

In Balance With Nature

In the beginning
There was Earth, beautiful and wild;
And then man came to dwell.
At first, he lived like other animals
Feeding himself on creatures and plants around him.
And this was called IN BALANCE WITH NATURE.
Soon man multiplied.
He grew tired of ceaseless hunting for food;
He built homes and villages.
Wild plants and animals were domesticated.
Some men became Farmers so that others might become Industrialists, Artists, or Doctors.
And this was called Society.
Man and Society progressed.
With his God-given ingenuity, man learned to feed, clothe, protect, and transport himself more
efficiently so he might enjoy Life.
He built cars, houses on top of each other, and nylon.
And life became more enjoyable.
The men called Farmers became efficient.
A single Farmer grew food for 28 (*155) Industrialists, Artists, and Doctors.
And Writers, Engineers, and Teachers as well.
To protect his crops and animals, the Farmer produced substances to repel or destroy Insects,
Diseases, and Weeds.
These were called Pesticides.
Similar substances were made by Doctors to protect humans.
These were called Medicine.
The Age of Science had arrived and with it came better diet and longer, happier lives for more
members of Society.
Soon it came to pass, that certain well-fed members of Society
Disapproved of the Farmer using Science.
They spoke harshly of his techniques for feeding, protecting, and preserving plants and animals.
They deplored his upsetting the Balance of Nature;
They longed for the Good Old Days.
And this had emotional appeal to the rest of Society.
By this time Farmers had become so efficient,
Society gave them a new title: Unimportant Minority.
Because Society could not ever imagine a shortage of food.
Laws were passed abolishing Pesticides, Fertilizers, and Food Preservatives.
Insects, Diseases, and Weeds flourished.
Crops and animals died.
Food became scarce.
To survive, Industrialists, Artists, and Doctors were forced to grow their own food.
They were not very efficient.
People and governments fought wars to gain more agricultural land.
Millions of people were exterminated.
The remaining few lived like animals.
Feeding themselves on creatures and plants around them.
And this was called IN BALANCE WITH NATURE.

This poem was written by the late Dr. John Carew, former head of the Horticulture Department at Michigan State University, scientist, teacher, and humanitarian. First published in June 1970 (*updated with 2015 statistics), it has been reprinted throughout the world. Consider his words carefully as you are confronted with the issues of food safety, chemical use, and farming in the future. Make an effort to pass this message on.