

Designing Sustainability into Education and Rural Developments Working on Food Futures and Using Effective Microorganisms

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Abstract : *The need for sustainability is becoming a more pressing issue in our communities. It is all too important to create working systems that are effective in bringing about a holistic vision. In the light of the recent Foot and Mouth crisis and subsequent Economic Recovery plan for D&G (Dumfries and Galloway) there is increasing interest in developing progressive systems to provide education. In addition, the timely visit of Dr Higa to the Royal Agricultural College, England to talk on the topic of Foot and Mouth and the greater effects EM is having on farming around the world, the time is ripe to take action in building a healthy, wealthy sustainable environment, from this crisis. The rural market town of Castle Douglas is the site of a new Retail Project part of; Sosbie. (South of Scotland Business Efficiency Initiative) part of which is a waste audit in local businesses. The project is being run by; Sweap. (South West Environmental Action Project) Providing Community Environmental Support with the involvement of other groups, being (a) Thrift. (Stewartry Waste Reduction) working with D&G Education Department on a highly successful competition for 52 schools encouraging composting and compost-awareness. The stage two of the project is the introduction of seeds to grow in the compost and stage three is introducing composting with EM; (b) Envirowise. Practical Environmental Advice for Business, a Government programme that offers free, independent and practical advice to UK businesses to reduce waste at source and increase profits; (c) Sepa. (Scottish Environment Protection Agency); (d) D& G Council. (Dumfries and Galloway Council); (e) LSD which has set up composting systems using EM bokashi at a restaurant and a hotel in the town and has designed it to be part of the community food garden project, which is enabling food waste to be directed straight into the gardens behind the two premises. LSDS is also operating a bokashi making plant where 60kg of bokashi is made dried and bagged weekly.*

The development of the project with the recommendations by the groups above will create a model of local sustainability for other towns nationwide to follow. The project is already providing employment and education and helping to take the burden of the ever increasing waste stream. The growing of food using EM compost is providing the community with new food futures that will create a society with a fundamental understanding of the links between food, health, wealth, and the environment. EM will strengthen the economy of local organic and non-organic farmers by assisting soil enrichment and promoting more sustainable methods.
