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IOGA MISSION:

To educate ourselves and others in reasons for and methods of environmentally friendly gardening; and to encourage the reduction of chemical dependency in gardens, lawns and farms.

Why Should You Care If You Eat Genetically Modified Foods?

At the upcoming IOGA January meeting (see last page of this newsletter), Dr. Kent Blacklidge will discuss 1) what are Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), 2) why should we care about them. and 3) more.

Dr. Blacklidge is a graduate of Purdue University with a Ph.D. in genetics. He was involved with toxicology and genetic research at Purdue for 12 years. He has taught as an adjunct professor at several Universities including Indiana University at Kokomo.

In addition to his academic accomplishments, Dr. Blacklidge has been publisher (CEO) for 20 years of the Kokomo Tribune daily newspaper. As a consequence of his newspaper work, he holds a very strong belief about the public's right to know everything about everything that affects lives.

Dr. Blacklidge believes that big agriculture is a train wreck waiting to happen. His position is that biotechnology is being used in risky and reckless ways for both human health and the environment and that those in government (EPA, FDA, USDA) have failed to protect us and the environment from harm.

The article on the next page by Dr. Blacklidge originally appeared in the Kokomo Tribune December 3, 2014 and is reprinted here with permission.

Walk Softly

*Walk softly on the velvet green,
Earthworms frolic beneath your shoes.
Tromping on them would be mean.*

*To turn the sod with iron machine
Would give the wormy clubs the blues.
Walk softly on the velvet green.*

*Eggs of ant or seeds of bean
Might prosper with soft dirt to use,
Tromping on it would be mean.*

*Tiny critters, sight unseen
Suffer blunt force trauma bruise
If you tread harshly on the green.*

*Respect the reign of termite queen;
Mousies don't need your abuse.
Tromping on them would be mean.*

*The beasties which the soil doth teem
Would applaud the day you slipped
your shoes,*

*To walk softly in the velvet green.
Stomping on them would be mean.*

Paul Matzek



House Bill Would Limit GMO Labeling

by Kent H. Blacklidge, Ph.D.

(This article was originally published in the Kokomo Tribune December 3, 2014. Reprinted here with Permission.)

Your right to know what is in the food you purchase will become “keep them in the dark, they are too stupid” to know what is good for them if [House Bill 4432](#) passes Congress. This bill is scheduled for its first reading in the House of representatives on Dec. 10.



Kent Blacklidge

The fight is over whether you have a right to know if food you purchase at the grocery and feed to your family contains genetically modified ingredients, commonly referred to as GMOs. Sixty-four countries, but not the United States require foods to be labeled as having genetically engineered parts. Labeling is not required in the U.S. because giant chemical/seed companies such as Monsanto, Bayer Crop Science, Syngenta, Dow, DuPont and others that sell genetically modified seed and the poisons used to kill weeds and insects don't want you to know. You might choose not to buy GMO-containing foods.

And why should you care if you eat genetically modified foods? One reason is the pesticides (poisons) used on the crops that become food for us or for livestock follow the crop. These poisons are referred to as pesticide residues, but call them what you may, they are poisons. The government has set allowed amounts of these poisons to be in foods and then tells us they are safe for us to eat. There is one genetically engineered corn that makes its own pesticide in every cell of the plant, including in every kernel of corn. Studies have shown that all of us already carry around in our bodies a load of harmful chemicals. Some are cancer causing. Some are harmful to our livers, kidneys, and other organs, including our brains. Some are harmful to our hormone system that controls all sorts of bodily development and function. But what we take in from pesticide residue is safe, if you believe the government.

Genetically engineered crops were simply declared safe by government decree. The government said there was no significant difference between standard crops and those that had been genetically engineered. The 64 other countries that require labeling decided there is a difference. In the U.S. there have been no long term safety studies on genetically engineered crops. However, evidence continues to emerge that calls safety into serious question — safety for consumption and safety for the environment.

The big deal about HR4432 is that it would prohibit any state in the U.S. from passing and enforcing legislation requiring labeling of genetically engineered foods. It would place all authority for such a requirement in the hands of the very agency that has failed us in the first place, the FDA. HR4432 would literally erase bills already passed in Vermont, Connecticut and Maine. It would block labeling efforts ongoing in many other states. When legislation requiring labeling is proposed in a state, big chemical/seed and large food-processing companies pour millions of dollars into opposition advertising. Now they are concentrating their efforts into the passage of HR4432.

Indiana has nine representatives in Congress. Two of them, Todd Rokita (R-District 4) and Marlin Stutzman (R-District 3) have joined Rep. Mike Pompeo of Kansas in sponsoring HR4432. This bill is titled “Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act of 2014,” when it should be titled “Deny Americans the Right to Know Act of 2014.” Reps. Rokita and Stutzmand, along with big chemical/seed and food processing companies have decided you should stay in the dark.

A Visit To Yeager Farm

IOGA members Kathy Ambler and Gayle Swant operate Yeager Farm in Fairland, IN. The land has been in Gayle's family for many years. They designed their home themselves, and it is surrounded by beautiful flower gardens on all sides. They leave a few Ironweeds in the garden because they attract so many butterflies. They have farmed the land for nine years but have downsized some recently. It is still a large farm and lots of work though! They go to the [Broad Ripple Farmer's Market](#) on Saturdays and also sell at the [City Market](#). Kathy farms full-time. Gayle works in Indianapolis. They use a [1948 Allis Chalmers Model G tractor](#) and find that it works well for a small market farm.

They have three large hoop houses and several smaller houses as well where they not only start plants in the spring but also grow some plants throughout the growing season. One interesting plant growing in a hoop house is [Malabar Spinach](#), a tropical Indian plant. It takes a hot climate and being in a hoop house in summer provides the type of heat it needs. It can grow up a trellis and produces large leaves on a rapidly growing stem. Kathy just clips the vine and takes the whole thing to market rather than taking off individual leaves. They also grow [Red Malabar Spinach](#) which grows faster but has smaller leaves.



Kathy Ambler of Yeager Farm in Front of Their Potting Shed



Milabar Spinach (left) & Red Milabar Spinach (right) Growing Inside Hoop House

Kathy and Gayle specialize in growing Asian vegetables. They like seeds from [Johnny's Selected Seeds](#) but for most Asian vegetables they use [Seeds of India](#) and [EvergreenSeeds](#). They also like [Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds](#) for heirloom seeds. Kathy and Gayle grow the [Poona Kheera](#) cucumber, a tan colored Indian cucumber. They also grow a long Japanese cucumber, [Suyo Long](#). They grow a [Bitter Gourd \(Melon\)](#) which is spiky and people eat only the rind and often put it in curries. People like the bitter taste. They grow a lot of [Millionaire Okra](#), various different chilies, a red Indian sorrel, [Gongura](#). Gourds including [Bottle Gourd](#), [Snake Gourd](#), and [Ridgegourd](#) (also called Luffa) which is used as a bath sponge when mature. All of the gourds can be eaten when the plants are young. They resemble zucchini in texture. They grow an

Asian Eggplant, [Chu Chu](#), which is a deep burgundy and the size of an egg and which is often sliced and grilled. Kathy and Gayle also like the [Black Beauty](#) eggplant with the shiny skin and medium size. To make a trellis for the gourds, they find bamboo sticks are light weight, last a long time, and are easy to use. They get them from [Grower's Solution](#) greenhouse and nursery supply distributor online.

One of the more unusual vegetables is an Armenian melon called [Tigger](#). The Tigger melon is orange or orange and black and striped like a tiger. It is similar to honeydew in taste, has a wonderful fragrance, and

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Trellis Made Using BamBoo Sticks for Melons and Gourds

is about the size of a big orange. Another interesting plant is a miniature Roma hybrid tomato called Juliet. They also grow the German Johnson tomato, a large German pink tomato. They say that many people are reluctant to pick tomatoes until the tomatoes are red and fully ripe. They pick them as soon as they get a pink or reddish blush, as they will not get any sweeter while staying on the vine longer and when they stay outside on the vine they might get damaged by insects or weather. They say that tomatoes do not need light to ripen. Harvesting tomatoes before they get red sounds like a great idea to avoid damage to tomatoes that stay on the vine until they are fully red.

Starting lettuce for fall crops is never easy, but Kathy and Gayle think the Batavia or Summer Crisp plants are good for fall. They start the plants

in the hoop house in mid July and plant them outside the second week of August. This year they are trying something new and will use shade cloth outside to hopefully keep the lettuce from growing to seed too early.

Kathy and Gayle only use insecticides if absolutely necessary, and then they use those certified for organic. One they have used is Pyganic, a pyrethrin based insecticide. They know when you kill “bad bugs” that you also are killing “good bugs” so they are reluctant to use even organically approved insecticides unless there is a really serious problem.

Visiting the gardens of others is always a fun and interesting experience. Learning from other gardeners is really a great way to increase your gardening knowledge. It’s a constant learning process to garden!



Part of Kathy & Gayles’s 300 Okra Plants. (In Previous Years They Have Had Up To 1200 Okra Plants)

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Yeager Farm Pictures



Kathy & Gayle Designed Their House



Kathy & Gayle Use [Aquashade](#) to Dye the Water in Their Ponds to Prevent Sunlight from Entering and Thus to Slow Down the Growth of Algae



1948 Allis Chalmers Model G Tractor Used on the Yeager Farm

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Yeager Farm Pictures



Eggplant



Porous Ground Cover on Grass for Gourds to Grow On



German Johnson Tomatoes Ripening After Being Picked

October IOGA Meeting

The fall meeting of the Indiana Organic Gardeners' Association took place on Oct. 18, 2014 at the Carthage Mill, a renovated historic lumber mill in Carthage, IN, where the Fields of Agape, a 100% certified organic grain, seed, and bean cooperative is also located

Introductions were first, with each person telling how their gardens had fared this past summer. Paul and Annie Matzek remarked that their cucumbers had done well since the harsh winter had killed off many of the cucumber beetles. David and Beth Englert grew beautiful dahlias this summer. Don and Karen Nelson still have mole problems. Paul Gaston said his kale was not too good, but his volunteer tomatoes were great.

Ron and Claudia Clark grew strawberries for the first time. They successfully planted eighteen different tomato varieties and had great luck with Packman broccoli, which just keeps on producing. Ron put Bt (Bacillus thuringiensis) on it so there were no worm problems. Larry and LaVella Bills hardly had to go to the grocery as their garden did so well. They add commercial compost from GreenCycle. Another member found four-year-old horse manure to be a good soil amendment for her blueberries. Susan Irwin-Simons makes a delicious Swiss chard au gratin from a recipe found online.

Debbie Voelpel asked if anyone had successfully overwintered pepper plants, but no one seemed to have tried it. Another member had problems with paper wasps, which it was noted do not return to the same nest the following year. Painting a porch ceiling light blue is a good way to deter them from building a nest on the porch since they think it is the sky. Lynne Sullivan reminded us to leave the insects alone unless they are a real problem since they are pollinators.

Paul Matzek asked when is the correct time to cut back asparagus? Waiting too long can invite asparagus beetles which can remain in the soil. Planting parsley and garlic nearby may deter these beetles too. Someone else mentioned that their sweet potatoes were bent in half. This is really okay. The potatoes are just as good as the perfect-looking ones that are sold in the grocery. Growing Daikon radish in the fall will loosen up the soil, which improves it for growing beets and sweet potatoes.

We then broke for the delicious pitch-in lunch, during which people continued discussing their gardens of this past summer.



Anna Welch (left) from Fields of Agape with IOGA member Debbie Voelpel (right)



IOGA Members and Guests Listen to Becka Selkirk from the Unique 2 Eat Farm,

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At the Business Meeting following lunch, Lynne told the group that a Green Gift Shop will be held on Nov. 18 at the Carmel-Clay Library. She also said that Charlie and Jane Gareri are moving to South Carolina. They were dedicated members of IOGA, as well as being our representatives to the [Indiana Conservation Alliance](#), which promotes “green” legislation, such as trying to keep unneeded phosphates out of fertilizers. Anyone interested in taking on this job, which does not involve a heavy time commitment, should let Lynne know.

David recently met with someone from the [Center of Wellness for Urban Women](#), a group concerned with sustainable living and better eating habits. We often get requests from gardening organizations, asking us to speak to their group

Larry and LaVella brought lots of their peppers to share. These peppers are not too hot and are delicious when baked in the oven with a little oil sprinkled over them.

Following the business meeting, the program was presented by Anna Welch, who along with her husband, Keith, started Fields of Agape about eight years ago, in what has been a personal journey for them. They were concerned that modern agriculture is no longer real agriculture and has depleted the soil of nutrients. They have two partners, Judith Avery in Hendricks Co., who has fifty acres certified organic, and Dave, who does use heavy equipment but cleans it carefully so as to be certified organic. Many people in the Carthage area have small farms, and the Welchs want to teach them that there is a better way to farm.

They started out with twelve herb gardens and heirloom seeds. Now they have geothermal cold storage to store the food in 25# bags. John Bihn of [Teamwork Manufacturing](#) invented the [Crusher](#), which they use to grind their products for their value-added markets. Later we got to see the Crusher in action. There is also a small commercial kitchen that can be rented for \$25 per day.

The Welchs are not trying to return to old-fashioned ways, but rather want to combine the best of the past with modern technology. There have been challenges, but they continue to develop and bring others along. They have received grants from Anderson University and have hired Anderson University students, mentally challenged people as well as people in rehab/recovery to help with some of the work.

Becka Selkirk of the [Unique 2 Eat Farm](#), another associate, told us about the feed they make for chickens, quail, rabbits, and goats. They make a feed that is 19% protein and also a 12% scratch feed for the chickens that are enclosed in a run. All of these feeds are organic, and with the Crusher they can use 100% of the grain harvested.

Bill, Becka’s husband, told us about their organic fertilizers. They use kelp, which is brought in from all over the world, especially the Irish coast. Even more important, they use [mycorrhizal fungi](#) and microbes, which work together in the soil for the benefit of the plants. The micorrhizae deliver many essential nutrients such as phosphorus to the plants and increase drought resistance while the microbes are able to “fix” atmospheric nitrogen so the plants can absorb it.

Gardeners can buy their fertilizers by calling Bill at 765-541-1404. They also do a free soil analysis. Those wanting to purchase organic animal feed can call Becka at 765-541-1403.

After the informative program, we were invited to tour the facility, and everyone received a gift bag of products made by the Crusher.

- Margaret Smith, Secretary

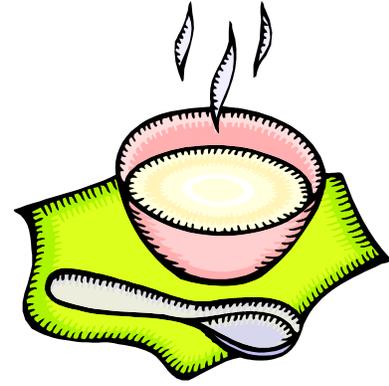


John Bihn from Teamwork Manufacturing
Demonstrates the “Crusher”

Mush

by Paul Matzek

While growing up, we occasionally had mush for breakfast, probably when mom had sold all the eggs, or we were out of cereal. Now, most people develop a blank stare if I mention I had mush to start the day. But the recipe is on the corn meal container, so I have vindication.



Unless my memory of the good ol' days is corrupted by time, mush just doesn't taste as good as it used to, so this spring I determined to find out why. I first planted [Roy's Calais Flint corn](#) from [Seed Savers Exchange](#). It has red and yellow kernels, and out of curiosity I segregated the seeds and planted them in separate beds next to each other. Later, to avoid cross-pollination, I planted [Bloody Butcher](#), a dark red corn, from [Sustainable Seed Co.](#) Both are heirlooms.

The flint produced 5 ft. stalks with a few nice ears and a lot of scrubby ones. The kernels produced remained true to the color of the seed, except for one ear in each plot- interesting. The Bloody Butcher produced 10 ft. stalks with much larger, nicer ears.

The showdown came after the kernels were dried and hard. I whizzed a little of each in the Vitamix to make corn meal, then made a small batch of mush from each, along with some from Quaker corn meal, all without the benefit of seasoning or sweetener. The two corns from my garden had fine flavor, different from each other but definitely corny. I've never sampled wall paper paste, but the grocery store stuff must be close kin to it. The chickens enjoyed it.

As with many hybrid grains, the nutrition a plant can produce has been diluted over greater and greater yields until little taste is discernible. Hence, I shall have corny mush. I think a blend of the two heirlooms might be the best of both worlds. And that grey-haired guy with the black hat can stay in the can.

Paul and Annie Matzek are IOGA members living in Elizabeth, Indiana.



Speaking of Corn — Here is a Picture of Some Beautiful Strawberry Popcorn Ears That Jon Thomas Grew Last Year

LETTERS:

Letter from the Cobbs



(Editors' note: Beulah and Clarence Cobb are the only charter members of IOGA still members of IOGA. Beulah attended the first organizational meeting of IOGA in the early 1970s.)

Dear Claudia and Ron,

... I will tell you of two new things that come into my life this year as part of my life work with growing and gardening and taking care of my little spot of the world.

In August I was invited, by the secretary of the Howard County Soil and Water Conservation District, to attend the meeting of a group who call themselves, "Women Caring for the Land."

It seems that even though 49% of farmland is owned and/or operated by women, men still assume that they get to make all decisions about farm matters.

My "farmer" had continued to make all decisions about contracts, rent prices, crops planted and organic procedures.

These women told me where I could find the legal information to make my voice heard. They gave me the courage to insist on doing things my way on my farm. It is a powerful feeling, but time will tell what happens now.

It is always time to learn. I had planted a Maximilion Sunflower clump that was creeping aggressively across my garden. (Something that I couldn't control) So in the fall of 2013 I covered the whole clump (I had cut it to the ground) with a heavy sheet of upholstery fabric. I anchored it in place with big stones and left it until Spring. When the growing season began I pulled off the fabric and:

1. All the sunflowers plants were gone!
2. Earthworms had made tunnels everywhere.
3. No roots remained, only soil.

4. I tilled the soil and planted onions which grew and flourished.
5. The Maximilion plants never came back!
6. I now continue to put mulch (mostly crushed & rotted leaves) around most of my established plants.
7. Conclusion: Mulching is so much easier than pulling & hoeing weeds!!

P.S. I still like Maximilion Sunflowers, but I think they need a creek bank as a place to live!

Beulah Cobb



Maximilion Sunflower

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\$ Treasurer's Report \$

4th Quarter 2014

Opening Balance Oct. 1, 2014	\$ 4507.21
Income	
Membership	\$ 10.00
Total	\$ 10.00
Expenses	
Hosting Gratuity	\$ 75.00
Newsletter	\$ 125.00
Website Expense	\$ 50.00
Total	\$ 250.00
Closing Balance Dec. 31, 2014	\$ 4267.21

Respectfully submitted by Ron Clark, Treasurer



Margaret Smith's Zucchetta Squash
 Growing on a Recycled, Cemetery Flower Stand. A Great Recycling Idea
(Editors' Note: Zucchetta Squash are not affected by the Squash Vine Borer and when picked small can be used in place of Zucchini. When mature they produce long, interesting looking squash)

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Mark your calendar

IOGA generally meets quarterly on the third Saturday of the month. Mark your calendar for upcoming meetings.

- January 17 2015
- April 18, 2015
(Plant Auction)
- July 18, 2015
- October 17, 2015



How do I join IOGA?

Dues are \$10.00 per individual member, and \$12.00 for a dual membership (same address, one newsletter).

To join, please send your annual dues to:

Please include ALL of the following information:

I prefer my newsletter to be emailed mailed.



I O G A
 7282 E 550 S
 Whitestown, IN 46075

- Full Name
- 2nd Name (if dual membership)
- Address
- Phone Number
- Email Address

**IOGA
Meeting
Sat. Jan. 17
10:45 am**

Meeting at the
King of Glory Lutheran Church
2201 East 106th St., Carmel, IN 46032 ([Map](#))
10:45— Arrive and Setup for Lunch
11:00—11:45 Pitch-in Lunch
(bring food to share plus table service)
11:45—12:45 Introductions and Gardening Q&A
12:45— 1:00 Business Meeting
1:00— Presentation on GMOs with Q&A

Meeting: The IOGA meeting will be held at the King of Glory Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall followed by a presentation and discussion on GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms). The presenter is Dr. Kent Blacklidge who is a Purdue graduate with a Ph.D. in genetics. Dr. Blacklidge was involved with toxicology and genetic research at Purdue for 12 years. A question & answer (Q&A) session will follow the presentation.

Pitch-in lunch: Bring a favorite dish filled with food ("home-made" and/or "organic" appreciated) to share and your plate, fork, and drink.

Directions: The King of Glory Lutheran Church is located 1.3 miles north of I-465 at the southwest corner of 106th St and Keystone Ave. Take Exit 33 from I-465 (northside of Indianapolis) to Keystone Ave. Go 1.3 miles north on Keystone Ave. and take the exit to 106th St. Turn left (west) on 106th St. and then after leaving the round-about make an immediate left (south) into the church. Use the door furthest south for easiest access to the Fellowship Hall meeting room.

Everyone welcome! Questions, or if lost, call Lynne Sullivan (317) 574-1921.

Remember to car pool, if possible.

Join us and bring a friend!

Hoosier Organic Gardener
Claudia and Ron Clark, editors
7282 E 550 S
Whitestown, IN 46075



**Annual Dues Are
Due in January!**

**Join us!
IOGA Meeting
Sat. Jan. 17**