

## ink spots: *opinions, news, and reviews from an inkjet*

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...E. coli, salmonella poisoning, Mad Cow disease...what do these growing epidemics have in common? They are all transmitted to human consumers through chickens and other animals raised in...filthy, crowded pens [where] micro-organisms mutate into virulent pathogens... It makes one wax nostalgic for the good old days when eating was only associated with heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and atherosclerosis. *World Watch Journal*, 1998, quoted in *The Food Revolution*, John Robbins, 2001.

### What are we doing to ourselves? How can we undo what we've done?

If you read our newsletters regularly, you'll find the same themes repeated. Although in this edition I am primarily using the Randall Fitzgerald book, others I have reviewed recently cover the same issues.

Andrew Kimball's book, *Your Right to Know*, [2007] dealt with "genetic engineering and the secret changes in your food." Author and primatologist Jane Goodall is quoted on the flyleaf: "The children of North America have now become the world's lab animals on whom to study the longterm effects of GM products."

*Fast Food Nation* [2002] and *Chew on This* [2006] by Eric Schlosser [the latter with Charles Wilson] catalogued the consequences of North Americans' preoccupation with fast food.

Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* [2007] chronicled her family's journey "away from the industrial food pipeline to a rural life in which they vow to buy only food grown in their own neighborhood, grow it themselves, or learn to live without it."

I have older books that cover the same concepts. John Robbins, author of *Diet for a New America* [1987], and *The Food Revolution: how your diet can help save your life and the world* [2001] was, of course, a pioneer in calling our attention to the longterm health and environmental consequences of factory farming, and the advantages of a plant-based diet. I also want to introduce Jo Robinson's *Pasture Perfect: the*

*far-reaching benefits of choosing meat, eggs, and dairy products from grass-fed animals.*

When we began teaching Let's Be Well in 1994, no one was talking about grass-fed animals. Jo Robinson says that even in 2000, when she wrote her earlier book, *Why Grass-fed is Best*, "few people knew about the benefits of products from grass-fed animals." At that time, grain-fed was viewed as a mark of quality and of tender, juicy meat. It was assumed that grass-fed meant dry, tough, or "gamey."

Times have changed. The media have helped spread the word. Pasture-based farming has been featured in *The Smithsonian*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *House and Garden*, *The National Review*, and other publications too numerous to mention. And why not? Here are the win-win-win propositions this freelance writer has uncovered. **Pasture-based farming is**

1) **Good for animals.** Most animals today are being "finished" in Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations [CFOs] corporate-owned, highly mechanized, fuel-intensive factory farms where large numbers of animals are confined in a small amount of space. Feedlots are large tracts of bare ground where cattle wait to have their genetically-modified feed dumped into troughs.

2) **Good for the farmers.** "Raising animals for the feedlot industry is precarious business. Although you may do an excellent job raising your calves, sheep, or hogs, your ability to make a profit is influenced by...the weather, the global economy, outbreaks of food-borne disease, the price of feed, the cost of drugs, government subsidies, the national ups and downs of the market cycle, the price of oil, and fluctuations in consumer demand. One year, the stars line up and you make a decent living. The next two years...you break even or lose money. In recent decades, there has been more down years than up."

Kenny Ausubel, political activist, said at a food conference in 2004: "At the present time we are hurtling toward a world where family farms are quaint relics from the past, farm workers are poorly paid and exposed to hazardous working conditions, our animals are genetically altered to satisfy corporate needs, and our meat, eggs and dairy products contain ever more unwanted 'additives' and fewer desirable nutrients." Fortunately, the number of pasture-based farms is on the rise.

3) **Good for the planet.** Over half the total amount of water consumed in the US goes to irrigate land growing fodder for 1,000 pound steers. Enormous amounts of water must be used to wash away animal excrement from feedlots. To produce a pound of meat requires about 2,500 gallons of water. John

Robbins says, "Our supply of good water is disappearing at a terrifying rate."

4) **Good for YOU.** If you begin eating grass-fed beef, you won't go back to grain-fed. Why? Corby Krummer, writing in *The Atlantic Monthly*: "Grass-fed beef tastes better than corn-fed beef; meatier, purer, far less fatty, the way we imagine beef tasted before feedlots and farm subsidies changed ranchers and cattle." Sam Gugino, a *Wine Spectator* columnist, reported in the August 2003 issue: a steak supplied by a grass-fed producer was "delicious, rich and full-flavored, but without the excessive fattiness on the finish of some prime beef."

What would happen if more North Americans would choose to eat a mostly plant-based diet and when they occasionally ate foods from animals, bought eggs from chickens that run around, and a little meat and/or aged cheese from cows, goats, sheep, or bison that eat grass? All these authors say we'd have less heart disease and fewer cancers.

**Can a healthy society be built on unhealthy food?** If chickens are debeaked so they can be crowded into cages where they poop on each other, can their eggs be good for us? If cows are fed chicken litter, road kill, and worse, is their meat fit for human consumption? Why is a fast food sandwich so cheap? Let's examine our values this new year; **let's value ourselves.** +++

## Fitzgerald's *The Hundred-year Lie* reviewed once more: a problem with synergies

**"We are surrounded every day by an invisible sea of synthetic chemicals.**

**We consume foods that have been depleted of essential natural healing nutrients. These nutrients have been replaced by synthetic chemical additives.**

**These additives in our processed food interact synergistically in our bodies with synthetic chemicals absorbed from our water, our air, and our consumer products, weakening our immune systems.**

**Once weakened, we become susceptible to illnesses and diseases that medical practitioners treat with synthetic chemical drug compounds that often prove even more toxic to us.**

**And this cycle in our culture and in our lives repeats itself over and over..... "**

*The Hundred-Year Lie*, Randall Fitzgerald, 2006.

Summer quarter I began reviewing Randall Fitzgerald's *The Hundred Year Lie*. Fall quarter I tried again. Both newsletters are archived on our website—see page 4. There is so much more to describe. I'd suggest you read the sidebar before continuing.

**The hidden role of synergies.** "Synergies influence our lives in multiple ways—for better or for worse," says Fitzgerald in a chapter called **from the womb to the grave**.

"The human mind is a synergy of chemical reactions. So is human reproduction. So is our body's metabolizing of food. Even though **synergos**, a Greek word for 'working together,' implies cooperative effects that are positive, we do experience negative synergies..... The most obvious are prescription drug interactions that produce toxic side effects, such as when tranquilizers combine with painkillers to produce coma or death."

Perhaps because of its various branches of specialization, medical science tends to ignore the central role of synergistic effects in the human body. Biologist Peter Corning says that synergy "ranks up there with such heavyweight concepts as gravity, entropy, and information" as **concepts that explain how the world works**. Yet, "scientists study complex systems through the lenses of their own specialized concepts, paradigms, and theories..... To many scientists, synergy is an unfamiliar term."

Periodically I refer to *Silent Spring*, the 1962 bestseller, which I bought for 25 cents on a table in our public library a few years ago. It was Rachel Carson who first pointed out the toxic effects on health of "two or more

different carcinogens acting together. For examples, if a phosphate pesticide called *malathion* is applied at the same time as other phosphates, "a massive poisoning results—up to fifty times as severe as would be predicted on the basis of adding together the toxicities of the two." It was she who first uncovered the toxic effects of DDT. When DDT is added to "other liver-damaging hydrocarbons, which are widely used as solvents, paint removers, degreasing agents, dry-cleaning fluids," one chemical acts to alter and intensify the effects of another, "a process that can produce cancer in humans."

**Canaries in a coal mine.** Fitzgerald lists a few of the "myriad ways in which synthetic chemical synergies may be having an impact on our health:

- A December 2005 article in the journal *Toxicological Sciences* reported that a two-year University of Liverpool study of four food additives—aspartame, MSG, and the artificial colors *quinoline yellow* and *brilliant blue*—"found them to interact synergistically in ways that interfere with the normal development of nerve cells. The mixtures of the additives had up to seven times greater neurotoxic effects on nerve cell growth than when the additives were applied individually... **The combinations of additives studied were typically what are found in a child's bloodstream after a snack and drink.**"

- The December 13 2005 *New York Times* reported that a chemist at MIT, Dr Gerald Wogan, studied a group of hepatitis-B-infected men in Shanghai. Risk of liver cancer in these men increased 70 times if they ingested common toxic chemicals in their food.

**Conclusion: components of one's diet can increase the activity of enzymes that convert chemicals to carcinogens—as well as inactivate good enzymes that would ordinarily detoxify chemicals.**

- The Nov 27, 2005 *Los Angeles Times* reported that an epidemiologist with the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, discussing how long-term exposure to toxic chemicals destroys brain neurons, said, "It's not one nasty thing that is causing Parkinson's. It's exposure to a combination of many environmental chemicals." Fitzgerald says, **"Pesticides in various combinations are now considered a chief culprit as silent killers of brain cells."**

- Flight attendants who have experienced a wide range of health symptoms now have a label: *skypoxia*. Nausea, headaches, fatigue, slurred speech, tremors, and memory lapses are not uncommon. "Some toxicologists believe the symptoms are due to chemical fume synergies exacerbated by confined cabin space and jet fuel vapors ...Although very little is known about chemical synergy, the problem is very real because of the many ill flight attendants." I have a book, *Jet Smart*, written by Diana Fairchild, who circled the world over 21 times on international flights. She is now permanently medically grounded.

- SIDS, sudden infant death syndrome has confounded pediatricians for more than 50 years and resulted in one million baby deaths worldwide. Jim Sprott, a chemist in New Zealand, believes that crib death is caused by a synergy of chemicals, such as flame retardants, added to mattresses during their manufacture, creating enough gas to asphyxiate babies. +++

## How can an informed consumer be proactive—and avoid toxins?

Last quarter I used this page to describe the potential toxicity of drugs, including prescription medications. I made the following recommendations: **Talk with your doctor to see if you need to stay on your meds.** For bone strength, take other steps proven to boost bone health: consume calcium-rich foods, get enough vitamin D, including from sunshine, and engage in weight-bearing exercise. Diabetics should not only watch what they eat but also ask their physicians about using methyl B12, since diabetes drugs such as Glucophage have been known to cause B12 deficiency. For high cholesterol and hypertension, redouble your efforts at dietary control, avoiding saturated fats in meat, dairy products, especially ice cream, and processed foods. And be sure to exercise. *The American Journal of Physiology*, August 2008, studied sedentary men and women, 60-75, who participated in endurance exercise for 11 months. After training, their hearts performed as if they were younger, with increased capacity to accommodate the energy demands of exercise.

**But what about other sources of toxicity?** The best answer may be to avoid them, but let's look at life stages one at a time, if we can. It's not simple, though.

Fitzgerald describes what Solomon Vargas, a professional counselor, learned when he surveyed his Parkinson's support group, at St Helena hospital in California's wine country. They were between the ages of 25 and 55, mostly white-collar professionals, though two were wealthy vineyard owners. What they had in common was that they had been raised on processed foods and as adults were hooked on fast food and junk food. His extensive research into brain and nerve functioning, combined with his surveys of fellow patients, led him to a commonsense revelation: **nutrient-deficient diets had weakened their bodies, leaving them vulnerable to all the synthetic chemicals in their environment**, creating a toxic synergy that destroyed their brain and nerve cells.

**Phase one: fetal development.** "For most of the 20th century, medical science assured us that the placenta connecting the mother to the fetus acted as a foolproof filter, protecting the fetus from toxins absorbed by the mother's body during pregnancy. Now we know this is a myth." Babies began to be born addicted to cocaine in the 80s, and pregnant women are now warned about fetal alcohol syndrome, because "most chemical substances have been shown to be anywhere from three to ten times as toxic to fetuses and newborns as adults. This contamination can even begin at conception, as a result of the mother's body burden of chemicals, or the father's semen being a carrier for **environmental toxins** that can be introduced directly into the egg at fertilization." This phase includes contaminants from **air pollution, household chemicals, everyday conveniences, and food contamination.** Women who hope to conceive should read this chapter. Sample: "Babies in the womb now swim in and absorb a chemical soup...**PCBs**, toxins found in electrical

transformers, hydraulic fluids, adhesives, have been found in 30% of breast milk, making your odds about one in three of having been exposed to additional PCB residue if you were breast fed. PCBs at just five parts per million can cause adverse brain changes that can be permanent."

**Phase two: childhood.** By the time you are six months old you have already received 30% of your total lifetime load of chemicals. Children are injected with a cocktail of **vaccines**, up to nine shots by age 6 months. Some of these have historically contained the mercury-based **thimerosal**. These toxins further overwhelm the already susceptible child's immune system. Any baby born today or in the past decade who consumed **breast milk** also absorbed traces of **perchlorate**, a component of rocket fuel. The source is food tainted by irrigation water during the growing season, deposited on food eaten by the mothers. "Perchlorate is known to adversely affect the thyroid (which controls your metabolism) and other glands of your body." On the other hand, **infant formula** is the primary cause of allergies in infants. Mother's milk contains natural colostrum, a substance that helps the infant develop protection against viral infections, influenza, dysentery, and many other ailments. Formula, an imitation food, provides no such protection. **Tap water**, sometimes used to make formula, increases a child's chances of headaches, muscle weakness, and stomach upsets. At higher consumption levels, its intrinsic **fluoride** can cause cognitive disabilities and mental retardation. An estimated 38 million homes still have the neurotoxin **lead** coating their walls, perhaps explaining why one in six children have high levels of lead in their blood. Lead lowers IQ, impairs memory, reduces attention span, and causes learning disabilities. **Pesticides, insecticide residues, and chemicals** can outgas from carpeting and furniture for years. A twelve-foot plank of **pressure-treated wood** used on decks, picnic tables, and playground equipment contains an ounce of **arsenic** "enough to poison to death 250 people." Children put their fingers in their mouths: one in 500 who regularly play on them will develop cancer as a result of this exposure. Blood testing has found the highest concentrations of **Teflon** and **stain repellants** from food packaging in children under 6 and in persons 60 and older. Teflon molecules never break down in the environment and persist in the human body for a lifetime.

**Phase Three: teen years.** Add to the above, **processed foods, fast foods, overprescribed antibiotics, personal care products, tattoos and body piercing.** Our internal cleansing systems were not designed to eliminate toxic chemicals. I don't have room for **adulthood** and **senior years.** I urge you to get the book, so that you understand dangers from **animal hormones, seafood consumption, and occupational hazards.** Don't assume that small amounts of chemicals cannot harm you. As Fitzgerald says, it's the synergy of all of the above that poisons us. You'll want to take his toxicity test to learn what **you** need to do to survive, if not thrive. +++

# Let's Be Well, Inc

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## Notable Quotables:

- **Folate: not just for women any more.** Men who want to father a healthy child someday had better eat foods rich in folate now. Without this important nutrient, there is a far greater risk that your sperm will contain either too few or too many chromosomes, according to researchers from the University of California, Berkeley. Such sperm are much more likely to lead to birth defects and miscarriage. A man's sperm has 23 pairs of chromosomes. The research team analyzed the sperm from 89 healthy men, looking for genetical abnormalities. Men who consumed the most folate [spinach, asparagus, other greens, chickpeas, lentils] had a 20-30% lower frequency of sperm abnormalities, compared with men who consumed less folate. *Netscape news*, July 2008
- **Tattoos: not just for sailors any more.** One quarter or more of those under 30 adorn their skin with at least one tattoo, according to Bernadine Healy MD. in "The Dangerous Art of the Tattoo," in *US NEWS*, August 4, 2008. Upwards of 50% of those who get tattoos later wish they hadn't. "But tattooing is designed to last forever, delivering permanent ink under the epidermis. The skin reacts by encapsulating the alien clumps of pigment in dense fibrous tissue while a few nearby lymph nodes collect what migrates out." Whether the tattoo is removed surgically or the person undergoes months of laser treatments, the tattooed area becomes a toxic chemical dump. Tattoo ink is inherently carcinogenic, but the laser removal process, which demolishes the pigment by scorching heat, triggers reactions that generate additional carcinogenic and mutation-inducing breakdown products that are absorbed by the body. Surgical excision or deep abrasion causes scarring, and sometimes requires skin grafting.
- **Vitamin D, not just a milk additive anymore.** According to *Consumer Reports*, Oct 2008, up to 36% of Americans might be deficient in vitamin D. Low levels have been linked to autoimmune disorders, cancers, heart disease, and osteoporosis. Those who have any of the above may want to ask their physicians if they need a blood test. You can boost your vitamin D intake by consuming salmon, other fatty fish, or D3 supplements. Most people also need 10 minutes outdoors without sunscreen 3 or 4 times a week. Those who are overweight, over 50, have darker skin, or live in the North, need more. +++

## Want to be rid of some of your chemical body burden? Use AIM's Herbal Release®

Have you experienced the benefits of Herbal Release®? When I notice lymph glands in my neck or underarms feeling tender, I increase the number of Herbal Release capsules I usually take.

According to the AIM data sheet, the lymphatic system consists of lymphoid organs spread throughout the body. These include the bone marrow, thymus, lymphatic vessels, lymph nodes, spleen, adenoids and tonsils.—which remove waste from the body and strengthen immune

system function. When your glands are tender, your lymph system could use some extra cleansing help. Rebounding is an excellent way to help cleanse the lymph, too.

Each of the herbs "was carefully selected for its ability to work with the lymphatic system to produce a positive cell environment." **Barberry root** may stimulate the immune system and activate macrophages, according to Michael Castleman in *Healing Herbs*. It may also help bile flow. **Boldo leaves** are said

to help the gallbladder. One constituent, *ascaridole*, is said to help expel intestinal worms. **Burdock root** can be used to remove accumulated waste products, according to A.W. and L.R. Priest, in *Herbal Medications*. **Cascara sacra** is a mild laxative and general tonic that promotes well-being in all body systems. **Chickweed** is said to be good for the blood and joints. **Dandelion root** has been called a remedy for a toxic liver. Studies in Europe show that **Echinacea** increases

production of T cells. Asian studies show **Licorice root** to be helpful to the liver. **Parsley** is recognized as a diuretic. **Sarsaparilla** is said to bind to endotoxins and escort them out of the body. When I take some extra capsules, my tender glands return to normal in a day or two. I picture toxic chemicals being escorted out of my body, strengthening my immune health. See <http://www.youtube.com/aimusers> to watch 3-minute video clips on Herbal Release and other fine AIM products. +++

## Consider the *Food Awareness Pledge*

*Food&Water Watch* [[www.foodandwaterwatch.org](http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org)] sent me the following, along with a membership enrollment form.

*I care about where my food comes from and how it gets to my table. I pledge to do the following to increase my knowledge and to create awareness and accountability:*

♥ *ask where the meat and produce I buy is from, and ask whether or not the fish I buy is farm-raised or wild-caught*

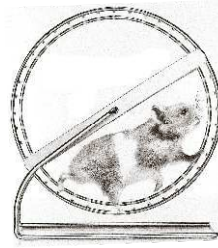
♥ *read labels, and ask that my grocery sell meat and dairy products that are artificial hormone— and antibiotic-free*

♥ *try to buy produce that is raised locally to reduce the impact on the environment and to support local family farms*

♥ *purchase organic foods as often as possible and stay away from genetically-modified and irradiated foods*

♥ *stay in contact with my elected officials and ask that they strengthen laws and regulations [that concern my health]*

February is traditionally heart month. Imagine how doing the above as often as possible could impact our heart health, reduce symptoms from disorders we already have, and keep us from getting other degenerative diseases. Why not try? +++

**LET'S TALK ABOUT GOING IN CIRCLES**

Our daughter had a hamster. Her bedroom was behind ours. Hamlet, of course, was nocturnal. Since he lived in a cage directly behind my head, I often heard him running in his wheel during the night.

We have run in a few wheels too. We were vegetarians, near vegans actually, for nine years--until Russell Blaylock MD, our Optimal Health Seminar speaker in 2002, looked at my hair and nails, listened to us describe what we ate, and said, "You have a protein deficiency." Protein is a major structural component of hair, nails, and skin. It is also needed to make enzymes and hormones, to fight infection and maintain muscle. Vital organs like the diaphragm require it for breathing and the heart needs it for pumping blood.

So, although we eat primarily plant-based, now we make sure we have some animal protein, in addition to our AIM LeafGreens™, which has a high protein content. Here are some reasons to reconsider protein intake from "Rethinking Protein Intake: More May Be Better as We Age," August 2008, *Environmental Nutrition*.

"New government data reveals that while protein intake among young adults has increased to 91 grams a day, in older Americans it's decreased to about 66 grams, with a trend toward sub-optimal intake. Older women are the least likely to get enough." The article lists five reasons for needing more:

1. **Type 2 diabetes.** High-protein, low carbohydrate diets reduce fasting blood sugar levels, lower after-meal insulin response, and improve overall longterm blood sugar control.
2. **Heart disease.** High-protein, low carb diets reduce risk factors for cardiovascular disease by lowering high blood pressure, cutting total cholesterol, improving HDL cholesterol, and increasing the size of LDL cholesterol particles, making them less prone to the oxidation that damages arteries.
3. **Bone health.** Although the effect of protein on calcium balance and bone health is controversial, higher protein intake seems to be linked to greater bone mass and fewer fractures, so long as there is adequate calcium intake. [Are my loss of three inches in height and my October 2006 hip fracture related to my nine years of inadequate protein and calcium consumption?]
4. **Muscle preservation.** The best way to minimize gradual loss of muscle that accompanies aging is to eat more protein and engage in strength-building exercises.
5. **Weight control.** Protein rich-foods satisfy hunger. Some experts recommend 30% of calories as protein per day to curb the appetite.

Most of us automatically think of animal products for defining protein-rich foods. The article has a list of *Smart Protein Picks*: Three ounces of fish, poultry, or lean meat provide 20-30 grams; 3 oz packed light tuna 21 grams; 3 oz canned salmon 16; ½ cup non-fat cottage cheese 14; 1 cup plain non-fat yogurt 12; 1 patty veggie burger 11; 2 oz [dry] Barilla Plus protein-fortified pasta 10; ½ cup cooked lentils 9; ¾ cup high-protein cereal, e.g. Kashi GoLean 8; 1 cup skim/nonfat milk 8; 2 tbsp peanut butter 8; ½ cup cooked amaranth 7; 28 peanuts 7; one large egg 6; ¼ cup sunflower kernels 6; 23 almonds 6; ½ cup cooked quinoa 4. [No wonder I had a protein deficiency. I never ate more than seven almonds a day. I sprinkled a few sunflower seeds on my salad. We ate no eggs and no dairy products, except butter.] But we had choices. The poor don't.

Chasing the latest diet is not a healthy strategy. May God give us wisdom to enjoy foods that coincide with scriptural principles of moderation, remembering, too, that if our bodies are meant to be the place where the Spirit of God dwells, when Solomon built the temple, only the very best materials were used. We have concluded the season we set aside for being thankful. The cover story of the November issue of *Christianity Today* reminds us that nearly a billion people on our planet are hungry, even though the world produces more food than ever. We, who have plenty, must pray for God's mercy--and we must give. Dr Mary Ruth Swope, who came for our October 08 Super Saturday, is encouraging us to fast—and to give the money we would have spent to ministries that feed the poor—see [www.kingdomcaloriesministry.com](http://www.kingdomcaloriesministry.com) **Let's give thanks—even in winter, especially that we are warm and safe and not hungry, during winter 2009.** May it be so. +++