

The Garden-Ville Method

MALCOLM BECK - FOUNDER

Unsound Agriculture Rape's Man & Nature

While visiting friends in the high plains of Texas I got a good taste of large-scale agriculture. Way beyond anything I had experienced at home on the farm, or in my own farming area.

Six hundred to a thousand acres or more in one cornfield. With center pivot irrigation systems that cover a mile diameter. Corn planted with real close spacing, closer than we planted small grain crops. So cleanly cultivated that it looked as if some one had hoed and got every little sprig of unwanted green. Some of the farmers had thirty or more cornfields like this.

Even though the crops were beautiful, the longer I visited and the more info I got from the farmers, the more I began to realize that there was something wrong with the whole system.

The water they are using to irrigate the fields is pre-historic water from the Ogallala aquifer, it only goes down, it does not replenish. The farmers themselves told me they only have 17, or if they are conservative, 19 years of water left, then it will all end. The economy of the whole area will die without water.

I asked one of the farmers approximately what it cost to grow a bushel of corn and what it brought when sold. The total production cost was \$3.05 plus or minus a few cents per bushel and at the elevator they received \$2.28 plus, or minus, a few cents per bushel. The seventy-seven cents deficit was made up by insurance and government subsidy which added up to enough for a profit. That is what kept them in business.

The corn they planted was GMO-Round Ready. (genetically modified organism designed to be resistant to the herbicide "Round Up") And if enough of the herbicide were not used to control the weeds the insurance would not pay off.

The government also paid the farmers to put a certain amount of acreage in CRP (crop reserve program) for ten years. In that program they had to plant a cover crop prescribed by the government. It was Old World Bluestem, a climax crop which is not a very good soil builder.

The farmers were also required to herbicide any broadleaf that tried to invade. I inspected one field in CRP that was full of tap rooted plants such as clover, thistles, careless weeds and other good soil builders, the only problem was, they were herbicided while still small, before the roots had a chance to go deep and do some good.

I mentioned to one of the farmers that the grass they planted in the CRP fields was a good soil protector but not the best soil builder. That farmer replied, "then that explains why those fields are no better when put back into cultivation than they were when first put into the program."

The Farmers agreed there was an over production of corn. To use up some of the over production, giant feedlots were built so the corn could be fed to cows.

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Garden-Ville
ORGANIC SPECIALIST SINCE 1987

**Committed to
Premium Natural
Garden Products**

Composts
Mulches
Natural Fertilizers
Soil Ammendments
Herbicides
Insecticides

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And a lot of the surplus went to Mexico and other countries.

My wife and I eat longhorn meat because of flavor, also, it is claimed to be very low in cholesterol because longhorns are not put in feedlots.

Grass fed cows have low cholesterol and there are other known health benefits from eating meat from grass fed cows. Could it be that fat from ruminating animals, designed to eat grass and roughage, becomes overloaded with cholesterol when confined to a pen and stuffed with corn?

I spent a week in Mexico talking to farmers, pecan and peach growers. They were complaining that the US was shipping too much cheap corn into Mexico and was killing the profits of their corn growers. Let's add up all these facts and look at the results.

1. The farmers are growing corn that has little to no market.
2. They are depleting an aquifer, which will deprive many small towns of water.
3. They are forced to plant GMO seed.
4. They are forced to use herbicides.
5. Prevented, or at least not encouraged, to use better cover crops to rebuild soil.
6. Fattening cows for food that could be bad for human health.
7. Helping to depress the economy of a neighboring country.
8. Causing more illegal immigrants to cross into this country.
9. Building the profits of a few, already super rich, companies that don't need it.
10. The US taxpayer is picking up the tab for all of it

There is a simple solution to this gross and complete violation of Nature.

Help the farmers become ranchers. Turn all of that country back to rangeland which is its natural state.


Texas Home Gardener

Graze the animals as the buffalo did and the HRM (holistic resource management) ranchers now do. Pay the ranchers a bonus to build soil fertility with organic matter through proper grazing. Then the grass-covered soil would trap and hold more water from the scarce rainfall.

Then the small towns would survive, and the Ogallala would survive. The farmers turned ranchers could stay on the land. The same number of animals as were in the feedlots could now be naturally grass fed. The meat would be healthier. The foul smell of the feedlots would go away. The pollution from the farm chemicals and tractor exhaust would be stopped. The economy of a neighboring country would not be hurt. Less illegal people would be tempted to cross into this country.

Taxes collected from the US citizens would not be subsidizing big companies such as grain movers and brokers, pesticide companies, fertilizer companies, equipment companies, insurance companies, and others. The taxes saved could be spent on more positive projects. The power and profits of a few big powerful companies would be trimmed allowing smaller companies to better survive.

**2nd Annual Benbrook Green Day
and Health Fair**



**BENBROOK
GREEN GARDEN DAY**

plus HEALTH FAIR

Saturday April 28, 2007
9:00 AM till 5:00 PM

Benbrook Community Center/YMCA
1899 Winscott Road, Benbrook, Texas
(Just East of the Intersection of Winscott Road and Highway 377 South)

A "green" and environmentally friendly Garden Show plus Health Fair. Promoting a healthy living lifestyle and environmentally safe gardening practices. Information at www.benbrookchamber.org

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