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<u>FEBRUARY</u> 6-Workshops	<u>AUGUST</u> 1-NI. DI. 1-Brd. Mtg.(eve)	<u>JANUARY</u> 9-GM, Seed Varieties/ Garden Discussion	<u>JUNE</u> 19-GM, Rossie
<u>MARCH</u> 7-Annual Mtg.	<u>OCTOBER</u> 3-GM, Harvest Feast	<u>FEBRUARY</u> 1-Newsletter Deadline 6-Board Meeting (aft.)	<u>AUGUST</u> 1-NI. DI. 7-Brd. Mtg.
<u>MAY</u> 1-NI. DI. 2-Brd. Mtg.(eve.)	<u>NOVEMBER</u> 1-NI. DI. 7-Brd Mtg (aft)	<u>MARCH</u> 20-Annual Mtg.	<u>OCTOBER</u> 2-GM, Harvest Feast
<u>JUNE</u> 20-GM, Rossie	<u>DECEMBER</u> 5-GM	<u>MAY</u> 1-NI. DI. 3-Brd. Mtg.(eve.)	<u>NOVEMBER</u> 1-NI. DI. 6-Brd Mtg
	GM = General Meeting NI DI = Newsletter Deadline		<u>DECEMBER</u> 4-GM

CORNELL GRAD STUDENTS ARE INVITED TO GIVE WORKSHOPS ON FEB. 6

LIVING MULCH and SEASON EXTENSION are Feature Topics

A full day of Vegetable Production Workshops has been scheduled by the NFC, working together with the St. Lawrence County Co-operative Extension Service. These workshops, to be held in Canton on Saturday, February 6 (soon after you get this notice!), will cover a wide range of information useful to backyard gardeners, homesteaders, and market gardeners alike. Local growers are invited to share their experiences.

The morning session will be devoted to slide presentations and discussions by our three featured speakers, beginning with Jim Martindale at 9:00 A.M. Jim, a soil specialist and livestock nutrition consultant from Jefferson County, will concentrate on types of tillage, soil fertility basics, and the effects of soil balance on plant health.

Gay Nicholson, a grad student in the Vegetable Crops Department at Cornell, will talk at 10:00 about Cornell's pioneering research on "Living Mulches" and her particular role in that research. A Living Mulch attempts to protect and build soil by growing cover crops between rows of food crops. In theory, these grass or legume "mulches" could prevent erosion, leaching, and overheating of soil, and legumes could add nitrogen. The main problems seem to be selection of non-competitive species and controlling their growth in relation to the crops. Cornell is using herbicides for this, but mowing is being studied by other researchers at the Rodale Experimental Farm. Perhaps it's time for organic farmers to do their own experiments with this promising technique.

After Gay's talk, Peter Kohm, of the same department, will discuss his experiments with season-extending plastic tunnels, which protect from frost and speed up the early growth of plants. He has been doing innovative work with various irrigation systems, raised beds, trenches, and mulches in combination with "slitted row covers" of clear 1.5 mil plastic, which need no daily manual ventilation (normally a big chore with such solar devices). Doug Jones will add some comments about his personal experience with different vegetables started early under plastic.

After lunch, our Cornell guests will join several local growers in a panel discussion of various growing methods (see list below). The final workshop will cover vegetable varieties recommended for the North Country, relying on the experience of local growers and reports

by our guests on the latest variety trials at Cornell. These variety-sharing workshops have been of great benefit to participants in the past. All of these workshops are likely to be quite informative.

Future workshops on Marketing and Small Fruit Production are planned for March and April. What else would the NFC membership like to hear about? Small grains? Food Preservation? Beekeeping? Seed Saving? Submit your ideas to members of the Board of Directors.

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DETAILS OF WORKSHOPS:

Place: Basement of United Methodist Church in Canton, corner of Chapel and Court Street, one block from Courthouse.

Time: Saturday, February 6, 9 to 5, lunchbreak at noon. Bring your own lunch (refreshments provided); several local restaurants are close by.

Fee: \$3.00 per person; NFC members get \$1.00 discount.

Childcare: Will be provided in separate room.

Schedule: 9:00-12:00 - Three featured workshops described above.
12:00-1:15 - Lunch break (NFC will provide coffee, tea, juice, milk). 1:15-3:15 - Panel discussion including the following topics: Growing Seedlings; Use of Various Mulches; Cultivation Techniques; Raised Beds; French Intensive Methods. Panel will include Peter Kohm, Gay Nicholson, several local growers and greenhouse operators. 3:30-5:00 - Vegetable Varieties.

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Need Help? Try A Farm Apprentice!

Doug Jones

Farmers--Do you have a very busy summer lying ahead, and a yearning to do all those little projects you never seem to have the time for? Do you like sharing your skills with other people? Would you like to trade your hard-earned skills for someone's inexperienced yet eager labor? Are there new things to learn each day at your farm?

If all your answers are yes, you should consider taking an apprentice through the NFC Program. We've had nine apprentices at Birdsfoot over the past four years, and we've enjoyed working with all of them. Each one remains a special friend of ours, some befriended each other, and all speak of pleasant memories of their stay here. This is generally true of most of the 29 apprentices we have placed on local farms in the past two years. They were drawn from a total list of about 60 applicants.

Of those who were not placed, most had decided to get a job or apprenticeship elsewhere, or went to summer school. Very few of those who were aggressive and interested enough to actually come and meet the prospective host farmers were actually disappointed. In the posters which I send to colleges and food co-ops in New York State and Massachusetts, I stress the importance of preliminary visits to the host farms. The goal of these visits--along with the written information supplied by both applicants and farmers--is to insure the best possible choice by both parties, to prevent unfortunate incompatibilities of lifestyles, personalities, etc., and to help both parties gain a clear understanding of what will be expected of them.