



Welcome to the Spring 2010 Edition of the Be Green-er Newsletter and Happy Earth Day! As we continue to strive to provide you with information you want, we are moving to a seasonal newsletter filled with topics you have requested we write about. In the future you will find guest writers, more tips and eco friendly tricks to living an even greener, more sustainable lifestyle. And remember to tell your friends about our newsletter and our healthy, sustainable 100% organic cotton T-shirts and Baby apparel passing along the gift of good health and environmentally conscious living.

Become a [Facebook Fan!](#)

News

We have lots of news to share since our last newsletter.

Come See Us and Celebrate Earth Day!

Be Green will be a vendor at both the Raleigh Planet Earth Celebration and the Durham Earth Day Festival in April. Admission to both events is free and we would love to see you there!



[Raleigh Planet Earth Celebration 2010](#)

Saturday, April 17th, 2010

11am – 5pm

Downtown Raleigh Bicentennial Plaza

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[Durham Earth Day Festival 2010](#)

Saturday, April 24th, 2010

12pm - 5pm

Downtown Durham CCB Plaza

Baby Onesies now available at Triangle Boutiques

What is more important than starting a baby's life out the healthiest way possible?

You can now see our 100% organic cotton baby onesies at [GreenPea Baby](#) on South Salem Street in Apex, NC and at [Zest Café and Home Art](#) on Six Forks Road in North Raleigh, NC. Go check them out and support our local retailers. Always available online, we will be launching even more beautiful designs later this spring.



Be Green Offsets 100% Carbon Output with NC GreenPower

Be Green is now certified by NC GreenPower for offsetting 100% of our carbon output for our operations. As hard as we all try to reduce our emissions and impact on the environment we still have some carbon output. NC GreenPower offers a number of offset options including for business operations, special events, travel and car emissions from commuting. Offsets are incredibly affordable and the money is used to invest in green power, thus "offsetting" the traditional power and emissions. Contact NC GreenPower to review their offset options.

Weekly Eco Steps

Spring is the season for spring cleaning and Farmer's Markets. We have suggestions and recipes for easy to make homemade cleaners that are not only great for your health, but your wallet. And now's the time to find your local Farmer's Market. Did you notice too a focus by a few celebrities on the importance of the food we eat? Read about Oprah and Jamie Oliver's recent TV shows on the topic.

["We Need A Food Revolution" - Oprah Winfrey](#)
[The Naked Chef, Coming to a Town Near You](#)



[Spring Cleaning the Eco-Healthy Way](#)



[Spring Means Farmer's Market Time](#)



And remember – share your tips with us in comments on our blogs or on Facebook.

What Makes Us Hot

The loss of our diverse crops and the corporate ownership of our food makes us more than hot!

It seems simple – our nation's farmers plant seeds, provide water, sun, maybe some fertilizer and presto – fresh vegetables that are sent to our grocery stores where we buy them to put on our table. After harvest the farmer's saved some seeds or purchased new varieties from seed companies and year on year perpetuated their gardens. Well, it once was that way.

So much has changed in the past 50 years as large corporations have taken ownership of our crops. What does this mean though? Did you know 73% of our corn¹ and 91% of soy¹ produced in our country is genetically modified? Hmm, you think – well, I don't really eat corn or soy products, so no biggie. But that is the same corn that makes high fructose corn syrup and the same soy that produces soy lecithin – try finding a product on your grocery store shelves without it. In addition, corporations now "own" seed intellectual property for the seed genes they modified for instance, to withstand being doused in Roundup (a Monsanto product). This also means that farmer's who buy these seeds can NOT save them and replant them. They must buy them, year on year. Another upsetting piece of this, corn and soy are the most subsidized crops in America, thus making it cheaper to provide those products to market. Now, if 80% of the crops are due to corporations, one can surmise that is also where the crop subsidies are going. Do you see where we are going with this? So, not only does it disturb us that a corporation can own our food supply in the form of the seeds, or the fact that they are modifying the seeds and receiving subsidies for their own gain from our tax dollars, but what about the fact they are drowned in Roundup?

The majority of industrialized countries have banned genetically modified foods (like Europe and Australia) so why not the US? Why are these crops considered fine for our citizens but not for others? More importantly, what happened to all the varieties of crops we had as kids (or our parents had as kids). Fortunately, there are a number of groups (mostly non-profits, concerned citizens, universities and a few government organizations) that are promoting the perpetuation and seed-sharing of non GMO seeds.

At the very least, it makes you think.

This subject has been gaining more media attention lately due to several documentaries, books and mainstream news articles. To learn more about the subject we recommend seeing Food Inc. which can be downloaded for free online or several books including Jane Goodall's *Harvest for Hope*; Barbara Kingsolver's

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle; or Michael Pollan's *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. We appreciate that there are some very one-sided viewpoints and felt these books provide balance with facts provided throughout the books. So next time you go grocery shopping, have a look. Be Green, Be The Change.

References: ¹GMO Compass. USA: Cultivations of GM plants in 2007. 2008; Derived from the US Department of Agriculture. Available from: http://www.gmo-compass.org/eng/agri_biotechnology/gmo_planting/283.usa_cultivations_2007.html

Stuff We Love

10 things we just have to share as they are making our world or our lives better...

1. [Afterglow Cosmetics](#). We love them for their commitment to safe and healthy ingredients! Afterglow is leading the way in truly clean cosmetics. We love their blushes, foundations and mascara! Oh, and their new creamy under eye concealer. Ok, there is nothing we don't love. So try it! Their customer service team will even help you match your current favorite shades.
2. [Simple Shoes](#). Our President received a pair of Simple Shoes Comfy Slippers for Christmas and has not stopped wearing them since. For Men, Women and Kids they have everything from sandals to sneakers to casual shoes using organic cotton, recycled rubber, hemp and eco-certified leather.
3. [Tom's Shoes](#). We appreciate we are on a shoe kick and Toms are not necessarily all eco-friendly, but we are big fans of Social Entrepreneurship and Toms is providing a pair of shoes to poverty stricken children around the world when we buy a pair. They do offer vegan styles with materials including hemp, recycled plastic bottles and other recycled fabrics.
4. [Patagonia](#). A company built on environmentalism before having a social responsibility statement was "in". Patagonia reviews every facet of its supply chain to reduce its impact on the earth while providing innovative fabrics and products to consumers. Did you know that anything ever purchased from Patagonia can be sent back to them to be recycled? And that their fleeces are made of recycled plastic bottles?
5. [Jamie Oliver](#). We appreciate you may be tired of hearing us talk about Jamie Oliver (you could say we are obsessed). But when someone takes a stand for what they believe in knowing they can change lives for the better, we will support that. Especially when it is caring enough about the health of our future generations to not back down. Check out Jamie's website for great recipes, inspirations and updates on his Food Revolution journey.

6. [Bob's Red Mill](#). We love Bob's for their commitment to organic , alternative (gluten-free) and all natural raw ingredients for baking and cooking. We now love them even more as Bob Moore, their President, gifted the company to his employees!

7. [The Environmental Working Group](#). A non-profit group who over 20 years has been researching toxins and its effect on our health and our environment. They have provided research and insight exposing some of the perils of toxins in our environment while educating the public. They are changing the safety of our personal products industry through their [Comseticsdatabase.com](#).

8. [The Story of Bottled Water](#). We already touted the video "The Story of Stuff" and now Annie Leonard has come out with the Story of Bottled Water. Watch it and share it! Bottled water is not necessarily healthier or safer and she exposes the marketing aspects large corporates are using to charge us 200 times more for tap water.

9. [Seed Savers Exchange](#). Interested in growing an organic garden or learning more about the preservation of heirloom vegetable varieties? Seed Savers Exchange is a 35 year old nonprofit connecting farmers who save heirloom seeds then share with others. An amazing source of seeds and information - check out their website and join the exchange.

10. [Treehugger](#). Interested in really improving your eco-knowledge about what is going on around the world? Check out Treehugger, one of the leading sources of eco-information from around the world.

Charity Spotlight



We recently saw a presentation and met some amazing people working at Builders of Hope (include link), a nonprofit trying to prove that green building, energy efficiency and healthy materials can be standard in affordable construction and home rehabilitation. Located in Chapel Hill, NC, Builders of Hope (BOH) was started by Nancy Murray in 2006 in response to her observation of the shockingly high tear down rate of modest affordable houses to make room for multi-million dollar homes in Raleigh, NC. Aside from her concern about filling landfills with perfectly good housing materials, Nancy noted a lack of safe, quality, affordable housing in the city. Nancy started BOH with the singular mission singular mission of rescuing and transforming these tear-down homes into premium, affordable green

housing.

BOH started with a community in Raleigh and have grown to several communities in North Carolina. They are now branching outside of the Triangle area to other communities in North Carolina. We spoke with Emily Egge, VP of Development for BOH about their green building process and the communities they serve.

The BOH communities start with a raw piece of land – some purchased on their own, others given by municipalities with zero interest loans. They then relocate houses that have been donated or have been slated for demolition due to commercial or transportation development. Once relocated, they begin their “extreme green rehabilitation” . Emily noted that many of the houses they save were built over 50 years ago when sturdier wood materials were used in construction. Hard woods are the main portion of the house that is recycled then they replace the electrical systems, plumbing and finishes with higher efficiency products and eco-friendly finishes.

BOH focuses on affordable housing as it makes the biggest impact on our communities. Homes are sold at cost and usually well below appraised value to families whose income falls below median levels. In addition to affordability, these communities have improved health, reduced energy costs and reduced transportation costs . BOH even provides green jobs training and workforce development programs thus affecting the communities and businesses well beyond just one house.

We are inspired by BOH's efforts to not only rehabilitate homes in an extreme green way, but in giving back to their communities by providing local jobs and job training and affordable housing options. They embody our philosophy to Be Green, Be The Change!

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