

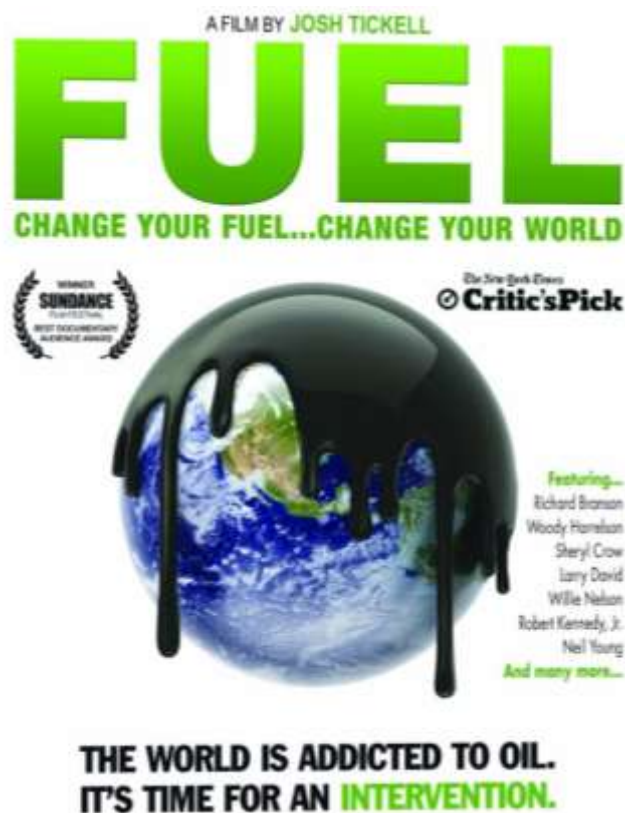
EAST HADDAM GREEN COMMITTEE

Spring 2012 Newsletter

Green Committee Film Series

Recipient of the Sundance Film Festival Audience Award for Best Documentary in 2008, Josh Tickell's film, FUEL, explains how we came to be dependent on oil, and what we can do to kick our fossil fuel habit using a combination of energy efficient technology, sustainable biofuels, and other renewable energy sources. Rereleased in 2010.

Sunday, March 11, 2012 3-5 pm at the Town Grange, 488 Town Street, East Haddam. Admission is free.



Josh Tickell is the author of a best-selling book on biofuels *From the Fryer to the Fuel Tank*. His most recent project is powering his Prius with gasoline created from algae.

This will be the second film in the Green Committee's film series, the first was ***Suburbia: The Good Life in CT?*** shown in January, 2010.





Connecticut Clean Energy Update

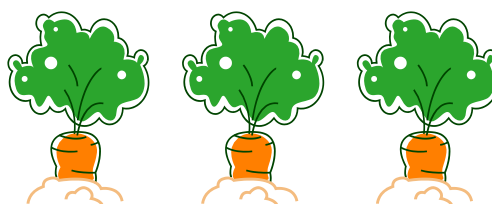


East Haddam is a Clean Energy Community and is participating in the Neighbor to Neighbor Energy Challenge. The goal is to help residents reduce their home's energy use by 20%, while at the same time earning rewards for their town – like free solar-powered street lights. The Connecticut Clean Energy Fund is now part of the new Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority (CEFIA). This group's mission is to “promote, develop and invest in clean energy and energy efficiency projects” in Connecticut.

Go to www.ctenergychallenge.com to schedule a Home Energy Solutions (HES) visit (\$75) and find out how to save money on your energy bills. An HES evaluation includes a blower door test, a duct test, inspection of windows, insulation and HVAC systems, free CFL light bulbs, low flow showerheads and faucet aerators! It can also help you qualify for rebates and incentives on energy efficiency upgrades including insulation, windows, energy star appliances, heat pump systems, gas hot water heaters and more. See www.ctenergyinfo.com for details.

Consider signing up for clean energy on your electric bill. As a Clean Energy Community, East Haddam has 124 households (3.8%) signed up to use clean electricity. This helps the town qualify for a free clean energy system (solar photovoltaic, wind or solar thermal). Customers of CL&P or UL can support energy made from renewable sources like wind or small hydro. There is a small additional cost which can be offset by choosing an alternative electric supplier. Your electricity would still be delivered and billed by CL&P or UL, but would be purchased from a lower cost energy supplier. Go to www.ctenergyinfo.com to compare rates and then to www.ctcleanenergyoptions.com to check out the options for clean energy and to sign up.

Connecticut's Solar Lease Program is not accepting applications right now; more information is available at www.ctsolarlease.com.



East Haddam Community Food Bank Garden

The Food Bank Garden will begin its fourth season this spring! Started by Nancy Pincus and Ted Stumm in front of the old Middle School in 2009, it has provided about 300 lbs of organically grown produce, all donated to the Food Bank. Last year the garden was doubled in size to 34' x 28' and grew beans, carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, spinach, squash, watermelons, sugar pumpkins, and tomatillos. All produce is donated to the East Haddam Food Bank. Volunteers are needed to help plant and maintain the garden. Please contact Nancy Pincus at 860-873-9171 or email us at easthaddamgreencommittee@gmail.com if you can help.

The Food Bank serves about 190 families, up from 103 families when the garden was started.



An Early Spring?



This seems to be the “winter that wasn’t”! So it was no surprise that the groundhog did not see his shadow on February 2, predicting an early spring. Traditionally known in the US and Canada as Groundhog Day, February 2 marks the half-way point between the Winter Solstice (the shortest day of the year) on December 20 and the Spring Equinox (when night and day are of equal length) on March 20. If the groundhog sees his shadow on this day, another 6 weeks of winter is on its way, if not, we’ll have an early spring. The custom of using the weather on February 2 to predict the coming of spring began in Europe during the middle ages. German farmers brought the custom to Pennsylvania. The prediction has been found to be accurate about 80% of the time. Regardless of the accuracy, it is the very beginning of spring. The buds are swelling and the earth is beginning to wake up.

What could be the results of a drier, warmer winter, like this one has been so far? Without snow cover plants are more vulnerable to damage from the freeze/thaw cycle, and to winter kill. Warmer temperatures could cause flower and leaf buds to open earlier than usual, which puts them at risk for damage from frost. This could be especially damaging to fruit crops, reducing crop yield. There will most likely be more insects – pests and beneficial ones – because warmer temperatures will allow more generations to be produced in one season. Probably more ticks! Less snow in higher elevations and up north means less snow melt going into reservoirs, lakes and streams. That, added to lower general precipitation, could result in lower water levels going into summer.



The Local Food Scene

CSA’s, co-ops, farmers’ markets, local food delivery services – our local food options are expanding! What’s considered “local food”? Food grown in your backyard, in your town, county, state, within 100 miles, food grown in your general region.... it’s all “local” by one definition or another. If you live on the east coast, food grown in California is not local, but it’s better than food grown in Chile or Mexico. Food grown outside the US may be sprayed with pesticides banned here, but legal there. It’s legal to import those foods and sell them here. Check the country of origin on all the food you buy (especially fresh out-of-season produce) so that you know where it comes from. Those grapes may be from Chile, the canned mushrooms from China, frozen shrimp from Thailand, or that orange juice from Brazil.

For more information on what grows in Connecticut and who is growing it, go to www.buycctgrown.com . There is a list of what is in season, and you can search for the locations

of farmer's markets. Check out *Edible Nutmeg*, Connecticut's local food magazine, at www.ediblecommunities.com/nutmeg.

Consider joining a CSA or food co-op. Visit a local farm, farm stand, or farmer's market, or have local food delivered to your door. Here is a list of some local food options:

- **CT Farm Fresh Express:** local, mostly organic, food delivered to your door. Details and ordering information at www.ctffe.com or call 860-873-8760.
- **Staehly Farms:** sells Christmas trees, firewood, annuals, perennials, vegetables, fruit, pumpkins and other seasonal items at their farm stand. Now accepting **CSA** applications! They also offer a delivery service during the summer. Details at www.staehlys.com or call 860-873-9774. Located at 278 Town Street, East Haddam, CT.
- **Provider Farm:** CSA shares available for vegetables and fruit, mostly organic, also sells grass fed beef and veal. Details at www.providerfarm.com or call 860-222-5582. Located at 30 Woodbridge Road, Salem, CT.
- **The Local Beet:** Food co-op selling natural groceries, local foods, fair trade goods, green living products and some organic produce, located on Main Street in Chester, CT. Call 860- 526-2667 or go to www.thelocalbeetcoop.com for details.
- **White Gate Farm:** a year round farm stand, selling organic vegetables, eggs, frozen Cornish hens and lamb, and more. Open Wednesdays 12-7, Saturdays 9-4. Details at www.whitegatefarm.net or call 860-739-9585. Located at 83 Upper Pattagansett Road, East Lyme, CT.
- **Cato Corner Farm:** sells a variety of award-winning raw milk cheese made from the milk of grass fed cows. The cheese store is open Saturdays 10-3, and Sundays 11-3. Details at www.catocornerfarm.com or call 860-537-3884. Located at 178 Cato Corner Road (off of Rte. 16 in Westchester), Colchester, CT.
- **Rathbun Library Farmers' Market:** During the summer months, there is a Farmers' Market at the Rathbun Library at 36 Main Street, East Haddam, CT. Contact the library at 873-8210 for details, or check www.rathbunlibrary.blogspot.com.
- **Chester Sunday Market:** open Sundays 10-1, from June to October at the Chester Town Center, Chester, CT. Details at www.localharvest.org.
- **Lyme Farmers' Market:** open Fridays 3-6, Saturdays 9:30-1, from June to October, at Ashlawn Farm, 78 Bill Hill Road, Lyme, CT. **Ashlawn Farm Coffee** – café open year round, Monday – Saturday. Details at www.farmcoffee.com or call 860-434-3636.



CSA's and Eating in Season

What is a **CSA**? It stands for Community Supported Agriculture. It's a partnership between the farmer and a group of people who buy shares of the farm's harvest. The shares are paid for in the early spring when the farmer has a lot of costs (seed, fertilizer, equipment repairs, etc.) but few or no products to sell. Once the season begins the members receive a predetermined amount of produce. The farmer benefits from having some cash to get started, and the customers benefit by having a supply of fresh produce and from having a direct relationship with the people growing their food. The farmer and his customer share the risks and rewards.

When you own a CSA share, you become more aware of what's in season where you live. It's exciting to get your first share! You pay more attention to the weather. If there is a hail storm, you worry about more than if the hail dented your car, you wonder – did it wreck the strawberries or tomatoes I've been looking forward to this week? What about the lettuce, peas, and beans? If you are used to getting most of your produce from a supermarket, without regard to what's in season, or what the weather has been, it's a new experience.

How many of us remember how special strawberry season was? When the strawberries ripened in June we ate them every way we could, and had strawberry shortcake for desert several times a week. My mother made enough strawberry jam to last for a long time. Because once the season was over, that was it for the year. No more strawberries until the next June (except for those mushy frozen ones). The same was true for raspberries, blueberries, peaches, asparagus, fresh peas, corn and the new crop of apples and pears each fall. We looked forward to each season and to the wonderful fresh foods that came with them.

Check out this recent article about Eliot Coleman and Barbara Damrosch and find out how they harvest hardy vegetables all winter at their farm in Maine.

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/23/garden/living-off-the-land-in-maine-even-in-winter.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all%3Fsrc%3Dtp&smid=fb-share



Remember to Recycle!

Every ton our town recycles is a ton we don't have to pay to dispose of as trash. East Haddam has single stream recycling now, which means that all your recyclables – paper, cardboard, glass, metal and plastic - can be put into the same container (separate from garbage).

And Use Those Reusable Shopping Bags!





Area Green Events



We want to spread the news about local environmental activities. If you or your organization are sponsoring an event that promotes healthy and sustainable living; protects, restores, or maintains ecological integrity; encourages and supports the use of clean energy, conservation of energy and natural resources, please let us know. We'd love to share the news!

Send your submissions to easthaddamgreencommittee@gmail.com. Include your organization's name, the location, date, time of the event and contact information.

March 3, 2012: CT NOFA's 30th Annual Winter Conference. 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Manchester Community College, Manchester, CT. Details and registration information available at www.ctnofa.org.

March 11, 2012: East Haddam Green Committee Film Series "Fuel: change your fuel...change your world" 3-5 pm, Town Grange, 488 Town Street, East Haddam, CT. Admission is free.

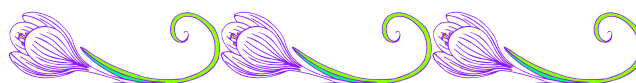
March 12, 2012: "Climate Change: A Storm of Controversy" 6:00 pm at the East Haddam Free Public Library, 18 Plains Rd, Moodus. 860-873-8248. Ask questions and get the facts about climate change! Dr. R. Laurence Davis, professor of Earth & Environmental Science and University Research Scholar, University of New Haven will lead the discussion

March 16, 2012: UConn's 2012 Conference for the Home Gardener. 8 am-4:30 pm at the Lewis B Rome Commons, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT. Details and registration information available at www.2012garden.uconn.edu.

March 24, Connecticut Master Gardeners 2012 Symposium "Exploring Diversity in Garden Design" 9am-4pm, Manchester Community College, Manchester, CT. Details and registration information available at www.ctmga.org.

April 20, 21, 22, 2012 CT River Coastal Conservation District 21st Annual Shrub & Seedling Sale

A large variety of plants native to Connecticut. Pre orders due by April 2, go to www.conservect.org/ctrivercoastal for a complete list of plants and ordering information, or telephone 860-346-3282. This is their main fundraiser; all proceeds are used for conservation, environmental education and technical assistance programs.





Can You Lend a Hand?

The East Haddam Green Committee is charged with surveying the town's eco-footprint, reporting on the results, and helping to promote a more eco-friendly town.

We're looking for a few new volunteers to join our committee. Meet residents with similar values and interests. Make a difference to your community and the environment. Join the East Haddam Green Committee!

To become a member, attend one of our monthly meetings or go to the First Selectmen's Office and complete a Committee Volunteer application.

Committee members or alternates must be town residents and at least 18 years old.

East Haddam Green Committee

Meets the First Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm
at the River House behind the Town Hall

Current Committee Members:

Ken Simon, Chairman
Chad Peterson, Vice-Chairman
Martha Hansen, Secretary
Nancy Pincus
Terri Smith

Any comments or suggestions, please email the Green Committee at easthaddamgreencommittee@gmail.com

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