



Goodbye Céline

Posted by [Claude Jolicoeur](#)

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Goodbye Céline](#)

December 17, 2015 07:36AM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

Tonight I'd like to tell you about a good friend of mine, Céline Caron, who really is a pioneer of holistic orcharding - although she never really used this word to describe her way to grow plants.

Back in the 1970's she and Yves installed themselves on a beautiful land just outside Quebec City and started growing all sorts of things, including fruits, vegetables, nuts, chickens, and so on. In 1981 she was co-authoring a fruit growing book, *Guide pratique de production - fruits et petits fruits*, which was translated in English and adapted by Bart Hall-Beyer, published under the title *Ecological Fruit Production in the North*. Those who are lucky enough to have a copy of this book know how informative it is... You may also have read one of her numerous articles published with MOFGA. Mostly on permaculture, fruit growing, ecology or soil health.

She was part of the research group at Laval University who published the first scientific papers on ramial wood chips. This was in late 1970's or beginning of 1980... Since those times, she has always been obsessed by the health of the soil. For her, it's all in the soil. She has put most of her efforts in understanding, explaining, communicating the relationship between soil health and good agricultural products. Even considering herself as a *soil doctor* when joking... She recently completed the writing of a new book on soil health and on how precious soil really is.

Céline is a survivor. On December 15 1994, she was in New Zeland for a conference where she presented a paper (1) on ramial wood chips, and was struck by something (I don't really know what it was, some really nasty microbe) that almost killed her - and should normally have killed her... She is a fighter and she survived, but after a coma that lasted weeks, she woke with kidneys that didn't function anymore, and other physical disabilities. She nevertheless continued growing fruits and other plants, and doing her research.

This afternoon, I went at the hospital to kiss her goodbye. After 21 years of survival since this incident, her body decided it was enough.

[CelineCaron.jpg](#)

Bon voyage Céline, we'll miss you.

Claude

(1) this paper on RWC is quite interesting and may be downloaded here

[\[www.aggra.org\]](http://www.aggra.org)

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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[Paul Weir](#)

[Re: Goodbye Céline](#)

December 21, 2015 03:33AM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 187

Claude, that was a lovely remembrance and eulogy you shared. From what you have written, I can tell that Céline was indeed one special lady and deeply holistic in her approach to connecting with her fruit and the wonderful living soil that made it possible. She made a genuine difference with her outreach, to a great many, and she did it until the very end.

I am sorry for the loss of your close friend, Claude.

A toast to Céline, one of the great ones

[Gopher Hill Apples](#)

Zone 8 in California

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[Nick Segner](#)

[Re: Goodbye Céline](#)

December 21, 2015 11:59PM

Registered: 9 years ago

Posts: 49

Claude-

Sorry for your loss. It's clear, as Paul stated above, that she must have been a remarkable woman. That paper was a joy to read!

Nick Segner

Wildcat Valley Farm
Zone 8b
Olympic Peninsula Rainshadow
Port Angeles, Washington

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 01/11/2016 11:39PM by Nick Segner.

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[Michael Phillips](#)

[Re: Goodbye Céline](#)

December 22, 2015 05:44PM

Moderator

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 621

Walking through Celine's orchard was an inspiration for me way back. We talked about ramial wood chips, soil ecology, and unruly Patten pears. This was the land where I first saw seeded comfrey ... and it grew rampantly throughout her gardens and tree meadows (seek out the Bocking cultivars, folks). Over dinner at Claude's I heard tales of how Celine and Yves helicoptered into the Artic in order to ski their way home. As in hundreds of miles of trekking back to civilized lands. Hers was a life fully-lived. I do want to see her final work on soil health, Claude, when it comes to be published (hopefully in a recognized language, *mon ami!*). This is the woman who gave holistic fruit growers vital understanding about white rots and humic/fulvic acid formation and thus long-term fertility. I will continue to hear her voice on the winds as I walk amongst my trees.

[Lost Nation Orchard](#)

Zone 4b in New Hampshire

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Re: Goodbye Céline](#)

December 23, 2015 05:15AM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

Quote

Michael wrote:

I do want to see her final work on soil health, Claude, when it comes to be published (hopefully in a recognized language, *mon ami!*)

I am not too sure, Michael, where this work stands... I know she completed the manuscript and last summer she was searching for a publisher, either French or English. I then gave her the contact of our common editor Ben, and also of my French editor. She might have submitted it to Ben - I don't know. I saw her again in September at our annual apple party, but we didn't discuss about the book.

When I went to visit on Wednesday, someone (probably Yves) told me the manuscript had been accepted for publication. But Céline was still alive then, although extremely weak (she left us on Thursday morning), and this wasn't really the subject we talked about as you may imagine. So I don't even know if it is a French or English publisher... And will it be ever published now that she is gone - I can't answer to that, unfortunately. We both know how the interaction between author and editor is important during those stages...

So that is where we are my friend! Not many answers I am afraid.

Claude

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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[Jeb Thurow](#)

[Re: Goodbye Céline](#)

December 27, 2015 02:39AM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 15

Claude

That was a great eulogy and way to remember a close friend. I did not know her, but I do have the book "Ecological fruit production in the north" well worn and full of notes. I hope her book on soils is published

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Re: Goodbye Céline](#)

January 10, 2016 07:03PM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

I was able to talk to Yves yesterday about Céline's book on soils.

Well... it is in French! She didn't have the time to write the English version. Title is *Planète Terre en SOL majeur*, and in French is an analogy to a musical part, the French word SOL being the soil and also the music note G - In English this would translate as *Earth Planet*

in G/Soil Major... but it doesn't work as well.

She was able to complete the texts for it, and at the moment a couple of her close collaborators are reviewing and editing it. Yves was telling she didn't have the time to search for and find a publisher interested, but he wants to make sure it is printed, at least in small quantity for the people interested.

Claude

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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