



The Good Food Digest

A publication of the Baltimore Food and Faith Project supported by the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future

BIBLICAL SCHOLAR DR. ELLEN DAVIS CONCLUDES BFFP/ICJS FOOD AND FAITH STUDY SERIES

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We all know that a day of rest each week can help to restore not only our physical health, but our spiritual health as well. Whether our faiths have us taking time out on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, every time we do so, we are expressing our appreciation for the world as it was at creation. In essence, we affirm that while we are busy altering the world the other six days of the week, for this one day we will let it be. Not only do we rest then, but so does everything else—the land, the flora, and the fauna—when we cease to extract from them and put them to our use. Although our industrial agricultural system has largely done away with the Sabbath—farmers are often forced to work 7 days a week to make ends meet—even farm fields and animals are to rest:

For six days you are to glean, but on the seventh day is Sabbath, there will not be (any) on it. (Exodus 16:26, translated by E. Fox in The Five Books of Moses.)

Ideas like these framed just part of the discussion led by Dr. Ellen Davis, Professor of Bible and Practical Theology at Duke Divinity School, for the final session of a study series co-sponsored by the BFFP and the Institute for Christian & Jewish Studies this past spring. *Food and Faith: Cultivating the Wisdom of Our Texts* was a six-part series that brought together clergy, lay leaders, public health officials, school food experts, food anthropologists and others to talk about what our traditions' texts have to teach us about the ways that we produce and distribute food today. Loosely basing the series on Dr. Davis' book, "Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture: An Agrarian Reading of the Bible", series' participants looked critically at the "practices of modern industrialized agriculture, in light of critical biblical" interpretation. How are we supposed to care for the land? What is the proper relationship between our Creator, the environment, and ourselves? And how do we nurture this relationship for the good of all creation?

This pilot series was a great success. While we do have some kinks to work out, interest is high in continuing this discussion via another series in the future. Interested in participating? [Let us know!](#) And check our [brand new Facebook page](#) in September to watch videos of all of the talks given at this year's series.

BFFP's mission:

To partner with Baltimore area faith communities and religious organizations of all faith traditions to promote a just, safe, and trustworthy food system that allows us to produce what is needed now and for future generations in a way that protects people, animals, air, land, and water.



ICJS Director Chris Leighton, Dr. Ellen Davis, and BFFP Director, Angela Smith

FOOD OF THE SEASON

Nothing says summer like a bowl of ripe, sweet berries, and what could be better than [picking your own](#) right off the bush while they are in season? ([Farmers' markets](#) are a good place to find fresh berries if u-pick isn't for you.) In prehistoric times, people used the roots and blossoms of raspberry plants for medicinal purposes, and it wasn't until the middle ages that people began to eat them as food. Now, of course, we can't get enough of these berries with a fragrantly sweet, yet subtly tart flavor. The most common are red-pink, but they also come in black, purple, orange, yellow and white. Yum!

(From <http://food-facts.suite101.com/> and <http://www.whfoods.com/>)



WE WANT THE WORLD TO KNOW...

... that you're wonderful! So many of you are doing great work with your faith communities to help bring about a more sustainable world. Why not share your story, plant a seed, and spur others to action? The [Baltimore Sustainability Office](#) has a space on their website where you can describe your efforts to local folks, and the [Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy's Food and Faith](#) site reaches an even broader audience. There is strength in numbers! So let's spread the word!



RASPBERRIES



Old-Fashioned Raspberry Jam

From Epicurious.com

Raspberries are delicious, extremely versatile, and can be consumed in a variety of ways. It's just too bad they don't grow year round! One way to keep enjoying them even in the winter months is to make this simple and delicious old-fashioned raspberry jam. Warming the sugar beforehand keeps the jam boiling evenly and ensures success.

4 cups granulated sugar

4 cups raspberries

Place sugar in an ovenproof shallow pan and warm in a 250°F oven for 15 minutes. (Warm sugar dissolves better.) Place berries in a large stainless steel or enamel saucepan. Bring to a full boil over high heat, mashing berries with a potato masher as they heat. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Add warm sugar, return to a boil, and boil until mixture will form a gel, about 5 minutes. The mixture is ready when a small spoonful dropped on a cold plate becomes no longer syrupy and does not run when tilted.

Finished jam can be stored three ways: In the refrigerator (in a glass bowl or jar for 2-3 weeks), in the freezer (in jars or other freezer-safe containers), or on the shelf by processing canning jars in a boiling water bath (ladle hot jam onto hot sterilized jars, cover with lids and rings, and process for 20 minutes in a [boiling water bath](#).)



Students participating in the Sustainable Agriculture Alternative Spring Break at Kayam. (Source: www.jcarrot.org)

BFFP MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Kayam Farm at Pearlstone Retreat Center
5425 Mt. Gilead Road, Reisterstown, MD 21136
(410) 429-4400 or jakir@pearlstonecenter.org
Jakir Manela, Farm Director



Angela first learned of Kayam Farm when she was interning at an organic CSA farm in Baltimore County a few summers ago. The BFFP ventured out soon after to see the vibrant and inspirational Kayam Farm and was awed at what is happening there. We now look for excuses to visit the farm; it is so much better than meeting in an office!! Jakir shares with us some of the wonderful work they are doing:

“Shalom from Kayam Farm! Our mission is to embody and inspire social and ecological responsibility by transforming our community through hands-on Jewish agricultural education. We believe that Judaism teaches us essential things about living sustainably, and that we must begin to deeply understand and embody those teachings in order to adequately address our current social, environmental, and spiritual crises. We immerse ourselves in the earth through farming, and in Torah through learning and teaching. Summertime is our most crucial, inspirational, and powerful season for doing this.

This summer, a group of young Jews (undergraduate and graduate students, rabbis on sabbatical, rabbinical students, farmers, teachers, Jewish scholars, activists, high school students, and others) from around the country to learn together about the fundamental connections between Judaism, Agriculture, and Sustainability through our three main programs: 1) the Kayam Summer Fellowship, 2) the Kayam Farm Kollel, and 3) the Kayam Art Collective. Our goals through these programs are to:

- 1) Work together on the farm to produce healthy, organic, and delicious produce for ourselves and our community.
- 2) Teach people of all ages about the beauty and abundance of the natural world, how to work within that natural system to grow healthy organic food, and how to become better stewards of G'd's Creation.
- 3) Create beautiful & inspiring farm art, reflecting & enhancing the beauty and creativity of local organic agriculture.
- 4) Build intergenerational, pluralistic Jewish community dedicated to Torah, agriculture, and sustainability.
- 5) Deeply encounter primary Jewish texts that help us think critically and creatively about sustainability, food justice, food security, and fragmented community.

We focus on learning these primary texts in pairs, using both the Hebrew (or Aramaic) texts, as well as the English translation. We have begun a [Kayam Farm Kollel Blog](#) in order to share the highlights of each week's Kollel learning, and we have also begun documenting our discussions through video and audio. In addition, we document the teaching activities of the farm's Summer Fellows into a curriculum that we publish each December called *Chai VeKayam*. Summer Fellows are Jewish educators from around the country who teach Jewish experiential outdoor education, including gardening, cooking, songleading, and ropes course at Camp Milldale, the JCC day-camp located next door to the farm.

No matter what program people participate in, everyone starts each morning by working together on our 2.5 acre farm. Our harvests serve a 40 member CSA, local farmers' market, and the Pearlstone Retreat Center's commercial kitchen. We also donate to a nearby shelter, and we eat really well all summer! The summer community lives together in a tent village located just a few steps away from the farm. Cooking and cleaning are communal responsibilities, and our kitchen is vegetarian and kosher while also prioritizing local and organic foods. We live together in community, farming and teaching during the day, learning and playing music at night. Shabbat is beautiful, relaxing, celebratory, work-free, and a great community-builder. Join us!!”

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“When we ask whether there is any hope for rural communities, I think we have to clarify what we mean by ‘hope.’ A cultural heritage that has taught us that matter alone matters has deprived us of a true meaning of hope... In our materialistic culture, hope means that there has to be something out in the world that gives us reasons to be optimistic. A few contemporary visionaries have demonstrated that hope, at least as interpreted from the perspective of faith, is not based on what we see out in the world but on what we value inside ourselves... (they) have... reminded us that hope is not confidence that things will turn out fine; hope is a commitment to justice even when there appears to be little to be gained by making that commitment. Wendell Berry refers to such hope as “difficult hope.” Three years before Vaclav Havel became president of Czechoslovakia, when the country was still a dictatorship, he was asked if there was any hope for his homeland. “Hope is a state of mind, not of the world,” [Havel] replied. Hope is not a belief that things will go well, he said, but a willingness to work for something because it is right.

Hopeful changes don’t occur because we engineer them or wield power; they come because we respond in faith in our communities and take the time to be neighbors to each other. We also know that such changes don’t always come on our watch just because we do the right thing. Of all the women who started the women’s suffrage movement in the nineteenth century, only one lived to actually exercise the right to vote... - *From Cultivating an Ecological Consciousness: Essays from a Farmer Philosopher* by Frederick L. Kirschenmann (pages 327 and 328)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friday, 8/13/10, Time TBA

Location To Be Announced
Baltimore, MD

To find time and location, and for more information, visit www.ciw-online.org/

Florida Modern Day Slavery Museum: An examination of the history and evolution of slavery in Florida’s fields, its roots, the reason it persists, and its solutions

The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) developed the Florida Modern-Day Slavery Museum in consultation with forced labor survivors as well as leading academic authorities on slavery and Florida labor history. The museum consists of a cargo truck outfitted as a replica of the trucks involved in a recent slavery operation (U.S. v. Navarrete, 2008), accompanied by displays on the history and evolution of slavery in Florida. (Florida supplies over 90 percent of the tomatoes consumed in the US from October to May and several tomato pickers have been enslaved in recent years.)

Saturday, 10/9/10, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

St. John’s Episcopal Church
9120 Frederick Rd
Ellicott City, MD 21042

For more information, contact Shelley Klinefelter at
sklinefelter@episcopalmaryland.org

Greentober Fest

Hosted by the Episcopal Diocese Environmental Steering Committee, this will be a day of environmental education and inspiration networking. There will be a guest speaker and workshops for clergy, parishes, senior wardens and lay people.

Saturday, 10/24/10

All around Baltimore.

For more info, check out <http://www.350.org> and <http://www.bjen.org/acts.html>

Global Healing Shabbat, International Climate Action Day

This fall, Shabbat Noach — when Jews around the world read the Torah portion about the Flood, Noah, the Ark, and the Rainbow — comes on October 23-24, the day when a number of experts on the global climate crisis have called for world-wide actions to protect our planet from climate disaster. 350 Parts Per Million is the number that scientists say is the safe upper limit for CO2 in our atmosphere. BJEN, Pearlstone, Jewish Volunteer Connection, and THE ASSOCIATED ask Jews to commemorate this day by helping them to [log 350 acts of climate change](#) towards the community’s goal of 90,000 hours of service, and to observe Shabbat Noach as “Global Climate Healing Shabbat” with special prayers, sermons, Torah commentary/ midrash, songs, lectures, debates, panel discussions, resolutions, kiddushes, etc.

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