



The AUUF Green Pages – June 2008

# Living Green, Living Well!



## Eating Alabama

### *Eating Alabama?*

*Eating Alabama* “means eating well, very well indeed.”

*Eating Alabama* is right on that Rosita’s organic and uncaged bacon, found in Hartselle, Alabama, “is the best bacon I’ve ever tasted in my life. Period. Hands down. End of conversation.”

*Eating Alabama* knows how amazing the goat cheeses produced at Bulger Creek Farm in Notasulga are.

*Eating Alabama* starts a home garden and finds that sugar snap peas not only contain 98% of your daily needed vitamin C, 21% of your vitamin A, and 11% of the iron that you need, but cure any cravings for junk like cheetos.

*Eating Alabama* discovers that a Tuscaloosa organic farm family had to sue Whole Foods to make it stop using their picture in WF’s “local supplier” advertising when the store never delivered on its promise to buy their produce.

*Eating Alabama* goes to Cuba and reports “what few of us can imagine anymore: a viable, vibrant local food economy where fresh, seasonal, and sustainably grown produce is the expected norm, not some yuppie nonsense only available at stores few of us can afford.”

*Eating Alabama* records the discoveries of two Tuscaloosa couples who decide to eat only food produced in Alabama.

*Eating Alabama* is a website: [www.eatingalabama.org](http://www.eatingalabama.org).

Check it out, it is delicious!

## Solar Power Works at the Busch Plantation!



***AUUF’s green queen Chip Busch points with appropriate pride at the newly-completed addition to her solar power system, with six more panels added last month by her son Brian and solar consultant Daryl Bergquist. Brian’s children and Elena and Jaden gave invaluable assistance by going under the house to take wiring to places grown-ups could not go. The first stage of Chip’s solar power system ran only the pool pump. With about 1.5 kilowatts of power now installed, solar electricity now supplies Chip’s greenhouse and smokehouse, plus her freezer, refrigerator and computer workstation. The system is flexible, and she can switch various circuits to the grid or the solar system as needed. Photo at right shows the solar hot water collector on the roof that supplies all the hot water Chip needs for most of the year.***

## Summertime . . .

“What is so rare as a good day in June,” sang my father, tunelessly but with considerable accuracy in Massachusetts. June is not bad in Alabama, although there are those among us who find it hot. Beat the heat with shade, fans, dips in water. Air conditioning is a recent invention we will soon discover to be too expensive, and not just in dollars. In the pre-A/C days in humid climates we used to wrap up in wet sheets. In Tucson you would freeze if you tried that.

But about the garden. Get out there early, and get out of there before you wilt. Deep water any plants needing water. A little daily sprinkle is not a good idea, unless Mother Nature does it. A tiny bit of rain goes everywhere, slows transpiration, raises moisture/humidity. Your little bit of sprinkling on a treasured plant just keeps it from developing deep roots. Give your treasured plants about one inch per week. You will have to water newly planted shrubs and trees more generously. New transplants need almost daily water for a week, then twice weekly, then stretch it out to once per week. Deeply.

If we get an inch of rain, you can skip a week of watering. Mulch everything. Protect it from the sun and any winds. And let lawns go dormant if it is permitted in your area. If it isn't, complain to city hall.

Your veggies should be feeding you now. Summer squash, unstoppable zucchini, green beans, swiss chard or new zealand spinach, beets and carrots. My tomatoes will start up in June but that is the hybrid called “Fourth of July.” It's really early but not as tasty as some later ones. Early Girl is good and fairly early.

It's almost corn time . . . and the livin' is easy.

– Chip Busch

## (o o) ∨ *The Green Raven*

### *Double pneumonia*

What is double pneumonia? Well, a pneumonia is a flower like a begonia; a begonia is a meat like a sausage, a sausage and battery is crime, monkeys crime trees, trees a crowd, the rooster crowd in the morning and made a noise, the noise is on your face like your eyes, the eyes is the opposite of the nays, a horse nays and has a colt, you get a colt and go to bed and wake up in the morning with double pneumonia....

What does the price of gas have to do with global warming?

When I was a kid there were only about two billion of us. Now there are six and a half billion. Most of them are still poor but this engine of hope-greed-desire, and this example of a rich, spend-thrift America is driving enormous change.

The Chinese are following our example, feeding our habit and using tons of our money to emulate our rich and spend-thrift ways: more cars, more electrical widgets, more trinkets, more gewgaws.

Pollution is misplaced production. It is made by farmers trying to wring an extra drop of ethanol out of a corn field with extra nitrogen. It deadens our seas below New Orleans and over to Texas. It does the same at the mouth of the Nile where eroded sands used to repair beaches clear to Israel, but are now stopped at Aswan, but the chemical fertilizers spurring Egyptian agriculture keep on coming, growing algal blooms and die-offs: dead spots in the Mediterranean.

Pollution is wasted gas from mis-tuned autos that burn it badly. It is too much soap in your washer leaching into streams and rivers, and soda pop or water bottles pitched out of cars, cigarette butts ground under foot, and even wasted food dumped into land fills.

The newest pollution is more subtle. It is the product of even the cleanest burning, even the metabolic combustion that occurs when animals like us breathe and eat and exhale CO<sub>2</sub>, like clean burning fires: fuel (food) + oxygen => CO<sub>2</sub> + water. Everywhere. Everywhere. Green plants are the only things that can reverse the process, as far as I know.

The Chinese and the Americans, the Indians, Spaniards, Malians all want more stuff, more cars, faster cars, slicker computers and ipods, although some just want enough to eat. Whatever it is, the machine called the open market, free trade capitalism is delivering it to them, but at prices rising as steeply as the insatiable demand for it all. And the by-product is CO<sub>2</sub>, methane, global warming, global harming -- enough to bring it all schlumping down.

Perhaps not with a bang  
But a whimper.

– Chip Busch

## Stalking the Wild Spinach

Lamb's quarter, that is – *Chenopodium album*. It's one of the most nutritious and delicious wild herbs and likely to be a common weed in your yard and flower or vegetable garden – unless, of course, you've been too free with the Roundup herbicide.



The young leaves make a delicious addition to a salad, and the cooked greens make an excellent substitute in any recipe calling for spinach. One cup of raw lamb's quarter leaves contains 80 mg of vitamin C, 11,600 IU of vitamin A, 72 mg of phosphorus, 309 mg of calcium, and good amounts of thiamin, riboflavin, niacin and iron ([www.edibleplants.com](http://www.edibleplants.com)).

Lamb's quarter will grow to be six feet or more, but is best when harvested at 1-3 feet. If you cut the plants at the ground rather than pulling roots and all, they are likely to regrow and offer a second harvest. Undersides of leaves are slightly furry and greyish or whitish. Be careful of identification; check samples with experienced gardeners and test very small amounts for possible allergic or toxic reactions.