

SeedBroadcast



agri-Culture Journal

Autumn 2013

SeedBroadcast



"I grew dried black beans and scarlet runners.

Every afternoon I would go down to the garden and would fill my pockets up.

I had a bowl that I would empty my pockets into and I felt so rich, just to have this bowl full of beautiful beans.

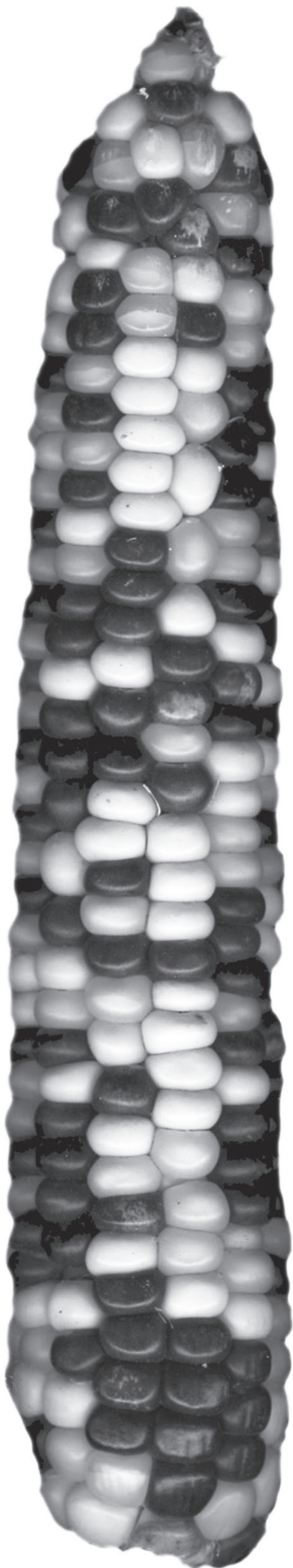
I would then sort them.

It was wonderful."

ABIGAIL GRSKOPT, STORY RANCH, MINERAL HILL, NEW MEXICO.

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IT GROWS WHERE IT IS SUPPOSED TO BE

"Seeds are witnesses to the past, they have their own story and each of these seeds had a set of hands that diligently planted them from one generation to another.

Seeds are our living, breathing relatives."

ROWEN WHITE, MOHAWK, SEED STEWARD.

SEEDBROADCAST MET ROWEN AT NATIVE SEED/SEARCH IN TUCSON, ARIZONA. YOU CAN HEAR HER SEED STORY @

<https://soundcloud.com/seedbroadcast/rowen-white-shares-her>



SEEDBROADCAST is a generative project exploring grassroots food and seed sovereignty through collective inquiries and hands-on creative practices. Throughout the year, we initiate community projects to examine critical issues surrounding seed and food sovereignty, visit local farms and gardens to experience what is happening first hand in the field, and engage in creative strategies to dig deeper into the real, often unheard stories of local agriculture. SeedBroadcast believes that local communities hold a genius of place that nourishes the core of sustenance. We seek to reveal this innovative knowledge while pollinating creative practices, which animate the saving and growing of local seeds, to provide an avenue for the revitalization of localized, sovereign food sources.

This collective is committed to grow, locally and deeply, while also finding connectivity and partnerships between communities and individuals across the country. We hold a strong belief that it is a basic human right to have unlimited access to growing and eating healthy food. These rights are not necessarily available to everyone for many reasons: lack of resources, such as open pollinated seeds, access to land and water, and a lack of cultural support. Therefore, we have made it our objective to support, defend, and create diversified sites of food and seed actions, through creative investigations across rural and urban environments.

SEEDBROADCAST was initiated by Jeanette Hart-Mann and Chrissie Orr, at the Compartiendo Semillas, Sembrando el Futuro, Seed Exchange in Las Vegas, New Mexico in 2011, to investigate food culture in action. Exploring open pollinated seed networks, the ecology of urban and rural agricultural systems, and the meshwork of environmental concerns permeating food production today, this discursive project has become a testing ground for creative broadcasting and collective action. Engagement has included community based projects, installations, dialogues, creative actions, and experiential practices. Interdisciplinary collaboration is a founding principal of this project, where participants from diverse backgrounds work together as critical partners of inquiry, exploration and creation.

This is our 1st edition of the **SeedBroadcast agri-Culture Journal** and we want to thank all who generously contributed. We are building from the soil up and invite all who read this to consider contributing to the 2nd edition, which will be published in the Spring of 2014. Your contribution could be a drawing, photograph, story, recipe, poem, or an essay, with relevance to the essence of seeds and seed saving practices. We are looking forward to hearing from you. Each of you holds a wisdom and it is this wisdom we hope to share.

The deadline for submissions is Friday, January 31th 2014.

Please send to seedbroadcast@gmail.com

We will be on the road with the Mobile Seed Story Broadcasting Station so look out for us. You can keep up with our travels and encounters with other seed lovers on our website www.seedbroadcast.org and follow our blog at seedbroadcast.blogspot.org

We would like to thank our fiscal sponsor, the Center for Southwest Culture, the Kindle Project Fund of the Common Counsel Foundation, the McCune Charitable Foundation for their support, Lacey Adams for graphic design, Marita Prandoni for editing, and all of our local and national partners. For a list of our partners go to www.seedbroadcast.org/SeedBroadcast/SeedBroadcast_Roots.html

SEED=FOOD=LIFE

WE ARE BUILDING IT FROM THE SOIL UP

COLLABORATION

CHRISSIE

The first time I met Jeanette it was at my local coffee shop where we talked and exchanged ideas for hours. It was easy and challenging and dynamic; we spoke the same language, and could agree to disagree. We were two artists critically looking to new practices, both with a love and commitment to the potential held in each and every seed and in each and every community. This was the beginning.

JEANETTE

The process of collaboration and commitment to collectivity is a critical formation of SeedBroadcast. Like the ecological body of diversity and heterogeneity, it does not necessitate that we give up our subjectivity, but rather recognizes that agency is integrally connected to the work, passions, desires, and biological processes enveloping all of us. Seeds, pollination, adaptability, struggle, and action are the rhizomes of this process.

BROADCASTING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

JEANETTE

What we call knowledge is not static. It is not trickle down service from those that know to those that don't. Instead, it is a growing complex of local beliefs and practices that are shared, applied, and persistently transformed, at and in the grassroots. To be a grower of food and a saver of seed is to engage this directly and be an active cultivator of knowledge and of what we call culture. This notion of culture is essential to our collective re-creation of a popular agri-culture and the most basic human right to grow, eat, and share the healthiest food around. This is the emphatic mission of SeedBroadcast.

CHRISSIE

We started where we were called, the community of Las Vegas, New Mexico, where there is a tradition of local growing practices in the rural areas around this former railroad town. We visited people in their own backyard gardens, on their farms and in their dried dusty garden beds that were left bare due to the city water shortage. We shared food together in fields and

community centers, we made a "How to" book and we listened to one and other. These collaborators helped to shape and mold our initial ideas for gathering and dispersing local land-based stories into what is now the Mobile Seed Story Broadcasting Station and networking practice.

LISTENING, BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS, BELIEF IN WHAT WE HEAR.

CHRISSIE

We were inspired by the people we encountered who invited us to share a day in their lives, they shared their beliefs in growing and owning the rights to their own seeds and food production, the struggles to do this, and the tenacity to continue. The relationships we built informed our structure and inspired us to dedicate our creative capacities to push beyond our notions of "art" to explore creative ways to encourage and broadcast critical dialogues around reclaiming our seed and food sovereignty. This is what we heard.

JEANETTE

Folks from all walks of life have shared Seed Stories with us. These are usually audio recordings with corresponding photographs of seeds, gardens, or portraits: beautiful, powerful, critical, and personal stories. Yet, we also recognize, encourage, and support other forms of expressions. These stories are shared as drawings, writings, conversations, documents, objects, and always seeds. This expressive diversity broadens our capacity for listening and teaches us about the possibility of a seed, of people, and of passions. It re-formulates power in the hands and minds of people sharing these Seed Stories and produces a new site for the articulation of sovereign agri-culture.

AND FULL ON DEDICATION

JEANETTE

Dedication and optimism go hand in hand. With all the challenges we face on a daily basis—lack of healthy food, water, land, seeds a changing climate, and the corporate accumulation of wealth, power, and resources—who wouldn't want to plant seeds, save seeds, and share seeds? Gardeners, farmers, seed savers, and people everywhere are inspired to play their part, beginning and continuing a long tradition to be infinitely optimistic and plant a seed.

CHRISSIE

We followed our dreams. Jeanette dedicated her summer to create the Mobile Seed Story Broadcasting Station in an old bread truck as part of her Masters in Fine Art. She travelled slowly across the country from Anton Chico, New Mexico to Vermont, forming partnerships and connections along the way with seed libraries, seed lovers and local food growers who shared their wisdom and stories. The Seed Story dispersal and national networking emerged into many new seed loving friends, the seedbroadcast blog, and web site. I remained at home in New Mexico, actively researching and pursuing grant opportunities, (thank you Kindle) and keeping up with our local partners and collaborators.

WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT

CHRISSIE

Our conversations started that day in the café in 2011 and I believe that the time was right. Look at us now: We have just come back from a tour of the Southwest with local visits to Anton Chico, Santa Fe, Albuquerque Bio park, Native Seeds / SEARCH, to events and seed exchanges, to schools and rural villages, and to the heart of urban Phoenix. The seeds bring us together in ways that I would never have imagined. They bring the young and the wise, the experts, and the beginners. But all who shared their stories with us have a connection to the potential that the seed holds. In these up side down times the seed holds the potential of HOPE, new growth, nourishment and wonder. This is what we are all looking for, is it not?

JEANETTE

What else will these seeds share if I listen to their stories?

As this story accumulates, it moves us to believe that every seed and every seed saver, and every grower and lover of food have crucial stories to share. This wealth of local, practical, and creative know-how is a site of unconditional knowledge building and the frontier of truly innovative people based, food practice.

In solidarity,

SeedBroadcasters

www.seedbroadcast.org
seedbroadcast.blogspot.com



FOOD SOVEREIGNTY HAKIM BELLAMY

She said
What if the scientist stuck to science
And let the farmers stick to farming

It's not rocket science

Global agriculture has changed more in our lifetime
Than the previous 10,000 years

Went from
If it ain't broke, don't fix it
To if it works
Whip it into working harder

When the sun
Doesn't rise fast enough for us
Will we tinker with that?

Will we surrender our Eden
To the machine
Look God in the eye
Point to the third day and say
"Not good enough"
Will we piss in the same pond
We've evolved from
Will we turn our back
On the mud in our veins

It's not rocket science

The chemist are covering the spread
bruising silos with fruit sky high
You think the pesticides are expensive?
Imagine the plane
Gotta push a hell of a lot more acres
To cover the gas bill that gets that thing in the sky

It's not rocket science

Even the fairy tales prosthetized
Jack and the Beanstalk was so obviously
Corporate, that they didn't try to hide it
In the beginning of the story he put three seeds
in his pocket
And by the end he turns a profit

It's surprisingly not surprising
That there is no problem with how he got it
In a country founded on deception and robbery

And there's NO WAY
A beanstalk gets THAT big without GMO coursing
through its body
That's like watching Major League Baseball
And pretending there is no difference between 1999
And 2005 Jason Giambi

But the script gets flipped
To mess with our conscious
Of course, Jack is hungry and poor
So he's just like us

Stole the tall man's gold
And tricked his wife into liking him

Made Jack the bad guy
Even though the beans were free
And the stalk was on his property

But Jack still wins a happy ever after
Though we all know fairy tales aren't reality

In the end,
The corporation is still giant
And Jack can't have no beenstalk without'em

It's not rocket science

They say money doesn't grow on trees
But there are plenty of companies pumping it
into the ground
"Food chain" will get a whole new meaning
As soon as they figure that out

Chemicals invented for world wars
Have no business in our bodies
Fertilizing killing fields with bullshit
Will only yield a barren garden

I suppose it makes perfect sense
If the idea is to wage war on our biology

Monocrop all biodiversity
Til every seed is eugenically perfect
And leave the farming to the Nazis

It's not rocket science

Putting dope into the soil
Makes the land an addict
Now Mother Earth can't function without it
While just a few years ago
She used to make miracles out of scratch for
our parents.

Years ago our country abolished the ability of
rich people to own farmers
But they didn't want to share crops
So they pulled all the stops
Traded slave for patent holding, full well knowing
That they will always "own" farmers
As long as they can own their seeds

It's not rocket science

We cannot eat coffee,
Super Insects or Super Weeds

Our crops have become a courtroom
And the lawyers are woefully overdressed
For this kind of work

It's not rocket science

If your coat is a dirtless shade of white
You are not allowed in this field

Here, brown is holy
Here, life is NOT
An experiment
It is reality

Here, is not simply playing God
Here, is tampering with blessings
Here, is not 20,000 feet
Here, is ground
Zero

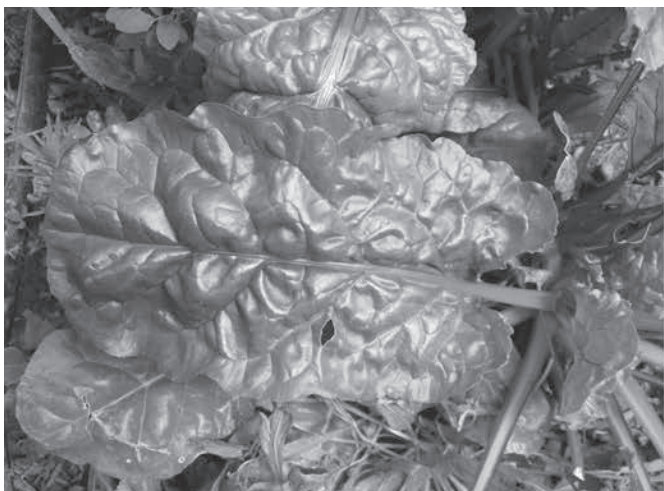
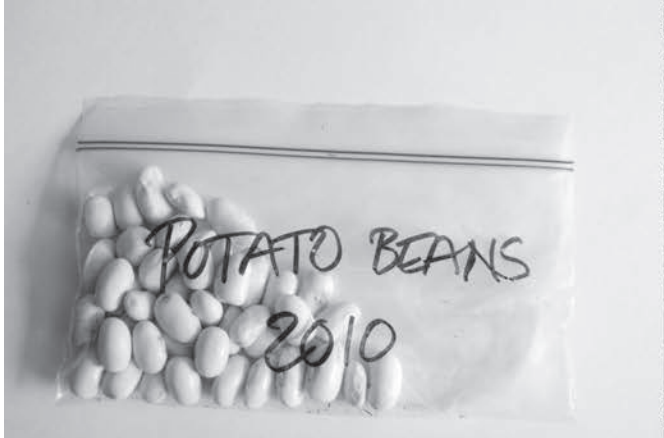
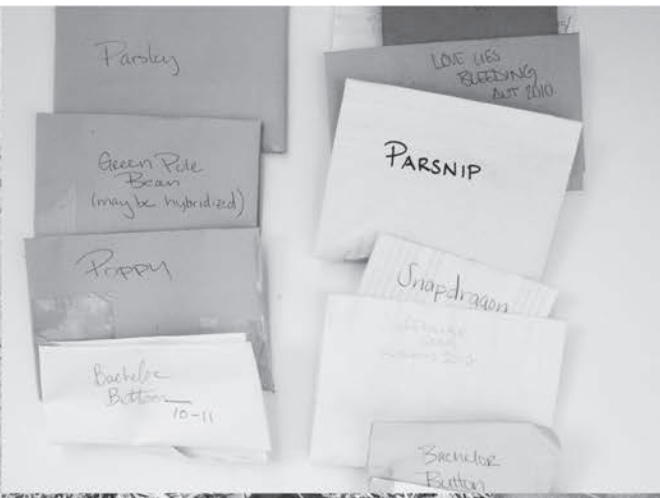
Here, is both feet
Both knees
Both hands
Both lips
Kiss

It's not
Rocket
Science.

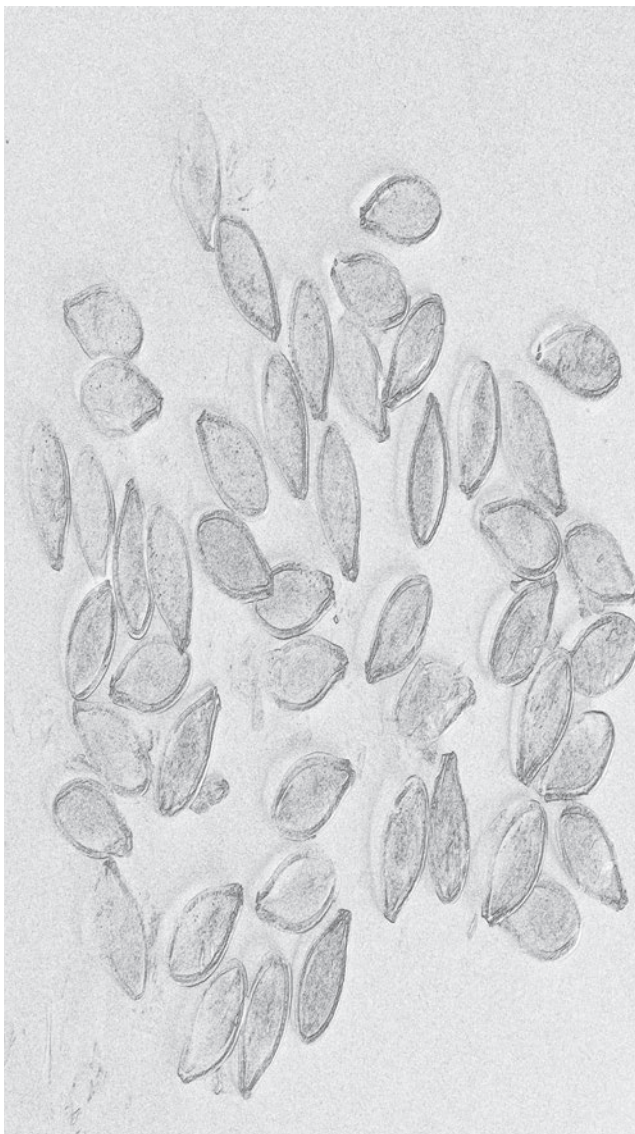
© HAKIM BELLAMY, MAY 4TH, 2013

THIS POEM WAS WRITTEN BY HAKIM BELLAMY, THE POET LAUREATE OF ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, FOR THE OPENING EVENT OF **SEEDS: A COLLECTIVE VOICE**, CO-ORDINATED BY JADE LEYVA. **SEEDBROADCAST** WAS HONORED TO BE INVITED TO THIS EVENT. YOU CAN READ OUR BLOG AND LISTEN TO HAKIM READING HIS POEM @ seedbroadcast.blogspot.com/search/label/Albuquerque.

HAKIM IS A POET, SPOKEN WORD ARTIST AND POET LAUREATE OF ALBUQUERQUE. HE LIVES AND WORKS IN ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO



A SEED CYCLE IN 5 PARTS CHRISTIAN LEAHY



I. FOR MY SISTER EVE

I can't help myself.

Like others before me, I long for the forbidden
rampion beyond the garden wall,

the sharp burst of the pomegranate seed,

the apples drooping over the abandoned cellar
hole that ripples with garter snakes in the heat.

I lick the blood that slashes the air and speckles
my baby's cheekbones when the dog noses be-
tween the stones and wrenches one black and
torn snake out by her flicking tail.

Always, I reach for and taste that which comes
with unknown costs.

I winter in underworlds, hand my firstborn over to
the unseen, endure centuries of exile—wander-
ing with my palms pressed over the sockets of
my blinded eyes.

I make headlong promises to life and dwell with-
in vows beyond my comprehension.

It's been worth it—to be cast out of the garden
to mingle again and again with the wild and
impenetrable.

I trust the seeds: how they give themselves to the
wind. How they soften in dark earth and stream-
ing water. How they yield to their essence.

What do those, who would probe life's innermost
secrets with insistent fingers, know of true love
and resilience?

II. LAST SUMMER'S GARDEN

I am on my knees in the garden under the
full moon.

A naked bulb shines through the broken barn
window and a Guadalupe candle glows at a tilt
in the next furrow. My son crouches near, and
between these orbs of light and the greater
shadow, we begin.

He makes a cup of his hand and I pour some
seeds into his palm and into my own. We ex-
change a toast and tip them into our mouths.
There's pale cucumber, then squash, corn, and
nasturtiums to brightly shoo away the rabbits,

We pluck seeds from the saliva at the tip of our
tongues, press them into the ground and return
our dirty fingertips for the next.

In this rhythmic way,

like my great grandmothers at their needlework,
we bind life with life.

I am undone, with surprising suddenness, by this
act of trust.

I hide my sobbing from my son. Turn my face
from the moon.

I know what it is to be out of cycle

—for my seeds to not take and grow—

as if I were the moon and the earth had strayed
beyond my pull and the tides had ceased to
move beneath me.

I know the infertility of my dreams.

How the rains do not come no matter how fer-
vent my homemade prayers and ceremonies.

I have lost faith that seeds will be seeds.

Do they all terminate now?

III. KIT CARSON AND THE APRICOT TREE IN THE ARROYO

In January 1864, Kit Carson entered Canyon de
Chelly and axed 5,000 peach trees.

Surely, there is no more effective strategy of
colonization—

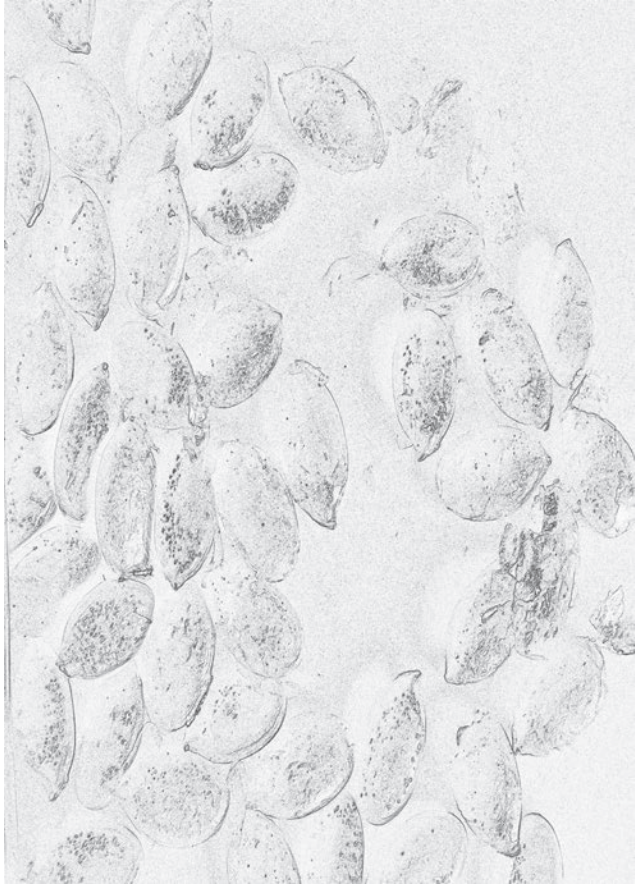
no quicker, no cheaper, way to stun the soul
than to destroy the flowering womb for the
people's seeds.

There was an apricot tree in the arroyo that
snakes past my home.

What an alchemist, this sturdy child of a wild tor-
rent and some sand!

Her spring halo of subtle stars would transform
into a deep green canopy where coyote, some
birds, and I would take refuge and deliriously
marvel at our fortune.

...All those plump suns and their orbiting hornets.



THIS POEM WAS WRITTEN BY CHRISTIAN LEAHY FOR THE OPENING EVENT OF **SEEDS: A COLLECTIVE VOICE**, CO-ORDINATED BY JADE LEYVA. **SEEDBROADCAST** WAS HONORED TO BE INVITED TO THIS EVENT.

YOU CAN READ OUR BLOG AND LISTEN TO CHRISTIAN READING HER POEM @ seedbroadcast.blogspot.com/search/label/Albuquerque.

CHRISTIAN IS A WRITER AND ACTIVIST WHO LIVES AND WORKS IN SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO.

All the sweet, sticky light!

In fall, she transmuted again into burnished copper as the days drained away to the southwest—a final blaze to sustain us through the coming darkness.

One brittle November dusk, I discovered she had been bulldozed by the County.

There was nothing left.

I could not sink to my knees. I could not lay my hands on her ragged stump and staunch the blood I could not see but knew was running over my boots and down the arroyo.

Because I couldn't breathe, I kept moving, kept walking, kept chastising my self.

It hadn't even been a clean, merciful cut.

Perhaps, they thought it was inconvenient—this miracle in their drainage ditch.

Or maybe they didn't know she was a fruit tree.

But I will not speculate any longer on what is in the mind of those who do not consult the earth, the river, the bees.

Until you have known the seed of a child sparking within you, all your blood rushing in the night to the throbbing place below your belly...

Until you have labored to and at the precipitous edge of creation, on your knees and roaring like a bear in the living room...

Until life has born down upon you with a force that rips away the entire bank you stood upon while judging the river...

Until you have known the kind of surrender one does not choose but meets at the moment where giving birth is the most certain death...

Then how?

How can you be trusted to know the value of any thing or make decisions about what lives and dies?

IV. NIGHT FISHING

I'm pacing across the floor with my heart tonight. There's reason enough for it to be heavy.

I pause at the threshold between one room and another, and lose my self in dark corners. I'm barely breathing and my belly is dull where the words flash and rise. I try to sit in the faded velvet armchair but there's a spring that releases again and again and back I am at pacing.

I once went night fishing with my uncle on a northern lake faraway from now. No moon. No stars. Only a flashlight to penetrate the oily dark.

I held my breath and held my body still—even though the water at the bottom of the boat was up to my ankles and I was afraid of what moved beneath us.

Pole. String. Hooks. Knives. My uncle's teenage bravado. All this...yet we could not pull anything from the depths.

It is the same tonight.

There's only a question that comes when I pause:

Will you turn and look upon the truth of your brokenness?

And even though no one is coming and it shouldn't have been this way and you never learned how and the 11th hour has passed well into the 13th, will you stop running, take a tattered breath and make a cup with your hands to gently hold the grief?

Everything has been singing to us all along—the trees, the stars, the small winter birds, the seeds.

V. THE SEED SYLLABLES

In Vajrayana Buddhism and Hinduism, seed syllables are sound embodiments of goddesses, buddhas, and bodhisattvas. The best known of these is OM.

There has always been a tremor in my voice, a ragged tear that reveals my heart, whenever I attempt to speak beyond those who are closest to me and into the collective.

It has taken a long time to understand that this is not my shame.

Not my failure. Not my vulnerability, but the original language of my body.

...The stirring of my seed syllables.

My *bija*. My *Om*.

I am going back to where sound arises.

Not in English. Not in Sanskrit.

In a silence which is really listening and softly touching everything with a prayer.

I claim pure and present darkness. Interconnected roots. Fathomless meanings.

Now, from this sacredness, I choose each word with care.

I speak ancient dreams and new worlds into simultaneous being, unspool galaxies of hope, generate star nurseries of vision.

See how my seed syllables become swallows writing love letters over distant rice fields with the black ink of their bodies.

How the seed syllables are now the tracks of a deer lightly carrying the night sky across her haunches.

And, look: here's the boy with shining eyes my laughing conceived one January night.

I will penetrate this indifference, this refusal to see, to bear witness, to raise up, to defend the seeds that brought forth these watermelon mountains, those hurrying clouds, this corn to feed us all.

When I line up my words in this way, gods and goddesses are here in the stream.

Can you sense them longing for us?

I wade in, loose-limbed and go out on their current, seeding my self in different places, times, dreams so that I may protect the web of life everywhere with everything that I am.

This is my seed sovereignty.

This is my seed sovereignty.

© Christian Leahy, May 4th, 2013

WHY TOMATOES HAVE NO TASTE VIRGINIA WASSERMAN

YEARS AGO, when most of us were kids, tomatoes were a seasonal fruit (or vegetable); they were only available when they were ripe, called the good ole summer time. Up where my husband came from (near the huge Heinz factories, you would see the immigrant labor in the fields with their tall baskets and their bent backs.

But Americans love that splash of color on their salads year around, so big Farm got to work and "bred" a more cooperative tomato. First, tomato bushes that produced tomatoes that ripened all at once, none of this having to go over the same fields several times. Then, automatic harvesting machines that ripped the whole plant out of the ground and shook the tomatoes off to go rolling down a chute. But before that the skins had to be toughened up so you didn't have a mess of juice instead of marketable tomatoes.

Of course some taste was sacrificed along the way, but hey, you got mounds of red smooth skinned tomatoes mounded up in supermarkets all year long. Acid free tomatoes so to make everyone's tummy happy, by the way. And now we have a whole generation of younger people who have no idea what a sun ripened, juicy tomato is supposed to taste like. All thanks to the progressive science of gene manipulation. Manipulating plants to make a new plant has been around forever, it's just gotten more sophisticated over the years.

Monsanto (one of the ten corporations that literally rule the world) started out with cornering the

fertilizer and pesticide market for corn, and then went on to genetically build a superior corn plant (what they consider superior). And, since they had a strangle hold on the market, forced farmers to buy their seed, and only their seed. And to keep the profits going, they lobbied to make it illegal for farmers to collect their own seed corn from their own crops. They had to buy it (again) every year.

A disturbing footnote to this corn story is that you can't keep the bees and the winds from going where they will, so neighboring farms that got cross pollinated were sued by Monsanto for copyright infringement, and the farmers lost. Yes, corporations have that much power.

Having had great success moneymaking by creating new varieties of plants, big money has decided to try gene manipulation on animals. Certainly manipulating animals into what you want has also been around for years, puggles? But there is a bit of difference between animal husbandry and gene manipulation. What's in the news now is "Frankenfish." What Big Farm has done is injected some eel DNA into salmon DNA, and produced a GMO (genetically modified organism), and has gotten government permission to sell it in our grocery stores.

These GMO salmon grow TEN times faster and bigger than wild salmon, I have to assume they don't taste as good. So what's the big deal? For one thing, if a few escape from the fish farms and interbreed

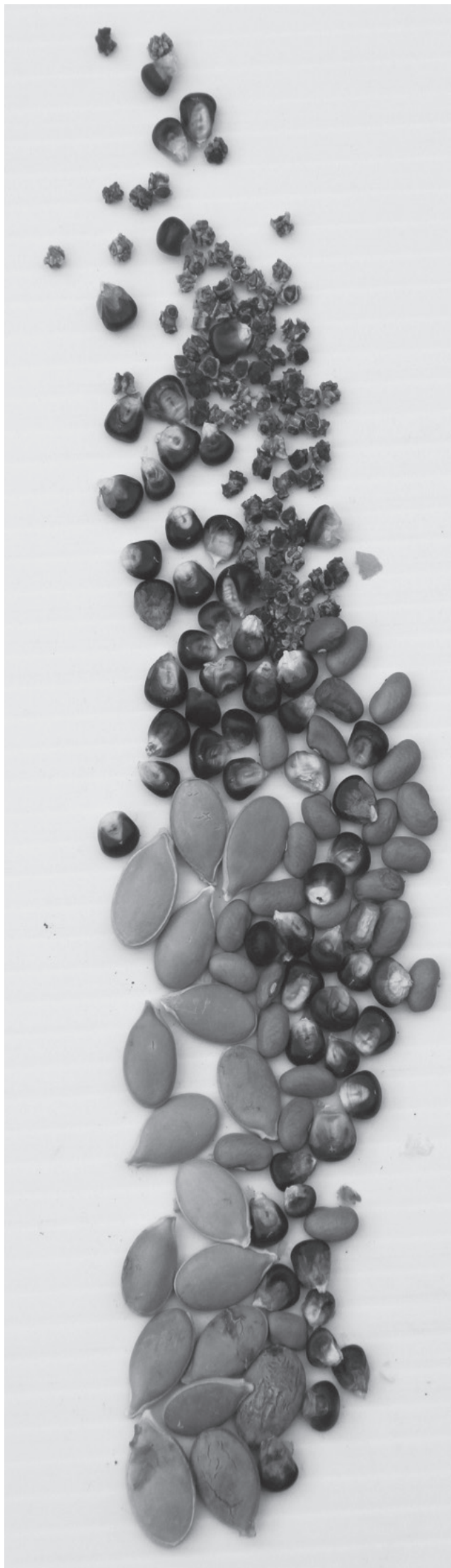
with the natives, no more wild salmon. We have enough evidence of such disasters happening, from Zebra mussels to kudzu to African bees. Hello, look what pythons have done to the Everglades.

But the immediate issue is that Big Farm is fighting with all their resources to resist labeling their products as GMO. They are afraid of the consumers that might feel a little queasy about eating invented foods and would avoid them, affecting their sales. Sixty five other countries require GMO labeling; a few countries prevent the sale of GMO foods altogether. But not the United States. Political lobbying by huge corporations wins every time. So, if you see a petition for GMO labeling requirements, sign it. And eye those salmon filets at the supermarket carefully. You just might be eating eel, garnished with a GMO tomato.

VIRGINIA WASSERMAN IS FROM A SMALL TOWN IN OHIO AND IS A RETIRED EDUCATOR AND ACTIVIST.

"SINCE BEING RETIRED I FIND I CANNOT STAY SILENT ABOUT ALL THE THINGS THAT NEED ATTENTION FROM CARING PEOPLE, TRYING TO INFORM THE ORDINARY PERSON ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE WORLD HOPEFULLY TURNS THEM INTO A CARING PERSON. AND ALL OF US NEED TO CARE ABOUT WHAT WE PUT INTO OUR BODIES".





PRECIOUS SEED MARITA PRANDONI

Consider a seed
A sentient bead
Inside its shell
A dormant spell

Preceding frondescence
It springs from quiescence
Swelling with moisture
The seed coat will rupture

Ingrained in its core
Is a nutrient store
A stem then emerges
To sunlight it surges

Extending with roots
It also grows shoots
Breathing in oxygen
Whether weed or cultigen

A seed's unique fate
Should lie in its trait
Not forced to compliance
By lab twits and science

A seed is a trickster
Its cryptic elixir
Can trigger disease
If exploited or teased

Best not to mess
With the genes seeds possess
Their bounty is mystical
If the aim is reciprocal

THIS POEM WAS WRITTEN FOR SEEDBROADCAST
BY MARITA PRANDONI

MARITA IS A FREELANCE WRITER, EDITOR AND
CULINARY ENTHUSIAST.

SHE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT BUILDING
RELATIONSHIPS WITH PLANTS, ESPECIALLY THE
EDIBLE KIND. SHE LIVES AND WORKS IN SANA FE,
NEW MEXICO.

Capirotada (Bread pudding)

1 loaf Whole Wheat bread Toasted

5 Cups of Water

1/2 Stick butter

2 Cups brown Sugar

1 Cup Raisins

2 tsps Cinnamon

3 Cups Cheese

Pour water in pan, butter, Sugar, Raisins & Cinnamon boil about 5 minutes.

Put a layer of bread in 13X9 pan pour Syrup and some Cheese repeat until all bread & Syrup is use. Put remaining Cheese on Top. Bake 20 minutes 350° degree Cool and enjoy.

TERRY ROMERO IS A COOK AND GRANDMOTHER AND LIVES IN ANTON CHICO, NEW MEXICO.

SEEDBROADCAST HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO TASTE TERRY'S CAPIROTADA AT THE 1ST ANNUAL COMPARTIENDO SEMILLAS IN ANTON CHICO.

IT IS DELICIOUS.

seedbroadcast.blogspot.com/search/label/Anton%20Chico

AMANDA RICH IS AN ARTIST AND FARMER LIVING AND WORKING IN ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO. SHE IS PART OF THE ERDA GARDENS AND LEARNING CENTER COMMUNITY.

www.erdagardens.org.

SEEDBROADCAST MET AMANDA AT THE OPENING EVENT OF **SEEDS: COLLECTIVE VOICE** YOU CAN LISTEN TO AMANDA PERFORM "AMARANTH, (EVERLASTING)" @

seedbroadcast.blogspot.com/search/label/Albuquerque.

Amaranth (everlasting)

He said he would chop off the hands
of anyone tending this sacred plant
watering hopefully her tiny seeds
praying that she sprouts and grows
taller than the summer flowers
taller than the corn
taller than any man

He said he would chop off the hands
of anyone eating this precious grain
mixed with honey and human blood
an ancient recipe
full of thrift and ritual

He said he would chop of the hands
of anyone guarding her lovely seed
onyx and shiny like glistening hair
smooth round beads mixed with violet shaff

But she did not dissappear
too prolific, too fertile
dropping thousands of her young
with frantic force

defiant, tenacious, almost tacky in her showy fountain
heavy with flower, with lusty pollen, with seed

She grew a stalk so thick you need a hatchet to cut her down
but even in the cutting she shakes her head
and seeds and laughs and seeds

No, not Cortez, not Coronado
not any conquistador could take her down
she survedd the laws and punishments
was ripped from the earth a milion times a seedling orphan
left to dry in the dust
a rotting waste
rather than the mother she was meant to be

She could have been another story of annihilation
a drawing in rock, left to interperatation
she might have been hidden on a reservation
or sent to some kind of school meant to make her forget

but this was not her fate
she will not give up
she will out live all of it

the gentic modification,
breeding her until she blanches
and becomes toxic and barren

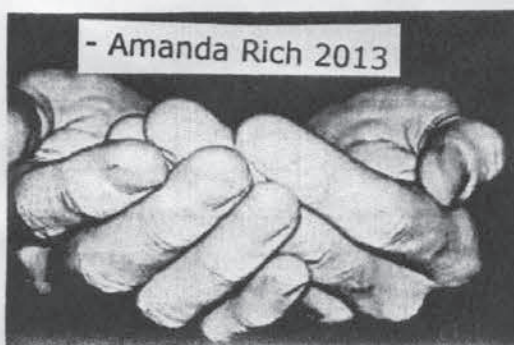
the invitation to be sequesterd to bourgeois landscaping
and conferences of white people calling eachother shamans

the comodification when she is boxed up
in groovey "whole grain" cereals;

or frozen and renderd meaningless like
the Zia
or Kokopelli

but she is sacred
and I want to see her grow weed wild,
because she is
on the ditches, in the medians
and even where fools plant grass,
because I like to see her laugh

- Amanda Rich 2013



d 3400 BCE. It was the sacred
ain of the Aztec
ciety. Amaranth can be eaten as a
vegetable and the leaves are
richer in iron than spinach.



www.erdagardens.org
Erda Gardens and Learning Center
offers volunteer opportunities and
workshops.

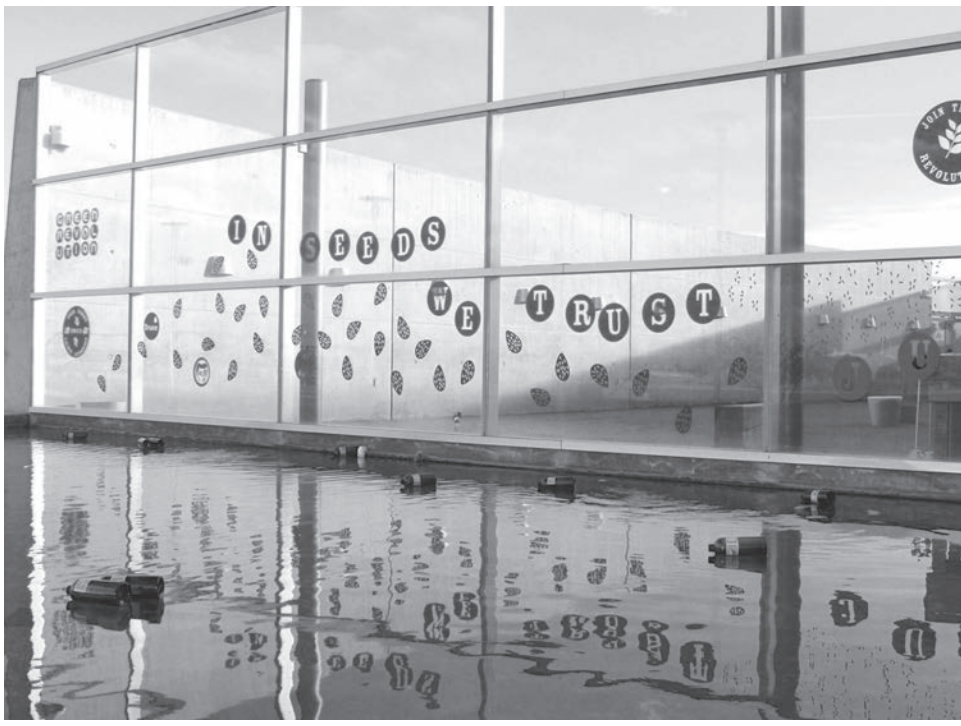
Lalo Quintana prepares his crop rows for irrigation by the acequia madre drawn off the Pecos River in El Cerrito, NM.

This Image taken by Sharon Stewart is included in her long-term chronicle of acequia culture and village life, "El Agua es la Vida: A Village Life Portrait."

SHARON IS A PHOTOGRAPHER WHO LIVES AND WORKS IN MORA COUNTY OF NORTHERN NEW MEXICO AND SEEDBROADCAST MET HER AT THE 1ST MORA COUNTY SEED EXCHANGE IN APRIL 2013.

www.sharonstewartphotography.net





IN SEEDS WE TRUST JOAN BARON AND LAURIE LUNDQUIST

IN SEEDS WE TRUST art installation evolved when artists Joan Baron & Laurie Lundquist were invited to participate in an exhibition at The Tempe Center for the Arts in Tempe, Arizona called "Green Revolution." The exhibition is traveling from the Smithsonian in D.C. and addresses critical environmental issues of our times.

The organizers were seeking a regional interpretive element to their sustainability theme, so we decided to team up and create a mixed-media interactive piece for the exhibition. It is still on view through May 25th, 2013, after a lively opening in January. The gallery director is pleased to share that the exhibition is one of their top three in attendance since they opened the gallery in September 2007.

Our approach and theme grew out of what we share in common. A passion for growing food in our small garden spaces around our home/studios and making art. Both activities, we acknowledge, fulfill us & sustain us while contributing to the well-being of others around us. Since seeds are the beginning of the magical process of growing food, it seemed a natural to focus on that aspect in the art work. We were cognizant that many people do not think about their food coming from seeds, let alone the importance of saving seeds. We knew that food production

and seed distribution in this country is directly tied into a powerful political and economic machine. We wanted to empower people to think independently of this "machine" and grow their own healthy foods by planting their own seeds.

Thus, Seeds as Currency became the major theme of the art. We incorporated the image of a one-dollar bill as a label on over 700 water bottles. The labels read, "In Seeds We Trust" at the top and "United Gardens of the World" at the bottom. Inside each bottle we placed a selection of seeds, a message identifying the seeds and instructions for planting, as well as a special SeedWatch seed buyer's guide provided by Native Seeds Search in Tucson, AZ.

Opening night, we dressed in appropriate "revolutionary garb" and sited ourselves in the shallow reflecting pool outside the Tempe Center amidst hundreds of floating bottles. As visitors to the gallery arrived, we scooped up a bottle with our repurposed rakes and offered one to each attendee! Throughout the run of the exhibition, visitors can pick up a bottle from the smaller interior installation that we created.

Planting seeds is universal. The resulting plants play a major role in maintaining biodiversity and balance within our ecosystems.

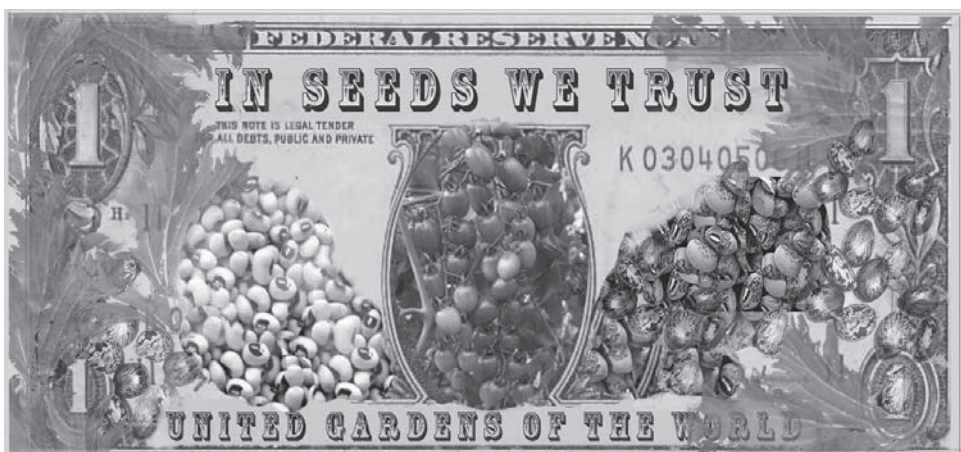
To invite an ongoing conversation about this and other related topics, we created an "In Seeds We Trust" Facebook page where people can post pictures of their planting experiences, find great images, and learn more about what grows well throughout our desert seasons. Local seed libraries for sharing and trading seeds are also listed. We anticipate continuing this dialogue long after the exhibition has moved on to another city and look forward to meeting our expanding community of urban gardeners.

Ron Finley of L.A.'s Green Grounds guerrilla gardening recently stated in his TED presentation, "growing your own food is like printing your own money"!! In Seeds We Trust couldn't agree more!

SEEDBROADCAST partnered with "In Seeds We Trust" as part of the spring tour to Phoenix and Tucson to create an evening event at the Tempe Center for the Arts as part of the Green Revolution exhibition.

CHECK OUT THE SEEDBROADCAST BLOG @ seedbroadcast.blogspot.co.uk/search/label/Tempe

JOAN BARON AND LAURIE LUNDQUIST ARE BOTH ARTISTS AND ACTIVISTS WHO LIVE IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA



THE PEN AND INK DRAWINGS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE FROM THE "GROW FOOD" SERIES THAT SEEDBROADCASTER CHRISSIE ORR CREATED WHILE SHE WAS IN RESIDENCY AT GRAND CENTRAL ART CENTER IN SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA. SHE MISSED HER GARDEN.



25



4.

BETWEEN THE BOTTOMLANDS AND THE WORLD:

AN ABBREVIATED GLOSSARY OF EXPERIENCES IN AND AROUND BEARDSTOWN, IL

SARA ROSS AND RYAN GRIFFITH

INTRODUCTION

Beardstown, IL is a relatively small town with a current population of around 6,000 that is located on the Illinois River, south of Peoria. It was founded in the early 19th century by Thomas Beard on land known as Indian Mound Village, a name suggestive of the indigenous inhabitants that have been all but eradicated from any visible history. The river has played a huge role in how this land has been shaped, facilitating the movement of earth, wildlife, people, and ideas. Today, the river's importance to the town is still visible, if muted, but there are other vectors of change that have superseded it. What follows is a set of stories about some of the contemporary conditions of Beardstown in the form of a glossary. These terms came to define many of our experiences there and provide one entry into the complex set of relationships that bind the town to the midwestern region and to the larger world.

VERTICAL INTEGRATION

Driving around Central Illinois, it's hard not to be overcome by a strong sense of horizontality. A lateral force, pulls us toward our destination, pressed through the space that exists between the ground and the sky. Scenes of the pastoral are very present here; this area is seasonally quilted with corn and soybean fields, and dotted by farmhouses, grain elevators, and the occasional solitary church. "The land" appears as a soft, flat surface upon which things grow and move, a life-sized slide show of real and fictitious pasts. But, of course, vertical realities intersect with this horizontal perception of existence. There are other images, not yet painted into a Grant Wood-esque rendition of the Midwest. These realities present a different set of consequences and expectations. They can be found in the workings and history of the largest employer in Beardstown, Cargill Meat Solutions.

Cargill Meat Solutions, known locally by the name Excel, is one division of Cargill Incorporated, a company that journalist and writer Brewster Kneen has called an "invisible giant." Cargill started as a single grain storage "flat house" in Iowa in 1865, but within 20 years the company handled over 1.6 million bushels, quickly moving into a prominent position in the growing global business of the grain trade. From its early days, Cargill's owners were involved in various aspects of national and international commerce—railroads, communications, lumber, salt, and shipbuilding. Before the middle of the 20th century, the company was operating in South America and Europe and in 1957 began using an IBM 6560 computer to manage its global production and

pricing mechanisms. While Cargill can be viewed as an extension of international commerce in the colonial age—think of the East India Company or the Hudson's Bay Company—it must also be understood as operating in a very different geopolitical and economic world from earlier colonial trading companies. What distinguishes enterprises like Cargill from modern corporations is its size, status as a non-publicly traded company, and its involvement in the production of vastly different (but deeply connected) products. Just a small sample of Cargill's affiliated businesses illustrate the company's many tentacles: Always Tender® (meats), Sunny Fresh Foods® (eggs), Diamond Crystal® Salt, Gerken's® Cacao, ClearLane® Deicer, North Star Steel, CarVal Investors. The process of consolidation and management of every aspect of a business practiced by Cargill is known as "vertical integration" in the language of economists. Cargill, in fact, no longer considers itself a grain company, or any kind of material production company, for that matter. It's now in the business of "customer solutions."

To better grasp the form and scale of these activities, we have attempted to learn from the spaces where such activities are present on the ground. We tried to visit a Cargill elevator in Gilman, IL. Sarah entered a small building next to the city-block sized grain storage facility there and was immediately struck by the number of control boards and screens displaying data. The single IBM computer of 1957 has evolved into a massive, globally connected system of real-time inputs, outputs, and comparative analyses. Brewster Kneen explains the way that Cargill sees the world:

To source, transport and deliver bulk commodities globally requires a rather special view of the world, a view one can really only adequately get from outer space, from a satellite.

Cargill's perspective, according to Kneen, is one that enables the company to look down on the globe and see cropland, transportation networks, markets, and barriers to their success in exploiting those things. In some recent promotional literature, Cargill resolves two competing views of the world:

From a single seed in a farmer's field to a dinner table halfway across the globe, Cargill brings ideas together to help satisfy the world's needs.

The material singularity of a single seed is within the company's sight, but is only meaningful when accumulated into the bulk commodities that can satisfy the needs of a world composed of waiting dinner tables. Cargill doesn't simply inhabit the horizontal surface with us; it shapes that surface to its benefit, from a vantage point positioned above everything that has been vertically integrated beneath it.

BULK COMMODITY

Three GPS-equipped John Deere 9660 STS combine harvesters were in the field collecting tiny kernels of corn like blue whales harvesting plankton in the Pacific Ocean. Only the whale would have had to engineer the sea to contain dense, homogenized rows of plankton to be as efficient as the farmer-combine. That, and the whale wouldn't actually eat the plankton, but would ship it off to other whales far away to process into derivatives and "value-added" products. Or maybe feed it to other animals that they would later eat, transferring the calories into other forms of consumable flesh.

A single grain of corn is around a centimeter in size. But no one measures the size of corn in kernels. It's measured by the bushel, pound, ton, acre, hectare, mile, kilometer, dollar, yen, yuan, peso, and euro. If you're a specialist, it's measured by the twenty-foot-equivalent-unit. This field, planted and harvested by Dudley Farms, Inc. is about 7,000 acres of hybrid corn. It's taken away in 1,000-bushel units, carried by 18 wheelers from the field to an elevator in nearby Pleasant Plains, IL. From the logically named "dump pit" the corn is then moved in smaller units, riding in tiny, but rapidly moving, buckets up and into drying and storing compartments.

A Discovery Channel documentary on corn has called the U.S. corn harvests the "Superbowl" of farming in recognition of the scale and magnitude of the effort. It's also an apt analogy given the fierce competition and branding involved.

We met the Dudleys (two brothers, Matt and Steve) one day while they were harvesting. They explained a little bit about the role of land and real estate in commodity farming. They also provided some anecdotes about their interactions in the global trade for corn and beans. We discussed things like "identity preservation" and the need to keep different kinds of corn separate, as Europe and Japan don't import genetically modified corn from the U.S.

Their farm, they told us, is small by current commodity crop standards. Land in this part of the country, Central Illinois, can go for more than

\$8,000/acre. This land is leased, not owned, a fairly common practice for even large farmers. Steve Dudley explained that buying and renting farmland is an extremely competitive part of the business, as local farmers compete with each other to buy up scarce land as it becomes available. And they're not just competing with each other. Speculative investors, buyers who plan to eventually sell or lease the land for profit, represented 21 percent of land purchases in 2008, according to the IL Society of Professional Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers.

As we document these conversations and their harvesting operations, the Dudleys explain their familiarity with being photographed and questioned. "The Japanese businessmen who visit to check out the crops take lots of pictures," Steve tells us. It didn't seem that he was just repeating the stereotype of camera-wielding Japanese tourists. Japan imported almost 13 million metric tons of corn in 2009. 40 million metric tons of U.S. corn was delivered to the ports of other nations that year, adding up to a financial weight of over 9 billion USD. Where does this corn enter the network that ends in the EU, Mexico or Japan? Steve points west on Illinois State Road 125, towards Beardstown.

In Google Earth, a barely perceptible flick of the wrist can get one from a combine in the Dudleys' cornfield to one of two river terminals in Beardstown. On the road, they are a mere 15 miles apart. Corporate giant Cargill owns the terminals and a regional grain cooperative, Clarkson Grain. Just north, in Frederick, is another large terminal facility owned by Archer Daniels Midland. Sitting on the wall built to protect Beardstown from an overflowing river, one can watch farm equipment, corn, wheat, soybeans, coal, scrap metal, and empty containers move to and from their domestic and international destinations at the pace of a few miles per hour.

TILING

Everyday at 1pm our local radio station hosts an hour-long show called "The Ag Report". A portion of the show is dedicated to the stock and futures numbers of beans, corn, pork bellies, ethanol, and grain commodities. Another ten minutes is dedicated to worldwide weather forecasts. If you aren't familiar with the global trade of commodity crops, listening to the show is like learning new language; you might recognize a few of the words, but not the overall context. For a little

more than 100 years, the corn belt landscape has been tinkered with, in small, yet precise measures to produce the commodities on the Ag Report.

For example, the land has been engineered to dry faster after rain and snow.. In 1850, the year the federal Swamp Land Act passed, the Midwest was soggy. Regions around lakes and rivers had large floodplains and deep marshes. The Swamp Land Act was designed to boost development west and south of the New England states by helping states and counties drain the land for agricultural production. Once the land was drained, the price and yield per acre increased.

Though drainage materials have changed over the last 100 years, drainage techniques have not. In the first half of the 20th century, drainage was created by laying tiles—short sections of terracotta pipe, fit end to end, un-sealed. Placed in rows throughout a field and just a few feet under the soil's surface, water would seep into the pipes, draining in to ditches and nearby streams. In order to coordinate contiguous drainage, taxing bodies called "Drainage Districts" were formed. They were able to leverage the capital for such massive projects and ensure county-wide drainage.

CONTINUED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Grade	Minimum Limits of		Maximum Limits of	
	Text Weight per Bushel (pounds)	Heat-Damaged kernels (percent)	Damaged kernels total (percent)	Broken Corn and Foreign Material (percent)
U.S. No. 1	56.0	0.1	3.0	2.0
U.S. No. 2	54.0	0.2	5.0	3.0
U.S. No. 3	52.0	0.5	7.0	4.0
U.S. No. 4	49.0	1.0	10.0	5.0
U.S. No. 5	46.0	3.0	15.0	7.0



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

GRADING CHART FOR CORN QUALITY AT THE JOHNSON GRAIN SHUTTLE--A LARGE FACILITY THAT MOVES GRAIN BY RAIL TO TX FEED LOTS.

DRAINAGE DITCH IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS.

ONE OF MANY PILES OF CORN, STORED ON THE GROUND AT THE FALL HARVEST WHEN ELEVATORS AND WAREHOUSES ARE FULL. THIS CORN PILE, OWNED BY CARGILL, IS LOCATED NEAR BEARDSTOWN ON THE WESTSIDE OF THE ILLINOIS RIVER.



Over 50 million acres of U.S. cropland is currently drained, but now the pipes are old and need to be replaced. To the tune of \$570 per acre, farmers often hire agricultural Tiling Services to lay plastic perforated pipes for drainage. Drainage contractors will assess the topography and soil type, combined with the type of crop grown, to figure the depth the pipes will be buried. To verify the results of such tiling, farmers employ “yield mapping” using GPS technologies to report the yield and quality produced on each acre of land. Newer GPS units print real-time maps in the cab of the farmer’s combine as he/she harvests.

Engineered tiling, GMO seed, chemically enriched soil, state of the art equipment, and satellite powered mapping all reassures U.S. and global markets. While this version of high-tech farming ruptures mid-20th century pastoral images, there is still one sublime element in the scene: the weather. The Ag Report often reminds listeners of that one thing the farmer can’t control. For now, the century-old practice of tiling suffices.

FRICION

For the better part of the last century, Rushville and Beardstown, IL were Sundown Towns—places that, often violently, excluded African Americans and non-whites. As previously all-white communities, neither town developed the historically prescribed and segregated “black,” “brown” or otherwise ethnically defined neighborhoods common to most racially diverse American cities. Urban zoning protocols that supported the segregation of cities were never put in place there. In a drive around Beardstown, activist and urban planner, Faranak Miraftab, pointed out the results: ethnically and economically mixed neighborhoods with apartments, trailers and single-family dwellings situated side-by-side. Africans, Carribeans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, long-time white residents, and Mexicans are neighbors. To our untrained eyes, the town just looked varied—to Faranak, they signaled something more remarkable.

The story of how this formerly all-white town became the home of residents from around the globe has many chapters, including industry restructuring, international trade agreements, the U.S. Farm Bill, the U.S. State Department’s Diversity Visa Lottery program, the travails of migration, and the struggles of newcomers to make a place home. Anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing describes such realities through the metaphor of friction:

It is these vicissitudes I am calling friction. Friction makes global connection powerful and effective. Meanwhile, without even trying, friction gets in the way of the smooth operation of global power. Difference can disrupt, causing everyday malfunctions as well as unexpected cataclysms. Friction refuses the lie that global power operates as a well-oiled machine...

Perhaps, from the perspective of Cargill, Beardstown and Rushville residents are the grease, lubricating production for large revenues in their “meat solutions” division. But from the perspective of everyday life in the two towns, friction represents the complicated negotiations regarding language, culture, and ideas of identity. Indeed, the forces of friction have unequivocally divested these towns of their status as “white only,” and may well change the way a multinational corporation like Cargill operates. In lieu of paying full taxes on its business, Cargill donates to cultural events and spaces like the annual Africa Day and Mexican Independence Day celebrations, as well as a large soccer field utilized primarily by Latina/o and African immigrants. This support is certainly part of a community relations and employee management strategy. It is important, however, not to assume that Cargill controls what happens in such spaces. Indeed, the unfolding of these rural, transnational spaces constitutes new articulations of community and new forms

COUNTER CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

SOCCER FIELD IN BEARDSTOWN, IL.

PICTURES IN THE BEARDSTOWN HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF 1965 GROUNDBREAKING OF OSCAR MAYER IN BEARDSTOWN, IL.

SIGN FOR TRUCK WASH SPECIALIZING IN "BIO-SECURE WASHES" OUTSIDE OF THE CARGILL SLAUGHTERHOUSE.

of struggle. As Tsing notes, a "teleology" of anthropology or meat packing alone can't explain the changes seen in these Midwest towns.

COLD CHAIN

East of town, maybe a mile or so from the Illinois River, sits United Food and Commercial Workers Local 431, the union office for Cargill's workforce of approximately 2,000 people. We wanted to ask union representative, Duke Walters, about the work done at the plant. When we called him to set up the meeting, he suggested that we might also want to talk to some representatives from Cargill. Upon arrival, we found two company reps waiting with Walters. They were wearing short-sleeved, cotton polo shirts sporting Cargill's logo tucked into khaki slacks. They immediately started in with questions for us:

So, why do you want to talk to us?

How does this have anything to do with art?

We explained that we were trying to create images of Beardstown that reflected its complex relationship with the larger world, and that this was difficult because of the prevailing depictions of rural places as isolated and inherently not cosmopolitan. After seeming to succeed in convincing them of our purpose, we proceeded with our questions, but it became immediately apparent that Walters would be a mostly silent participant in the exchange. This was a job for the public relations department.

In between well-rehearsed statements on the company's ethical treatment of the 18,000 hogs it slaughters daily and its progressive stewardship of the Illinois River (into which the company dumps 3 million pounds of toxic waste annually), the reps did manage to give us something resembling answers to our basic questions. Where do the 5.6 million 8 oz servings of pork go once they leave the plant every day? While not being able to speak to many of the details involved in the movement of their goods, they could say this: the small plant in rural Illinois ships to Mexico, Russia, China, Japan and that it collaborates directly with outlets like Applebee's® and Wendy's® to produce specially-tailored products like the Baconator® hamburger. We also learned that cuts of pork are actually taken from Beardstown to Tokyo fresh. "Fresh" as in "not frozen," but vacuum sealed before being sent by refrigerated trucks to ports on the West Coast, maybe Portland or Long Beach, where they are sent by ship to ports in Japan. Less than 30 days after a hog is killed, pork from that hog is put on a shelf in a store in Tokyo. In the

world of logistics, this reality is called the "cold chain." The cold chain is one of the places where the distances between the site of production and the site of consumption are visible.

In 2002, over \$1,200 billion of food was moved by 400,000 refrigerated containers (known in the industry as "reefers"). Why not move the sites of production closer to that of consumption? Surely, even for a company like Cargill, the costs of transport are vast. In other words, why does the cold chain exist? Here in the Midwest, our ground grows grain (corn and soy), and lots of it. While the transport of grain makes up another chain of economic flows, a large part of regionally grown grain stays in the area. Considering the costs of labor and transportation, it is actually cheaper, for large and small producers alike, to raise animals in the Midwest because this is where the grain is. Last year, an exported metric ton of meat earned more than 15x the same volume of exported corn and soy combined. Meat can be viewed as grain in another, equally mobile, yet more valuable form. Thus, Cargill reps cued us in to the "warm chain" (our term, not theirs), where hogs from nearby feeding lots in 5 different states are raised until they reach 6 months or 270 lbs. before being brought to Beardstown. Upon arrival, they are gassed and cut into pieces, the parts traveling through the plant's conveyor belts and onto reefers where they enter the cold chain.¹

HEAD DROPPING

Every year our neighborhood has a barbecue. We buy a pig from a local farmer; one household gets the pig the night before and with 50 lbs of ice, keeps the carcass chilled on the kitchen floor until roasting begins the next morning. At this year's roast, I met a woman, Angie, who had friends who worked in the meatpacking industry. Her friend, Jon, worked on the slaughterhouse floor of Oscar Meyer, and later, Cargill in Beardstown. A few months after our neighborhood shindig, we contacted Jon and asked him about life as a meat packer.

In 1968 the job at Oscar Meyer was a good one. After serving in the military, at the age of 21, Jon got a job on the slaughtering floor at \$2.25 an hour. Oscar Meyer was a family owned business, with AFL-CIO Local 431, Amalgamated Meat Cutters working as unionized labor. In the 1980s, Jon explained, new technologies forever changed the industry: selectively bred hogs ensured standardized sizes and new, automated tools cut, sliced and diced the animal at an ever faster pace. The push to get more "pieces out" created more jobs. People were added to the line, but the speed and repetition of any one

job created more injuries. The union negotiated a "piece-pound" standard, in which time studies calculated the amount of work that could be done in a given time. If the worker could produce more pieces/pounds per hour than the standard, he could earn more in wages. Piece-pound was a cross between hourly wages and piecework wages, and yielded a decent middle class living for the all-white, mostly male workforce. Jon describes one of the most lucrative, and dangerous positions on the line as 'head dropping', which is exactly what it sounds like.

The 1980 and 90s were turbulent times for unions, and the Amalgamated Meat Cutters were no exception. Oscar Meyer sold off many parts of the business. General Foods bought out the slaughterhouse, with Oscar Meyer just owning the end product. In an era of high interest rates, Jon says that ownership of the slaughterhouse changed hands several times, with corporate giants like Philip Morris buying companies like his to invest workers' pensions. After many union concessions, and slaughterhouse closures around the Midwest, the Oscar Meyer/General Foods slaughterhouse was closed in 1986. Everyone was fired and 6 months later rehired under a new company paradigm operated by Cargill Meat Solutions. Today, Cargill slaughters 18,000 pigs a day, 6 days a week, in Beardstown IL. In 2002, Jon, becoming an 'older' worker, was asked to train younger workers to do his job. He saw the writing on the wall and moved to Missouri Foods Company where he also works in the meat business. He says the production is much smaller, but he is happy with the work.

CONTINUED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

CONCLUSIONS

It is all too easy to see the demographic and economic changes occurring in Beardstown, and much of the Midwest, as a fundamental shift or break from the past, as many sociologists, journalists, and economists have noted. But when has that past ever been stable? In the 19th century, the river brought white settlers, intensive agriculture, and industry. As settled land became municipal territory, settlers-turned-citizens defended their racial and economic boundaries through sundown town practices and labor union organizing. By the beginning of the 21st century, the forces of capital have largely dismantled both of these boundaries in the quest for ever-increasing profits. The area's old and new residents are left to forge relationships in whatever spaces are available, and hope the big employer doesn't leave them behind.

Districts created in the 1900s helped raise taxes for cropland drainage. More recently new areas, called "Enterprise Zones," have been defined to alleviate the tax 'burden' of corporations. The "Enterprise Zone" in which Cargill is located is a state defined territory that grants it special

economic privileges. Such zones use the power of the state to exempt corporations from the responsibilities of citizenship while giving them all the benefits. Cargill helped create a precarious world for Beardstown and its residents, and then used that precariousness to demand even more power from the State to further shape the world.

The industrial nature of the cornfields we drive through on our way to Beardstown is hidden in plain sight, unrecognizable through our lenses of nostalgia and false memories. The values determining the future of places like Beardstown are also obscured by seemingly unquestionable realities — the need for jobs, economic competition, and consumer demand. It's impossible to see these realities as reflecting the interests of most of the town's people, whether old-timers or newly arrived. Looking through the dense walls of corn, and over the wall that hides the river, we try to imagine what other Beardstowns are possible. In fact, we can see some of them taking shape in cross-cultural relationships formed in spite of, rather than thanks to, the contributions of Cargill.

ENDNOTES

¹For more on the world of international shipping and logistics, we recommend checking out Dr. Jean-Paul Rodrigue and Matthew Craig, *The Geography of Transport Systems*, Routledge, 2009.

It's also available online for free reading:
people.hofstra.edu/geotrans/eng/ch5en/appl5en/ch5a5en.html

SARAH ROSS IS AN ARTIST WHO WORKS IN SCULPTURE, VIDEO AND PHOTO. HER PROJECTS USE NARRATIVE AND THE BODY TO ADDRESS SPATIAL CONCERNS AS THEY RELATE TO ACCESS, CLASS, ANXIETY AND ACTIVISM.

"WHY I CARE ABOUT SEEDS, FOOD, PEOPLE, CREATIVITY AND ECOLOGY? THESE THINGS ARE PART OF OUR COMMONS, THEY CONNECT US AND MAKE US HUMAN. WE HAVE TO WORK TO KEEP WHAT'S COMMON COLLECTIVELY OURS AND FOR ALL PUBLIC BODIES TO ENCOUNTER, CONSUME, EXPRESS, ETC."

RYAN GRIFFIS IS AN ARTIST CURRENTLY TEACHING NEW MEDIA ART AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, URBANA-CHAMPAIGN. UNDER THE NAME TEMPORARY TRAVEL OFFICE, RYAN CREATES WORK AND PUBLICATIONS THAT ATTEMPT TO USE TOURISM AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CRITICAL PUBLIC ENCOUNTERS.

"FOOD IS ONE OF THE MOST VISIBLE AND RELATABLE ASPECTS OF OUR RELATIONSHIP TO OUR SURROUNDINGS AND OTHER LIVING THINGS."



Biscochitos

1 pound Lard
1 1/2 Cups Sugar
2 tsps Anise Seeds
2 Eggs beaten
3 tsps baking powder
1/2 tsp Salt

1/2 Cup Apple Juice

6 Cups flour

Cream lard, Sugar, and Anise Seeds

Add eggs at a time and baking powder

Salt and Juice Mix. Add flour.

Knead dough slightly roll out dough 1/4 inch

thick Cut in shapes with Cookie Cutter

Bake 350 degree oven 10 to 12 minutes.

lightly brown Roll in Sugar and Cinnamon.





What stories will your seeds share?

