

Bringing Real Food to Main Street Nutrient-Dense Standards, Awareness and Support

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www.organicconnections.org

Internationally respected farming consultant and medical doctor Arden Andersen noted in his book *Real Medicine, Real Health* that the nutrient content of foods today compared to half a century ago ranges from 15 to 75 percent less.

"Eating all the right foods today," Andersen wrote in a recent blog, "still leaves us short of needed nutrition."

This critical problem has given rise to a budding movement in "*nutrient-dense*" food. These are crops to which native health has been restored and which retain their full nutritional value as they did prior to food industrialization. It is also interesting that when full nutritional content is brought back to plants, no toxic insecticides or herbicides are required.

While a growing number of farmers throughout the world are successfully raising nutrient-dense crops, they are doing so independently, and not as part of an overall cooperative, in a similar way to organic farmers some 30 years ago. The Real Food Campaign has as its overall goal to bring nutrient-dense food into the mainstream, with set standards and broad distribution, as previously accomplished with organic food. The campaign is now in the stage of hammering out general agreement among producers as to such standards, to create a consolidated effort and bring a new "golden age" of nutrition.

One farmer and researcher, Dan Kittredge, has taken on the considerable mission of making nutrient-dense food available to everyone, and has founded the Real Food Campaign to do so.

"The Real Food Campaign (RFC)—a project of the non-profit Remineralize the Earth—is working to bring nutrient-dense food into the marketplace and create a new standard for food quality," Kittredge told *Organic Connections*.

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"RFC addresses shortcomings in conventional soil science by promoting tenets of biological farming practices that provide an alternative to chemical agriculture. By balancing biologically available soil minerals, soil life is improved and crop health is enhanced, avoiding the need for toxic rescue remedies. Most importantly, by facilitating natural soil life and health, crop nutritional quality is exponentially improved."

Creating a Standard

The goal of having produce broadly available with substantially higher nutritional value has met with agreement

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Dr. Arden Andersen

from nutritional experts everywhere. But in order to make such produce broadly available, more farms need to become involved. For that to happen, standards, education and protocols have to be evolved, and one major function of the RFC is to establish and promote these.

"We are first going to evolve an empirical standard that can be used as the yardstick for everyone to follow," Kittredge said. "Initially, we are going to publicly obtain quality standards being individually used. We can then begin to extrapolate from those what are the best protocols for achieving this standard."

Kittredge estimates that fully bringing about this standard will take around 18 months. The first step is to invite farmers from the world over to submit their methods. "It's basically sort of a multiple feedback mechanism. If you've got farmers who are achieving nutrient -dense growth, and you can correlate these farmers with the protocols they're following, the best protocols will rise to the top. Out of 100 farmers, 75 of them use one protocol, 2 use another protocol and 14 use another."

Kittredge made his first broad presentation of the Real Food Campaign in December 2008 at Acres USA, a leading annual

Organic farmers and researcher Dan Kittredge scatters rockdust stonemeal on his garlic.



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eco-agricultural conference. The presentation got great response and brought many experts on board who agreed to help evolve these standards, including researchers, medical doctors, farmers and farmer consultants.

Raising Awareness

While the standard is being set, another function of the campaign is to bring awareness to natural practitioners such as chiropractors, nutritionists and natural health professionals. Although many are keenly knowledgeable of the need for higher quality food, quite a few do not know that it is actually being grown and made available.

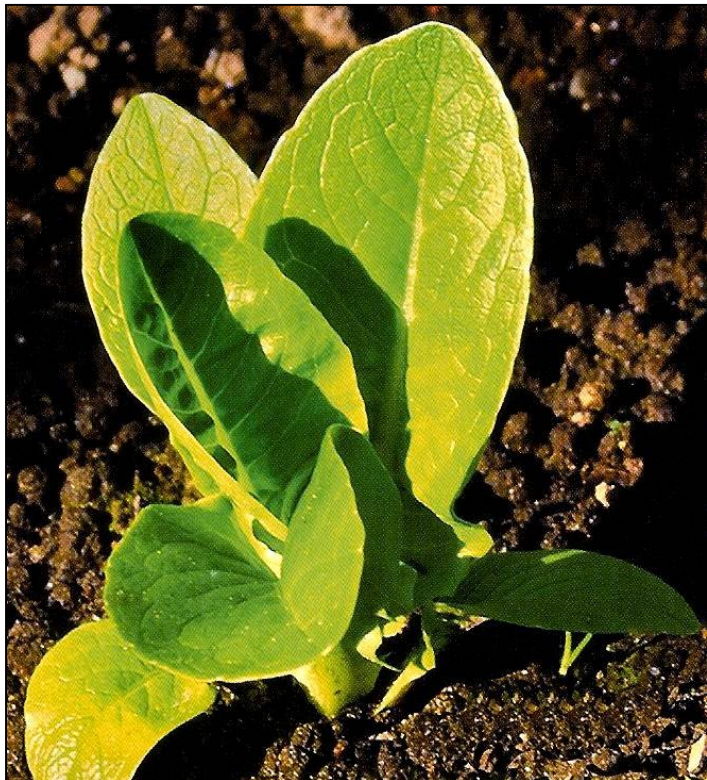
As awareness is increasing, tools will shortly be provided on the RFC website (www.realfoodcampaign.org) so that these natural practitioners—as well as consumers—will be able to measure the nutrient density of local foods. The data obtained will not only be accessible for the consumers' benefit, it can also then be uploaded to a database on the RFC site and shared with others. The result will be a database of availability of quality crops across the country.

“The collected information will go into a web-based decentralized network that describes the principles and benefits of nutrient-dense food production and publishes open lists of all producers, consultants, stores and local interest groups.”

Kittredge explained, “This resource will be a constant work in progress that grows with the campaign and provides cohesion among all of its constituents.”

Seeking Start-up Support

As with any project of RFC's considerable scope, it takes



funds. Hence, Kittredge is also engaged in raising support for the design and development of the infrastructure necessary to achieve RFC's mission of bringing nutrient-dense crops to the mainstream.

“A minimum of \$25,000 will support a six-month period of intensive research compilation and formation of

the Web database,” said Kittredge. “The funding of this crucial period will set the foundation for the future of the campaign.”

“A funding partner at this time will reap the benefit of producing considerable tax-deductible assistance to develop and coordinate the intellectual capital around this body of work.”

Coming Soon to a Store near You

What does all this mean? It means that in the future you'll be able to actually purchase nutrient-dense food at your local market, and a healthier world is in store for us all.

ALTHOUGH MANY ARE KEENLY AWARE OF THE NEED FOR HIGHER QUALITY FOOD, FEW KNOW IT IS ACTUALLY BEING GROWN AND MADE AVAILABLE.