

Reclaim the Commons 2006

Tuesday April 11

Community Gardening Project:

9am-3pm at Nelson St. & N. California Ave.

Parade! 4:30 pm

Meet at the Merchandise Mart (N. Franklin at the river), home of Monsanto's Chicago office. Head for the Biotech Industry Organization (BIO) Gala at the Field Museum for a "Mutant Ball!"

Animal Rights Response

8:30 am to 10:45am

Meet at the Corner of Cermak & Michigan. Protest the BIO convention at McCormick place as they holds a workshop discussing the threat posed to the Bio industry by the animal rights movement. As they discuss us inside, lets let them know that they can talk all they like, but we aren't going anywhere until every cage is empty!

Wednesday April 12th

6:00pm to 10:00pm Closing reception at the Chicago Theater
175 N. State Street.

Let's send them home with a clear message that we will never forget the animals nor will we forgive their industry for murdering them.

Please do everything you can to make it out to these events, this is a great opportunity to send a powerful message to the people who are directly responsible for the torture of murder of millions of animals a year. Don't let the chance pass you by. Come out and let the BIO convention know that they aren't welcome in Chicago!!!



Schedule of Events for Reclaim the Commons
www.reclaimthecommons.net
www.chicago.indymedia.org



Reclaim The Commons is a response to the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) Convention in Chicago from April 8th-12th. BIO is a group of the world's biggest agribusiness, pharmaceutical and bioweapons corporations. BIO promotes genetically modified (GM) food, corporate controlled farms, bioweapons research and a profit-driven healthcare system.

Join Reclaim the Commons to call for: Safe and healthy food, sustainable farms, the right to save and plant seeds, community garden space, science in the public interest, intact ecosystems, access to healthcare, genetic integrity of all life, biodiversity, human rights for farmers in the Global South, a world free of genetically engineered bioweapons and stopping cruelty to animals!

WELCOME CENTER: New World Resource Center (1300 N. Western Ave) will serve as a welcome center for Reclaim The Commons. There will maps, information, and computers available to use for free.

Welcome Center Hours (NWRC)

10am-2pm and 5pm-9pm on Saturday the 8th (Health and wellness for activists – training from 10-12)

The Green Scare - Presented by Don, volunteer with the North American Earth Liberation Prisoner Support Network (NAELPSN)

Since December, 2005 over a dozen people have been arrested around the country and charged with participation in Earth and Animal Liberation Front actions. Some of the defendants face life in prison, and tragically, one life has already been lost. Bill Rodgers, accused of multiple arsons, was found dead in his Arizona jail cell last December. Support for those arrested, whether they are innocent or guilty, is a crucial element in the struggle to defend the earth. In the words of eco-prisoner Jeff 'Free' Luers: "These people need your help... If you ever considered yourself part of this struggle, a part of this movement, if you were ever just thankful somebody was brave enough to make a stand - YOU have to help them."

The medical failure of animal testing and the fight to close Huntingdon Life Sciences - Jay Johnson

Come learn about the ethical and scientific arguments against animal testing as well as the history of the ongoing campaign to close Huntingdon Life Sciences (a contract research organization (CRO) which has been known to test GMO's on animals). A campaign which has come up against some of the largest companies in the world and won and has driven HLS to the brink of bankruptcy."

Radical Sustainability for Autonomous Communities Scott Kellogg, co-founder of Rhizome Collective, from Austin Texas

This is a workshop in urban ecological survival skills and will explore the cross-section of permaculture and social activism. This will be a skill-share focused on techniques used to secure people's access to life's basic necessities: food, water security, shelter, waste management and energy production. The techniques are ones which have been developed over the past five years at the Rhizome Collective, an urban sustainability and community organizing project in Austin, Texas.

Make shoes from your old sweatshirts! - Taught by Jenine, all the way from Providence, RI !

Learn to make shoes from recycled sweatshirts! DIY and make your next pair of shoes all from cheap or free materials - and hey, you're recycling!

Monday April 10th

Action in solidarity with farmers. Details to be announced.

Tapestry of the Commons, an Interactive Workshop
Jan Edwards and Nancy Price of Alliance for Democracy

What are the Commons? In this workshop we will explore natural and cultural commons; public and private property; interconnectedness and sustainability; and the threats of privatization, globalization, commodification and corporatization. With a grounding in history and through exercises and games we will emerge with ideas for focused action designed to reclaim our common wealth. Or at least have fun trying!

Mapping the Alternatives - Claire Pentecost and Daniel Tucker

Picture an alternative food system, incorporating small-scale local growers, equitable distribution, and resource recycling. Such an alternative is rapidly coming into being in Chicago. What exists already? What are the connections? What is still missing? In this workshop we will attempt to bring together the disparate parts of what is happening to produce better food and distribution in our region. We will workshop ways to literally picture and actively encourage these efforts through mapping. □ See the most recent issue of AREA Chicago for the inklings of these efforts www.areachicago.com

Movie Screening: "We Were Painting Butterflies".
Molly Pocket, of Bolozone Housing Collective and New Roots Urban Farm in Saint Louis

A documentary that chronicles the events surrounding the arrests of 27 activists who were planning to protest the 2003 World Agricultural Forum in St. Louis. Follow the stories of those entangled in the web of repression as the film explores the illegal police raids that took place at several collectives, and the subsequent effects these actions had on the Flying Rutabaga Cycle Circus and the St Louis community. Question/answer period and room to share stories to follow about: police repression, the World Agricultural Forum, the status of legal matters for those arrested in St Louis and how we can strengthen our support networks.

Another World Exists - Radish of Southern Exposure Seed Exchange in Virginia

Exploring intentional community. A short overview of egalitarian and ecologically-minded communities, and how to get connected.

12pm-9pm on Monday the 10th
10am-3pm on Tuesday the 11th

Saturday, April 8th:

Joint International GMO Opposition Day in 30 Countries!

Festival! 2-5 pm at Federal Plaza (Adams & Dearborn) Music, speakers, art making, food, kids' activities, circus performers, tabling & Really Really Free Market (bring something to give away or just come and get free stuff). Speakers include urban farmer and writer LaDonna Redmond, and representatives for Coalition of Imokalee Workers & Food Not Bombs.

Panel on Genetic Engineering and Human Rights – North and South
6:30 at DePaul University, Lincoln Park Campus, Schmidt Academic Ctr. Room 154, 2320 N. Kenmore. With Anuradha Mittal, writer and international speaker on human rights, trade and agriculture; Puerto Rican author and environmental educator Carmelo Ruiz; Sarah Alexander of White Earth Land Recovery Project; and John Kinsman, Wisconsin farmer and president of Family Farm Defenders. Moderated by Jeffrey Smith, author of Seeds of Deception.

Animal Rights Response to BIO

6:00pm Protest the Biotech Institute Opening Reception & Banquet
Sheraton Chicago Hotel, 301 E. North Water Street
This Banquet is sponsored by Abbott Labs, one of Huntingdon Life Sciences' (HLS) larger customers. Lets let them and the other people who murder animals for a living know that the torture Abbott pays for at HLS and the torture they inflict on the animals themselves is nothing to celebrate.

RECLAIM THE COMMONS WORKSHOP SCHEDULE:

Sunday, April 9th, Acme Art Works 1741 N. Western Ave. Doors Open at 9:00 am

9:30 Food Sovereignty 101, Seed Saving, Corporate Personhood

11:15 GMOs in Latin America, Movie: "We Were Painting Butterflies", Crafts with Plastic Bags, RTC Past and Future

1:45 Tapestry of the Commons, Mapping the Alternatives, Another World Exists (Intentional Community), The Green Scare

3:30 The Medical Failure of Animal Testing, Know Your Rights Training, Radical Sustainability for Autonomous Communities, Making Shoes with Recycled Sweatshirts

Animal Rights Response 11:00am

Protest the Biotech Career Fair
Hyatt Regency Chicago
151 E. Wacker Drive
Come out to educate the next generation of Biotech workers to the reality of animal experimentation.

Sunday's Reclaim the Commons Workshop Descriptions

Food Sovereignty 101 - John Peck, executive director, Family Farm Defenders

Many people in the U.S are unfamiliar with the concept of food sovereignty compared to food security. Unfortunately, food security has also become a “Trojan Horse” for creeping corporatization of the global food system. As a watered down “technical issue of how best to get food to those who need it, food security avoids the deeper political debate about why hunger exists at all in a world that has plenty of food. Food sovereignty, on the other hand, valorizes common sense principles of community autonomy, cultural integrity, and environmental stewardship – ie. people determining for themselves just what seeds they plant, what animals they raise, what type of farming occurs, and what they will ultimately eat for dinner. In this workshop will discuss the global principles of food sovereignty set forth by Via Campesina, and how these can bolster domestic campaigns for reclaiming our food/farm system.

Abolish Corporate Personhood - Jan Edwards of Alliance For Democracy

Slavery is the Legal Fiction that a Person is Property. Corporate Personhood is the Legal Fiction that Property is a Person. By looking at the Constitution and Supreme Court cases we will discuss the historical interplay between People's Rights and Corporate Rule, how and why the Courts gave personhood to corporations, why it is so detrimental to our democracy and what are the current strategies underway to Abolish Corporate Personhood. This workshop is information packed but easy to understand.

Basic Seed Saving - Radish of Southern Exposure Seed Exchange in Virginia

Since the 1970's over a thousand previously independent seed companies have been snatched up by huge corporations - many of them agrichemical corporations. But we don't have to buy seed from multinational corporations, and we can save our own seeds. Seed saving is a dying art, and we are losing hundreds of plant species each year. This is a beginner's guide to basic seed saving, keeping the control of the seed in the hands of the people.

GMO's in Latin America: A Geopolitical and Agroecological Outlook Carmelo Ruiz, Author of “Transgenic Ballad: Biotechnology, Globalization and the Clash of Paradigms”.

This workshop will provide a broad picture on what's happening regarding GMO's in Mesoamerica (genetic contamination of corn), South America (Roundup Ready soy) and the Caribbean (namely Cuba and Puerto Rico). The GMO issue will be placed within a broader eco-political perspective that will include militarism and free trade. Alternative grassroots movements will be discussed, as well as the profound difference and incompatibility between organic agribusiness and a truly revolutionary agroecological vision.

Crafts with Plastic Bags! - Jenine, all the way from Providence, Rhode Island!

Ever found yourself on a desert island with only plastic bags?? Learn how to make almost anything (re)using plastic bags!! From clothes, to shoes, to rope, and housewares- practically anything! Hands on workshop. Lots of information, too.

Reclaim the Commons: History and Future - Meddle Bolger, Ethan Genaver & Edmund Frost

From 2004 to 2006 – and beyond? Initially formed to oppose & demonstrate radical alternatives to BIO2004, RECLAIM THE COMMONS has grown from a single mobilization into an ongoing movement. This workshop will feature discussion with organizers of each of the RTC mobilizations in San Francisco, Philadelphia and Chicago. We will look forward to the 2007 convergence against BIO in Boston, as well as consider RTC's participation in mobilizations beyond biotech, such as global resistance against the July 15–17 2006 G8 Summit. We can also discuss the nitty-gritty that needs to happen in order to strengthen our long-term movement, like clarifying organizational structure & completing the long-delayed move of www.reclaimthecommons.net to a new (and much better) content management system!