

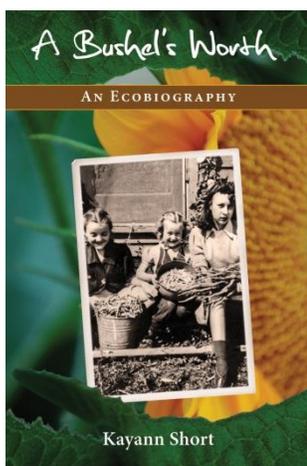
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Announcing the August Publication of
A Bushel's Worth: An Ecobiography

by Kayann Short

A personal love story of the land, harvest, history, and friendship energizing today's Community Supported Agriculture Movement



“How has your life been shaped through your connection with the natural world?” This is the question Kayann Short, a writer, teacher, activist, and farmer, asks her students as they embark on writing their own ecobiographies. *A Bushel's Worth* is Kayann's own answer to this question, shared with readers through her generous story of Community Supported Agriculture on Stonebridge, a ten-acre, organic farm which she and her partner, John, own and operate on the Colorado Front Range.

This debut book illustrates the growth and nurturing of community along with soil, trees, and crops. From a front porch folk song fest to a toppings-to-share pancake breakfast, from tractor tribulations to a deceptively named Great Wheat Harvest, teamwork, trials, and laughter abound as readers explore along with

Kayann the ways in which lessons from the past inform and inspire the sustainable communities of today and beyond.

Crafted with peaceful prose and seasoned with smatterings of diary entries written by the author's grandmother—as well as hearty recipes from then and now—*A Bushel's Worth: An Ecobiography* is rich with poignant connections to the past, a practical and joyful focus on the present, and, in true farmer fashion, anticipation for the future.

ISBN: 978-1-937226-19-0 / \$14.95 / 215 pages / Trade Paperback / August 2013

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About the Author



Kayann Short, Ph.D., is a writer, farmer, teacher, and activist at Stonebridge Farm, an organic community-supported farm in the Rocky Mountain foothills. She has directed memoir and digital storytelling projects with community elders, adult literacy students, and non-profit organizations. Her writing has appeared in *Women's Review of Books*, *The Bloomsbury Review*, *Edible Front Range*, and *Colorado Gardener*. More on her ecology-based memoir work is available at www.ecobiography.com. Besides growing delicious food at Stonebridge, Short teaches the important place of organic food production and agricultural preservation in a healthy, environmentally sustainable community.

Visit Kayann's website: kayannshort.com

Early Praise for *A Bushel's Worth*

"*A Bushel's Worth* is my favorite kind of nonfiction. Not only is it about many topics close to my heart—gardening, food, family—it is a beautifully told story, and a love story at that, centered around the love of a couple, their love for the land, and a community's love for a way of life. This book forever changed my perspective and awareness as I 'walk out' in my own garden."

—**Katrina Kittle**, author, *The Blessings of the Animals*

"A heartfelt meditation on farm, food, and family. *A Bushel's Worth* tells a love story of the land and a life spent caring for it."

—**Hannah Nordhaus**, author, *The Beekeeper's Lament: How One Man and Half a Billion Honeybees Help Feed America*

"Kayann Short shares a passionate and often lyrical account of how she and her husband John took their first brave steps toward revitalizing a small Colorado farm and with it their lives and the community they drew around them. This is a book about how agriculture continues to create culture when it is practiced with generosity, creativity and attention. It is an inspiring story, a gift for all of us, both on and off the farm, who are trying to learn how to slow down our frenzied lives so that we may give ourselves to what really matters."

—**Gregory Spaid**, author, *Grace: Photographs of Rural America*

"With a companionable mix of literary and earthy sensibilities, Kayann Short writes with graceful, ferocious attentiveness [and] finds reassurance for herself and her modern family in 'the old wisdom of the fields.'"

—**John Calderazzo**, author, *Rising Fire: Volcanoes & Our Inner Lives*

"[A] beautifully written and sensually rich 'ecobiography' of farm life . . . *A Bushel's Worth* is a loving natural history – of a farm, a marriage, and a way of life that has changed interestingly and dramatically over just a few generations."

—**Jane Shellenberger**, author, *Organic Gardener's Companion: Growing Vegetables in the West*

"The book is a substantial meal . . . as much about growing community as it is about growing food, and it leaves the reader with a generous bushel of instruction and inspiration on both counts."

—**Susan Becker**, Director, Boulder Public Library Oral History Program

“A Bushel’s Worth: An Ecobiography eloquently depicts humans and nature coexisting and mutually benefiting not only in theory, but in actuality . . . where people treat each other respectfully as they gently work on and with the land.”

—**Shelly Eberly**, National Outings Leader, Sierra Club

A Conversation with Kayann Short

Q: Why did you become a writer?

A: I don’t think of myself as having “become” a writer. I’ve always written, from short stories in elementary school to an editorial column in my high school newspaper to my dissertation and journal articles as an academic. Along the way, I’ve written letters to the editor and kept a myriad of journals and created a blog. What’s different now is that I’m publishing my writing in a new form: an ecobiography, or ecology-based memoir, in a more personal voice that describes my own life events and reflection on the larger context in which they occur. Like growing vegetables, writing is something that’s always been a part of me and always will be.

Q: What does being a feminist mean to you and how does it affect your involvement in CSA?

A: I’ve been a feminist all my life, although I didn’t use the term much until I went to college and joined the campus feminist group. I always bristled at the idea that girls couldn’t do certain things like wear pants to school. It wasn’t until sixth grade in 1971 that we girls challenged that ridiculous rule—and won. I reject the idea that people are divided into only two gender groups with rigid demarcations that privilege one group over the other. I taught women’s studies for many years, incorporating service learning community projects in areas of women’s health, labor, and education. I especially loved teaching women’s literature classes because of all the great books with strong female protagonists as empowering role models.

Certainly one area impacted by feminist change is agriculture, where women have become actively involved as farm owners, managers, and marketers. The return to smaller-scale farms and organic methods in particular has attracted women to farming. I’m not the one who drives the tractor on our farm—although many women do—but I am usually respected for my farming expertise. Sometimes the older, conventional male farmers will look right past me to John in meetings but in the CSA and organic fields, we’re generally treated as equal farming partners. Having come from a farming family, I’m proud that agriculture is becoming open to women in all levels of participation.

Q: What is your advice to those just learning about the CSA movement and hoping become more involved, or to those who perhaps do not have access to a CSA but wish to eat more healthfully and locally?

A: I encourage everyone who wants a healthier, more locally based diet to find the resources in their area (localharvest.org is a good place to start) or create them, if that’s necessary. As I discuss in the book, one of the roots of CSA is in Japan following WWII when mothers wanted chemical-free food for their families and approached farmers to grow it. If a CSA or what’s now called NSA—neighborhood supported agriculture—is missing in an area, surely someone has a farm, garden, or growing space that could be

cooperatively developed. If there's no farmer's market, work with city or county officials and local gardeners, farmers, and businesses to get one started.

Q: What do you see as the greatest challenge facing the CSA movement?

A: For all farmers, no matter what form their market takes, the changing climate is a major concern. Weather conditions have always been unpredictable in farming, but climate zones were fairly stable so we knew which types and varieties of plants would do well in our particular ecosystem. Today, things like the length of the growing season and temperatures during that season are less predictable. Add unusual and even catastrophic weather events and dwindling water supplies to all that, and the challenge to know what to grow and how to grow it becomes even greater. With climate change, farming becomes riskier but, even more frightening, our food supplies become even more unstable.

Q: What's in store for the future of CSA?

A: CSA has reached the point where newer and older farmers have some differing concerns. For new farmers, farming has a pretty steep learning curve and reaching new members requires ingenuity. For those of us who helped create the CSA movement more than twenty years ago, our concerns also lie with the future: ensuring that our farms continue past our own lives, especially for those of us farming in the midst of development pressures.

The CSA model is a flexible one and is even being adapted for other realms like community-supported artwork. Each CSA has to find its own niche and as that happens, I hope more people will join a CSA and stick with it. We're lucky that a large portion of our membership returns each year because we know that in this fast-paced, convenience-based society, incorporating fresh vegetables into their meals isn't for everyone. The members who do return year after year know that CSA is not just about what the consumer gets, but about maintaining agricultural land and heritage. As CSA farmers age, the CSA movement will need to consider what traditional farmers have been facing for decades: how to keep a farm a farm.

Q: What do you hope readers will receive or learn from reading your book?

A: In *A Bushel's Worth*, I alternate between memories of my grandparents' North Dakota farms and stories of our own farm, Stonebridge, today. Whether by viewing family farms of the past or small farms of the present, I'd like readers to see that farming is not inherently synonymous with industrial agriculture and its mechanization, chemical inputs, and export commodity profit motive. I'm an advocate for small-scale, organic agriculture because I believe that local foodsheds offer hope for the future of healthy eating and healthier environments. I'd love readers to be inspired to connect with farms like ours in whatever way they can—as growers, members, consumers, cooks, neighbors, volunteers, or advocates for the preservation of rural land. If each person has some relationship with a small-scale farm, the growth of the local food movement will be tremendous and, in turn, will influence the politics behind the way we grow, eat, and live.

For the complete conversation, visit torreyhouse.com.

Events

Tuesday, August 20, 2013 @ 7:30 PM

Boulder Bookstore

1107 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO

A Bushel's Worth Book Launch

Saturday, September 7, 2013 @ 2-4 PM

Macdonald Book Shop

152 E. Elkhorn, Estes Park, CO

Book Signing

Sunday, September 15, 2013

Stonebridge Farm

5169 Ute Highway, Longmont, CO

Book Reading and Harvest Festival

October 2013

Mountain and Plains Independent Bookseller Association Tradeshow

Denver, CO

Wednesday, November 13, 2013 @ 1 PM

Longmont Genealogical Society, First Lutheran Church

803 3rd Avenue, Longmont, CO

April 2014

The Cupboard

152 S. College Avenue, Fort Collins, CO

About Torrey House Press



Torrey House Press, based in Torrey and Salt Lake City, Utah, is an independent publisher of fiction and literary nonfiction. Torrey House titles range from historical to contemporary to futuristic, incorporating cultures both pioneering and ancient, and utilizing language as rich and varied as the landscape itself. A passion for place drives THP and its authors, and this passion manifests itself strongly in the striking prose and unexpected plots of each Torrey House title.

By providing readers with good books, Torrey House seeks to increase appreciation for natural landscapes and foster awareness of many often-overlooked environmental concerns. Two percent of Torrey House sales are donated to not-for-profit environmental organizations supporting conservation in the West, home to so many of our nation's public lands. Donations also fund a scholarship available to up-and-coming writers at western colleges.

