

LE TOUR DE CSA

A VISIT TO BIODYNAMIC FARMS
SUMMER 2008



Moving forward as an aspiring sustainable designer, I have come to realize that a shift towards building a sustainably designed environment is going to take more than green materials and buildings with its race towards green certifications and accreditations. In order to move closer towards building a sustainably-designed-environment what we really need to do is to rethink 'everything'.

Last winter I took a step towards becoming a member of Spiritual Food Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) where I purchase a part of my weekly produce that supports farmers who practice not just organic farming but biodynamic farming. Biodynamic agriculture is a way of living, working and relating to nature and the vocations of agriculture based on good common-sense practices, a consciousness of the uniqueness of each landscape, and the inner development of each and every practitioner. Common-sense practices include striving to be self-sufficient in energy, fertilizers, plants, and animals; structuring our activities based on working with nature's rhythms; using diversity in plant, fertilizers, and animals as building blocks of a healthy operation; being professional in our approach to reliability, cleanliness, order, focus on observation, and attention to detail; and being prompt and up-to-date in doing one's job. On the weekend of July 4, 2008 I finally had the opportunity to make a trip to the Kimberton Hills Camhill Village farm in the Valley Forge area of Pennsylvania. I met three farmers, Sebastian who happens to be a graduate in environmental science from

Germany growing our fresh produce and providing us greens even in the winter season from his sustainably designed greenhouse. Jason who provides us our dairy; and Eric who shares the land with 7 stars farm source of our yogurt and provides us with eggs but none off late as a hungry fox has killed some of the chickens. I asked him what he was doing to catch the fox and he said that his intention is not to catch the fox. Rather his focus is on how to reinforce the protection around the chicken's cage so that the fox can be curbed of its natural instinct. I also visited the bakery, part of the same Village where the naturally leavened bread is baked in collaboration with Down Syndrome residents on the farm who are an integral part of the community.

I invite you all, especially those who are members of CSA to visit the farms and the community you have become a part of. I also invite others who share a passion for a sustainable world to join in on the next trip to the CSA farms and realize that sustainable design world goes beyond LEED buildings and products. It can start with as simple as what, how, and where you eat and how it subtly and incrementally impacts you and the world around you.

Links and References for more info:

<http://www.localharvest.org/csa/>
<http://www.biodynamics.com/biodynamics.htm>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biodynamic_agriculture

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