



Quote of the Week: The Financial Crash

“Confident men took leave of common sense and bet on the idea of perpetual profit in the real estate market and crashed. But it wasn’t their money. It was your money they were messing with. And that’s why we need government regulators. Gimlet-eyed men with steel-rim glasses and crepe-soled shoes who check the numbers and have the power to say, “This is a scam and a hustle and either you cease and desist or you spend a few years in a minimum-security federal facility playing backgammon.”

-Garrison Keillor, *Alternet*, October 6, 2008

Bait and Switch on Disaster Relief Brings Pentagon Another Half Trillion

With the mainstream media focused on the outrageous \$850 bailout of Wall Street, the Senate sneaked through a separate \$633 billion bill last week, the bulk of which is allocated to increased funding for war (\$488 billion) and Homeland Security (\$73 billion). According to the Associated Press, “The administration won approval of the defense budget while Democrats wrested concessions from the White House on disaster aid, heating subsidies for the poor and smaller spending items.”

In related news *CNN* reported this week that 60% of Americans now expect the economic recession to metastasize into a full-blown depression, though *CNN* forgot to ask disgruntled taxpayers what they thought should be done to fix the economy. Here’s what OCA would suggest:

1. Implement massive cuts in military spending and get the hell out of Iraq and Afghanistan;
2. Ban all offshore, untaxed bank accounts and then start taxing these \$23 trillion dollars in assets;
3. Slap a .1% transaction tax on all stock transactions and currency speculation and use this trillion dollars in annual revenues to help rebuild the economy;
4. Nationalize the troubled banks that need bailouts, renegotiate their mortgages, and start investing these nationalized assets in green jobs, affordable mortgages, and retooling the economy.

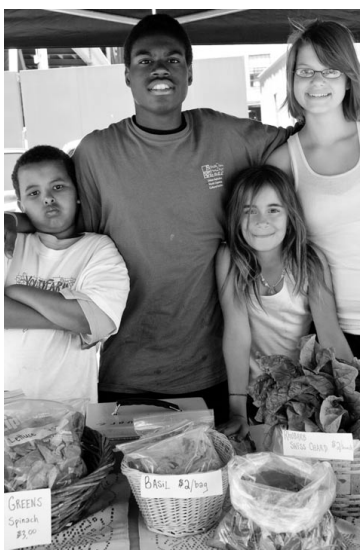
Old McDonald Outshines Ronald McDonald

Despite the ongoing economic recession, consumers are increasing their purchases of green or sustainably produced foods. One Florida-based chain, Pizza Fusion, delivers locally grown, family-farmed foods in hybrid vehicles. The chain now boasts 75 franchises in 15 states, all of which are built from recycled materials. Not to be outdone, a union of 42,000 North Dakota farmers have pooled their resources and invested more than \$6 million to build green restaurants in Washington D.C. to showcase food from family farms. One of the “farm-to-table” establishments is walking distance from the Capitol and the White House, offering a tasty home-cooked reminder to us policy-makers that this nation was built on the backbone of the family farmer. When asked if a meal at the restaurant has the potential to positively impact a congressman’s ability to reject the offers of a corporate-agribusiness lobbyist, one patron said, “It depends on how warm the apple pie is that day.”

Foodies, Teamsters Protest Whole Foods

Last weekend, OCA joined forces with the United Farm Workers, the Teamsters Union and the National Farm Workers Ministry and leafleted at Whole Foods Markets in 33 states. Our solidarity is having an impact. The entire \$70 billion organic and natural foods sector is watching this campaign very closely. Whole Foods Market is Country Natural Beef’s largest purchaser and can easily take a stand for domestic Fair Trade by pressing Beef Northwest to sit down with the United Farm Workers and negotiate a fair contract. Keep up the pressure by sending Whole Foods an email here. Many organic consumers and Fair Trade advocates are interested in learning more about this campaign and the plight of America’s farmworkers.

Creating Green Neighborhoods



Housing prices may be crashing, but there’s a new green networking trend that is picking up momentum in neighborhoods across the US. Citizens are abandoning expectations that the government is going to implement truly sustainable policies, and they are banding together to create their own green communities and neighborhoods. One example is the Nubanusit Neighborhood in New Hampshire, which is a green neighborhood of single family homes and multiplex units that share an organic farm, office space and common space. According to Lono Hunter, resident of the eco-neighborhood, “In terms of actually living in a way that can help the environment, I think you need the power of numbers.” The US Green Building Council is picking up on the trend and says it will begin applying a version of its Leadership in Energy Environmental Design (LEED) rating system to entire neighborhoods starting in 2009.

The Election: Time for Positive Change

Learn where your candidates stand on issues of Health, Justice, Sustainability, Peace, and Democracy at grassrootsnetroots.org
2008 Voting Alert: In 26 States, It’s Not Too Late to Register The Organic Consumers Association has joined the Peace Impact coalition to help register voters for the historic 2008 election. If you live in one of these states, AL, CA, CT, DE, KS, MD, MA, NE, NV, NC, NJ, NY, OK, OR, SD, UT, VT, WA, or WV, it’s not too late, but the deadlines are coming up, some as early as Friday, October 10. You can register online at peaceimpact.org ID, IA, ME, MN, NH, WI and WY have Election Day registration at the polls on November 4. ND doesn’t even have voter registration; you just show up and vote.

Please Donate

We know times are tough for everyone right now. That’s why the OCA continues to work for consumers, family farmers, our environment, and our most precious assets, our children. We want to continue fighting the good fight, as well as bring you *Organic Bytes*, but we need your donations to survive these financially difficult times. If you enjoy *Organic Bytes* and believe the world is a better place with OCA’s non-profit work, please consider donating today. Any size of donation is helpful and appreciated.

Donate Now: organicconsumers.org/donations.htm