



Organic Morality

by Rick Weller, Founder of Organically Done Plant Products

We all have the need to vent occasionally and this is one of those times for me.

I spent the weekend with a group of pretty informed folks and we talked about politics, economics, the environment and yes, some less serious things – basically 'what's going on in the world' stuff.

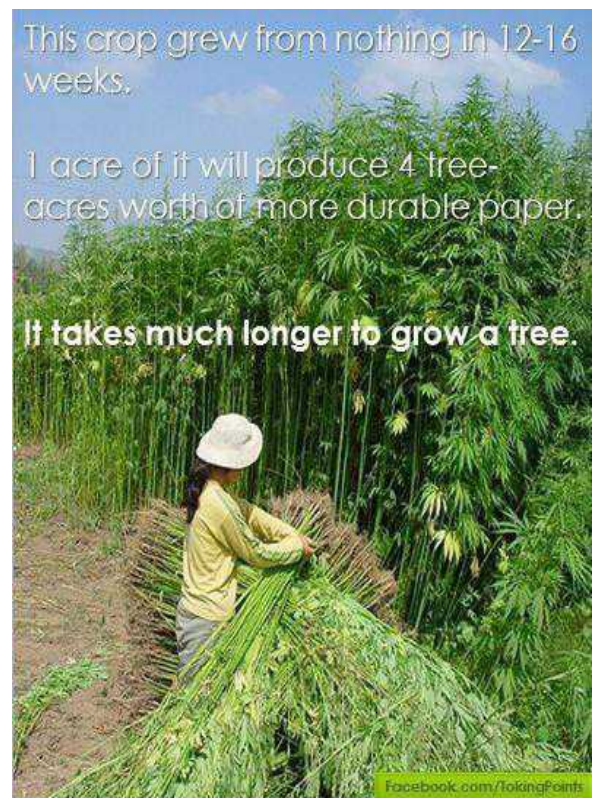
Most everyone knew about the George Zimmerman / Trayvon Martin trial, that the Tigers are in first place and that Kim Kardashian just had her first baby. There were a lot of blank stares when I brought up topics like GMO food products and honeybee colony collapse. I was a bit surprised given the importance of these issues.

Comments I heard this past weekend...

- “...if the government allows all of those pesticides on the shelves, they must be safe...”
- “...why would farmers plant GM crops if they weren't safe...”
- “...I can't tell food companies what to put in their products...”
- “...there's not much I can do about global warming...”

So, here are some facts you may not know

- 95% of genetically modified seeds (GMO's) are planted so that farmers can spray pesticides on their fields without killing the crops. This has led to an increase in pesticide use, a dramatic increase in livestock deformities and stillbirths, previously unknown proteins in our food supplies and, many people believe, an increase in human health issues. There are NO studies proving that GMO's are safe.
- Chemical fertilizers and pesticides contaminate our water supplies, are significant contributors to greenhouse gases, remain for decades in our soils and are absorbed by many of the world's insect population. These chemicals are found in almost every corner of the globe.
- Chemical companies (like Monsanto) and major food companies (like Kellogg's) lobby to prevent requirements for labeling foods containing GMO ingredients - their rationale is that it would cost too much to change labels (funny, they change their labels all the time) and that consumers would not buy foods that have GM ingredients (kind of like saying we won't buy products if the label shows more salt than we want – isn't that the point).
- Many scientists believe that the pesticide class of neonicotinoids is the primary contributor to bee colony collapse (we've lost more than 50% of our honeybee population). The EPA allowed 'temporary' registration of these products 10 years ago pending completion of environmental impact studies – these studies have still not been completed and the EPA continues to allow their use. Wouldn't it make more sense to test BEFORE we approve?
- Pesticide residue is found on almost all produce in our stores. There is no entity responsible for understanding the cumulative effects of these toxins to human health or the environment.
- The European Union (EU) and other countries ban the use of many agricultural products that are allowed and widely used in the U.S.



and on, and on.

Most of us are concerned about these types of issues when we bother to think about them, and what we are leaving for future generations. Few of us have the energy required to impact change. When was the last time you called or emailed one of your political representatives and voiced your opinion? When was the last time you decided to spend a few pennies more to support your local retailer selling quality local goods rather than getting that 'great' price from Walmart for a low-quality product from China? How many of us turn out lights in rooms we are not in?

A majority of Americans believe in the legalization of medical marijuana, gay marriage rights, a woman's right to choose, GMO labeling laws, immigration reform, etc. So why do our politicians, who are supposed to represent us, continue to vote against these issues? Why wouldn't a company like Kellogg's want to label their foods with the information their customers want? We've become passive participants.

My goal here is not to criticize but to encourage participation. Buy organic products. Send a letter to your representatives telling them you want to know what's in your food - vote them out of office when they make poor decisions. Turn out the light when you leave the room. Neither the politicians nor our corporations will fix the problems unless we demand it.

Supporting the organic movement is not going to save the world but, its a start.

Organically Done (www.organicallydone.com) is a Michigan manufacturer of organic fertilizers and soil amendments. Our mission is to produce high-quality truly organic products that provide everything your plants need while being free of potential contaminating sources that are found in many of today's "organic" alternatives – NOT ALL ORGANICS ARE CREATED EQUAL.

