

Pine Press

December 1, 2005

Vegetables
&
Monocles

(© Other Patriarchal Constructs)



Next Issue:

NOTHING

This is either a philosophical statement, or the Pine Press is tired and it's going on Winter vacation. It's probably a philosophical statement, I'm almost sure of it. Like, you know, Heidegger, Being, Nothing, or even Hegel — as long as it's German and completely incomprehensible, everyone's happy. The Pine Press will come back some day, when it is less tired. It told me so, so send something, condolences, get well soon cards, happy eightieth grandpas, to pinepress@gmail.com and it'll be in the next Pine Press. Because the Pine Press publishes everything. And nothing.

From the Editor...

S P A C E

Let's all treat each other like human beings, and I mean all of us, including me treating you like human beings and you treating me like a human being, because there has been a lack of that from a lot of us toward a lot of others of us and I'm not pointing fingers here because none of us have been particularly civil, or ready to recognize the capacity in each other for honest mistakes or conflicting, yet valid interests and this will get us nowhere — we're all in this thing together, whatever it is.

SHC will soon welcome a new Executive Director, Adrien Vlach. He'll be training in the office this coming week, so stop by, say hello, talk co-op shop with him.

And no, I did not draw the carrot man. I am not talented.

Next Pine Press? Maybe.

—Mike Langdon

The McCarty Fine Print

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MSU Student Housing Co-Operative (SHC)
541 Grand River
East Lansing, Michigan 48823
517-355-8313
coop@msu.edu
http://www.msu-shc.coop/

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S P A C E

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S P A C E

Letters

The views expressed in the following letters are solely those of their authors.

Dear Pine Press,

I think you should stop printing yourself and be emailed in an electronic newsletter, and here's why:

Environmental effects:

1. Involve cutting less trees for paper
2. Save energy from the production and transporting and copying the Pine Press
3. Reduce air pollution from the pulp mills
4. Prevent toxic ink contamination
5. Improve water quality because paper production requires a large amount of chlorine save landfill space (although I hope all co-ops recycle to the max)

Economic effects:

1. Less money for paper
2. Less money for toner
3. Less wear-and-tear on SHC copy machine

Social effects:

1. More people could read Pine Press online
2. It could be archived for everyone to see
3. Email is the way of the future
4. Lessens SHC's ecological footprint

As you can see, Pine Press, I'm not anti-you, I'm just pro-trees.

Lauren Kramer Olson
Bower Co-Op

The Pine Press Responds:
Paper! Paper! Feed me Paper! Rarr!

The Pine Press

There has been much discussion throughout the SHC concerning our policies and practices. This is a wonder-

ful thing. However, I fear that the discussion may be suffering from "tunnel vision". By this I mean that the focus of the discussion has become, or is becoming so focused on a single issue (pot) that we are in danger of missing the bigger picture.

The issue at stake here is more one of personal choice and personal responsibility.

Quoted from the SHC By-laws:

"The SHC has a responsibility to provide for the needs of its membership, but the membership has a higher responsibility to the SHC, that of being part owner in a collective ownership. Because of this collective ownership, all members must be responsible to each other as equals. If this responsibility is not fulfilled, then that SHC is no longer an organization of its members, only an organization of people."

It saddens me greatly to see Evan resign. I consider him to be an outstanding young gentleman, and an asset to SHC. Unfortunately Evan made a series of choices, and now he is faced with the consequences.

Pot is an illegal substance in this country, but the issue at hand is not about a larger system's ability to impose itself and its methods on a smaller one. The issue is that we are all responsible for both our actions, and the consequences of our actions.

I am happy to see a letter being sent out "from Mosier house cooperative" about an issue that

concerns the residents of that house. I would however like to remind the individuals responsible for writing that letter that their voices are no more and no less important than the voices that that had been silenced until they spoke out on the exit forms. When speaking on behalf of an entire house, care must be taken to represent the views of all the house members, and not just a vocal minority.

It is wonderful that a group of co-ops went to a board meeting to speak out about their beliefs. It is unfortunate that this occurred in such a way as to be disruptive to the board meeting agenda. Part of living in a democracy is having the patience to wait your turn to speak. At any rate I hope those individuals discovered how easy it can really be to have your voice heard in the SHC.



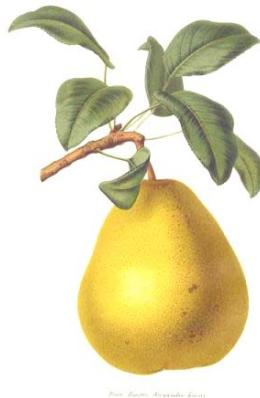
Just show up to a meeting, wait your turn, and say what's on your mind. Don't know what's going on at a board meeting? Ask your board rep. Is this system infallible? Of course not. Communications are going to break down on occasion. The real problem as I see it is that many people in the system are not taking responsibility for this communication on their own shoulders. If we decline to be in communication until something happens that really makes us angry, whose fault is it really? Much of this anger, resentment and unnecessary punitive action can be averted if we all make ourselves responsible for being in communication with each-other, both within a house and within the entire SHC. Even when we are not pissed off about something.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Matt Kaiser

Dear Student Housing Cooperative Members,

I would like to pose some questions and offer some solutions to recent issues within our cooperative organization. I feel that some are misusing the idea of transparency within the organization to their advantage, and to the disadvantage of others. I feel that the cooperative spirit is being compromised when some of our members feel that they have no voice. I am speaking not of the voice we all have in the broader SHC, but of the voice that each of us has in our own houses, and related issues of transparency. First I will pose some questions for thought.



* If members of a house feel like they do not have a voice in their houses, should they just move out (as they seem to have done according to exit surveys)?

* If a member feels that illegal activity in their house is having a negative impact on the house, on SHC, or on the liability of the organization and its individuals (the board, the EC, the ED), how should they address these issues, and to whom?

* Do you feel that members should be held accountable to the contracts they have signed, in effect indicating they consent to be governed in a manner consistent with SHC code?

* Do you recognize that SHC as a corporation may be held liable for the actions of its board, with respect to approving or ignoring illegal activity, within the organization? These liabilities could include indictment of board members, EC members, or the Executive Director. This is not to say that SHC should conduct raids or spy on house parties. This is to say, however, that when members complain of illegal activities in

their houses, such as dealing drugs from a member's room or using drugs in a common area, SHC has a right and a duty to protect *all* its members.

To the people who spoke at Monday's board meeting about the need for house autonomy, I would agree in most cases that approaching the board with house problems is not the solution. I would define a house problem in terms of the house's day-to-day operations, for example if someone failed to clean a bathroom or cook dinner on time. That should be dealt with by the house, and bringing it before the board would be silly.

However, an issue of legality such as marijuana use, both in terms of the housing contracts and of federal law, affects the entire SHC. Members are moving out over this, being driven away because they take issue with public drug use in their houses. I think we have been extremely lucky thus far that not one of them has called the police. Therefore I would characterize this as bringing important issues to the attention of the board, and not "tattling" as was tossed around at the board meeting. We must recognize SHC's duties to its members.

If we are interested in preserving house autonomy, we must make our houses accessible to *everyone*, not just the majority in the house. We cannot foster an environment where members feel oppressed or unable to voice grievances at house meetings, and this is an issue of transparency at the house level. When house members are driven out by what they feel is a hostile environment in the house or at meetings, the blame lies with the lack of transparency on the part of meeting facilitators, house officers and other house members.

In closing, I would like to reiterate: the danger of having illegal activity occurring in our houses is that anyone, even the general public, could simply bypass SHC and report it to the police. We should all be aware of this fact and not take it lightly. The situation is unique because as a co-op, there is the potential for events in one house to affect the organization as a whole. I suggest that everyone in SHC read once more the contracts that we have all signed, and remember what each of us has agreed to.

Cooperatively,
Barbara Ebel
Elsworth House

*Agree? Disagree? No one will ever know (or care) if you don't send your own letter to pinepress@gmail.com.
Seriously.*

Tyrone Biggums Says

by Mychal Brandon Smith

Mychal Brandon Smith sat down with superstar Tyrone Biggums for an exclusive interview.

Mychal Smith: Does it upset you that people only know you as a crack head on The Dave Chappelle Show?

Tyrone Biggums: Absolutely not! I am what I am. You can't judge me no more than I can judge BUSH.

M.B.S: Do you do any other drugs besides CRACK?

T.B: Hell no, nothing compares to crack.... Well besides Red Bull energy drink. That's crack in a can for ya.

M.B.S: You think Red Bull Drinks are a drug

T.B: Hell yes, we all got our drug of choice and that stuff is no different than what I do.

M.B.S: Are you serious? Red Bull is no different than Crack?

T.B: Did you not hear me the first time man? Weed, Red Bull, X, coffee, beer, liquor, cigarettes and sex is no different than crack. And did I say sex is no different than crack. That's some addictive stuff!

M.B.S: Red Bull, coffee, beer, liquor, cigarettes and sex is not illegal. Why would you compare this to crack?

T.B: You don't think people get addicted to them?

M.B.S: Good point! I've heard your roommates don't appreciate you doing drugs in common areas.

T.B: I don't appreciate them drinking coffee in the morning that stuff wakes me up. You ever try to sleep and the smell of coffee brewing keeps you up?

M.B.S: Why don't you talk to them about coffee making and how it wakes you up?



T.B: They just won't understand, I feel sometimes they don't respect me.

M.B.S: Do you think it's because you are a crack head.

T.B: I am no different than underage drinkers, weed heads and the people in my house having sex in the common areas.

M.B.S: I agree we should never lose respect for each other and have common courtesy for each other. What would you like to say to the people that have a problem with your crack addiction?

T.B: If you have a problem with Tyrone Biggums.... Please come speak to Tyrone Biggums. I won't do crack in front of you nooo more if it bothers you. I will even pretend to have stopped and only do crack in my bedroom. Basically I won't do it around any of y'all who take my crack offensive.

Mychal Brandon Smith is hilarious.

SHC Officer Elections: Coming Up

The positions of President, Executive Vice-President, Vice-President of Membership, and Vice-President of Education shall be elected by a plurality vote by the general membership of SHC each Spring semester at least one month before the beginning of the summer semester. Persons running for the positions of President, Executive Vice-President, Vice-President of Membership and Vice-President of Education must submit a statement of candidacy to the Education Committee to be publicized to all SHC Houses. Nomination deadlines will be 14 days prior to the 1st day of elections. So think about it.

Vegetarian Recipes

from Mike Ludwig

Vegetarians, like us Jews, often feel left out during Christmas. While the rest of the family is indulging in a juicy piece of pig ass, the animal-friendly, environmentally-conscious herbivore remains alienated with their salad, gravy-less mashed potatoes, and, if they're lucky enough, a big chunk of tofurky. Don't fret this year— here are a couple recipes that vegetarians, Jews, and everyone else can enjoy together during the holiday season.

Sweet Potato Latkes

(yields 50 small pancakes)

2 lbs sweet potatoes, peeled and coarsely grated
1 medium onion, finely chopped or
4-5 green onions, finely chopped
2/3 cup all-purpose flour
1-2 tablespoon fresh minced garlic
(optional or to taste)
4 large eggs, lightly beaten
2 teaspoons salt or seasoning salt
(or to taste)
pepper
oil (for frying)

1. In a large bowl stir together grated sweet potatoes, onions, flour, eggs, garlic, salt and pepper.
2. Heat enough oil to cover bottom of a large skillet.
3. In batches, spoon a heaping tablespoon batter onto hot oil and flatten slightly with fork or spoon.
4. Cook for about 1-1/2 minutes on each side (depending on how crispy you want them).
5. Transfer to a paper towel.
6. Delicious!

To spice things up a little, try adding cinnamon (with no garlic) or cayenne.



Drunken Brie

- 1 Wheel of brie cheese
 - 1 Bottle of Kahlua (the bigger the better)
 - 1 Box of crackers
1. Put the brie in an oiled brownie pan
 2. Pour in Kahlua
 3. Bake in oven on 350 F for 15 minutes (give or take)
 4. Drain excess Kahlua, serve with crackers.

Mike Ludwig is not a Luddite, there is merely a vague similarity between his name and that of Ned Ludd, founder of the early 19th century movement against industrialization. So stop asking him about it.

SHC Hunger Banquet: A Success

by Mike Langdon, et al

November 20th, 2005, the Phoenix House hosted the first SHC Hunger Banquet. Credit is due to the members of the Education Committee and especially the Service Project Subcommittee for all of their time and effort. Credit is also due to the approximately forty co-ops who braved Sunday morning hangovers, a four dollar admission, and cold weather to attend the event. We were able to raise \$174 which has been donated to the MSU Student Food Bank. Equally importantly, we were able to raise awareness about world hunger.

The following was read to and by the participants of the Banquet.

Today 1.2 billion people — about one-fifth of the world population — live in poverty. 800 million of these people suffer from chronic hunger. Every 3.6 seconds, a person dies from hunger and other preventable causes. That's 24,000 people a day. You may think hunger is about too many people and too little food. Not true. Our rich and bountiful planet produces enough to feed every woman, man, and child on earth. It's about power. The roots of hunger lie in inequalities in access to education and resources. The results are illiteracy, poverty, war, and the inability of families to grow or buy food.

The Hunger Banquet is a metaphor for how food and other resources are inequitably distributed in the world. As such, a Hunger Banquet can only touch upon the issues. We cannot recreate the many and complex ways in which poverty manifests itself. We will not have time to go into all the problems associated with lack of access to healthcare, education and employment opportunities, and the realities of the day-to-day struggle for survival.

It is important to note that no one section of this room represents a single country. While the United States may be one of the wealthiest countries on earth, 31 million Americans do not get enough to eat. Stark inequalities prevail, both worldwide and within countries.

Now I would like to introduce you to the three segments of this world. But, please remember — it's too easy to measure this world purely in economic terms. It is really about each person's ability to achieve a sense of security and have access to resources.

THE HIGH-INCOME GROUP:

You represent the 15 percent of the world's population with a per capita income of \$9,266 or more. You are fortunate enough to be able to afford a nutritious daily diet. As a group, you consume 70 percent of all the grain grown in the world, most of it in the form of grain-fed meat. Since most of you exceed your daily requirement of calories, you face health problems such as heart disease and diabetes.

But most of you don't worry about getting health-care. You have access to the best medical care in the world. Your children are born destined to go to school; the only uncertainty is how many years they will study after high school.

Access to credit? You turn down more offers than you can count. You and your family live in a comfortable and secure home. You own at least one car and probably two televisions. When you take your annual two-week vacation, you

don't worry about your job disappearing.

It's a good life because YOU have access to everything you need and you have the security to enjoy it.

THE MIDDLE-INCOME GROUP

You represent roughly 30 percent of the world's population. You earn between \$756 and \$9,265 a year. The levels of access and security you enjoy vary greatly. You are the folks who live on the edge. For many, it would take losing only one harvest to drought, or a serious illness, to throw you into poverty.

You probably own no land and may work as a day laborer, which pays a paltry amount, but it's better than nothing. Your small income allows for some use of electricity and a few years of schooling for your children — especially if they are boys. Alternatively, you may have left your family to go work in the city. You hope that the money you earn from your less than minimum wage job as domestic help or worker in a sweat shop will eventually allow you to move back home and make a better life for your family. Or perhaps you are a migrant farm worker in the U.S. South. You work long hours performing backbreaking work but still can not afford nutritious food for your children. Through no fault of your own, you were born into this harsh life. You hope that your children will have the opportunity to do better.

So, like everyone stuck in the middle, you feel squeezed, and you just hope that the bottom doesn't fall out from your world.

THE LOW-INCOME GROUP

You represent the majority of the world's population — roughly 55 percent. Your average income is less than \$755 a year — about \$2 a day — although many of you earn much less. Most of you are from poor countries such as Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Haiti, or Cambodia.

Every day is a struggle to meet your family's basic needs. Finding food, water and shelter can consume your entire day. For many of you women, it would not be uncommon to have to walk five to 10 miles every day to get water, spend several more hours working in the fields, and of course taking care of the children.

Many of you are frequently hungry. It is quite likely that you don't get the minimum number of calories your hard-working life requires. Many of you are homeless or living in structures so flimsy that a hard rain or strong wind can cause a major catastrophe.

Even though education is the single most powerful weapon against poverty, school is a luxury few of your children will ever experience. Most girls don't even bother to dream about school. Not surprisingly, many of the countries where you live also have the largest foreign debts. Your governments are forced to throw money into a bottomless pit of debt payments, instead of spending money on essential services like education and healthcare.

Adequate health care is out of the question for many of you in this group. For most of you, early death is all too familiar, with many mothers expecting to lose one or two children before they turn five.

Mike Langdon ran out of space in which to say something dumb about himself.

Do You Know Where Your Food Pyramid Comes From?

by Barbara Ebel

There is a possible conflict of interest between governmental agencies, animal products industries, and restaurant industries with regards to consumer health.

The number one health concern we see in the news these days is obesity. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) says that when people are overweight or obese, they are at high risk for hypertension (high blood pressure), which can lead to heart failure, kidney failure, stroke, and brain damage. People who are overweight or obese are also at risk for Type 2 diabetes, osteoarthritis, respiratory problems including sleep apnea, and some cancers including breast and colon cancer.

According to the American Heart Association, most Americans already eat more protein than their bodies need, which can increase health risks. Further, animal foods are the main source of fat in Americans' diets (at least 48% of daily fat intake). This excess fat intake can be directly linked to obesity and all its health complications.

Next, what many Americans don't know is that animal foods are the only dietary source of cholesterol (humans can produce all the cholesterol they need in their bodies). According to GoVeg.org, a partner of PETA.org, "the average cholesterol level in the U.S. is 210, the average vegetarian's cholesterol level is 161 and the average ve-

gan's cholesterol level is 133. People with cholesterol levels below 150 are virtually assured of never having a heart attack, while nearly one-third of meat-eaters will die from one."

The CDC, the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Association, and the American Dietetics Association all strongly recommend that people minimize their intake of high-fat, high-protein animal products, while increasing intakes of fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. In an age of steak houses and 24-ounce slabs of porterhouse, triple cheeseburgers and 4-pound ground beef burritos, most Americans aren't aware that the a serving of meat is defined as just 4

ounces. These same Americans are also the least likely to even approach the recommended daily servings for fruits, vegetables, and grains.

The dairy industry claims that the major health benefit of milk and other dairy products is that they are a great source of calcium. What's not heavily advertised is the obscene amount of fat, cholesterol, and sugar (lactose) present in these products. What's also not advertised is that the countries in the world with the lowest rates of milk consumption (Japan, China) have the lowest rates of osteoporosis.

Consider, though that here's not a calcium group according to the USDA - there's a dairy group.

What gives? The rest of the world gets plenty of calcium from things like beans and dark leafy greens, but these foods - far lower in fat and completely free of cholesterol - are not grouped with milk. This is not the real point, however. The major health issues in the U.S. are still obesity and heart disease, and the health risks of osteoporosis pale in comparison.

The USDA's push for dairy products in the American diet has its roots in the eating habits of the dominant race in this country - Caucasians. Most of the U.S.'s minorities, up to 95% of Asian-Americans and up to 70% of African-Americans are "lactose intolerant", meaning they lack the enzymes necessary to digest milk. In



1988, the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition reported that "it rapidly became apparent that this pattern (lactose intolerance) was the genetic norm, and that lactase activity was sustained only in a majority of adults whose origins were in northern European or some Mediterranean populations." Rather than calling the majority of the world's people "lactose intolerant", we should be calling them "normal".

Despite the obvious problems that dairy products pose to so many people, the USDA persists in calling for 3 servings of dairy per day. What could be the reason for this?

Though one of its major functions is to formulate healthy nutrition guidelines, the USDA has done a particularly poor job of getting Americans to follow its famous, though now outdated, Food Guide Pyramid. According to the USDA, in 1994 the average American diet was structured as such:

- 586 lbs. of milk and dairy products
- 394 lbs. of vegetables
- 199 lbs. of meat
- 193 lbs. of products containing flour and cereal
- 121 lbs. of fresh fruit

indicating that over 40% of the diet for the year consisted of dairy products. Instead of making dairy a small portion of the daily diet, the average American is making it the major component. A food pyramid based on what Americans actually eat would have fresh fruit at the very top, followed by vegetables, then meat and bread on the 3rd level, and milk and dairy at its base.

Given this information, and the heavy advertising done by the meat and dairy industries, there seems to be little hope of anyone following the newly redesigned MyPyramid system, either. The reason why is clear when one discovers that the USDA, responsible for creating national nutrition guidelines, was also created to promote the nation's food industries.

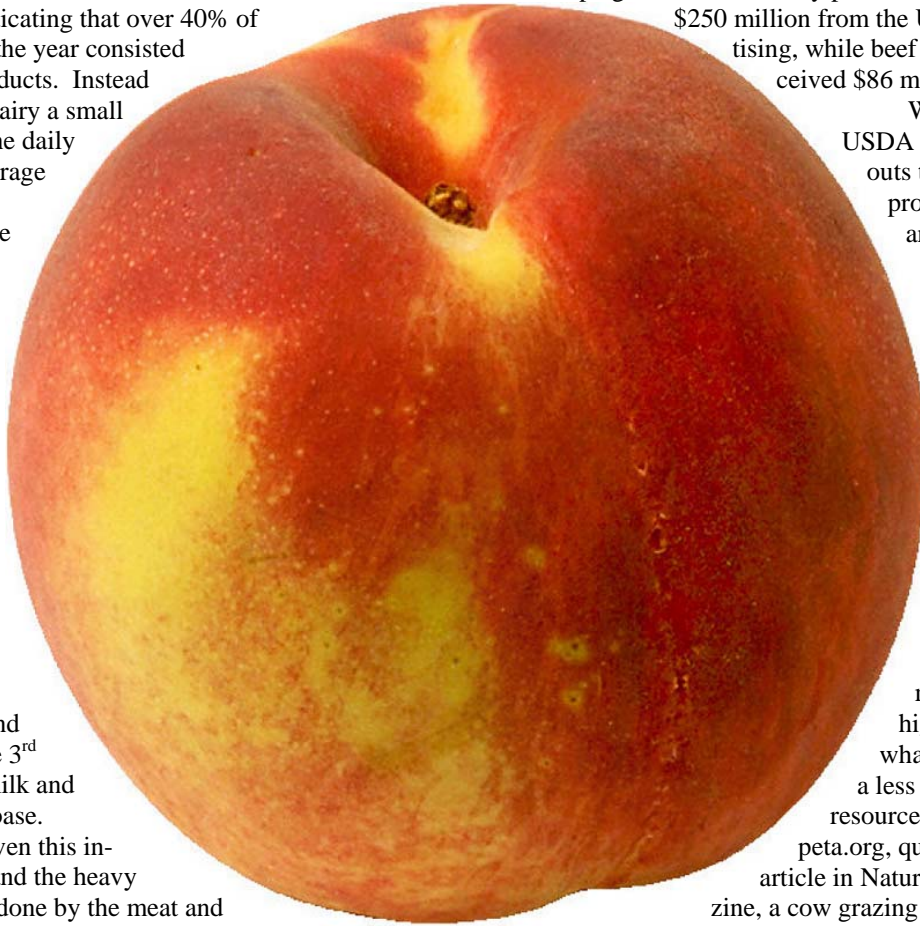
Consider its role in the beef industry: as a department of *Agriculture*, the USDA is supposed to conduct "beef promotion, research, and consumer education programs that are invaluable to the efforts of promoting the consumption of beef and beef products" (Title VII of the U.S. Code). There is a constant conflict between

what the USDA's non-industry nutritionists tell it to set as guidelines, what the industry wants it to set as guidelines, and the pro-industry advertising paid for by the USDA.

The USDA gives out billions of dollars in farming subsidies each year; not to those who produce fruits and vegetables, which make up the bulk of the new MyPyramid, but to dairy, rice, wheat, sugar, cotton, corn, and soybean producers. Additionally, the USDA provides millions of dollars to the dairy and beef industries for advertising on a national level. Remember the "got milk?" and "Beef: It's what's for dinner" campaigns? In 2002, dairy producers received over \$250 million from the USDA for advertising, while beef producers received \$86 million.

Why might the USDA give these payouts to the animal products industries, and not to the fruit and vegetable producers, you ask? Animal products are much more expensive than vegetables, because of the work and resources poured into them. Producers can command much higher prices for what ends up being a less efficient use of resources. According to peta.org, quoting a 1997 article in *Natural Health* magazine, a cow grazing on one acre of land produces enough meat to sustain a person for 2.5 months. The amount of soybeans grown on that same amount of land could sustain a person for 7 years, yet the profit from beef is far higher.

If the USDA pays to promote the animal products industries, more money can be made than if they had promoted plant products instead. In the case of the dairy industry, the USDA gives out \$2 billion in annual subsidies because of the Milk Income Loss Contract, not to mention the above-market prices paid by the USDA to supply milk for federal school lunch programs and WICS. Essentially the USDA is propping up an indus-



try that can't support itself. The reason behind this is industry lobbying, to the tune of \$2 million per year, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. Two million dollars per year is a small investment for such a large return in subsidies.

Even when confronted with scientific evidence of the dangers of high-fat, high-cholesterol, high-sugar foods, the USDA lacks the power to write the appropriate guidelines. Industry lobbyists are responsible for watered-down wording in the national nutrition guidelines, from "eat less meat and milk" to "choose lean meat and nonfat milk", from "avoid too much sugar" in 1980 to "moderate your intake of sugar" in 2000 to the vague and unhelpful "choose your carbohydrates wisely".

Further, the animal food industries are filling the ranks of the USDA with former heads of animal foods companies. In 2000 the Physicians' Committee for Responsible Medicine, a group touting the benefits of vegetarianism and veganism, filed a lawsuit against the USDA regarding this. PCRM claimed that the USDA had violated federal law by deliberately concealing the ties that 6 of 11 members of its dietary guidelines advisory panel had to the meat, dairy, and egg industries. The suit was ruled in favor of the PCRM.

In her November 2004 article written for Conscious Choice Magazine (www.consciouschoice.com), nutritionist Louise Light describes her experience as the leader of a group of nutritionists who submitted guidelines to the Secretary of Agriculture for approval. Light was hired by the USDA in the 1980's to help reformulate the 'Basic Four' food groups guidelines.

"When our version of the Food Guide came back to us revised, we were shocked to find that it was vastly different ... As I later discovered, the wholesale changes ... were calculated to win the acceptance of the food industry ... [the Secretary of Agriculture] altered wording to emphasize processed foods over fresh and whole foods, to downplay lean meats and low-fat dairy choices because the meat and milk lobbies believed it'd hurt sales of full-fat products."

She goes on to say that "changes were made to the wording of the dietary guidelines from 'eat less' to 'avoid too much'.

"But even this neutralized wording of the revised Guidelines created a firestorm of angry responses from the food industry and their Congressional allies who believed that the 'farmers' department' (USDA) should *not* be telling the public to eat less of anything, in-

cluding saturated fat and cholesterol, meat, eggs and sugar."

The solution to all this would be to transfer responsibility for the nation's nutritional guidelines from the USDA to the Department of Health and Human Services, which has no such ties to the food industries. Louise Light suggests this very thing, closing her article by saying that "The USDA's built-in conflicts of interest must be openly acknowledged so that we can make the shift. Nutrition is too important to leave to anyone who's interest is convincing us to 'just eat more'."

Barbara Ebel will rock your socks off any day of the week. She brings the facts, the know-how, the can-do attitude, the dance-willingness, the Nintendo skillz, the after-shave. In other words, she brings it.

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R.I.P. Sam



1991-2005