?

One study, carried out at the University of Waterloo, suggests that the typical eco-tourist (as self-defined) tends to be older, better educated, and higher-income than the general tourist population. And most important, eco-tourists tend to be looking more for a nature-based experience often with an educational component. According to Ron, targeting these populations will be a key task for those wishing to develop eco-tourist opportunities in this province which has relatively few of them, compared to other locations.

Province can assist

It seems reasonable to expect the Provincial government to assist in the development of policies for eco-tourism, based on best practices and past experiences of other jurisdictions with a longer history in the field. Ultimately, communities must be able to have a strong hand in their own standards setting, however, in order that the local knowledge and traditions be honoured.

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GENETIC ENGINEERING THREATS

ANGER TURNS TO ACTION

By Jan Westlund

Pat Mooney's stark update on 'terminator' and 'traitor' technologies developed by Monsanto and other 'life science' multinationals at this spring's organic agriculture conference left audience members reeling at the magnitude of their potential impact.

Genetic engineering designed by corporations to leave seeds impotent and force farmers into dependency for each season's seed or the chemicals required to 'turn them on' was interpreted by many as a full frontal assault on farmers' rights and the security of the world's food supply.

It was viewed as the outrageous outer limits of a technology which acknowledges no ethical implications from cross species breeding supported as it is by the attitude that no element of nature is sacred from human manipulation nor safe from unfettered profiteering.

Disbelief turned to horror ... horror dissolved to anger ... anger mobilized action ... and the Biotech Working Group of the Manitoba Eco-Network was born this spring.

Three main objectives

Meeting on an irregular basis at the Eco-Centre at #2 - 70 Albert Street, the disparate group of about a dozen new and more experienced activists has vowed to focus their initial actions in three different areas: public education and action around the patenting of terminator and traitor technologies for use in Canada; public education and action around the demand for labelling of geneti-

cally engineered foods and seeds; and public education around the politics and problems of Monsanto commanding a presence on the University of Manitoba campus. They have produced a sample letter and background information which supports a call to refuse patenting of terminator and traitor technologies here (copies are available to anyone calling the Eco-Network at 947-6511). Also currently available is a petition demanding labelling and a moratorium on genetically engineered food soon to be followed by a sample letter for general use.

Contacts around the globe

Manitoba Eco Network staff have supported the Biotech Working Group with research through our contacts with north American groups working with these same concerns broadened by their contacts around the globe. These groups are applying pressure to grocery retailers, lobbying government, participating in international stakeholder processes and generating grassroots activities right across the nation now.

Some nuggets of recent developments

in biotechnology include:

★ Dr. Arpad Pusztai, a distinguished researcher at the Rowett Research Institute in Scotland, announced that rats who were fed genetically engineered potatoes showed serious health damage. Within 48 hours of his announcement, the Institute said Dr. Pusztai was mistaken, suspended him in humiliation, and forced him to retire.

More recently, at least 20 scientists (included toxicologists, genetic engineers and medical experts) from 13 different countries re-examined his work and reported his conclusions were justified. The data showed that rats fed GE potatoes for 10 days suffered serious damage to the immune systems and various organs, including the kidney, stomach, spleen, and brain. (Alive: Canadian Journal of Health and Nutrition, May 1999);

★ Scientists are discovering what could turn out to be a bad news for Canadian corn growers. Laboratory studies have found that bugs that eat genetically altered corn may develop a tolerance for it. A significant portion of Canada's corn is genetically altered to be resistant to pests. (CBC Radio, World Report, May 1999).

★ Britain's largest grocery chain announced it would phase out genetically modified foods from its shelves, and two large British food processors said they would work to eliminate gene-altered ingredients, adding momentum to a European consumer revolt that is threatening a number of US [and Canadian] exports. (Washington Post, April 29, 1999);

★ The British Medical Association called today for an open-ended ban on the introduction of genetically-modified crops and food. Sir William Asscher, chairman of the BMA's Board of Science and Education, said more research was needed into the health and environmental impacts of so-called Frankenstein foods. (PA News, May 17, 1999)

★ A study by the York Nutritional Laboratory, Europe's leading specialists on food sensitivity, showed that soy allergies have

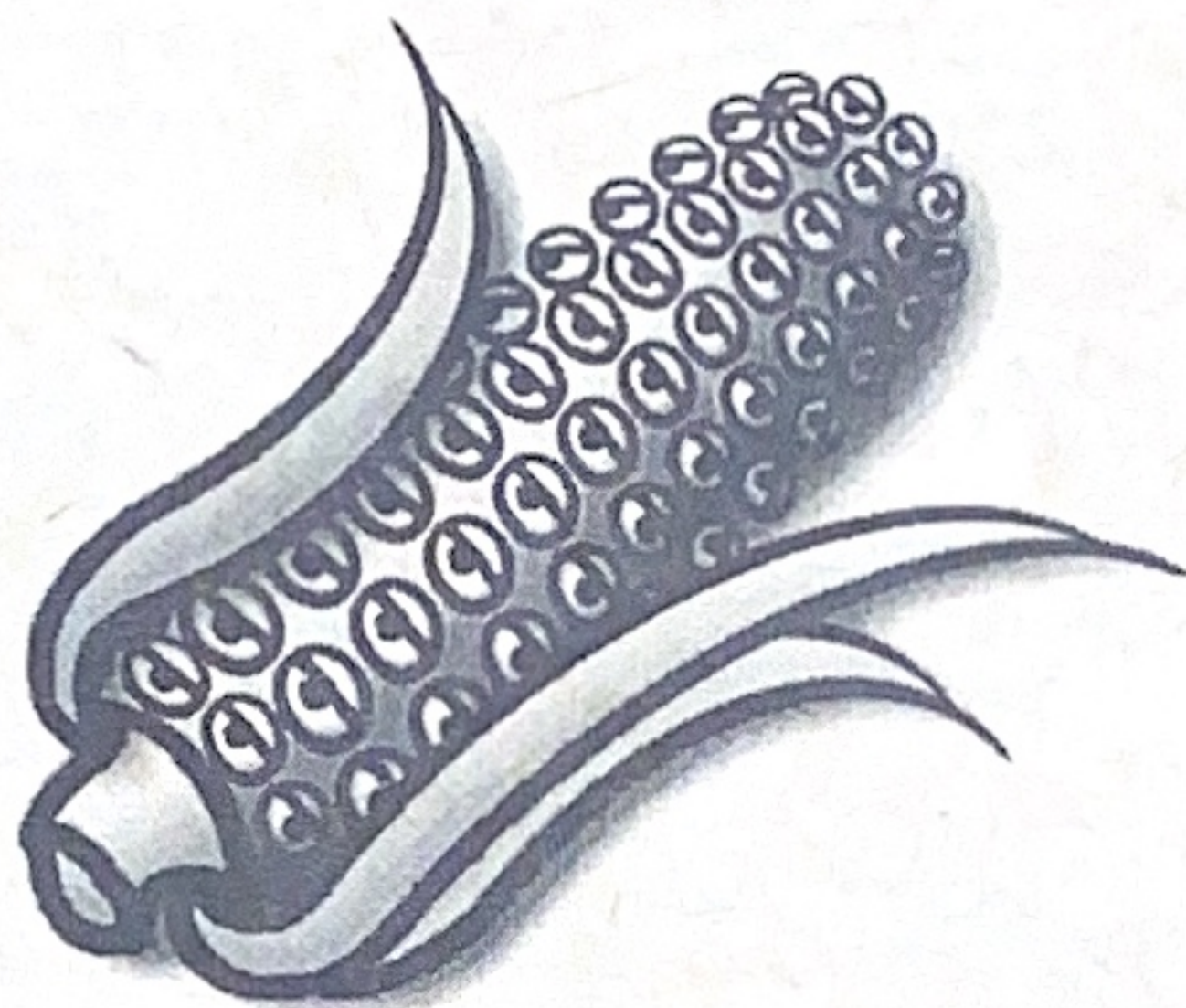


illustration by David Henry

IN REPLY

In the last Journal, we published a letter sent by Arthur Millward to Eموke Szathmary, President of the University of Manitoba, expressing concern about the establishment of a Monsanto Crop Development Centre on the University campus. Arthur kindly passed along Dr. Szathmary's response:

Dear Dr. Millward, Thank you for your letter regarding the opening of the Monsanto Crop Development Centre at the University of Manitoba.

I agree that we all need to be concerned about the safety of genetically engineered crops to other life forms as well as to our species. The necessary degrees of safety, however, cannot be attained without experimentation. For example, experiments are ongoing to confirm - or reject - Arpad Pusztai's findings. I believe that the research undertaken at the Crop Development Centre could also provide the reassurance we seek; there is no need to assume that nothing positive will emerge from the work undertaken here.

While some may regard it as a gamble to undertake such research, in my view it would be unconscionable not to put our knowledge to use and thereby find the means to produce more food for a dangerously overpopulated world.

Thank you for expressing your concerns.

Yours sincerely, Eموke J.E. Szathmary, PhD.

increased 50% in the past year. It is the first time in 17 years of testing that soy has crept into the top 10 foods to cause allergic reactions. As soy is the most common genetically engineered food, the researchers say their findings indicate that genetically modified food could have a tangible, harmful impact on the human body. (Alive: Canadian Journal of Health and Nutrition, June 1999)

★ The European Commission on Thursday halted the approval process for US-produced, genetically altered corn because the plant's pollen could threaten Monarch butterflies.

The policy freeze comes at a time when trade relations between Europe and the United States have already suffered setbacks. A conflict is also brewing over Europe's ban on US beef produced with hormones.

The study, by researchers at Cornell University, was published in this week's *Nature* magazine. Scientists found that leaves dusted with pollen from genetically modified "Bt maize," developed by American company Pioneer Hi-Bred International, have been proven lethal to Monarch butterflies. (News Wire Service, May 20, 1999)

★ OTTAWA — The federal Health Department has admitted it can't adequately assess the growing number of genetically engineered foods being developed by industry. "We must strengthen our capacity in the genetics area," Deputy Health Minister David Dodge told the Senate agriculture committee yesterday. "We do not at the moment have that capacity on board." He said hundreds of genetically altered products are expected to enter the market soon, but genetic scientists capable of assessing such products are scarce and in high demand. (The Province, May 14, 1999)

★ To blunt a nascent consumer rebellion, the Japanese government has proposed labelling bioengineered food to give consumers the freedom to reject it. That in turn has alarmed the United States, which fears that the move could threaten its \$11 billion annual sales -- including about \$1.3 billion from California -- to Japan, the No. 1 market for US agricultural exports. Japan is not the only nation gagging at the idea of genetically altered fare. A truly global food fight is under way. The outcome of the regulatory, marketing and public perception battle that has been joined in Japan could have far-reaching effects on what US farmers plant next year, on the skyrocketing US - Japan trade imbalance and on the struggle between biofood promoters and foes for the hearts and palates of consumers around the world. Well-organized environmental groups are crusading against what they have branded 'Frankenstein food', fanning doubts about the products from Iceland to New Zealand. Anti-GMO protests have been staged in the Philippines, India and Hungary, according to activists, who are flooding the Internet with virulent attacks on biofoods. In London, where foes dumped bags of bioengineered soybeans onto Down-

ing Street in protest last month, a poll by the Independent newspaper found that 68% of Britons were 'worried' about eating GMO food. Only 27% said they were happy to eat it." (LA Times, Sunday Report, March 14, 1999)

★ The National Farmers Union is concerned wind-blown pollen and seed from genetically engineered crops will contaminate non-engineered crops. Stewart Wells, a union spokesman, said it would cost organic producers and other farmers millions of dollars. Mr. Wells said it may soon become impossible to certify canola because no one will be able to guarantee it does not contain genetically engineered seeds. (National Post, May 12, 1999)

★ Research from New York University indicates that active Bt toxins genetically engineered into crops may accumulate in soil. In laboratory experiments, Guenther Stotzky and his colleagues have shown that purified Bt toxins, similar to ones found in some lines of transgenic crops do not disappear when added to soil but instead become rapidly bound to clay and humic acid soil particles. They bound Bt toxins, unlike free toxins, are not degraded by soil microbes, nor do they lose their capacity to kill insects. The accumulation of active Bt toxins in soils could represent a risk to soil ecosystems. (Soil Biology and Biochemistry 30: 463-70, 1998)

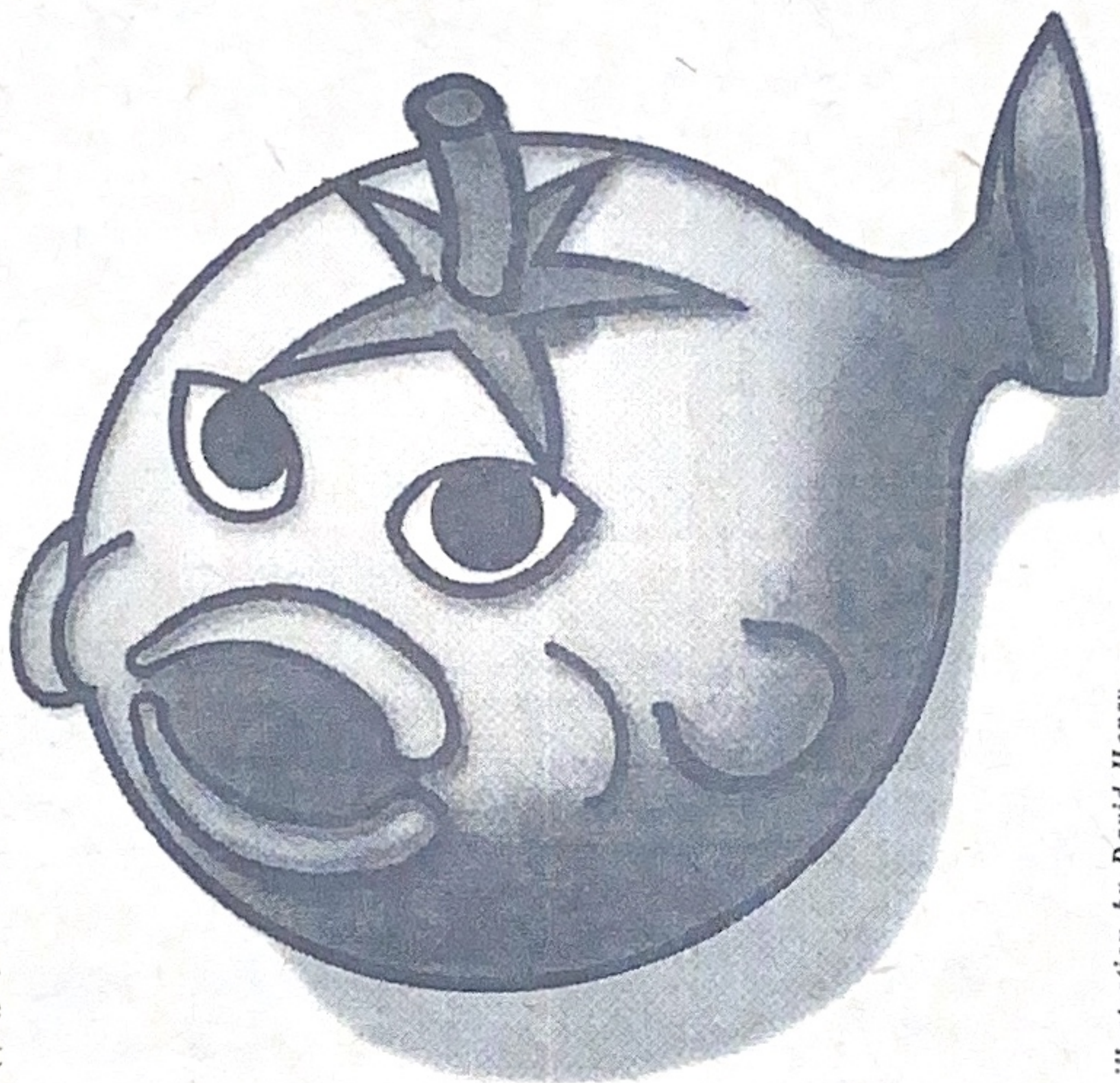


illustration by David Henry

★ Monsanto's director of biotechnology communications admitted to the UK's Independent on Sunday that 'resistance' can develop. Monsanto has apparently stated its intent not to plant certain genetically modified crops where there are wild relatives. The UK government's wildlife advisor, English Nature, criticised the company for inconsistency in the light of its application for commercial cultivation of GM sugarbeet, that does have wild relatives there. (Independent on Sunday, April 25, 1999)

★ Monsanto expects revenues of \$420 million and a net income of \$63 million from its new commercial activity area: water. According to the company's Robert Farley, the move into the water business forms part of the company's strategy to consolidate through the entire food chain: "Since water is as central to food production as seed is, and without water life is not possible, Monsanto is now trying to establish its control over water." To enter the water business, Monsanto has acquired an equity stake in Water Health International (WHI), with an option to buy the rest of the business. In a joint venture with Tata/Eureka Forbes, Monsanto is targeting market access to fabricate, distribute and service water systems. The company has opted for a joint venture strategy in order "to achieve management control over local operations but not have legal consequences due to local issues." The

See Genetic Engineering page 11 ►

BULLSHIT AND HORSEFEATHERS

PLUGGING THE LEAK THAT THREATENS CANADA'S WATER RESOURCES

Wendy R. Holm, P.Ag.

This article sums up very nicely one of the key concerns (water exports) of a new pan-Canadian project: the Water Watch Campaign. Founded by the Canadian Environmental Law Association, Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Council of Canadians, Water Watch has a chapter in Winnipeg. Contact Shirley Lord at CHOICES (944-9408) for more information and to get involved.

Last week in Ottawa, federal government bureaucrats met behind closed doors with lawyers for Sun Belt International to discuss the \$350 million (Cdn \$) lawsuit the California company has launched against Canadian taxpayers (you and I) under the investment provisions of the NAFTA.

Similar to the recent trade debate over the gasoline-additive MMT (for which federal bureaucrats - on behalf of the Canadian taxpayer - shelled out big bucks to US-based Ethyl Corporation in out-of-court settlements), Sun Belt is claiming damages under NAFTA's investor-state dispute mechanism (colloquially referred to as "Chapter Eleven" disputes in trade and investment circles) for profits they say they would have made but for the pesky interference of Canadian government regulations. In the case of MMT, by a federal ban on imports. In the case of tanker shipments of water, by a provincial ban on exports. Both for environmental reasons. (The fact that MMT is banned for use in a number of American states and that the Harmon Doctrine stripped Mexico of its rights to US water some 100 years ago is interesting but irrelevant...)

Back in the spring of 1991, Snow Cap's application to draw 15,000 acre feet of water from Toba Inlet on Vancouver Island was in the final stages of approval when California's Goleta Water District awarded Snow Cap the contract to ship \$105 million (US\$) of water a year to their tiny coastal town. Some five days later, the provincial government placed a moratorium on the issuance of any further licenses. Snow Cap was shut out of the market. The BC government settled with Snow Cap. Absent NAFTA, end of story.

But in a post-NAFTA world, new rights have been created. And so the feds and the lawyers for Sun Belt sat down last week to discuss Sun Belt's Chapter 11 claim against Canadian taxpayers for profits they say they would have made had they gone into the water export/import business with BC-based Snow Cap as originally planned.

BC's lawyers were not permitted IN THE ROOM, never mind at the table. This is a very dangerous situation we have here... The way this issue is handled from here forward is going to shape the future of water use in this country for the rest of history.

(Only last week, on the final day of last week's annual western premiers conference in DRUMHELLER, Alta., North Dakota Gov.

Ed Schaefer - representing the Western Governors Association - spoke of the need for cross-border diversions of Canadian water to parched regions of the northern plains...)

Because water is critical to farming, a few points to remember over the next several months as an antidote to the bullshit (as an Agrologist I share with farmers the right to public use of that technical term...) which will inevitably be spread around on this issue:

MYTH 1: WE CAN'T BAN WATER EXPORTS BECAUSE THIS WOULD ACKNOWLEDGE WATER IS A COMMODITY SUBJECT TO NAFTA

Circular and disingenuous. NAFTA's jurisdiction over our water resources needs no "acknowledgment" by Canada.

Water is a good under the NAFTA because - unlike raw logs and unprocessed fish from the Maritimes - water is not mentioned in NAFTA's Annex 301.3 (Exceptions). In effect, what NAFTA has done is pasted bright red "only for use on raw logs and unprocessed fish from the Maritimes and Quebec" stickers all over Canada's "Export Restrictions" policy tool (in this case, a federal ban on bulk water withdrawals for export purposes).

(What a water export ban would do is make Canada vulnerable to a trade challenge by the Americans. Which - as presently

written; without an exemption for water in other than bottled form - we would clearly lose. This is why the federal government is instead calling instead for a voluntary ban by each of the Provinces till this matter is resolved. Which they won't get.)

MYTH 2: AMERICAN ACCESS TO CANADA'S WATER UNDER NAFTA IS NOT 'TRIGGERED' UNTIL THE FIRST EXPORT HAPPENS

That ship has sailed; whether in bottles, trucks, tankers or rivers, water is a good already moving in international commerce between the two countries. And just because we don't mention it much doesn't mean that the US isn't quite ready when the time comes to point to precedence such as:

- The tanker truckloads of Okanagan groundwater that cross the international border every day on their way to Clearly Canadian's US-based bottling plant;
- The long term sale of municipal water by White Rock to Point Roberts; and
- The large bulk sales of water to Bonneville Power by BC Hydro in the early 1990's; Columbia River water (not power) captured and sold by Canadians for the benefit of Americans above and beyond any international obligations Canada had under the Columbia Treaty (ongoing);



But that is not the point. NAFTA's jurisdiction over water needs no "triggers" and would exist even if there had been no exports. The fallacy in this statement becomes evident when one looks at its corollary: as long as we don't allow exports, we are safe. Very dangerous error to leave in the minds of Canadians. The last person who tried it was John Crosbie....

MYTH 3: CANADA SHOULD SHARE ITS WATER

To suggest that Canada has some sort of moral or humanitarian obligation to take water from our lakes and rivers and export it to water deficient regions because we must "share" in the face of a looming water crisis is akin to saying that Canada should export topsoil to enrich the badly depleted soils of near and distant growing regions so that unsustainable farming practices and unsustainable food distribution patterns can be continued. What we should be doing in both cases is foster the development and adoption of sustainable technology.

THE ANSWER

There are four urgent priorities on the water/trade issue:

1. Full transparency in the federal government's dealings with Sun Belt, including BC's right to have its lawyers at the table.
2. A federal ban on all bulk water exports until such time as a federal water policy framework (legislation) is put in place ensuring any water export schemes pursued at the provincial level follow Dr. Tony Scott's three rules: short term (max 5 years), small quantity (e.g, tankers) and fully terminable or renewable at Canada's option.

3. COINCIDENT WITH IMPOSITION OF AN EXPORT BAN, a formal announcement to our NAFTA partners that we are seeking an explicit exemption for water in other than bottled form, failing which we have no option but to announce our intent to withdraw from the deal. (This would be accomplished through an amendment to the NAFTA adding water under Annex 301.3, Exceptions to Articles 301 and 309 Section A - Canadian Measures and providing equivalent security with respect to investments and services.)

4. A similar exemption for water must also be obtained at WTO/FTAA tables.

To some, this hard-ball approach gives rise to myth 4 ...

MYTH 4: THREATENING TO PULL OUT FROM NAFTA IS TOO DANGEROUS

Horsefeathers! It's just hardball. And if negotiated correctly, there is no reason to suppose that Canada would have to pull out... American stock exchanges would go into shock at the prospect of losing continued preferential access to Canada's markets and - more importantly - her resources. When push comes to shove, the Americans would have little choice but to opt for getting the goodies "on the table" rather than what was promised "under the table"; we'd have the exemption for water in other than bottled form and NAFTA would remain intact. And Canadians would once again have demonstrated international stewardship and statesmanship; the Canadian difference.

SUSTAINABLE PRIORITIES

Just as our response to the looming water crisis should be one of conservation technology, not raw exports, so too should our response to the growing food crisis (conversion of farmland to other uses, loss of topsoil, depletion of soil fertility, soil salinization, chemical residue buildups in soils) be one of support for sustainable farming practices. Which, in turn, require sustainable economic support for farmers. This is what the BC-Cuba Farmer to Farmer Project is all about.

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PLACES TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY

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Originally, we had hoped to interview people from all the Round Tables, as well as people from the communities who weren't necessarily involved in the Round Table, so as to get a broad perspective on the Round Table's work. While this happened for some communities, time limitations for doing this project precluded this happening everywhere. Consequently, most of the people who were interviewed had something to do with the Round Tables in some capacity or other. Additionally, in many of the communities, Round Tables no longer exist, and it often took many phone calls for the researcher to locate people who could speak about the Round Table experience.

Our findings

What did we discover? Our full report, including the survey questions and methodology is available for loan from the Eco-Network Resource Centre, as are the four reports of primary data from the researchers. I would like to summarize some of our findings here.

The great diversity of Manitoba's peoples, landscape and history is reflected in the answers to our survey questions but there are some issues that stood out clear across the province.

1. The first is that there are many, many people working really hard all over this province to make their communities better places in which to live, work and play. People are a really great resource and we've got lots of dedicated ones in Manitoba. This is good news. It makes us feel good, even inspired and energized. But it's not a big surprise, especially in this province known for its high levels of volunteerism. We need to dig a little deeper, and when we do, we find that many of these excellent volunteers are overburdened, stretched too thin, and burnt out. They're willing to work hard, but they can't carry the ball by themselves. They need help, in many cases identified as paid staff either on a project-by-project basis, or on a full-time basis to keep community efforts rolling.

2. We find that Manitoba communities (all these volunteers, with a little expert help in some cases) are really good at figuring out a vision for their communities. Creative, interesting ideas for current and future well-being are abundant. In fact, they reflect the kinds of desires and interests I spoke of earlier. But we also find that it's been really tough in most communities turning that vision into reality - implementation, in other words.

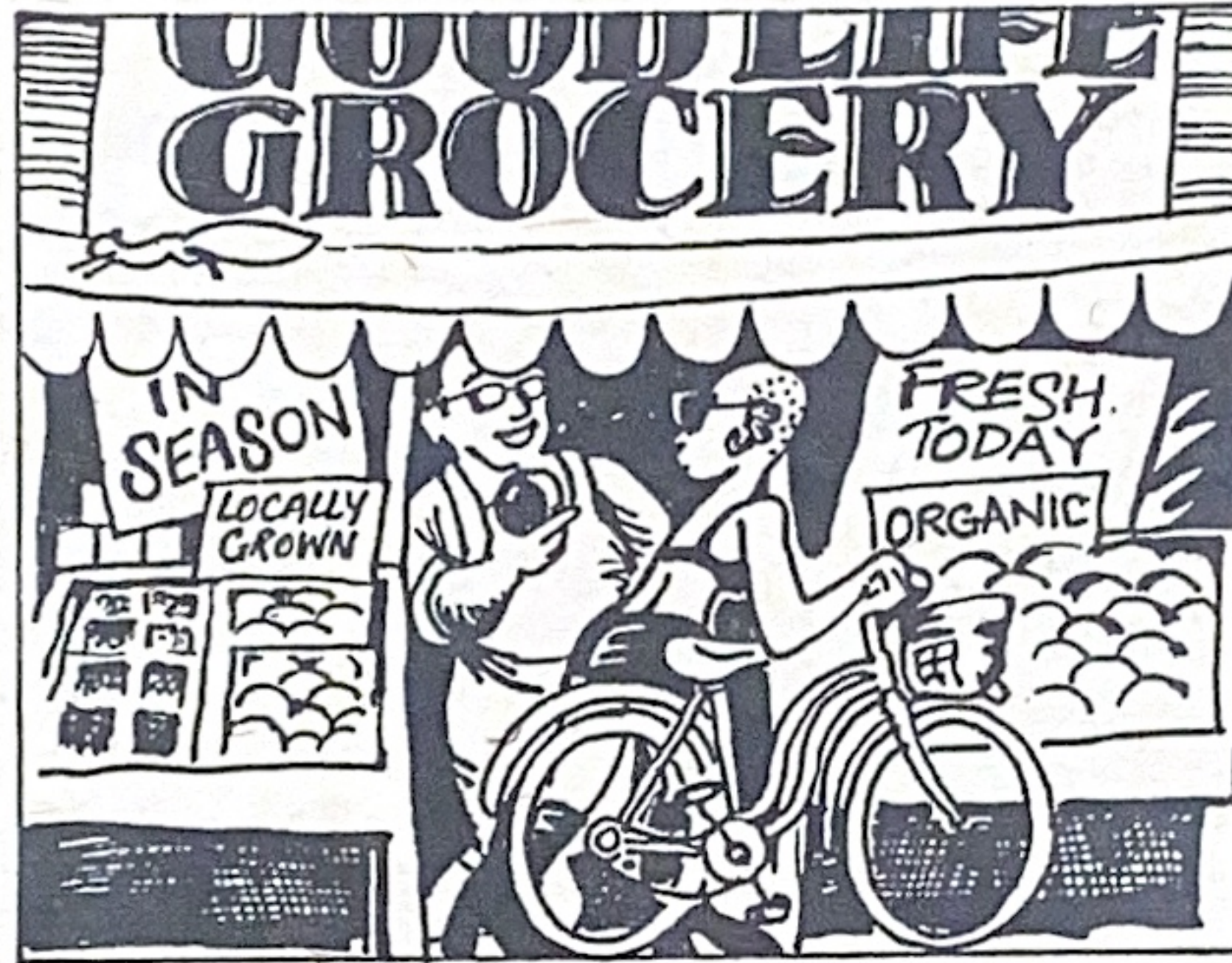
Some communities have excelled at this part - they are inspirational and can teach us a lot, Stonewall is one example - but they're also in the minority. We need to look at ways to make successful implementers the majority of Manitoba communities.

3. We see that most communities didn't get far with integrating health, economy and environmental concerns in a future-oriented manner. Why? Could be many reasons, but one is that most folks out there are dealing with the realities of day-to-day survival, especially in the north, especially in rural communities struggling with rapid-fire changes in the agricultural economy. (That's almost everyone). Thinking about the future anywhere beyond the next gen-

eration is a challenge. This highlights a very commonly expressed concern throughout the province by the way: an ongoing sense of insecurity about health care and about infrastructure maintenance in general is using up a lot of that precious volunteer time and effort, and stress is being generated by these issues.

4. The piece that does get people thinking about the future is the youth. Everyone wants to see youth staying in the community. Where youth are present, they're seen as a great asset, where they are leaving, this is a big concern. How can communities partner with youth, inviting them into planning which will include and excite them?

5. The prospect of tourism opportunities has many communities enthusiastic. In fact, it is seen as a beacon of hope for economic development almost everywhere. This is a great indication of the awareness and appreciation people feel for their home place. There is an eagerness to share this with others and a knowledge of how important it is to protect the natural and heritage assets to be showcased. Questions to be asked here include how can tourism be organized in a sensitive manner, so as not to compromise or damage these assets? And how can it be integrated into the broader pic-



ture so that communities are not finding themselves dependent on the fluctuations of foreign and domestic currency markets?

Does the Round Table process move communities forward? We found that overall, Community Round Tables were seen as positive by the respondents to our survey. They seemed to help with communication between groups, and developing a sense of common purpose and co-operation in communities. The program has a great deal of potential to assist further in local community development in Manitoba, if some lessons are learned from the experiences to date of Round Tables.

Our recommendations focus largely on the program itself and what can be done at that level to improve the service it provides to communities. For example, more attention needs to be paid to the original principles of Community Choices: if it is indeed to be a "sustainable communities" program, clarity is required as to what sustainability is all about, especially in the ecological sense, and especially in regard to planning for the future. Background and support materials, training sessions and indicators of environmental and social trends are needed to assist communities in understanding how to apply the concept of sustainability to Round Table processes and planning.

We would like to see more attention paid to the planning and implementation aspects of the Round Table process, especially information, skills and financial resources to help with seeing projects through.

Mechanisms which allow Community Round Tables to share and learn from each others' experiences are vital and need to be promoted.

See Places to Live ... page 11 ►

SOME NOTES ABOUT PESTICIDE MONITORING

by Marianne Hanishewski

Following the Organic Agriculture Conference in February, I remembered a speaker using the words "substandard foods". I phoned Health Canada and requested information on the list of pesticides registered and the results of pesticide monitoring. I received information on how to register a Pest Control Product, rules governing the Pest Management Regulatory Agency, a list of pesticides registered for applying to raw fruits and vegetables and a 14 page list of the results of pesticide monitoring on raw fruits and vegetables in 1992-93. I reviewed the Saskatchewan list for that year and found that one shipment of corn was monitored and 2 of potatoes.

When I called Health Canada to request information on pesticide residues on cereal grains, I was told that they do not do pesticide monitoring for grains. My call was redirected through a number of people and I finally spoke to Tom Nowicki of the research lab at the Canadian Grain Commission. He informed me that pesticide residue monitoring was not carried out on cereal grains for domestic use, only for "customers" in the export market, such as Japan. He sent me information on about 90 different pesticides used on wheat and barley, and suggested I contact the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to see if they monitor flour.

At the CFIA, I spoke with Eli Neidert who told me that the Food Production Inspection Branch did lab tests in 1989 on 250 samples for residues of malathion. Forty one samples had residues over

Health Canada's allowable limit. Apparently, no pesticide monitoring has been carried out on wheat since that time.

Could we be eating "substandard foods"? Obviously, nobody knows.

Marianne lives in Buchanan, Saskatchewan

NOTE: The report of the Sustainable Development Auditor for Canada, Brian Emmett, released as Eco-Journal was going to press, echoes Marianne's concerns. Among his many very serious concerns about the way Canada monitors toxic substances, was the revelation that of 22 industrial countries surveyed, only Canada and the Slovak Republic do not collect data on pesticide sales. The Auditor was extremely critical of the management and monitoring of pesticides in particular and concludes that "the federal government's ability to detect, understand and prevent the harmful effects of toxic substances on Canadians and their environment is seriously undermined".

Prime Minister Chretien has pledged that the report will be taken seriously, but the government is off to a bad start with the news of last minute industry-sponsored amendments to the new Canadian Environmental Protection Act. Liberal MPs Charles Caccia (Chair of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development), Clifford Lincoln, and Karen Kraft-Sloane have vowed to vote against the government if the amendments remain. **ECO**

GENETIC ENGINEERING

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private sector arm of the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) has apparently stated its interest in Monsanto's activities.

By 2010, around 2.5 billion people worldwide are expected to lack access to safe drinking water, while at least 30% of the populations of China, Mexico and India are expected to face severe water stress. (Vandana Shiva, *The Hindu*, May 1, 1999)

★ Bad news for people who had hoped that cloning might allow them to create more youthful copies of themselves: The first molecular studies, conducted on Dolly, the 3-year-old sheep cloned from a 6-year-old ewe, have found that Dolly's cells are, in essence, at least 9 years old. The surprising results suggest that

clones somehow inherit not only the genes, but in some respects the age, of the animals from which they are made.

"It sounds like the worst of our fantasies about cloning, combining the inexperience of youth with the biology of the aged," said Thomas H. Murray, president of the Hastings Center, a Garrison, N.Y.-based ethics think tank and a member of the National Bioethics Advisory Commission that prepared a report on human cloning for President Clinton in 1997. (Washington Post, Thurs. May 27, 1999)

To view the growing compendium of news clippings and articles on genetically engineered food and other biotechnology issues, or to help support the developing Canadian movement in registering concerns, call the Network office today. **ECO**

PLACES TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY

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The objectives of the program need to be made clearer to communities at the outset. And information should be provided about how Round Tables should fit in with the existing governance structures of the community such as municipal or community councils.

These are just a few of the recommendations we offer in the spirit of helping to reduce some of the frustrations expressed by our survey respondents and to make this very interesting and so-far quite valued, process into a truly remarkable effort in community development.

Note: We are hopeful that we will be able to help actualize our recommendations. Health and Environment Canada, and Rural Development, have expressed interest in our doing so, and some funding is being made available through the Community Animation Project for the development of a strategic plan which will incorporate the results of our report and the Community Round Tables workshop, as well as the ongoing goals of the partner organizations. Development of the plan will be proceeding over the summer months. **ECO**

CHURCH GROUP PLANS PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO CHURCHILL-NELSON HYDRO-ELECTRIC PROJECT

by Anne Lindsey

The Manitoba Aboriginal Rights Coalition (MARC), a non-Aboriginal, faith-based organization engaged in advocacy and public awareness initiatives regarding issues of Aboriginal justice, has announced it will hold a public inquiry into the effects of the Churchill-Nelson Hydro Electric Project on Aboriginal communities in northern Manitoba.

In 1975, when the Churchill Nelson Project was under construction, the Inter-Church Task Force on Northern flooding held a public inquiry into the effects the development would have on Aboriginal communities. That inquiry contributed to the formation of the 1977 Northern Flood Agreement (NFA).

Given the controversy about implementation of the NFA that has continued for the past two decades, and following a suggestion from Cross Lake (one of the affected communities), MARC feels compelled to reopen the inquiry.

MARC has assembled a high profile panel of Commissioners, representing a range of interests and expertise. They are Rev. John Aitchison of South Africa, representing the World Council of Churches, Rt. Rev. Stan McKay, former Moderator of the United Church of Canada, Helen Norrie, a Winnipeg educator; Arie Van Eek, former Executive Secretary of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada; and Sharon Venne, from the Blood Nation, a lawyer specializing in international law and aboriginal issues.

The commissioners will focus on whether steps taken to address adverse impacts have achieved the fairness and equity promised to Aboriginal peoples.

MARC says that implementation of the NFA has been contentious from the start. Allegations and reports have pointed to delays and inadequacies in implementation. Governments and Mani-

toba Hydro have spent over \$200 million in one-time cash and land settlements which finalize many NFA rights of 4 of the 5 signatory bands. The remaining band, Cross Lake, insists that the NFA is an ongoing covenant and that their rights are not for sale. [See "River of life cut off for the Cross Lake Cree" by Will Braun, Eco-Journal, Vol.8 No.5].

Both the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and the Manitoba Aboriginal Justice Inquiry have expressed concerns about the way governments have fulfilled the promises they made to the communities that were affected by the Hydro project. For example, the NFA's intent was that steps would be taken to ensure the ongoing economic viability of affected communities, says Thomas Novak of MARC. "Is lump sum monetary compensation really the best way to achieve this sustainability?", he asks.

The primary goal of the inquiry is to facilitate dialogue between the North and the South, and to establish whether Hydro and the governments have been "doing the honourable thing in our name", says Novak.

MARC is hoping that Hydro and the governments will appear at the inquiry, along with people in and from the affected communities. In addition, they hope to hear from communities which were left out of the Northern Flood Agreement. The general public is welcome to attend. The inquiry takes place on June 21 and 22 at Knox United Church in Winnipeg, and on June 24 and 25 at Cross Lake (see Calendar on page 4 for times).

MARC's membership includes representatives of the Anglican, Christian Reformed, Lutheran, Mennonite, Roman Catholic, Unitarian and United Churches.

For further information, call Thomas Novak at 287-8583. **ECO**

The Manitoba Eco-Network, 2-70 Albert Street Winnipeg, MB R3B 1E7

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