

Community Supported Agriculture and coops

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Make it fun

I want to talk about community supported agriculture and buying coops and the Gbiota club. This could be pretty boring and in this digital age all people seem to want is a 3 word slogan or max 500 words of text but I really want you to understand what this is all about so I am telling it as a hopefully funny story, it is a bit like a kids story so stop being adult for a bit.

Hitler and me

I was born and Hitler declared war, I have no idea what he had against me but he started it, I was just a baby and could only just manage to throw my dummy out of the pram - he had aeroplanes and bombs.

I can remember the air raids very clearly - and not for the reasons you may think. Actually I thought, in the way that toddlers do, that it was all very pretty with those search lights and flashes and bangs. But what got me was that mum picked me up and carried me of to the air raid shelter and I dropped my teddy and they would not go back and pick it up.

I still remember it clearly and I was very cross with Hitler and my mum.

Rulers I don't like

I decided I did not like rulers that dropped bombs on people and I still don't. Since then I have added to my list rulers that only think about increasing economic growth or GDP and nothing else (which pretty means much all rulers).

With toddlers (or politicians) logic goes like this. We eat food which makes us fat and sick so people get diabetes and have their legs chopped off. That costs a lot of money to pay the hospital fees which increases GDP which is good, it would save a lot of money if they told people about healthy food so they didn't have their legs chopped but that would lower GDP which is bad. The wonder of a toddlers mind.

Victory gardens

But I also remember very clearly was growing food - what I now have learned were called Victory gardens which is really getting back to me staying on story (see I do know the political jargon).

Now toddlers don't have any preconceived ideas about the world - they see what they see and that is the way the world is.

Now what I saw was a lot of ladies (there were no men - they had all gone off to some place called '**the war**') going out in their pinafores and digging up the grass to grow vegetables. They didn't seem to worry about what grass, the back lawn, the nature strip, the local golf course or park, if there was grass it was there to be dug up by an army of ladies in pinafores. That was how I saw the world back then - but there is more -

The wonders of the magic string bag

There is the wonder of the string bag. I have not seen a string bag for years but to a toddler this was like magic. My mum would put all sorts of vegetables she had grown into this string bag and go off to other people's houses and then swap a few cabbages and beans for some potatoes and eggs.

Now to a toddler this string bag was magic, it did not matter how much stuff she rammed into it, it would just expand and expand. I thought that even if she swapped for a double Beta truck the string bag would just expand to trap the double Beta truck and mum would just carry it home. Mum was an adult and adults were big and strong.

Zero waste

But there is yet more - nothing, absolutely nothing was wasted. Everything was saved, all the food scraps and plants cuttings were saved and put into a giant pile she called the '**compost pile**' and everything else was put into a pile called '**it will come in handy sometime pile**'.

After a bit mum started keeping chickens, which I liked, except we had to go off to what mum called the farms - this was a big adventure. There were these huge animals, which I learned were called cows and pigs and as far as I could understand were kept because they made these huge piles of poo - just like in my nappies.

As far as I could see adults thought this was highly valuable and they really liked the smell because they would spread it out over the fields so everyone could enjoy the smell.

Adults, I decided, were decidedly weird.

Everyday a horse and cart would come along our road to deliver milk and Bob, the kid over the road, would come out with a bucket to collect any poo the horse might drop. I asked him what they did with it and he told me they put it on their rhubarb which I thought a bit odd as we always had custard on our rhubarb. What a weird world I had been born into.

Gleaning

When we went to the farms we were given a bucket and told to collect all the grains of wheat that had fallen onto the ground. This apparently was called gleaning. It was quite fun at first but got boring after a bit and I wanted to go and play but was told there was a war on.

It seemed that if a kid wanted to do anything that was fun the adults would - 'say you can't do that there is a war on'. I never knew what it meant but I did know that when I came out of the air raid shelter houses would have just disappeared and the kids who lived in that house would come to live in our house so there was someone for me to play with.

Good old days - what bullshit

Anyone who lived through that era would go slightly bonkers when they hear people talk about the good old days.

Life is infinitely better now, there has been dramatic improvements in our technology which has led to greater prosperity across the globe and there is no reason why it should not continue to get better as long as we do what we humans are good at - learning from the past, planning the future and cooperating together.

What we can learn from Victory gardens and modern food production

1) ***This is what needs to be done - just get on with it***

From what I have learned since being a toddler there was very little organisation - the Government was busy trying to stop the bombers coming over by building as many Spitfires and training as many fighter pilots as they could. So basically the Government said '***you need to start growing your own food just get on with it as best you can***'.

I am trying to persuade people of the benefits of Community Supported Agriculture and buyers coops and indeed there is a lot published on this. For example there is an organisation called the Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance set up specifically to help groups wanting to form groups for Community Supported Agriculture. They publish a book called ***Farming Democracy*** and then there is the Australian Organic Food Directory which list many organic growers across the country.

There are also buying coops like the <https://www.localharvest.org.au/> and <https://www.goodness.com.au/buying-groups-food-cooperatives/>

There is no need to re-invent the wheel - all that needs to be done is to form a local group and let the group leaders decide how the group should be run.

2) ***letting people get on with it really works***

The Victory Gardens were incredibly successful growing some 40% of total fruit and veg production - not bad for a bunch of amateurs.

3) ***People really want to be healthy***

The modern industry spend billions of dollars on advertising trying to convince us that modern food produced by chemical industrial agriculture is healthy. And it works to a point.

But people are not stupid and learn they are being manipulated so there are many people looking for alternative healthy foods. Organic food are the fastest growing section of the food industry despite the current higher costs.

Just imagine what would happen if they could buy healthy food at a price similar to what they pay for chemical industrial food. Gbiota beds use the same growing principles, plenty of soils biology and minerals that our ancestors use - they just do it much more efficiently.

4) People actually care about the environment

People actually care about the environment and well being of their grand kids and their grand kids. It seems that the much of the population really understand about the dangers of destroying the environment - way ahead of our leaders whether in politics or industry.

I predict that history will look back on 2020 and Covid as the time when the idea of increasing profits and GDP was the sole aim was rejected by the people.

Forward to the present

I am now, many years later, the proud owner of a foamed titanium knee with ultra high molecular weight bearing - the height of modern technology and the real reason behind why you are reading this.

You see many years ago, straight out of University and driving my brand new mini I thought I was king of the road - when in truth I was just a smart arsed immature git know it all who in trying to overtake a truck ended up flying through the air to smash into the banks of a creek. Result one broken leg.

Years later it was down to bone and bone and a lot of pain. I was told I needed a knee replacement but decided to go to China to search for an alternative solution. I met a retired surgeon who introduced me to a top notch knee surgeon who basically said knee Fky Fky chop chop.

I decided to go back to Australia for the operation and the retired surgeon said she would come back to care for me after the operation. She looked after me so well - and knowing when I am onto a good thing, I asked her to marry me. She must have misheard me and thought I was offering her an ice cream because she said yes.

So I joke I lost a knee and gained a wife.

Diabetes strikes

But she started to eat the western diet and was soon diagnosed with Diabetes - bad but it got worse - her foot started to turn black and the doctors started talking about amputation.

After a lot of reading of the medical books we changed diet and she still has her foot - which I am happy about as she has nice legs.

But it set me on the road to learning about gut bugs. If we eat the wrong diet we get sugar loving bugs in our gut so we are prone to getting fat, diabetic and having our legs chopped off.

I am not saying that bad diet is the cause of getting fat and diabetes, the root cause is complex and the body becoming insulin resistant but diet is an **enabling factor**. If you change you diet it **dis-enables** your bodies tendency to becoming fat and diabetic.

Birth of Gbiota beds

This led to my obsession to changing gut biology by diet which is how the Gbiota beds came into being.

I have promoted these and been partially successful in reaching home growers that are already into Wicking Beds and who are probably already eating a healthy diet - hence the partial in partial success.

But some third of the global population is overweight and on this slippery road, food is one of the great issues of our age how we grow is sustainably without damaging the earth and how it leads to health rather than sickness.

Peoples right to choose

Now people have the right to choose what they eat and if they understand the facts and want to eat a diet that leads to diabetes that is their right, as far as I am concerned.

But is is not a fair contest - we live in the information age where companies spend many billions of dollars in manipulative advertising to convince us all that modern foods are healthy.

They are certainly not spending billions of dollars to warn us that they are slowly but surely destroying our soils and less slowly chopping down the last remaining forest to grow plants, like palm oil, to feed animals in intensive farming lots.

So I start the battle of creating change (the paradigm shift)

I win the battle to develop a way of growing gut brain food to change our gut biology. It is simple, and effective.

I win the battle of convincing some home growers that this is a good way of growing food.

I draw in the battle to persuade commercial growers to grow gut brain food, there are hundred of regenerative farmers who would be willing to grow gut brain food. They would be delighted to set up Gbiota beds if I can show there is a significant number of potential customers.

The need to eat brain food

But at the moment I am loosing badly to persuade enough people that they should be buying and eating brain food. I talk to a handful of my contacts about community

supported agriculture (CSA) and food buying coops and they all say it sound a good idea but what are they supposed to do next?

So it is back to the drawing board, revise the plan and counter attack.

The revised plan - what we need now is group leaders

So this is the plan. I have asked a friend, Igor by name, who has special expertise in computer software and databases to revamp the www.gbiota.club web site. This will display on a Google style map where all the home growers, potential customers and growers are.

So I am asking you if you have not already registered to register (currently on www.gbiota.com) and fill in your address and tick the home grower, customer, commercial grower box. This information will not be shared but will enable us to show how many people are willing to be part of the Gbiota club movement.

Grow the club - the power of the wallet

Next I ask you to contact your friends who may be interested in joining the Gbiota club.

There are three group who really should be eating gut brain food, people liable to become diabetic, to be and nursing mothers (babies get their initial gut biology from mum) and parents with younger kids (what they eat when young affects their gut biology for the rest of their lives).

I have had a little flyer on the Gbiota club printed up and will post them out to you if you email me.

We are asking these new recruits to register. This shows potential growers the interest in their locality.

The revised web site will be like social media site but private. Members in a particular locality can see where other members are and form a local club. The new web will be designed so each group to allow confidential communications between members within a group.

Leaders and passive members

What we need right now is group leaders.

Now most members of this local club will be passive members and just buy their gut brain food from the local suppliers through established systems.

But it needs a small group, or even individual, to take the responsibility for managing the local group. But why should they?

Not all people are selfish bastards

2020 will be looked at in history as when the world changed. Pre 2020 the paradigm was that profits and the market would solve all problems, after 2020 the paradigm shifted so that people, us individuals, have to take responsibility for the future of humanity. Our current food system, based on profits, is making us fat and sick and slowly but surely destroying the planets ability to grow food (as well as increasing climate change).

This changing paradigm will be the motivating factor behind these individuals who set up and run the local clubs.

Right now I am recruiting group leader - if you think this may be a fit please register on www.gbiota.com then drop me an email so we can chat about you becoming a group leader.