

Sustainable Sustenance – Potluck and Conversation

CREATIVE RECIPES FOR GRAINS AND LEGUMES
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27th, 2009 6:30-8:30pm
SAMUEL PARDOE BUILDING
PRESCOTT FARM AUDUBON CENTER
OAK HILL ROAD, LACONIA

Grains and Legumes (beans, peas, lentils) are excellent ways to add protein and fiber to your diet while stretching your food dollar. There are lots of great recipes using quinoa, millet, rice, buckwheat, barley, lentils, beans of all colors and sizes, and black eye peas. Just this week a friend brought us some gluten-free bread made with garbanzo bean flour! Visit www.deliciouslivingmag.com for tips on cooking grains and beans, as well as healthful tasty recipes. Canned beans are very good if you are short on prep time. If you've got some great recipes, or favorite cookbooks, bring them with you and we'll have a recipe swap. There are lots of good cooks in our midst, with much knowledge and experience to share. Please don't be intimidated if you've not cooked with grains or beans very much, just bring something made with as many whole, organic and/or local ingredients as possible and maybe someone will have a suggestion as to how you could incorporate grains or beans into your dish next time!

If there is someone out there who wants to come, but isn't able to cook anything, Karen would love a volunteer to bring some organic coffee, tea, and half and half. Please let her know if you can bring any of those items as your contribution.

Remember to bring your place setting, cup and napkin. Ana Gourlay very kindly gave some tablecloths to me so our tables will be nicely covered. Please RSVP to Karen Barker at barkers@alumni.unh.edu or 528-8560..

UPCOMING SUSTAINABLE SUSTENANCE:

March 27: Fund Raiser for Sustainable Harvest International

April 24: Biodynamic Farming with Barbara and Kerry Sullivan

May 29: Milk Goats with Allan and Janice Mistler.

Sustainable Sustenance meets monthly. Call Karen Barker for more information at 528-8560

“Energy Raisers” come to the Lakes Region area.

LARELLA had two energy raisers this fall, both to homeowners in Belmont. Scott Firth was the first, in early October as 15 helpers turned out to help install an evacuated tube solar hot water collector system, assisted by the guidance of Peter Adams of PAREI, the group who pioneered the concept of Energy Raisers. Scott had built a simple stand next to his home, oriented toward solar south to maximize his heat gain.

Later that month, another group of volunteers helped Alex and Edee Takantjas install their own system. Due to the shade of a tree, Alex and Edee's stand was located some 60 feet from the house, with an underground trench carrying the heat from the unit to the storage tank. The trench had been dug and the pipe laid before we got there, but the hardy group of volunteers did everything else.

We hope to do four to six Energy Raisers over the next year. Several people have expressed an interest and have attended several energy raisers. We ask anyone who would like an energy raiser to attend (and help out) at two previous energy raisers, getting a sense of how the systems operate.....



In the works of Alex Takantjas: I had heard that solar hot water gave the best return on your investment, but it was just an idea until my friend, Scott Firth, invited me to go to an energy raiser with him. A group of community minded people had gotten together to help one particular homeowner install a solar hot water heater. I did not actively participate in the energy raiser because I was new to the experience, but I observed enough to know that

this was something that I wanted to be a part of. Going to that one energy raiser made me realize that this was something that was attainable and it didn't have to be just some idea kicking around in the back of my head. I decided to make the plunge sometime between helping out at the second and third energy raisers. Scott had decided that he was going to install his own system as well. We had become members of the Plymouth Area Renewable Energy Initiative (PAREI), but Belmont was not an area where they did energy raisers; they prefer to train other communities to do their own energy raisers. Malik Haig organized for the co-director of PAREI to come down and give a talk about energy raisers at a LARELLA meeting. Scott volunteered for his house to be the guinea pig for LARELLA's first energy raiser and the energy-raising arm of LARELLA was born.

Installing a solar hot water heater at my house has definitely been a rewarding experience. I even say that after only having it installed for two weeks in November, which is the cloudiest month of the year in New England. Everyday when I get home I cannot resist going to check and see how much the temperature in my water tank has risen. Coming up with the specifics for my system was the biggest challenge but also the greatest reward. The system can be set up in many different ways with many different details. You can find somebody from both sides of every argument who will swear up and down that their way is the best way and it would be foolish to try anything different. Now that I have thought through all of these options, I take great pride in knowing that my system is put together brilliantly, I would have been crazy to do it any other way.



Massive Solar Rebates now available – up to 50% or more of cost of a new system!!!

Though the economy has rapidly contracted, there are some very bright spots on the horizon, and NOW is the time to consider a solar (PV) electric system. The Federal Government has extended the rebates through 2016, but more importantly, they have lifted the cap on rebates. Previously you were limited to a maximum of \$2000 in rebates off your taxes, now the cap has been lifted, so for solar (PV) purchase and installation, you can get 30% back. On a \$30,000 solar system (roughly 3kW capacity) you can get \$9,000 back from the US Government. Additionally, the State of New Hampshire offers up to \$6,000 back as a refund. So combined, that is \$15,000 back on a \$30,000 purchase and installation.

What do you get for that money? At today's energy rates (before the recently announced rate increase), that would buy you \$65 to \$70 worth of electricity in an average month. Over the lifetime of the system (40 years is a good estimate), that would be upwards of \$31,000. Of course, if the price of energy increases at any time in the next 40 years, your savings would be even greater – if the cost of energy doubles (cumulatively), then you would save over \$62,000. All for an investment of \$15,000!!!

Now, if you are an NHEC customer, your savings is even greater, because NHEC is offering up to \$3,500 in rebates for 2009. For NHEC customers, a \$30,000 system will bring you \$18,500 in rebates, for a total cost of \$10,500 for the \$31,000 worth of electricity you would get.

So if you have ever considered using solar electricity, NOW is the time to do so. It is likely that in future years the rebates will lessen as solar electric panels decrease in cost, and solar electricity becomes more commonplace. The rebates are to encourage trendsetters to start the trend – and now is your best chance. Malik Haig at Sustain Ability can explain solar rebates and show you what the components of a system look like. Call him at Sustain Ability at 528-4300.