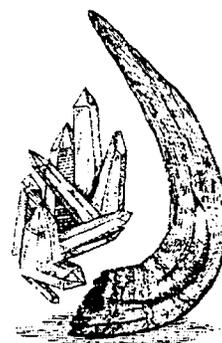




# Applied BIODYNAMICS®



Summer, 2010

Newsletter of the Josephine Porter Institute • Woolwine, Virginia

Issue No. 69

## Frey Vineyards: Cultivating Biodynamics in an Evolving Social Organism

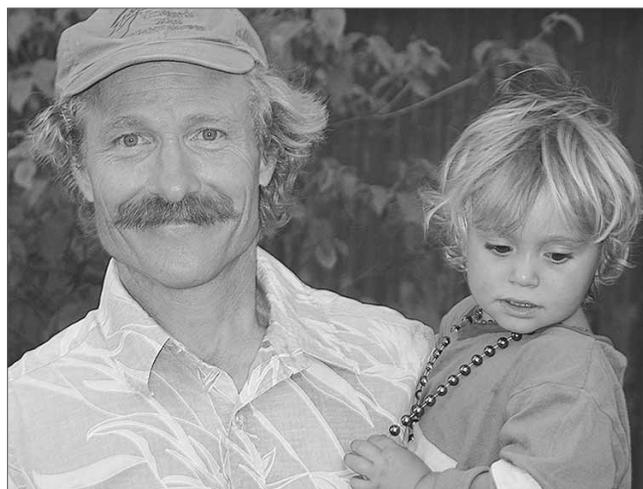
Hunter Francis Interviews Luke Frey

*In January, 2010, I attended the winter meeting of the Biodynamic Association of Northern California (BDANC). As is customary, the meeting was held at the beautiful Frey Vineyards outside of Ukiah, in Mendocino County, California, at the headwaters of the Russian River. A friend of mine had promised me that the annual meeting would be a memorable celebration of food and farming. I was not disappointed. The sumptuous feast at the end of the day was testament enough to the skills of the farmers and chefs present – homemade breads, wines, cheeses, pickles and sauerkraut complemented flavor-saturated biodynamic meats and vegetables. The dinner was preceded by a fascinating interchange of knowledge through lectures and discussions. There, I had the opportunity to meet Luke Frey, who gave the group a tour of the picturesque, forested farm property. Luke is a pioneer in the biodynamic and organic wine industries and an avid biodynamic preparation maker.*

**HF:** Luke, I was impressed by your family's farm. Could you tell us a bit about its history, and how you got into farming?

**LF:** My parents moved here from New Hampshire in 1959. I was born six months later. My dad, Paul Sr., had received a job at the state hospital as a psychiatrist. My parents bought the ranch in 1963. My mother, Beba, had twelve kids over a span of sixteen years. I was number six. In 1967, my dad had us kids plant grapes – about 35 acres of Cabernet, Merlot, Chardonnay and Gray Riesling – with a “Get out there and do it!” I remember being seven years old as we all helped plant the vineyards. We planted more in 1968. My dad consulted a well-known grape grower in the valley named Charlie Barra (owner of Redwood Valley Vineyards) for advice.

In late June, we had to start watering the young plants. Everything was watered by hand. At the time, all of the grapes were dry-farmed once they were established. We



Luke Frey with grandson

had an assortment of long hoses that we'd pull up and down the rows, watering four rows at a time. We dug out little furrows to hold the water, and spent our time plugging gopher holes as we went. We'd take two-hour shifts between children; we relieved each other in turn. We also hoed by hand. Out there watering as a young kid in this dry climate with little water holes to play in was difficult but also magical. We got to know the whole place.

**HF:** Did you grow other things?

**LF:** We grew vegetables for ourselves. We always had chickens, ducks, geese and peacocks. We had cows until we put the grapes in. They got into the grapes, though we now have cows again. We also had pigs. In the early 70s, we had as many as ninety-five pigs.

**HF:** Did you process them?

**LF:** We butchered them for our own use, and sold some of the meat to Mexican families in the area. We always had a house full of runt pigs. They lived in the house until we kicked them out. We also had young deer, raccoons and

*continued on page 3*

## Editor's Note

Biodynamics asks us to see our farm as an entire organism. We can expand that picture to include the family, community, town, and even the industry or economic systems within which we work and have interactions. In speaking with Hunter Francis about his experience at the Frey's northern California farm and vineyard, he expressed how the art of community – the social impulse – living on the Frey farm stood out most (besides the delicious food). Frey Vineyards carries out the work of biodynamics in context of a large extended family, the organic and biodynamic wine industries, and the Biodynamic Association of Northern California. Their work is a role model for how a biodynamic practice can give attention to agricultural detail, while also creating warmth and open heart space for human relationships.

The Russian mystic Valentin Tomberg describes how the anthroposophic impulse lives in a consciously formed group or community: "And when people have formed a circle in an honest, free and earnest disposition of soul, they indeed become united with a certain higher source of inspiration." This higher source of inspiration is also described by Rudolf Steiner in a lecture called "Brotherhood and the Fight for Survival" (Berlin, 1905): "Thus human communities are mystery places where higher beings descend to act

through the individual human beings... This is the secret of progress for the future of mankind: To work out of communities." Just as we look behind the physical manifestation of nature and try to experience the forces and processes active on our farms and in our gardens, so too can we look behind the community living on and around our farm, and carry this imagination of the social-spiritual impulses into our work.

Many of us are familiar with the Frey wine label, and the delicious certified Biodynamic and organic wines they produce. What a treat to get an inside view on the history and evolution of their operation and practices from Hunter Francis's in-depth interview. Look for Frey wines at Whole Foods, or ask your local wine store to consider stocking.

In this issue, you will also read about a second Hugo Erbe preparation now being produced at JPI in sufficient quantities to sell. For those who have a strong foundation in the nine preparations, it is wonderful to see this opportunity to expand our preparations work. Applying this Harmonizing Preparation will be a way to explore and experience additional ways of building cocreative relationships with elemental beings, another one of the many farm-based communities with whom we can cultivate a relationship.

JPI has several preparation making events coming up this summer and fall. Visit <[www.jpibiodynamics.org](http://www.jpibiodynamics.org)> and check the calendar of events page for details.

Happy Summertime,  
Christy Korror

### **Applied Biodynamics**

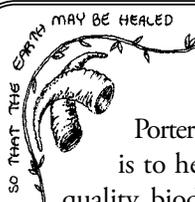
*Applied Biodynamics* is a quarterly publication of the Josephine Porter Institute for Applied Bio-Dynamics Inc. (JPI). The subscription price of \$30.00 per year helps support JPI research and development. Back issues are \$7.50 each.

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The Editor, *Applied Biodynamics*  
P.O. Box 133, Woolwine, VA 24185, U.S.A.  
Phone: (276) 930-2463; Fax: (276) 930-2475  
<[info@jpibiodynamics.org](mailto:info@jpibiodynamics.org)>  
<[www.jpibiodynamics.org](http://www.jpibiodynamics.org)>

Managing Editor – Christy Korror  
Co-Editors – Hunter Francis and Patricia Smith  
Layout – Bruce Bumbarger

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### **Mission**

The mission of the Josephine Porter Institute for Applied Biodynamics, Inc. is to heal the earth through production of quality biodynamic preparations based on the spiritual scientific discoveries of Rudolf Steiner and to advance education and research in biodynamic agriculture.

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## Frey Vineyards: Cultivating Biodynamics in an Evolving Social Organism

other animals living with us. They were like pets, though often became a nuisance when put outside – in the garden, etc.

**HF:** *You obviously were immersed in farm life from an early age. What about your education?*

**LF:** As far as formal schooling, I completed high school and then took a few courses at the local college, such as aeronautics. I got a pilot's license. Most of my winery training was on the job. My closest brother, Matthew, and I grew up with the Fetzer Family. I became close friends with Richard Fetzer, and my brother, with Robert. From the seventh grade, I worked in their winery part time – stacking barrels, cleaning tanks and so on. My brother worked there for nine years (from 1974-1981).

**HF:** *Was your family making wine at that point?*

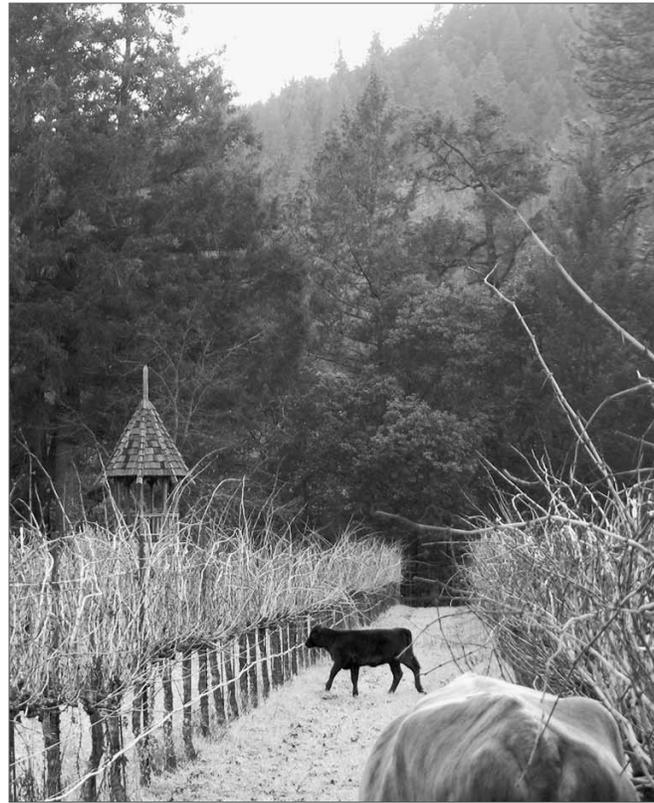
**LF:** No, but most of the practical skills that it takes to start and build a winery came from our work with the Fetzers. That had a big influence. I worked for them off and on until 1994. When we started making our own wine, we didn't have any money, so we had to build everything. All the practical experience helped.

**HF:** *At what point did you start making your own wine?*

**LF:** In 1978, there was a low in the wine grape market. We used to sell our grapes to Parducci Wine Cellars, and in '78 they couldn't take our grapes. So we thought, "We know how to make wine. Let's just try our own." We made twenty barrels the first year and sold it to friends. In 1980, we became bonded. So, we've been making wine since 1980.

**HF:** *And the business grew continually from there?*

**LF:** Yes, gradually. For the first five years, we did everything on our own. The first couple of years, we crushed grapes



*Calf in vineyard*

with our feet. We were the only ones in the county picking with old fashioned lug boxes. After the third year, we got a hand crusher.

**HF:** *And the facility?*

**LF:** First, we transformed an old shop into a wine cellar. We used open-top fermentation, and punched the cake [of skins and seeds] that forms on the surface during the process down into the wine. Year by year, we would add on another room. It was a progression. After 1994, I started working there full time.

**HF:** *What is the winery like today? How would you characterize it?*

**LF:** We produce about ninety-five thousand cases a year. We buy most of our fruit, many varieties, from other organic and biodynamic growers. The rest is grown on our 200 acres.

**HF:** *Is it true you were the first organic wine producer?*

**LF:** Well, in 1980, there really was no such thing as organic wine certification. We played a large part in the development of the whole organic movement, along with many others. When it came to marketing, we had to pound the pavement. Trying to sell wine is very daunting – especially when it's organic. The wine shops in particular had a hard time understanding what we were up to. Yet, we were the first organically-certified winery.

### **Biodynamic Preparations Legend**

BD #500 – Horn Manure

BD #501 – Horn Silica

BD #502 – Yarrow

BD #503 – Chamomile

BD #504 – Stinging Nettle

BD #505 – Oak Bark

BD #506 – Dandelion

BD #507 – Valerian

} Compost Preparations

BD #508 – Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)

Getting down the process of making organic wine took a lot of time. Early on, the standards would vary from year to year. So, the standards evolved. Eventually, sulfites were prohibited. Around 1984, we switched to non-sulfited wines. We felt using sulfites was kind of a crutch. Wine with sulfites is not real wine. It has additives in a chemical sense. It was hard. Personally, I wanted to do a small line of sulfited wine, because developing the non-sulfited process involved a lot of trial and error. But overall, my family was against that. Now, non-sulfited wines are becoming more popular. In France, there is a whole underground movement, because you can't sell non-sulfited wine there legally. Once you get the technique down, if you have good fruit to work with, it really creates a far superior wine.

**HF:** *So you helped carve out a niche?*

**LF:** Yes, we have recognition now. Many of our customers let us know they could never drink wines previously, because they were hypersensitive to sulfites.

**HF:** *At what point did biodynamics come into play?*

**LF:** In 1993 while I was working for Bobby Fetzer. We have a local Waldorf school, so we were being exposed to bits of Rudolf Steiner's work. About that time, Bobby discovered biodynamic agriculture. He was the vineyard manager for their ranch then. He hired a man named Michael Maltas, a biodynamic practitioner who had studied at Emerson College in England. They had a biodynamic program there. Bobby hired Michael to work with ten acres of Cabernet, and I worked with Michael. We needed a place to store the preps, a place to stir, etc. My main skill is being kind of a fabricator. I can make anything work. So, I helped create the infrastructure – a stirrer, spray rigs, etc. I learned how to prepare and apply the preparations with Michael. At the same time, we were working a very large compost pile.

Soon after we started, I contacted Harald Hoven because we needed to order some preparations. Harald introduced me to the Northern California group (BDANC). That same year, Harald and Dennis Klocek offered a six-day biodynamic intensive at Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, California, which I attended. Each day, we spent time in the garden. Dennis and Harald lectured on many things. It was a kind of orientation to Goethean Science. I therefore had a rapid immersion into anthroposophy and biodynamics, and it totally changed my whole life. So, that's how I got into biodynamics. The same year, I started to apply the preparations here. I rigged up a stirring station, and started spraying.

**HF:** *On the whole vineyard?*

**LF:** Yes, everything on the home ranch.

**HF:** *And you've been biodynamic ever since?*

**LF:** Yes.

**HF:** *Demeter certified?*

**LF:** Yes, we became Demeter certified in 1996. We started applying the preparations in '93-'94. After that, I started going to every quarterly meeting of BDANC. Then, I went to the international conferences. I have been to the conference at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland five times. I would go to as many lectures as I could. At the same time, I continued to take classes in organic agriculture.

**HF:** *What can you say about the connection to organics?*

**LF:** One of the basics of biodynamics is good agricultural practices. Soil health is number one. Biodynamics and organics don't contribute much unless the person practicing them is aware of and practicing quality agriculture.

*“Even if you get them [the biodynamic preparations] on your hands, or walk on the land where the preparations have been sprayed, you are affected.”*

**HF:** *What about your preparation making?*

**LF:** Since the beginning of my involvement, I've been making all of the preparations with the Northern California group. And right away, in 1994, I started making my own horn manure (BD #500) and horn silica (BD #501) on our home site. In 1996, I started making all of my own preparations onsite. I did the course at JPI in 1997 (the fall course). A year later, I did the spring course. And then I did a course with Peter Proctor on Molokai with the Hawaii group for about five days.

**HF:** *How was your experience at JPI?*

**LF:** It was good. I had already been making preparations with Harald and the others for a numbers of years. I wanted to expand my knowledge of how other people make them. My experience at JPI was rich, informative, and transformative. It was thorough and complete. From the perspective of what I had learned previously, which was already about quality, I could see quality is of utmost importance at JPI. Of course, quality is essential when it comes to making anything with medicinal-like properties. The other person I also did some preparation making with was Hugh Williams, of Threshold Farms in upstate New York, which was good.

**HF:** *How does your preparation making tie in with regional efforts?*

**LF:** We make preparations as a group, and most of them go to BDANC, so Harald is in possession of those. Members can buy them, and funds from their sale go to BDANC.

**HF:** *What are some of the challenges you've experienced in your preparation making?*

LF: The only challenge I really ever have is getting enough cow skulls for making the oak bark preparation (BD #505). Also, there is the problem of putting down a cow at the right time. It may be too young, or pregnant, or the wrong season. Sometimes I have had to put down a cow in early spring. If so, I freeze the mesentery and intestines. I clean them up completely so they take up less space. It sometimes happens I have a few skulls in the freezer and then I use them in the fall when I'm ready to make the oak bark preparation.

HF: *How about getting stag bladders?*

LF: No problem. I have a friend with a large tract of wilderness. He allows hunters to use his property for a fee, and they save the bladders for me.

HF: *Is there anything special about your use of the preparations? Have you developed any of your own practices?*

LF: I try to practice in line with what is recommended by the overall literature. But there are times when I just have to make it work. Sometimes I have to do things out of practical reasons. For example, I normally try to spray the horn manure preparation (BD #500) around the time of the full moon, but that is not always possible. Generally, I try to do it by the book. It makes a difference.



Burying BD #500 (horn manure)

HF: *Do you use Equisetum arvense (BD #508)?*

LF: Yes, I make my own. I use the Kolisko recipe [available on the JPI website at <[www.jpibiodynamics.org](http://www.jpibiodynamics.org)>].

HF: *After starting to use biodynamic practices, what effects did you notice?*

LF: The first thing I realized in working with biodynamics, is that biodynamic agriculture is a spiritual practice, in my view. To recognize that, is essential in the work. I noticed how my thinking and perceptions were changing. I started to see the world through different eyes. And of course, if you really ponder it, that's a prerequisite for any real change. It has to come from within.

In a physical sense, the first thing I noticed was the change in the light and the characteristics of the soil with each passing year. Now, I had been cultivating the vineyards since I was twelve years old, so I had an intimate connection with the soil. Each year is different, but overall, I noticed the ability of the soil to retain its own moisture in a new way. And with that, the way that it turned in, the way that it moved, and the way that it smelled all had a different quality. Another observation was that there was more diversity of weeds or plants. Also, there are certain aspects of biodynamics that aren't quantitative, they're qualitative. The quality of the colors of the leaves and the vines, and also the weeds, is different. It's like when you see someone who walks into a room who is carrying something heavy within. You can feel it, but you don't know how. And then there is someone else who walks in who is in love, and it just shows. It's kind of a qualitative presence. I can't prove it, but it's something I know.

HF: *How about the quality of the grapes and the taste?*

LF: In terms of the grapes, one thing I saw was that the yeast layer on the outer skin was denser and more uniform. It was more cloud-like rather than mist-like. It was thicker, and the actual skin of the grape was thicker. Right off, we



Preparations and compost piles



*Stirring preparations*

noticed less mildew. We also noticed that during fermentation, when you punch down [mix the fermenting grapes into the wine], there is more of a “fruitiness,” so to speak, to the smells – more presence of the aromas. Again, it’s not something I can prove, but I perceive it.

**HF:** *So, starting in 1994 made you the first biodynamic winery in North America?*

**LF:** As far as I know, yes.

**HF:** *Have you noticed any change in the attitude towards biodynamics since then?*

**LF:** Early on, people’s eyes would glaze over. They were curious, but hesitant. They would question it, but as if they were questioning a truth they knew was inside them. Among growers, it’s as if they recognized a fear coming up within them that was real. People would recognize something true in what they heard about biodynamic agriculture, yet they were hesitant to acknowledge it.

**HF:** *But since that early time, I imagine many of them have probably adopted biodynamic practices, and that you have been a part of that growth.*

**LF:** Oh, yes, absolutely. We have been doing winter workshops on our farm for quite some time, and of course, many growers are using biodynamics in our area now.

**HF:** *So, are people less hesitant? Would you say people are more open to the spiritual side of it?*

**LF:** Yes, I see people as becoming more open and better able to recognize what is aligned within themselves in relation to the philosophy of biodynamics. There is an acceptance within them of a “knowing” that, in some way, biodynamic agriculture is about them. It’s hard to describe, but more and more people are recognizing that it’s actually real.

**HF:** *And I imagine that’s true especially with the youth?*

**LF:** Oh, yes. Big time. The thing about the experience of biodynamic agriculture, is that when one looks into it, one sees aspects of oneself, which, if we are true to our conscience, is hard to deny. The more we learn to look into the natural world using the perspectives or frameworks of biodynamic agriculture, the more we recognize who we are. That can be kind of a “wake-up” to what is already living within us. So, through the practices of biodynamic agriculture, we recognize what’s alive within us that reflects aspects of the outer world. That’s what this work is all about. The biodynamic practices are an instrument for developing an evolving human consciousness. That’s the main thing, from my perspective. And the more the human consciousness evolves and opens up, the more it is capable of looking into the open secret of the natural world. It’s a continual evolution from that point on. It is like when you learn an art. You have to participate in it to the point where the art starts to speak to you or through you. When that happens, there’s a sort of “evolving.”

*“...food vitality is a necessity for social, cultural and political resilience.”*

**HF:** *Well put. With the relative rise in popularity of biodynamics, especially among wine grape growers, are you concerned at all with lack of integrity regarding practices? Or, are you concerned with people who just want to follow a recipe?*

**LF:** It seems to me that for anybody who even ponders the question of biodynamic agriculture in an open way, something shifts in them. There may always be people who are participating from the perspective of a shareholder whose company’s vineyard manager is actually doing the hands-on work. I can see the possibility of someone such as that having a conceptual idea of what biodynamic is, but never actually entering into a deeper, qualitative understanding. But for those who are actually doing the practice, as soon as you start working with the preparations, a shift happens no matter who you are. When you are working with the preparations, you are working with life forces. Even if you get them on your hands, or walk on the land where the preparations have been sprayed, you are affected.



Luke Frey with cows

**HF:** *What about the evolution of BDANC? What have you noticed in recent years in terms of people's involvement?*

**LF:** A lot. For years, there might be five to fifteen people at meetings, and if there were over twenty-five, you'd think that was a huge group. But around the year 2000 or so, things started to shift. Now, we can have two-hundred people at meetings. And that's only the amount of people who show up. There is a much larger group on the periphery who are interested, but who don't participate in these gatherings.

**HF:** *Do you think this is happening nationally? Is it part of a bigger trend?*

**LF:** Yes. I don't know if you noticed how the organic food movement went. It started in the food sector, in vegetables, and then moved into wine – I'd say at the tail end. Soon, many of the different wineries started to produce organically-certified wine. There were acres and acres of vineyards going into certification. The progression was from vegetables to wine. In biodynamics, it seems to be going from wine into the mainstream. My speculation is that it will move into vegetables soon. Eventually, biodynamic agriculture will primarily be in the vegetable production realm. There will be huge acreages using biodynamic practices.

If you think about it from a holistic perspective, there's really no other way it can go, because food vitality is a

necessity for social, cultural and political resilience. I see biodynamic agriculture soon becoming what is now called "mainstream." But it isn't going to have the mainstream twist. Things are going to change quickly. The whole economic structure is changing right now. Everything is shifting in a big way, and it isn't going to stop. It's easy to be fooled by the press when they talk about "economic upturns," etc. For anyone able to look at things clearly, to get a good insight into history, into human nature and general trends, they see that things have only just begun to shift. One of the things that will be necessary for humans to survive is a totally new relationship with food. And it's all going to have to do with quality. Quality food is a prerequisite for being able to make the transition we will go through.

**HF:** *And the transition will create opportunities in and of itself...*

**LF:** Totally. When things start to change in a big way, environmental cleanliness will be crucial. Everything else is minor in comparison, even global climate change. Without eliminating harmful pollutants, it won't work. You probably know, most of our health challenges are caused by environmental and social stress. To grow the best food in the cleanest environment possible will be the only way through to a long-term future. I believe biodynamic agriculture is going to be one of the only practices that can possibly make that happen.

**HF:** *Thank you, Luke.*

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Photographs courtesy of Luke Frey.



# Anecdotes and Antidotes—Biodynamics at Work

**Hugh Courtney, director of JPI, answers reader's questions**

**Q:** *I am getting ready to apply tree paste to our apple trees. I have been thinking about the formula and am wondering if using greensand may be an option (in combination with, or instead of) diatomaceous earth. Have you ever, or known of others who have, used greensand in tree paste?*

**A:** The original tree paste recipe, was one-third fresh cow manure, one-third clay, and one-third sand. Subsequently, almost as many different recipes have been developed as there are practitioners who have used it. Most people have chosen to substantially decrease the sand content and substantially increase the clay content. Most practitioners add some of the biodynamic preparations to it, especially BD #500 (horn manure), BD #508 (*Equisetum arvense*), and/or BC (barrel compost a.k.a. Biodynamic Compound Preparation). The Pfeiffer BD Field and Garden Spray is also used instead of the BC and BD #500 combination. Some will also add a minute portion of a vegetable oil such as castor oil or linseed oil to enhance the adhering character of the tree paste. See Pfeiffer's *Biodynamic Treatment of Fruit Trees, Berries, and Shrubs* (booklet for sale through JPI), and also Issue no. 46 of *Applied Biodynamics*.

As far as greensand, there is nothing that would preclude it as a portion of your tree paste recipe, other than making sure you had a goodly clay component and a goodly manure component. The sand or greensand component would allow the tree paste to be more easily washed off by

rain, so a good "sticky" quality is to be sought (thus the castor or linseed oil).

**Q:** *When using the fresh tea recipe for BD #508 (horsetail/*Equisetum arvense*) what is the shelf life of the "brewed" tea?*

**A:** The probable shelf life of the fresh tea BD #508 is likely about forty-eight hours, unless it is refrigerated. Whether an extensive period of refrigeration is the best approach is doubtful. Since we believe that the fermented tea is a better choice, if you haven't used the fresh in the forty-eight hours, just go ahead and let it ferment. At that point, it has an almost indefinite shelf life.

**Q:** *I would like to make some BD #501 (horn silica) this summer. However, I don't have a way to grind quartz. I was told that diatomaceous earth could be used instead. Is this possible?*

**A:** The major components in the chemical analysis of diatomaceous earth appear to be elements such as calcium, magnesium, sodium and iron. Since Steiner was recommending the making of BD #501 from quartz, orthoclase or feldspar, because of their strong silicaceous nature, I do not see how using diatomaceous earth could possibly yield the component of silica forces that Steiner made frequent reference to in the *Agriculture Course*.

You can obtain already pulverized silica from a ceramic supply house, and, it is my sincere belief, would arrive at a far better BD #501 than could possibly be derived from diatomaceous earth.

## Harmonizing Preparation of Hugo Erbe Now Available

**Hugh Courtney**

JPI now has available in sufficient supply for trial use by the biodynamic practitioner, the Harmonizing Preparation of Hugo Erbe, designated HE #9. We can provide this preparation at the application rate of twelve grams per unit/acre at a cost of \$7.00 per unit, plus shipping and handling (includes instructions for use).

This preparation is the second of the two recipes that Hugo Erbe originated as Offerings for the Elemental World, and should be seen as a companion spray to the Three Kings Preparation (HE #8). Whereas the latter spray is described as a "protection against the activities of opposing forces," the Harmonizing Preparation is intended to serve as "an expression of gratitude to the elemental beings." We would observe the same caution with this spray as we have recommended for the Three Kings Preparation. One should not use this preparation in isolation without using the basic

nine biodynamic preparations given by Rudolf Steiner beforehand, as well as committing oneself to continuing to nourish the elemental beings through the use of BD #500 (horn manure) through BD #508 (*Equisetum arvense*) in a consistent and diligent fashion.

The ingredients of the Harmonizing Preparation include: egg whites, honey, cow's milk, grape juice (red), sunflower oil, cooking salt, and whole wheat. These various biodynamic and organic ingredients are combined and then subjected to a lengthy anaerobic fermentation.

The publication Hugo Erbe's *New Bio-Dynamic Preparations* describes the choice of ingredients of "typical human food substances as offerings to the elemental beings. The composition aims to achieve a harmonious balance of ingredients, so that substances have been chosen which have a special significance, on the one hand, specifically relating

to the human being and his fourfold nature, and on the other, to the creative forces which are at work in the various groups of elemental beings.” It should be mentioned here that Hugo Erbe was an individual who could hold direct and frequent conversation with the nature spirits.

The use of this preparation allows us to “offer thanks to the elemental world not only for their own sacrifice of service, but at the same time we make it possible for the higher elemental beings (the warmth, light and air beings) and the lower elemental beings (the water and earth beings) to work again harmoniously for the restoration of fertility and within all the activities of the creatures of the earth.”

Hugo Erbe suggested that Michaelmas (September 29), “would seem to be the most appropriate time” for applying the

Harmonizing Preparation. In order to allow greater flexibility in scheduling the use of this preparation, we would suggest that any time during the Michaelmas season would be a good time to apply the Hugo Erbe #9, and we would define that season as the period from the fall equinox to Advent. Such a definition would allow application during the period around the Thanksgiving holiday which we celebrate here in the United States, and might endow that holiday with greater meaning than it might currently enjoy.

At long last, we are pleased to be able to introduce the Harmonizing Preparation of Hugo Erbe (HE #9), and we hope that many of you will choose to begin using it this year, and complete the cycle which was initiated with the Three Kings Preparation, which we began to make available a decade ago.

## New Book Titles Just Arrived

*Each title in the following sections includes an excerpt from the book jacket as a description of what the reader may expect.*

*\*Deep Gardening: Soul Lessons from 17 Gardens, Biodynamic Memories*, Woody Wodraska (Trafford Publishing, 2010). 227 pages – \$25.00.

“This is a book of deep gardening, fertile from decades of dogged experience, sprouting a wisdom only found through a profound conversation with the soil of life. A wonderful personal journey digging through nature, biodynamics and beyond.”

*\*Farming Soul: A Tale of Initiation*, Patricia Damery (Fisher King Press, 2010). 162 pages – \$25.00.

“A psychological and spiritual reckoning, *Farming Soul: A Tale of Initiation* questions theories and assumptions that date back to the early 1900s and the days of Freud, assumptions which have too often separated spirituality from psychology. Suffering the trials of her own individuation process, Patricia Damery finds answers through a series of unconventional teachers and through her relationship to the psyche and to the land – answers that are surprisingly deeply intertwined. One strand is about redeveloping a relationship to the land – Mother Earth – being rooted in a particular place and being guided by the tenets of Rudolf Steiner’s biodynamic agriculture.”

\*Although I had hoped to present an in-depth review of each of these titles, the tasks currently on my plate do not allow me the time to do proper justice to a review. Suffice it to say, that I found both of these titles a fascinating read. It was most intriguing to realize that while both authors come from a background of psychology or psychiatry, it is

their ultimate connection to the soil and nature that comes through most strongly. Both Woody Wodraska and Patricia Damery ultimately identify biodynamic agriculture and their many years of working closely with the biodynamic preparations as a spiritual path in and of itself. I can recommend both titles with enthusiasm.

—Hugh J. Courtney

## Other Newly Acquired Titles

*Metamorphosis: Evolution in Action*, Andreas Suchantke (Adonis Press, 2009). 324 pages – \$50.00.

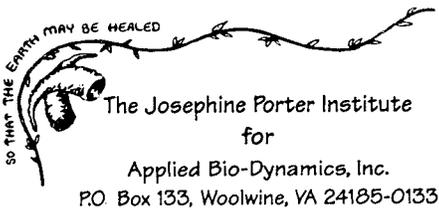
“This book is the result of a lifetime of biological research seeking to penetrate through the phenomena to the formative principles that have shaped them. Following Goethe’s participatory method, and drawing from his observations on a number of continents, Andreas Suchantke shows how the development and evolution of plants and animals can be understood in terms of metamorphosis. Through his eyes, we come to see evolution as a dynamic process that unfolds on a far more fundamental level than Darwin’s natural selection. In the age of stem cell research, Suchantke’s insights into the formation of organisms as integrated wholes offer a much-needed complement to the findings of conventional genetics and microbiology.”

*Wisdom of the Bees: Principles for Biodynamic Beekeeping*, Erik Berrevoets (Steiner Books, 2009). 145 pages – \$18.00.

“While the benefits of Steiner’s research into agriculture and education are increasingly recognized, his research into the nature of bees has had limited impact on beekeeping practices and on our general understanding of nature. *Wisdom of the Bees* examines Steiner’s insights and research into the nature of bees and their implications for the future of beekeeping.”

*“Practical activity nowadays is an empty routine devoid of spirit; but anything that truly does come from the spirit is also always preeminently practical.”*

Rudolf Steiner – *Spiritual Foundations for the Renewal of Agriculture*, p. 12



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