



OUTREACH & ACTION

Wonderful interns have left a legacy of amazing curriculum and resources on sustainable food and energy. These unite in our new kit of teaching tools, *Cultivating Hope, Educating for Change: Resources for Teaching about Sustainable Food and Energy*. The kit will be complete in January of 2005. We plan to make gifts of twenty kits to local schools and libraries in the coming year. A video produced in collaboration with Athol Orange Community Television is in the editing stages. We look forward to airing and sharing this documentary with regional cable stations and community organizations across the country. The kit includes multi-media materials developed by and for Seeds of Solidarity including:

- *School Food, Rude or Renewed?* is a PowerPoint slide show created by intern Allyson Maynard. A preview at the Northeast Organic Farmers Association conference inspired many attendees to request a copy to share with school boards and parents in their communities to promote Farm to School.
- *What Fuels your Life?* is an exhibit that travels with the SOL Patrol van to illuminate the true costs of fossil fuel, biodiesel, and waste grease. Creator Kim Van Mourik miraculously shrunk the exhibit to PowerPoint size and developed an accompanying teacher's guide for use in high schools.
- *Youth Cultivating Food and a Hopeful Future: Lessons From SOL Garden* is the weekly series of activities we use with teens in our afterschool program to build awareness of the food they eat before they get their hands in the soil.
- *Cultivating Healthy Communities Through School Gardens* is a manual for planning and implementing school gardens and greenhouses in the Northeast. Thanks to intern Mary Spaulding.
- *Guide to Cultivating Hope and Educating for Change* by intern Anna Heidorn and illustrated by her father Chuck contains ideas and action steps for supporting local food and renewable energy.

Steps Toward Going Renewable

How to start producing some of your own power: A grid intertied system enables you to add solar (or other renewable) electricity to your already existing electric system. An electrician installs photovoltaic (PV) panels and a grid intertied inverter. While the sun is out you are producing energy and using it. When more power is needed than is supplied by your panels, you run off the utility grid. If you are producing more power than you are consuming, your meter runs backward and your solar electricity is sold back to the utility company. Check with your utility company about any existing incentives.

Or... An Off the Grid System means you are not connected to the utility company and produce all of your own power. This can be achieved as a next step after you install a grid intertied system by adding a battery bank to store the electricity produced by your PV Panels.

Install solar hot water panels to preheat your water.

Did you know...

If you heat with oil, you can use up to 20% biodiesel in your tank as it is compatible with home heating oil. Call your heating oil company and ask them to carry biodiesel for home delivery.

An excerpt from our new resource guide

Grow Food Everywhere: The Cardboard Method

Collect cardboard from appliance and furniture stores (large boxes make applying cardboard easier) and food coops. Lay down 1 to 2 layers of cardboard right onto sod. Cover with mulch such as straw.

It takes 6-8 months for the cardboard and sod to completely break down. If you put down your cardboard in the spring you can cut holes into the cardboard every two feet, dig up the soil in the hole, then add some compost and a transplant such as a tomato, squash or broccoli.

When cardboard is decomposed, rake off remaining bits of tape and cardboard. Mark where you want your beds with string, and dig a pathway along the outside edge of the string and toss this soil onto the bed.

These permanent raised beds to which you continue to add compost and mulch each growing season become a self-sustaining worm farm.