

Decision making and meetings



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Community gardens are managed in a variety of ways. Some have co-ordinators or management committees who make the day-to-day decisions about running the garden, others have working groups responsible for different areas, or 'all in' processes to involve all members/gardeners in decision making. Whatever structure you decide on, clear and effective decision making processes are essential for community gardens' wellbeing and growth.

All garden decision making processes will involve at least some (and perhaps many!) meetings. These are opportunities for gardeners and their supporters to gather together, enjoy one another's company, share ideas and enthusiasm, make decisions, and further the growth of the garden and its projects. Utilising effective facilitation and decision making skills and processes can help your group not only to come to good decisions, but ensure that decisions are put into practice effectively.

Management /co-ordinating committees

Community gardens that are incorporated as Associations usually have a management or co-ordinating committee (sometimes called a co-ordinating collective or an executive) as one of their decision-making and management structures. A well functioning and convivial committee can contribute greatly to a successful, resilient, flourishing community garden. Support yours to be its best.

What is a management/ Co-ordinating Committee?

A management or co-ordinating committee (or collective) is elected by members to run the business of the community garden on behalf of members. Associations have an Annual General Meeting (AGM) each year to decide who will be on the management committee for the coming year.

It includes designated roles and responsibilities such as treasurer, public officer, and secretary.

A management committee is accountable to members, gardeners, funding bodies, and external 'clients'.

Effective committees

- Work in support of the garden's aims, objectives, and vision.
- Include cross sectional representation from the garden organisation – volunteers, plot holders, supporters, training participants, local community members, employees, client groups, etc.
- Have an induction process that ensures committee members understand their personal roles and responsibilities and those of the committee.
- Are well informed about the workings and goings on of the garden.
- Have good support from the community garden as a whole.
- Target and attract people with key interests, skills and networks to fill management committee roles.
- Rely on agreed meeting and decision making procedures.
- Have friendly, efficient, well facilitated meetings.
- Provide training and/ or mentoring for management committee members.
- Have effective communication between management committee and garden members/ volunteers/ grassroots.

Resource:

"Just a tick!" – a Best Practice Survival Guide for Committees and Boards of Management Kate Reynolds, Adelaide:Volunteering SA 1999 69 pp

Targeted at community organisations, this guide covers constitutions, legal structures, systems of management and governance, roles and responsibilities of committees, finding and keeping committee members, and dealing with conflict. Available from CANH and other community organisations for around \$7.

Working groups

A working group may be ongoing, such as a fundraising sub-committee; or temporary, like a working group to design a new seating area.

Delegating tasks and decisions to smaller working groups can be an effective way of getting things done and making general or committee meetings more efficient.

Working groups (and individuals taking on tasks on behalf of the garden) need clear guidelines about what they are responsible for and by when, within a context of how their work fits with the larger project. Any person or group who takes responsibility for an aspect of the garden needs the trust and support of other gardeners and clear information about what decisions they are able to make and what should be referred to a larger group or co-ordinator.

Agree to processes for 'checking in' on the progress of working groups, for example asking working groups to present a report or update at each committee meeting.

Succession planning

Ideally, all roles at the garden should have at least three people involved: the person currently filling the role, the person who has handed it over to them and is still available for advice, and a person learning the ropes to take it on next. Part of every role in the garden, whether as Treasurer or as Tuesday chook feeder, should be to prepare to hand the role onto the next person who will take responsibility for it. What can you do to make it easy for them to understand and do what you do? This may mean writing down or otherwise sharing the range of tasks you do for the garden. It may mean gathering and filing information in a way that can be easily used by the next person (last year's financial records, phone numbers for chicken grain suppliers...). It may mean developing and recording systems that make the role easier and more effective (setting up templates in a computer program, redesigning the chicken dome...). It may also mean mentoring someone, or several people, to learn the skills you are using in your role.

Decision making processes

A clear and agreed upon decision making process is essential for any group to function effectively. There are numerous variations on decision making processes, from the parliamentary style 'Robert's Rules of Order' to unanimity under the apple tree, informal delegation to formalised consensus processes. Some involve a high level of participation from many people, others delegate more decision making authority to individuals and small groups. The decision making process you choose or develop can reflect and strengthen the values of your group and contribute to the effectiveness and pleasantness of your garden's management.

Voting processes

There are more options for voting-based decision making than there may appear at first glance!

Some groups find that requiring a two-thirds majority helps the group to reach better decisions and maintain group cohesion than a simple or 50% + 1 majority.

Some groups restrict voting rights to certain people at a meeting, for example financial members of the organisation, people who have attended a certain number of previous meetings, or people who are actively involved in or effected by a decision.

Any voting model will achieve better outcomes with good facilitation.

Consensus decision making

Consensus decision making aims to make creative decisions which draw together the whole group's best thinking, without the creation of 'losers', and with attention to the maintenance of non-hierarchical relationships. Consensus decision making enables groups to attend to two equally crucial aspects of group process:

- The task dimension – achieving the group's purposes and the goals it sets itself
- The maintenance dimension – building and maintaining good relationships, commitment, and creativity within the group.

Consensus is both a goal and a process. The goal is to reach decisions that everybody in the group can live with and is committed to seeing put into practice effectively. The process is a decision-making structure that enables the expression of individual ideas, opinions and creative thinking, while at the same time prioritising collective values and goals over the goals or ideas of the individuals within the group. In order to achieve this balance, the consensus decision making model is (contrary to many people's expectations) formal and highly structured, with each stage of the decision making process designed to reinforce the model's underlying principles. The practice of respectful and reflective listening is a key element of the decision making process. Consensus is also a very flexible model, adaptable to the structure and goals of very different organisations. The process of consensus decision making involves inviting people to voice their ideas and opinions, listening carefully, and appreciating different points of view to one's own. Each person brings different skills, experiences, and attitudes to the consensus process. All have value.

It is essential that everyone involved in a consensus decision making process has a clear understanding of the principles and practice of consensus, and is willing to give it a go, and that someone acts as a facilitator to help the meeting run smoothly.

The consensus process may begin with encouraging everyone present to share their ideas, thoughts, hopes and concerns about the issue under consideration, or it may begin with someone offering a proposal for an action.

The facilitator and others in the group pay attention to what's being said, and when common threads and areas of agreement begin to appear, they try to summarise them and form proposals. For example, "it seems like we're all thinking an that open garden day sometime in June would be a good idea – I propose that we decide to work towards having an open garden day one weekend in June, and form a working group to make it happen".

Once a proposal has been put to the group, the facilitator asks for any clarifying questions about the proposal, and then for any concerns or reservations about the proposal.

If people raise concerns about the original proposal, their ideas are taken into account, there is more discussion, and if possible, a new proposal is made, and consensus is tested again.

If no one raises any other issues, the group has achieved a consensus and can move on to the next issue at hand. In some groups, facilitators formally test for consensus by asking if anyone wishes to block or stand aside from the proposal. For some groups, an option to formally 'stand aside' from a decision enables people to express their opposition to a proposal and to note that they may not participate in enacting the decision whilst accepting the decision of others in the group. In formal consensus process, it is possible for any participant in a meeting to block or veto a decision. In many groups, the only grounds that a person may use to block is if they feel a decision violates the core principles or aims of the group or would cause harm to the group or its members. Some groups set time limits for particular decisions, and if consensus is not reached, they may put a decision aside to the next meeting, perhaps asking people to bring additional information that may help the group to reach a decision.

Consensus decision making processes may be used for some or all decisions made by a group. Many find that better decisions are made through consensus, and that people are more committed to carrying out decisions they have agreed to.

Resources

Consensus Decision Making

Introduction to consensus, including why use consensus, what's required, key guidelines and variations. http://www.uhc.org.uk/webpages/toolbox/meetings_and_or-organisation/consensus_short.htm

On Conflict and Consensus: A Handbook on Formal Consensus Decisionmaking, C.T. Butler and Amy

Rothstein Portland: Food Not Bombs 1987

A comprehensive guide to consensus decision making, including structures, dealing with conflict, roles, and techniques. Available at the Consensus Project, <http://www.consensus.net/>

Effective meetings

Good meetings encourage people to remain involved, committed and positive. They can even be fun. No matter the decision making process you decide on, the following suggestions will help create effective meetings that not only make good decisions, but ensure they are put into practice efficiently.

Agree on a place and time

Decide on regular meetings at the same place and time so people can plan to be there. Meet only as often as necessary – don't meet weekly if you could meet monthly and organise by another means in between (eg via smaller working groups).

If you don't have a garden site suitable for meetings, look for a free meeting space at a library, community centre, university, church or school. Or meet in a café – talk to the managers and book a table at a time when it's convenient for people to take up table space for an extended period. A perceived expectation that they will be expected to buy something at an expensive café may deter some people from attending. Avoid meeting in people's houses as this can make meetings feel cliquy or exclusive to new members.

Value people's time and punctuality by starting and finishing on time.

Prepare an agenda beforehand

An agenda sets a clear purpose for your meeting and enables people to prepare and think about items before the meeting.

Distribute the agenda before the meeting, perhaps via email. Make sure you include the place and time if this varies. Some groups allocate a time for each agenda item (eg. Open day planning update: 5 minutes). At times, it may be useful to circulate background information before the meeting as well.

If you have different people coming to each meeting, allow time for a brief round of introductions. Introductions are helpful for remembering names, and if you ask people to share something about themselves (eg. something good that happened to you this week) they can help to build your group's sense of community. You may want to include time at the end to evaluate the meeting process – new people can be particularly good judges.

Roles

Every person in a meeting has the responsibility and the capacity to make a difference to the way that meeting works. Each meeting should have people taking particular responsibility for facilitation and for minute taking. Some groups also assign other roles, such as time keeping, co-facilitating, and 'jargon busting' (keeping an eye out for acronyms or language that may be confusing to some participants). Roles may be fulfilled by one person, or rotate at each meeting. Sharing minute taking and facilitation skills within the group can help everyone participate more effectively in meetings.

During a meeting, the facilitator's role is to attend to both 'task' (keeping to the agenda, recording decisions



SA Community Gardening Network meeting, Fern Avenue Community Garden. Photo: Annemarie Brookman

made) and 'maintenance' (ensuring everyone has an opportunity to speak, looking for common ground) goals.

Outcomes

Meeting minutes are an important way of making sure all topics raised have been dealt with.

- Any decisions made in a meeting should be included in the minutes.
- Any tasks identified should have a person (or people) responsible, a date for completion, and possibly a person to provide advice or to report to inbetween meetings.
- Any tasks identified or ideas proposed that were not decided on should be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

At the end of a meeting everyone should know:


- When and where the next meeting is
- What they are supposed to do
- How to get in touch with people if they want to help/ get involved/ ask a question
- Who will facilitate and prepare an agenda for the next meeting, and how to contact them.

Distribute minutes as soon as possible after the meeting.

Training

Consider holding a facilitation workshop at your garden, or attending training courses held for community organisations by local councils and community organisations.

Resources

 There is a Facilitation Workshop outline on page 77 of this booklet, which includes handouts

Meetings: A guide for facilitators and A User's guide to meetings

Both of these factsheets can be downloaded from the Growing Community website, www.cahn.asn.au/community_gardening

Facilitating Meetings Effectively

http://www.uhc.org.uk/webpages/toolbox/meetings_and_organisation/facilitating_meetings_effectively.htm

Taking minutes

http://www.uhc.org.uk/webpages/toolbox/meetings_and_organisation/taking_meeting_minutes.htm

Administration and management systems

The background of the slide is a solid green color. Overlaid on this is a detailed, light-green line drawing of various leaves and branches, resembling a dense foliage or a large plant. The leaves are of different shapes and sizes, some with prominent veins, and they are arranged in a way that fills the entire background behind the text.

Administration and management systems

✱ You can use the sample volunteer application form on page 99 as a starting point for developing your own information collecting systems

Having clear guidelines and policies, capable administrative processes, and effective management systems in place will allow your garden to function smoothly and to grow to its full potential.

This section includes information on developing rules and policies, including plot allocation and use, establishing administrative systems, managing money, evaluating projects, garden safety and health and insurance. It includes volunteer registration forms that can also be downloaded from <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx> and adapted for use at your garden.

Rules and guidelines

Community gardens require strategies and systems for managing participation, development, maintenance, administration, safety, and security. Developing these systems takes time, but your project will not reach its full potential unless you put the time into this area. Clearly document and make available your management approach and expectations to gardeners to prevent misunderstanding and conflict

New volunteers, plot-holders and others involved should have this information explained to them and provided in written form before they start – this leaves no room for misunderstanding of what you 'are' and 'are not' allowed to do. Ensure that you cater to the language groups of your gardeners – provide translations of all documents where required. ✱

Following are examples of community gardens' rules/guidelines for gardeners from Collingwood Children's farm, Melbourne which is composed of individual plots, and Kurruru Pingyarendi, Gilles Plains SA, who are a shared garden. Feel free to draw from or adapt them to use for your own garden. ✱

Set up capable administrative systems

Think about the information required to manage the garden and to how to store it. When people apply for a garden plot, for example, collect information that will help with the allocation process and later administration tasks. ✱ When people inquire about volunteering, collect information about what their interests are, when

they're available, and so on ✱. A database may be the best way to store information such as waiting list and plot holder details, volunteers' details, interests and skills, emergency contacts, members' subscriptions, etc. If you have plots that are leased to people, an annual billing system is useful – deal with billing for one month of the year not twelve!

It can be useful to develop systems to collect information to support funding and other applications, such as the number of visitors and volunteers participating, numbers on plot waiting lists, and possibly information demographics of people involved if you are seeking funding from sources with particular focuses (youth involvement, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, etc).

Managing money 9

Find out what financial skills and experience you have in your group. Do you need help or training? A number of agencies have community accountancy projects that offer direct services, training and advice. Check with your local council or library. Ask other established community groups how they organise their finances, who independently checks (audits) their books, and who gives them financial advice.

Money handling basics

These rules are essential, and apply whether you are spending \$10 or \$10,000

- Always issue a receipt when money is received
- Include your ABN on all receipts
- Always obtain a receipt for money paid out and sign for any money received
- Ensure that receipts are written in ink not pencil
- Don't keep more money than is necessary in the treasurer's home or the garden's premises. Make sure your insurance covers you for small amounts of cash
- Put money in the bank as soon as possible
- Never pay expenses from cash just received – draw cash from the bank or write cheques for expenditure
- Keep as many records and notes of transactions as your garden needs.

9 This section was adapted from Cultivating Community's Good Practice Guide for Community Gardens

✱ There is a volunteer induction workshop outline on page 76

✱ Additional examples, including Cultivating Community's comprehensive 'Community Garden Rules and Guidelines' are available for download from <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx>

There are also suggestions of issues to consider in the plots section of this booklet, page 23

✱ See page 101 for a sample plot application form to adapt for use at your garden

Examples of community garden rules

Collingwood Children's Farm gardener responsibilities – what we expect from gardeners

Collingwood Children's Farm St Heliers St (PO Box 80)
Abbotsford Victoria 3067

Email: info@farm.org.au Phone & Fax: 94175806

Before beginning to work a plot eligible gardeners are required to read the "Rules and Guidelines" and sign a "Community Garden" contract. Community Gardeners at the Collingwood Children's Farm are required to:

1. Pay an annual fee
The Annual Membership Fee is \$50 (full) \$25 (conc) for a 6m x 4m plot (the old double sized plots are \$100 (full) \$50 (conc)). Collingwood Children's Farm collects the fee that is used for water, garden supplies, and garden maintenance. Payment can be made by cheque, through the post or directly to our reception – open from 9am to 5pm every day of the year.
2. Help look after the garden's communal facilities by:
Attending three working bees a year: Monthly working bees on the third Saturday of every month (1pm – 4pm) enable gardeners to take responsibility for the care, maintenance and development of the communal areas within the Community Gardens and provide opportunities for sharing culture, knowledge and skills.
3. Support the Farm by:
Contributing to two farm fundraising events a year. The Farm runs a regular program of fundraising events that include monthly family days, night music events in the barn, seasonal events such as the winter solstice bonfire and the Country Fair. We rely on the support of volunteers to run these events successfully. Contributions can include helping with food preparation and serving, staffing stalls, washing dishes, cooking cakes and salads, helping set up and pack up etc.

Becoming a farm member: Gardeners are encouraged to take out a Farm membership – this is currently \$15 a year. It supports the Farm and you will receive our seasonal newsletter that has excellent information on gardening and general Farm events.
4. Abide by the rules and guidelines
Use your plot intensively over the whole year. There is a very long waiting list!

- Maintain weed-free pathways of one metre in width around your garden plot.
- Take all your rubbish home – if you carry it in you can carry it out!
- If you move house or are going to be absent for a period of longer than three months, the community garden worker must be notified.
- Minimise water use by watering less frequently and more deeply and by mulching over summer.
- Avoid using any chemicals or pesticides – strictly organic practices apply.
- Keep the gate locked at all times before 9am and after 5.30pm

Kurruru Pingyarendi Community Gardener Guidelines

Please sign in the book in the shed when you start work and sign out when you finish.

We encourage community gardeners to work safely, and to take reasonable care to protect their own health and safety by:

- Working within their own personal limitations to avoid injury to themselves and others;
- Keeping the garden area tidy;
- Wearing sun hats, sunscreen, gloves, and protective footwear as required.
- Following guidelines on handling potting mix and compost – ie wear gloves and keep products moist (to avoid breathing dusts, and particles when handling). Wash hands immediately after use.

We encourage gardeners to ensure that their tetanus vaccinations are up to date.

This is a great place for children but they need to be supervised by parents or caregivers. Again because of the risks of breathing in dust and particles, kids need to wear shoes and not use the soil for play.

A First Aid Kit and an approved sharps disposal container, are kept in the reception area of the Health Service, and are available for use by Community Gardeners.

Hand washing facilities are available in the Health Service Toilet area. Please don't use the kitchen sink for hand washing.

Don't hesitate to call an ambulance on 000 if you think it is necessary.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

If your garden's annual turnover is less than \$50,000, registering for the GST is your choice. You need to decide whether the time involved in registering and accounting for GST is worth it.

Field officers from the Australian Taxation Office are available to visit and assist community-based organisations to deal with the implications of tax. You can submit questions to replyin5@ato.gov.au and a range of downloadable resources is available from www.ato.gov.au.

The Our Community website www.ourcommunity.com.au provides an excellent free list of on-line publications. Look for 'registering for Goods and Services Tax (GST)', or email service@ourcommunity.com.au. Our Community can also be contacted on (03) 9320 6800.

Australian Business Number (ABN)

Your garden (or its auspicer) will require an ABN to engage with other businesses and organisations (that is, in order to spend and receive money for goods and services). You will need to include your ABN on any receipts issued, as all receipts are considered Tax Invoices for taxation purposes.

You can register for an ABN electronically through the Business Entry Point of the ATO website – www.ato.gov.au (14 day turnaround) through the mail (28 day turnaround) or a tax agent. More information is available from the ATO by phoning 13 24 78. Brochures on ABN and related tax issues are widely available at post offices and newsagents.

Budgeting

A budget is a financial plan for a specific period, usually a financial year or the duration of a specific project. It is a tool to help you in managing and controlling the finances of your group.

A budget will enable you to predict cash flow difficulties. Making a useful budget needs a thorough understanding of the garden's finances. This is easily developed over time; however you may need outside help in preparing initial budgets. This expertise may exist within your group. Find out!

Preparing budgets follows a set of logical steps. Each provides information for the next step.

Look closely at your current financial situation and make an Opening Balance. This is a snapshot of the finances of your garden on a specific date. To do this you need to tally up all monies held in cash, in the bank and any

monies owed to you. Deduct from this total all the monies you owe and you have your opening balance. Discuss developments planned for the coming year – or better still when you have a 3-5 year Development Plan. Use this information to help predict costs.

If your garden has a significant trading income (i.e. greater than \$10,000) then you probably need independent professional financial advice.

Prepare an Income and Expenditure Budget – this details what monies you expect to receive and spend during the year. Think carefully about how you categorise income and expenditure – well thought-out categories will assist future review, evaluation and improvement.

Prepare a Cash Flow Budget – this is your income and expenditure broken down into months. This helps you identify any cash flow deficits.

At the end of the financial year, prepare an Annual Balance Sheet for the end of the financial period. This gives you the opening balance for the next year.

Resources

The **Our Community** website provides an excellent free list of on-line publications. Look under the organisational management and development section for preparing a budget. www.ourcommunity.com.au.

Managing Money – A guide to understanding finances for community management Victorian Council of Social Services Melbourne: VCOSS 1995

This handbook explains basic financial management for not for profit organisations – covers budgeting, monitoring and reporting and is aimed at staff and committee members of community organisations.

Insurance

What cover is needed

To operate a community garden you must have public liability insurance to cover any person on your site for personal injury. If you are going to employ people you will need Employers' Liability insurance. In addition, it is sensible to have site insurance that cover theft, vandalism, fire, etc. It is good practice to display a copy of your public liability certificate on your public notice board.

Types of insurance

Public liability – to indemnify you against being held responsible for injury, disability or death of people visiting or taking part in your activities.

Employers' liability and group personal accident – to indemnify you against being held responsible for accidents causing injury, disability or death of employees and volunteers.

All risks policy – to cover the community garden property, such as equipment and money, against fire, flood, theft and any other specified risk. Many policies have a minimum claim level and an excess - an amount you have to contribute towards a claim.

Other insurances – to cover you against any other risks considered important, depending on the activities the garden plans to undertake, e.g. community garden work or activities that takes place away from the garden site.

Basic steps to getting insurance cover for your garden

Check with other community gardens and voluntary organisations. What type of insurance and level of cover do they have? What does it cost them? Was the company helpful? Seek up-to-date advice from organisations supporting the voluntary sector, such as SACOSS and Volunteering SA.

Check all your legal and funding agreements to see whether they require specific insurance cover. For example your lease may require a minimum public liability cover.

Where possible, piggy-back onto existing policies where possible. Community gardens are often situated on council, state, community centre or school land, and may be covered through existing policies – be sure to confirm the coverage. Some gardening organisations (including Garden Clubs of Australia and the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria) provide insurance coverage for their member groups, at rates which depend on the size of your organisation.

If an existing policy that meets your needs is not available, go to an insurance broker to get quotations. Ask them to explain to you in everyday language what is covered and in what circumstances. Premiums may be based on a number of factors: property size, number of sites, number of gardeners, type and intensity of activity, etc. Many organisations offer specific insurance packages for volunteer and not-for-profit groups, but community gardeners should make sure these policies address their specific needs.

Investigate joining together with other community gardens in your local area. Due to minimum premium requirements, it can be cheaper to purchase an umbrella policy covering multiple sites rather than for individual sites to purchase their own policies.

Review your insurance every year and when you make major changes like employing another staff member, buying equipment or investing in buildings – inadequate cover could make your policy almost useless.

Contacts

Garden Clubs of Australia www.gardenclubs.org.au, email membership@gardenclubs.org.au

The Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria (Australia wide) <http://rhsv.org.au/rhsv-members/for-clubs/club-insurance/> or contact the RHSV Insurance Officer at insurance@rhsv.org.au phone 03 5367 6363.

Evaluating garden projects ¹⁰

Evaluations are often required by funding agencies and other support bodies. Evaluation involves making judgments about something's worth. This is done by asking questions and reflecting on the answers you come up with. Remember to keep the emphasis on what has been achieved.

Why evaluate?

To see how we are going – participants, volunteers and workers need the satisfaction of being able to identify progress and results.

Evidence that your garden is providing a good and necessary service can help you win public support.

To improve what you do – i.e. help you manage the garden's development and change. You might want to emphasize unmet needs.

To justify what you do – funders want to ensure your group is doing what it is supposed to, is meeting genuine needs and is giving good value for money.

¹⁰ Reproduced from *Cultivating Community's Good Practice Guide for Community Gardens*

To advocate for more community gardens – gathering information helps to promote the broader community garden movement.

Put differently:

- What gets measured gets done
- If you don't measure results you won't fully recognise your achievements
- If you can't see achievement you can't reward it or learn from it
- If you can't recognise failure you can't address it
- If you can't demonstrate achievement you won't win public support.

Steps towards implementing evaluation

- Decide what you are using your evaluation for.
- Identify and remove barriers (such as resistance due to evaluation not being seen as "real" work)
- Ensure you know what your group is trying to do
- Decide on your outcome, impact and process measures
- Decide how you will collect, analyse and use your data
- Clarify responsibility – who is going to do what by when?

An evaluation question checklist

- What are we trying to do here?
- Does it work?
- Is this what we set out to achieve?
- What is its value?
- What has this achieved?
- Has this been successful?
- Why does it work?
- Why doesn't it work?
- What can we do to make it work better?
- What has been the short to medium term impact of our work?
- What has been the longer-term outcome of our work?

Resources

Everyday Evaluation on the Run

Yoland Wadsworth Allen & Unwin 1997

Health and safety in the garden ¹¹

It is important that your group develops a means of identifying risks or dangers and acts to eliminate or minimise them.

The general duties of employers in ensuring health, safety and welfare of their employees are outlined below. We strongly recommend that your garden, regardless of whether you have paid employees, apply procedures arising from these duties to everybody – volunteers, management members, garden members and visitors.

Your obligations – keeping it safe

Develop a health and safety policy – and form a working group that writes, implements, checks and revises your policies regularly. If you employ staff make sure they are part of the working group.

Make the environment safe – how often do you inspect and check the garden and its facilities? What have you identified in these checks and what have you done about it?

Provide information, instruction, training and supervision – what safety information is provided on the garden and can it be easily understood by all users? What health and safety training do you provide? For example, how many of your volunteers (and staff) know how to dig or lift safely?

Provide appropriate first aid – how many of your volunteers, staff and members are qualified first aiders? When are they on site? What information do you provide to users? Does the garden display a clear notice showing where a first aid kit is available? For very small gardens without facilities you should at the very least provide clear details of where to find the nearest phone.

Provide facilities – have you got clean and accessible toilets and washing facilities? If there are no toilets on-site, can you negotiate for the use of nearby facilities? Is there a comfortable and warm place where staff, volunteers and members can eat lunch and relax?

Record and investigate accidents – you should keep an accident book that is easily accessible to all. It should contain clear instructions about what to do, what needs to be recorded and who to contact. This should include accident and incident report forms. If an accident occurs - the details should be recorded as accurately as possible and subsequently investigated.

Safety procedures for chemicals – the best policy is to minimise or ban chemical use. Otherwise you need to state a clear policy and set of procedures for the storage and use of chemicals.

Provide insurance – you need it! 


Five steps for a safer space

- Look for hazards
- Determine who might be harmed and how
- Assess risks arising from the hazards and decide whether existing precautions are adequate
- Record your findings and take actions where necessary
- Review your assessment at least annually or when major changes take place.

Good practice ideas

Protective gear – inform gardeners of the importance of appropriate clothing and equipment and make it available: hats, sunscreen, boots, gloves, etc.

Poisonous plants – if you don't have sufficient knowledge, then seek advice from the botanic gardens, an established gardening club, or local horticulturalist. Pathways and walkways – keep them clear of obstacles. Use of wheelbarrows – don't overload them. Only move what you can easily manage.

Use of garden tools – a major source of accidents, for example rakes and forks left lying face up on the ground, strain from improper use. Proper storage of tools, and safe use demonstrations in volunteer inductions help reduce accidents. 

Power and electrical tools – some power tools require the user to be qualified to use them (eg. chainsaws). The necessary health and safety equipment must be worn.

Compost heaps – a well-managed compost heap will not attract vermin.

Dogs – many community gardens are dog free zones (with the exception of guide dogs). Dog faeces can pose a particular set of health problems, particularly for young children.

Dangerous materials – some materials (such as barbed wire) pose a particular injury risk. Ensure such materials are banned from the garden.

Poisons and pesticides – use good organic management practices so that you do not require these at your garden.

Resources

'Thinking about safety in our community garden', Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network
A two page brochure available for download from www.communitygarden.org.au

Safe Work Australia


See website at <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/>


Risk Assessment Handbook for Community Groups in Natural Resource Management,

Conservation Volunteers Australia.

Designed for community groups carrying out environmental projects. Available for free download from <http://www.conservationvolunteers.com.au/assisting-projects/RAWorkshops-survey.htm>.

CVA also offer a health and safety manual and training package called 'In Safe Hands' <http://www.conservationvolunteers.com.au/assisting-projects/in-safe-hands-toolkit.htm>.

 See page 65 for information on insurance

 There is a Volunteer induction workshop outline on page 76

Learning, education and training



Learning, education and training

Community gardens are hubs of learning: places where people develop new skills, share information, and pass on local and traditional knowledge. They are sometimes venues for undertaking more formal training too.

Most community gardens find that skill and information sharing happen naturally everyday in the garden. People learn as they garden, share ideas, and pass on their experience. Take some time to observe the ways informal learning occurs in your garden and find ways to support and promote it – simple things like encouraging people to take morning tea breaks together can make a big difference. Actively encourage mentoring so that people with skills have opportunities to share them and others have the opportunity to learn. Having books, leaflets, and other resources available for gardeners to refer to also supports informal and self-directed learning.

Many community gardens take the next step, and offer their own workshops or training programs, or make connections with established training providers. This section includes ideas for finding and creating learning opportunities for your own gardeners and offering training to the wider community. It has information about linking with programs in universities, TAFE colleges, and other training organisations, the essentials for designing a training program, how to conduct workshops at your garden, and outlines for workshops on inducting volunteers, garden safety, facilitating effective meetings, garden design, cooking with unusual plants, and dealing with pests and weeds organically.

Using training to develop your organisation

A range of education and training programs delivered by TAFEs, universities, and other training organisations are relevant to community gardeners. These programs can provide training for staff and volunteers, helping to build the skill base of your garden.

Accredited Training

Accredited training leads to formal qualifications in vocational areas. It is available through Registered Training Organisations and TAFE colleges. Some courses that may be relevant to community gardeners include:

- 'Train small groups' and other modules of the certificates in **Workplace Training and Assessment**.

These courses are run by TAFEs, private training organisations, and community organisations such as Volunteering SA, Conservation Volunteers, and permaculture organisations.

- Accredited **Permaculture** Training – in 2004, the permaculture community registered certificates I – 4 and Diploma within the national accreditation framework. Includes units on a wide variety of areas relevant to community gardeners www.permacultureinternational.org
- **Horticulture** certificates I – IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma, with specialisations like nursery, landscape, parks and gardens, and arboriculture.
- The Community Arts Network, SA runs a Graduate Diploma in **Community Cultural Development** www.cansa.net.au
- TAFEs offer a range of **Community Services** and **Community Development** courses
- **Disability studies** (TAFE)
- **Conservation and Land management** (TAFE)
- **Youth work** (TAFE)
- **Volunteer management** certificates are offered by Volunteering SA and Conservation Volunteers.

Non-Accredited Training

A number of other organisations provide workshops and training programs that could add to the skill and knowledge base of your garden:

- SA Council of Social Service offer training workshops and seminars on topics including effective communication, financial planning, negotiating skills, and risk management.
- Volunteering SA offers training workshops to voluntary organisations, including OSH&W, working in teams, working with volunteers, effective communication, food safety, and working with specific groups, such as Indigenous people and people with disabilities.
- Greening Australia provides training in occupational health and safety, community capacity building, plant propagation, plant identification, seed collection and surveying, with an emphasis on native plants.
- Trees for Life also offers training in seed collection and bush management.
- Permaculture Design Courses and Introduction to Permaculture Courses can provide an excellent grounding for the diversity of skills required

✱ Up to date contact details and further information available at <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx>

✱ See <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx> for up to date contact details for organisations offering accredited training

in community gardening – from site design to community development. Course information can be found in the Permaculture Association of SA's newsletters and website.

- Community Arts Network, SA offers a range of training workshops, including project management, funding, and cross-cultural communication. They also hold regular peer learning sessions.

Linking with established programs

Making connections with established education and training providers can be a way of involving more people and organisations in your garden, and may lead to ways to generate funding.

There are many opportunities for community gardens to contribute to other organisation's educational programs:

- hosting interns and students doing workplace and community service placements
- as sites for field trips for students at all levels
- as sites for practical projects or hands-on demonstrations
- providing guest presenters/ trainers
- as venues/ subjects for students doing research.

Universities

Community gardens have formed relationships with a wide range of university departments and courses. Use universities' websites to find courses that your garden could link with, and look at the particular interests of staff members to decide who to make contact with. Relevant courses might include:

- Social work
- Community development
- Occupational therapy
- Disability studies
- Public health
- Teaching
- Agriculture
- Natural resource management
- Environmental studies
- Urban design
- Architecture.

Designing a training program

In addition to the ongoing informal learning that takes place, community gardens have run or hosted workshops on a great variety of topics – from organic gardening to green cleaners. Some community gardens offer accredited training programs in areas like horticulture and permaculture (see the lists of training programs above for other possibilities). Sign up to local and national community garden email lists to keep in touch with workshops other gardens are offering.

Why run educational programs at your garden?

- Increase the capacity of your project by building the skills and knowledge of people involved
- Enable the garden to embark on new projects or extend activities you'd like to do more of
- Directly address the needs and interests of your garden participants
- An incentive for volunteering, and a way to 'give back' to volunteers
- A reason for new people to come to the garden and get involved
- An opportunity for people to share their skills and knowledges
- An opportunity to promote your garden through new channels
- A way to generate funds for your garden.

Permaculture students visit the Goody patch Community Garden, SA



Steps to designing an education program for your garden



✱ See funding section, page 48

✱ There are references to other training packages and programs that might be relevant on page 70 and at <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx>

Whether you are considering an hour-long workshop about meeting facilitation, or a six month accredited horticulture certificate program, these steps may be useful in planning your education program.

Assess the need for training

What skills and experience already exist among the people involved with the garden?

What are people in your garden interested in learning more about?

What are they interested in sharing with others?
What new skills, information and knowledge would benefit the garden as a whole or enable it to move in new directions?

Do people need training for particular roles in the garden (eg occupational health and safety, being a committee member; managing a budget).

What are the gaps?

Is a workshop or training program the best way to develop the skills people in your garden need and want? Alternatives may include self-education possibilities (for example using books, online courses, workbooks), on-the-job mentoring, or creating a study group.

Resources for making a needs assessment include:

- Skills mapping ✱
- Volunteer registration forms ✱
- A survey of volunteers ✱

- Informal conversations or a workshop with volunteers about what they'd like to learn
- Feedback from committee members and project co-ordinators

Get funding

If the needs analysis indicates that a major training program would benefit the garden and gardeners, having a person employed to focus on co-ordinating, (and perhaps delivering) the training can make a big difference. ✱

Research existing programs

- Are any other community gardens offering similar training?
- Are there any other groups offering similar training?
- What training packages exist?
- Are there any TAFE or university courses covering similar areas?
- What is the potential for collaboration?

See the lists of accredited and non-accredited training above. ✱

Design your program

Use the workshop resources in this booklet and information from existing programs that you have identified. Talk to Volunteering SA and other gardens that have run training programs. Leave space for the people participating in the program to shape the content of sessions they attend. Continually incorporate feedback from participants.

Administration and logistics

Will the course be accredited?

Where will the workshop be held?

What costs will you need to budget for (include morning teas, venue hire, facilitators' fees, materials, Registered Training Organisation fees)?

What will the cost to participants be?

How will registrations be administered?

Promote the training program ✱

You may decide to offer the training only to current volunteers, or to give them the first opportunity to register. Some gardens offer free training to people who have completed a certain number of hours of volunteer work, and charge others.

If you are producing a leaflet about the workshop or training program, include a form for people to fill in, with their name, address, phone, email, emergency contact, special needs, previous experience, as well as an outline of course and any fees or deposit required. You may like to offer an 'early bird' discount to encourage people to enrol promptly.

✱ See promotion section, page 44 for ideas about promoting events

✱ see page 28 for information on skills mapping

✱ see page 99 for a sample volunteer registration form

✱ see page 102 for a sample training needs survey

Case study: Ridley Grove Community Garden

Although its official opening was little over a year ago, Ridley Grove Community Garden has hosted a great variety of educational activities, from garden festivals involving several hundred people and all-day programs of talks, to small, hands-on workshops. Topics have included permaculture, composting, worm farms, creating frog-friendly and butterfly-attracting gardens, setting up a home vegie patch, native plants, bokashi, and making mini salad gardens in foam boxes for people living in units. The garden also hosts weekly visits from children from a neighbouring primary school and occasional university students on social work placements.

For Ridley Grove Community Garden, workshops are an opportunity to share skills, promote the garden in the wider community, and attract new people to become involved.

All workshops so far have been free to participants, though in the future they may charge a gold coin. The garden raises some money through sale of plants to workshop participants. It has also received funding to run workshops, including Adult Learners Week and local council grants, which have covered materials and organisers' and presenters' time.



Workshops have been presented by a range of outside facilitators and by the garden co-ordinator. Presenters have either been paid from grant funding or volunteered their time. For large workshops and fairs, the garden has invited other community groups, such as Rotary, to provide food, such as a sausage sizzle or Devonshire teas, for an extra fee to participants. This helps other community groups to raise funds, relieves gardeners from catering duties, and fosters mutual relationships between organisations.

Smaller workshops take place under Ridley Grove's pergola and the church next door makes its hall and other facilities available for large workshops and events.

Ridley Grove organisers have found that smaller workshops, with 20 – 30 participants, fill quickly with minimal promotion: a flyer on the notice board on the garden's fence, emails to local permaculture and community garden lists, and word of mouth.

For larger events, such as composting demonstration days which involve up to 200 participants, Ridley Grove gardeners have used a wider range of promotional strategies, including stories in local newspapers, announcements on radio gardening shows, writing articles for church and school newsletters, placing flyers in local shops and libraries, notices on internet gardening sites, and letterbox drops to neighbouring houses. They have found that community development officers in local councils are particularly helpful in passing on email notices through their networks. Ridley Grove has received sponsorship to produce banners and coreflute signs promoting major garden events, which also provide an opportunity to acknowledge supporters.

✱ For training involving children and young people, see the resources section in the Gardening with Children and in Schools section page 32

Resources ✱

Relevant training packages

New Farmers Manual Tash Morton and Dick Copeman
Brisbane: Northey Street City Farm 2004

An invaluable training manual for volunteers, volunteer trainers and volunteer co-ordinators at community gardens and city farms. Extensive training program covering all aspects of community gardens, including occupational health and safety, gardening, volunteering, and designing training programs.

Growing Communities: How to Build Community Through Community Gardening

Jeanette Abi-Nader, David Buckley, Kendall Dunnigan and Kristen Markley
American Community Gardening Association 2001.

A curriculum for the ACGA's 'From the roots up' mentorship program. Includes community building, leadership, planning, fundraising, and much more. Available from www.communitygarden.org.

Improving Nutrition through Home Gardening

UN Food and Agriculture Organisation Italy: FAO 1994.

Training package for people using gardening to improve health and nutrition, with teacher's notes and reproducible info sheets. Designed for development workers. Can be downloaded from <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/003/X3996E/x3996e00.htm>

Other resources

National Volunteer Skills Centre

Many useful resources and materials for community gardens offering workshops and training programs, including a Guide for Training Volunteers and a toolkit for evaluating training programs. Follow links from www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Partnering with Registered Training Organisations

A fact sheet for volunteer organisations considering partnering with an RTO in order to provide accredited training. Available from http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/files/XVGZE0PGC4/RTO_Quick_Guide_Partnering_with_RTO_Final.pdf

Running training sessions

Once you have determined the areas your garden will offer training in, it's time to plan, run and review your training sessions.

Planning workshop sessions

This booklet includes outlines for several workshops, which you can adapt to suit your needs. Each workshop is designed to meet specific outcomes, such as people learning a particular new skill. They generally follow the pattern of

- a welcome
- an introduction to the facilitator
- a brief outline of the session
- information about toilets, tea breaks, etc.
- agreements about smoking, listening to others, keeping to time, and so on
- a warm up exercise or icebreaker
- a process to draw out the existing knowledge with in the group and what people hope to learn
- the specific content of the workshop
- a distinct ending with a review and brief evaluation.

Handouts and references to further information can be valuable – it is often best to distribute these at the end of the session.

The venue

A welcoming, comfortable, and attractive space is important to create an effective learning environment. This might be an undercover area in your garden, a room at a local community centre, a church hall, etc

Workshop venue check list:

- tea and coffee making facilities
- pinboards/ walls to stick up posters, butchers' paper, etc
- good light
- air flow
- comfortable temperature
- low noise and privacy from other groups nearby
- shelter from sun, wind and rain if using outdoor spaces
- appropriate furniture – chairs, cushions, tables, etc
- toilets
- location of power points
- proximity to public transport
- wheelchair access
- access to gardens or outdoor spaces for practical exercises.

Equipment

The equipment you will require will depend on your workshop. Some things to consider...

- paper, pens, butchers' paper, black/ white board, markers, chalk, etc
- pins, blutak
- overhead projector; data projector; laptop, video, slide projector etc – make sure you allow time to test them out in the venue before the workshop starts!
- plenty of drinking water
- urn, tea, herbal tea, coffee, fruit. Refrigerator?
- cleaning equipment (brooms, vacuum, cloths, washing up gear, etc)
- equipment specific to your topic – eg garden tools, oven, extra hats, etc.

On the day...

Get to the workshop venue early to give yourself plenty of time to set up the space, organise your materials, deal with any problems (no toilet paper; overhead bulb needs changing), and to have a moment to relax before people start arriving.

Be proactive in rearranging the space to suit your purposes – you may want to arrange chairs in a circle, etc.

Be prepared for people to arrive – have the urn hot, make sure you have records of bookings, money owed, etc.

Welcome people as they arrive.


Relax and enjoy learning with people!

Resources

The Manual For Teaching Permaculture Creatively

Robin Clayfield and Skye Queensland: Earthcare Education 1995

Excellent introduction to using creative processes to facilitate learning about a range of topics. Permaculture focused, but applicable to any community garden training.

 See <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx> for ideas for introductions, icebreakers, and energisers

Workshop outline: Volunteer induction

All new volunteers should participate in an induction and orientation session before they start working on site. This can be done one person at a time, but it is preferable to hold inductions with small groups of new volunteers.

It is recommended that this session be followed by a Garden Safety session. *

Time

2hrs 15mins (plus 40 mins Garden Safety)

Outcomes

New volunteers:

- Know their way around the garden
- Have a basic understanding of the aims and activities of the garden
- Have met some of the other garden volunteers/workers
- Know about what volunteer activities they can participate in and when and where they can start.

Materials

Butchers paper/ blackboard

Pens/ chalk

Extra sun hats and/or sunscreen

Morning tea, water

Optional handouts: leaflets about the garden, volunteer policy documents, OHS procedures, volunteer handbook. You might put them together as a new volunteers' kit. *

Participants' requirements

A hat, water bottle

shoes suitable for site tour

Introductions/ prior knowledge

- Invite each person in the group to say their name, one of their reasons for volunteering at the garden, and something they know about the garden. Ask people to be brief in their answers. Tell people you will write the things they say about the garden on butcher's paper.
- Outline the program for the morning, make sure people know where toilets and water are, allow opportunity for questions.

Icebreaker: have you ever...? (optional)

Arrange chairs (or cushions) in a circle so there is one for each participant, excluding the facilitator. The facilitator

stands in the centre of the circle and completes the question 'Have you ever...?' Everyone who has must get up and switch chairs. They cannot return to the chair they left or the ones next to it. The person left without a chair must ask the question again. You might choose a specific focus for the questions (eg gardening: have you ever made compost in the rain, have you ever planted broccoli) or to leave it open to whatever people want to know about each other...

Site Tour

Plan a trail around the garden that will enable you to talk about various garden features and activities that take place. Design your route so that you do most of your talking in shady areas.

Before beginning, offer spare hats and/ or sunscreen. Ask what people are particularly interested in seeing or finding out more about the garden, and if possible tailor the tour to address these.

Show people where tools, etc they may need to use are kept, and any protocols for cleaning and putting away tools.

Invite and be prepared to answer questions as you go.

Introduce the garden and volunteering opportunities

Share stories of the garden, drawing on what was written on the butcher's paper during introductions. You might include the garden's history, organisational structure, aims and values, what happens there, where it's headed, and how people can become members and become involved in decision making.

Outline the ways in which people can get involved, the range of volunteer activities available, regular working times, training opportunities – if appropriate have time-tables and signup sheets for particular projects or working groups. Ensure everyone has filled in a volunteer registration form. *

Allow time for questions.

Morning tea

Share morning tea with other volunteers, supervisors, and workers at the garden. Personally introduce new volunteers to people they will be supervised by or working closely with.

You may have leaflets or other appropriate materials to hand out at the end of this session.

* See next page for a Garden safety workshop outline

* You could also include a set of Basic Gardening Leaflets from page 84

* There is a sample volunteer registration form on page 99

Workshop outline: Garden safety

This workshop should be tailored to address the particular hazards of your garden and to cover the activities people are likely to undertake.

Time

40 minutes if following a Volunteer Induction, 1 hour if standalone session.

Outcomes:

- Participants understand potential garden hazards and how to reduce risk
- Understand their responsibility for garden safety
- Are familiar with garden protocols and can identify contact persons

Materials/equipment:

Handouts: You could use the Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network's 'Thinking About Safety' fact sheet from www.communitygarden.org.au and your garden's Occupational Health and Safety policy or guidelines (or examples from other garden/s). *

Introduction

Introduce the facilitator, venue, and session.
Introduction/ icebreaker if running as a standalone session.

Introduce the garden's protocols and contact people, such as first aid officer; accident reporting, location and use of first aid box.

Safety brainstorm

Invite people to share their understanding of what makes a safe garden. Emphasise that everyone is responsible for their own safety and the safety of others.

Hazard assessment

If you have just been on a site tour, ask participants to identify potential hazards that they saw. If you are not following an induction session, take a brief tour of the garden, identifying potential hazards as you go. Discuss ways to minimise the risk of each hazard.

Tool safety

Introduce tools frequently used at the garden (wheelbarrows, shovels, saws, hoses and so on).

Discuss potential hazards of use/ misuse for each. Ask a participant to demonstrate what they see as the safest ways to use each tool, including carrying, using, putting down temporarily while using, and storing. Discuss.

Conclusion

Distribute handouts
Ask for feedback on session.

* Two community garden safety handouts are available from <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx>

Workshop outline: Meeting facilitation ¹²

It is preferable for this workshop to be run by a team of two facilitators. *

Time

Approximately 3 hours, depending on number of participants involved.

Outcomes

- Participants can identify their preferred supports and resources for meeting facilitation
- A basic understanding of facilitation techniques and strategies
- A basic understanding of potential difficulties faced by facilitators and ways of working with them.

Materials

Paper; whiteboard, blackboard, markers, etc

Role play cards (see below)

A watch or timer

Handouts *

Introduction

Introduce the facilitator/s, the outline of the session, the venue, etc.

Ask each participant to say their name and something they're hoping to gain from this workshop.

¹² Thankyou to Jeremy Urquhart and Mary Heath for ideas in this workshop

* The Decision Making and Meetings page 59 and Learning, Education and Training page 74 sections of this booklet could be useful for planning the content of this workshop.

* Several handouts ('Facilitation: A 10 Point Checklist', 'Facilitation: 10 Useful Ideas', 'Meetings: A Guide for Facilitators' and 'A User's Guide to Meetings') can be downloaded from <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx>, and/ or develop your own – you might like to add a list of your favourite facilitation books or websites

Discussion

Invite people to share some of their experiences of meetings – things that have gone well, difficulties, concerns, ideas. This could be mapped on a white board under headings of 'positives', 'minuses' and 'interestings'. Introduce and/ or draw out ideas from this discussion, for example the need for everyone in a meeting to contribute to the meeting going well, having support for the facilitator; co-facilitation, possible roles in meetings (minute taker, speaking list keeper, time monitor, etc), and so on as appropriate.

Paired sharing

This exercise is to help people consider what support they would like when facilitating a meeting.

Introduce the idea of 'attentive listening' as essential to good facilitation as well as this exercise: invite a volunteer from the group to assist you by sitting next to you and talking to you (you might suggest a topic like what's happening in your garden at the moment). As the person is talking, model as many kinds of non-attentive listening as you can – look away, check your watch, wave to someone across the room, say "that reminds me of the time when I...". People soon get the idea!

Introduce the exercise, perhaps suggesting some things people might like to consider, such as assistance from meeting participants, the venue, support from a co-facilitator, particular techniques, etc. Invite people to form pairs, preferably with someone they may have the opportunity to work with ongoingly or who they think could be a good supporter/ buddy. Let people know that you will use a timer to allow the first member of the pair 5 minutes to talk about their ideas, then call for a swap for the second person to have 5 minutes to talk. After discussion in pairs, briefly feedback ideas to the larger group by asking people to share one thing they would find helpful.

Role play

Introduce the role play as an opportunity to try out facilitation, experiment with ideas, and draw on the thinking of the group.

One person nominates himself or herself as the first facilitator:

Other people take a card with a description of their role in the meeting. Your cards might include the following: "You're interested in what's being discussed, and keen to help the meeting go well"

"You are more interested in chatting to the person next to you than participating in the meeting"

"No matter what the topic under discussion is, you constantly want to discuss food co-ops"

"You're passionately interested in what's being discussed, and interrupt and talk over others"

"You have decided that all meetings are bad and don't want to be there – you're distracted and fidgety"

"You're engaged with what's being discussed, and have ideas to contribute but find it intimidating to speak up"

The group chooses a topic for the meeting (for example planning a community garden open day). The person role playing the meeting facilitator may stop the role play at any time to ask for assistance or suggestions from the group or the leader, and the workshop facilitators may stop the role play to draw out issues that arise.

Allow at least two or three people to take a turn as facilitator.

When the role plays are finished, discuss issues and ideas that arise – making sure to emphasise that this was a very worst case scenario!

Conclusion

Give out handouts. Briefly brainstorm sources of further information – eg people in your community, books, websites, etc.

Ask each person to share one thing they will do to ensure their next meeting goes well.

Workshop outline: Harvesting and preparing unusual food plants

This workshop could be adapted for use with a range of foods – focusing on Australian bushfood species, weeds or wild herbs, or plants from a particular country's cuisine. This workshop is for a cooking demonstration. If you have the facilities, you may decide to run a participatory workshop where everyone cooks together, or small groups each prepare a dish.

All cooking workshops require particular attention to equipment, appropriate venue, and good food safety practices.

Ask people who book for cooking demonstrations if they have any food intolerances or allergies, and make sure there are somethings that will be good for them to eat.

Time

Depends on menu planned – allow time to eat together afterwards.

Outcomes:

Participants

- have an opportunity to try new foods or cooking techniques
- understand uses of some unusual food plants in the garden
- can identify some unusual edible plant species.

Materials/equipment:

This will depend on the recipe you choose...

All ingredients required for the recipe – pre-prepared if appropriate (eg onions chopped, flour measured)

Baskets, knives, etc for harvesting

Knives, chopping boards, mixing bowls, utensils, cooking equipment, etc as needed

Apron

Hand washing basin

Stove top, cob oven, BBQ, etc

Plates and cutlery for tasting and/or a shared meal

Washing up facilities

Handouts with recipes and plant identification information

Introduction

Invite people to share their names and a favourite garden food.

Outline the program for the day, ask if people were hoping for particular outcomes or to learn specific things.

Ask about people's experience cooking with wild plants/ Vietnamese vegetables/ bushfoods/ etc as appropriate.

Plant Identification and Harvesting

Although most of your ingredients should be ready to use, take the group out to the garden to harvest some of each plant to be used in the recipe.

Encourage people to notice size, texture, smell, and growth patterns of each plant.

Discuss ways to tell if the plant is ready to be picked, and how to harvest the edible parts.

If there are any similar looking plants which are not good to eat, make sure people can also identify these, and point out differences to look for:

If you are using 'weed' species, emphasise the importance of not harvesting from potentially sprayed or contaminated sites, and not harvesting from road sides.

Briefly outline the cultivation of the plants – propagation, preferred growing environments, growing time, etc.

Cooking Demonstration

Plan your demonstration, taking into account time available. You may decide to pre-prepare some ingredients – washing, chopping and measuring before hand so they're ready to add. You may also decide to pre-cook the food to be eaten, and to prepare only a small portion in your demonstration. Make sure you are familiar with the kitchen, and any equipment and techniques to be used.

Describe what you're doing as you go, and if appropriate, why, for example frying spices to bring out flavour, or adding pectin to jam to thicken.

Invite questions and discussion from workshop participants – would they do things differently?

Use good food preparation practices ¹³

- Wash hands well
- Wear an apron
- Wear clothing that is clean, simple (no long flowing sleeves)
- Minimal jewelry
- Long hair should be tied back or up

¹³ From Jennifer Savenake (2003) Community Nutrition and Food Security Training package for use by dietitians and nutritionists Women's and Children's Hospital, Adelaide p.45

- Keep work surface clean and uncluttered – to assist this have equipment and ingredients on trays and remove once used
- Have a saucer or spoon rest on which to place a stirring spoon/fork
- Lift the lid from hot pans away from yourself and place lid upside down on the bench
- Turn pot handles away from front of stove
- Stand to one side when opening stove
- Use potholders or folded dry tea towels to pull out oven racks or to lift hot dishes. (Do not use wet tea towels or dish cloths).
- Use pans appropriate to size of hot plate or burner
- Turn off equipment or burner once finished.

Share the Food Together...

Workshop outline: Garden design

Time

3 hours

Outcomes

Participants have a basic understanding of garden design strategies, such as needs and functions analyses, random assemblage, and the impact of design on users.

Materials

Make a set of cards, one for each workshop participant, with one element of the garden on each. You could choose from this list, or develop your own as appropriate to your community garden site. A set of cards could include: Tall persimmon tree, seating area, BBQ, chickens, office building, native regeneration, bush tucker, compost area, lawnclipping drop off bay, nursery, individual garden plot, shared vegetable garden, and wheelchair accessible raised bed. 🌱

Welcome and introduction to the workshop

Outline of day, introduction to venue and facilitator

Introduction game: postcards

Spread out postcards or other pictures of gardens and ask people to pick one, that expresses something about what garden design means to them. Each person briefly tells the group why they chose their picture.

Brainstorm

Where do you learn about garden design? Where do you find garden design advice and resources?

Role Play

Introduce the idea of allowing every element (plant, animal, structure, etc) to live out most of its natural preferences, behaviours, and nature, and the benefits of

designing to take advantage of rather than control them. Each participant chooses one of the design element cards you have made. Each person discusses the needs, products, behaviours, and intrinsic characteristics of the element on their card.

As a group, discuss the potential beneficial connections among the elements – are there places where the products of one element match with the needs of another? Are there places where compatible needs can be met together?

Gather the cards together and mix them up. Describe the workshop space as if it were a place for a garden to be designed – higher ground by the door, a pond by the tea table, a road along the windows, etc. Ask people to move around the space, perhaps with music, and to stop in a random position.

Walk around the room and give each person one of the cards. Tell people that 'random assemblage' of elements can sometimes lead to creative new possibilities. Without deciding whether the placement of elements is 'good' or 'bad', discuss the potential effects of situating elements in these places.

Allow people to move around the room again, and create a design from their elements, taking into account the relationships explored in the previous processes. When the group has decided on a useful placement of elements, transfer the design onto a large sheet of butchers' paper; or use chalk to mark it out on the floor. Imagine different people using the garden you've designed: a child, a person in wheelchair, a person coming for first time... If possible, walk through the design imagining how it might effect different people's experience.

Ending

On butchers' paper, map some of the things people have learnt during the workshop.

🌱 You could adapt the Design section of this booklet to make handouts

Workshop outline: Organic management of pests

Time


2 hours

Outcomes

- Participants can identify some causes of pest-damage to plants
- Have a basic understanding of organic pest management principles and strategies

Materials

A garden with examples of pest presence and management strategies

Cards with an example of a pest and a management strategy on each – see below 

Introduction

Introduce facilitator; outline of workshop, venue, etc.
Invite participants to share their name and one of their reasons for coming to the workshop

Discussion of principles of organic pest management

Starting with soil to encourage healthy plant growth
Creating balanced garden ecosystems
Encouraging predator species
Not seeking to 'control' or eliminate all pests and weeds

Garden walk

Hand out a card to each person with a description of the presence of one pest species and one pest management strategy. People walk around the garden and find examples the things listed on their card. Encourage people to assist each other in their search, the facilitator may also help people identify examples.

The cards need to be specific to what's happening in the garden, and detailed enough in their descriptions so that people can identify examples from the information provided. Evidence of pests might include slug 'hotels' (places which shelter slugs and snails in the day time), caterpillar damage, eggs or larvae of specific pest species, etc. Strategies may include flowering plants to attract predator species, trap crops, fruit fly or slug traps, interplanting, etc.

When everyone has located the things on their card, each person shows the group what they have found. Encourage discussion about what insect or pest caused the damage, and the reasons for that species' proliferation and the plants' susceptibility to attack.


Brainstorm: Dealing with pests organically

Invite people to share ideas for organic pest management, including things that have and haven't worked well in their gardens. De-emphasise 'quick fix' solutions such as 'organic' sprays. Encourage people to look beyond individual plants and garden beds, and to look at their whole garden and neighbourhood.

Conclusion

Distribute handouts and discuss sources of information about organic pest management.

Ask people to share something they will try from the workshop.

 You could use the "Organic Pest Control" leaflet from the Gardening Basics section page 87 as handout

Workshop outline: Organic management of 'weeds'

Time


2 hours

Outcomes

- Participants can identify common weed species
- Have a basic understanding of organic weed management principles and strategies.

Materials

Materials for practical exercise – assemble all required tools and materials as required ready for each group to use.

Basic instructions for each practical exercise 

Introduction

Introduce facilitator; outline workshop, venue, etc.
Invite participants to share their name and one of their reasons for coming to the workshop

Discussion of principles of organic pest management

Starting with soil to encourage healthy plant growth
Not seeking to 'control' or eliminate all pests and weeds
Weeds as soil type indicators and dynamic accumulators of soil nutrients, as food and medicinal uses.

Garden walk

As a group, walk around the garden and identify some common weed species. For each, discuss potential benefits and uses, potential disadvantages of their presence, and their method/s of reproduction (eg tubers, seeds, layering, etc). Encourage discussion.

Practical exercises


Depending on the size of the group, you may divide participants into small groups to practice a different weed management strategy, such as sheet-mulching, solarisation, and cultivation. Set up spaces for each exercise, with all required materials and tools, and an instruction sheet for the group to follow. These exercises may take place in actual garden beds, or could be simulated on a tarpaulin or similar.

When each group is finished their exercise, they talk through what they've done with the rest of the group.

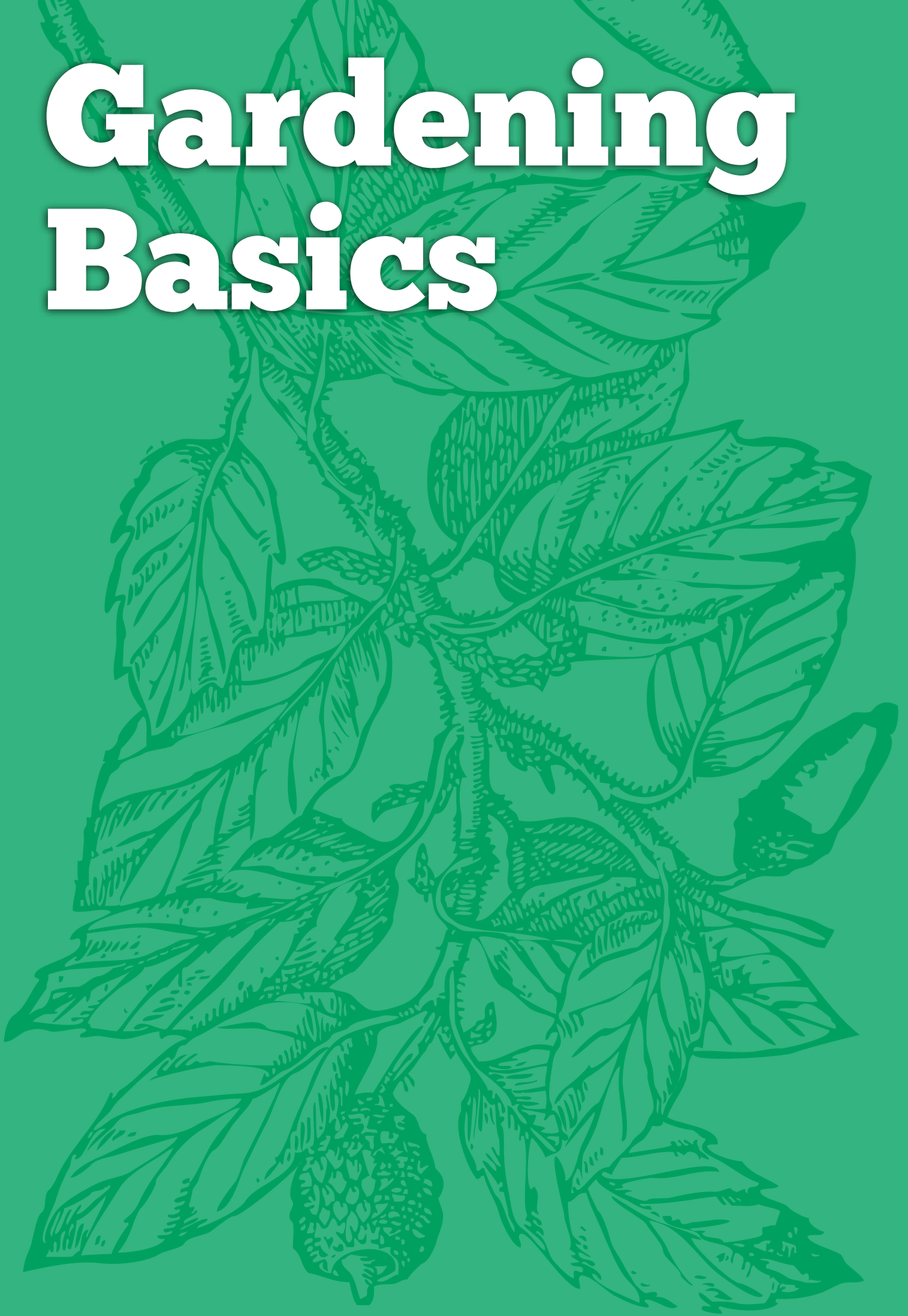
Conclusion

Distribute handouts and discuss sources of information about organic weed management.

Ask people to share something they will try from the workshop.

 You could use the "Organic Weed Control" leaflet from the Gardening Basics section page 88 as a handout

Gardening Basics



Gardening basics

People come to community gardens with very different gardening experiences – some are expert green thumbs with knowledge to share, others get involved to begin learning about helping things grow.

✱ These leaflets can also be downloaded in pdf format from <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx>

Also see *Sustainable Landscapes* brochure “Making Community Gardens More Sustainable” This brochure includes information on minimising water use, selecting herbs, vegies and fruit trees, and growing bush tucker plants. Available for download from <http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/botanicgardens/programs/landscapes.html> or phone 08 82229311.

Some of the best ways to share gardening knowledge at community gardens are through hands-on experience, informal mentoring, and occasional workshops. However, having basic gardening information available can be of great assistance to new and experienced gardeners. Many community gardens have a collection of books for people to refer to. Magazines and videos can also be useful, as can ‘what to plant when’ guides and posters. The majority of community gardens use organic practices, and seek to minimise use of water and other resources. Gardeners who are used to ‘conventional’ gardening methods will need resources to introduce your garden’s practices.

In this section, there are ten basic gardening leaflets, which may be used as part of a starter or induction pack for new gardeners, as handouts for gardening workshops, or however else they’re useful to your community garden. ✱



Bare soil rarely occurs in nature. Soils are covered by a thin layer of debris comprising dead leaves and twigs, with small amounts of various manures. This surface layer protects and nourishes the soil beneath. Gardeners may add a layer of mulch to the surface of the garden to achieve the same purpose. To be effective, mulches should be 5cm or more deep, with coarser materials needing to be applied at a greater thickness than finer ones. A no-dig garden uses a deep mulch, 15cm or more, as a growing medium.

Benefits of mulch

- Reduces water evaporation resulting from protection from wind and sun
- Adds organic matter and nutrients, improving fertility, structure and water retention
- Increases biological activity within the soil
- Maintains soil surface condition, eliminating problems of crusting and non-wetting
- Eliminates dirt splash and associated disease attack
- Preserves soil structure
- Reduces weeds by smothering and limiting germination
- Harbours beneficial predators such as spiders and centipedes
- Reduces erosion by slowing the movement of surface water
- Buffers extremes of soil temperature, particularly in the hot summer weather:

Disadvantages of mulch

- Harbours pests such as slugs, snails, earwigs
- Some types of grassy weeds grow in mulch
- Soil warming is slower in spring.

Some mulch materials

Straw and hay: Any straw or hay is suitable. Avoid material with seeds. Shake the hay before adding it to the garden if you suspect it contains seeds. Lucerne hay is the best mulch material as it contains a range of essential elements. Pea straw has reasonable nitrogen content, but is very light and breaks down quickly.

Bark/woodchip/sawdust: These woody materials form a long-term attractive colour, especially suitable for landscaping and ornamental gardens. Sawdust is good on pathways.

Leaves: Fresh leaves should be shredded or mixed with other materials before being used as mulch or they will form a matted waterproof layer. Some leaves, such as eucalypt, walnut, and pine (acidic) have an adverse affect on soil life. Leaf mould, made by allowing a pile of leaves to completely decompose, is a good mulch.

Shredded mulch: An excellent coarse mixture of wood chip and leaf. Home shredders can turn prunings into mulch. Large quantities may be purchased from garden supply depots. Avoid eucalypt, olive (which may contain seeds), or pine-based shredded mulch.

Newspaper: Use under other materials to smother weeds. Wet well before use. Do not leave paper uncovered or it will get blown about and create a mess. Glossy coloured paper is toxic and must not be used.

Seagrass: Long lasting cover that breaks down very slowly. Collect after rain to avoid salt, or water it down before applying.

Lawn clippings: Do not apply lawn clippings too thickly or they will go slimy. They tend not to last long and break down quickly. They may contain couch or kikuyu pieces, which can regrow. The properties of a lawn clipping mulch depend upon the type of lawn. Clover provides a higher nitrogen content, whereas kikuyu is fibrous with a higher proportion of carbon. Lawn clippings are best used on top of other, more open, mulch materials.

Weeds: Provided they are harvested before seeds set, non-invasive weeds make an excellent mulch.

Poultry litter: Any of the above materials may be left in a chook yard for a while before using as mulch. Chooks will clean out any weed seeds and add manure to the mulch.

Manure: Do not apply raw manures directly to the soil unless they are mixed with and covered by a large bulk of other materials. Failure to follow this rule will result in an unhealthy and smelly garden environment. Manures that have aged or been composted can be used directly.

Living mulches: Ground covering plants can be grown beneath other crops as 'living mulches'.

Non-organic mulches: The use of plastic as mulch is not recommended. Plastic will not break down and will become a nuisance later. Although plastic, used with other materials, provides an effective weed smother, many invasive and persistent weeds grow through the plastic, which obstructs the gardener when trying to clear these weeds. Gravel makes an attractive mulch, which contributes many of the advantages of an organic mulch, without the benefits of adding organic matter. Scoria is popular with landscape gardeners. It can be tricky using garden tools to weed through gravel.

Design the planting of your garden according to the plants' water requirements - plants that need lots of water can be grouped together so water isn't wasted on plants that can flourish with less. Drought tolerant plants in appropriate positions can shelter more fragile plants from sun and winds.

Observe, create and utilise microclimates in your garden – plant water-loving species in areas which tend to stay damp – such as in swales, at the bottom of slopes, around ponds or in rainwater runoff areas – and use more drought tolerant species in drier areas.

Choose plants which are most appropriate to the climate you live in – local species are a good place to start.

Don't let rainwater leave your garden! Install rainwater tanks to harvest roof runoff and direct overflow into swales or ponds. Maximise the infiltration of water which falls on the earth – mulch helps to reduce evaporation as well as feeding the soil and making plants more resilient. Basins or mounds built around shrubs and trees also limit runoff. Minimise impermeable surfaces such as driveways and cement paving. Lay pavers so water can soak through.

Minimise lawn. Accept that lawns will become dormant for part of the summer – most will recover when rains return. Mow less and allow grass to grow longer for a deeper root system.

Prune your fruit trees from the bottom – the fewer leaves, the less water leaves the plant and the less it requires. Pruning from the bottom also creates beautiful shady canopies.

Take notice of weather conditions – turn off automatic systems if it is raining! The best time of day to water varies. In Adelaide's hot, dry summers, evenings after sunset are a good time – that way water has a chance to infiltrate before hot days evaporate it. In cooler conditions, early mornings are preferable. Never water in the sunshine or wind.

Water less often and more slowly and deeply. This will encourage deeper root development for greater drought tolerance.

The aim of organic pest control is to reduce damage to an acceptable minimum. It is neither possible nor desirable to eliminate all pests completely from the garden.

Natural balance

If the right conditions are created in the garden, a host of useful predators and parasites can be encouraged to move into the garden and do the pest control for you. These conditions are habitat (somewhere to live) and food (pests or other food used during different times of the predators' life-cycle). The best way to maintain the conditions required for a range of useful organisms in the garden is to grow a diversity of plants and to avoid the temptation to try to eliminate all pests.

Some commonly found useful garden predators and parasites are birds, lizards, frogs, spiders, ladybirds, hover flies, lacewings, dragon-flies, praying mantis, centipedes, parasitic wasps, and predator mites. Small children with instructions to collect snails can be useful too.

Soil conditions

Improving soil quality can reduce the occurrence and impact of pest and disease in the garden. Plants grown in good healthy soil will be healthy and healthy plants are disease resistant. Fungi and moulds in healthy soil produce natural antibiotics, cleansing the soil and aiding plants' disease resistance. Unhealthy plants, including plants raised on artificial fertilisers, attract pests. Healthy plants will resist pest attack and outgrow pest damage.

Organic sprays and dusts

Materials with natural insecticidal properties, which quickly break down and do not cause contamination may be used to kill garden pests. They will also kill many useful organisms so only use as a last resort.

Pyrethrum - The dried flower heads of the pyrethrum daisy are used to make an insecticide spray. Though non-residual, the spray is quite strong and should be used with caution.

Neem - Oil extracted from the Neem tree has insecticidal, fungicidal and antiseptic properties.

Quassia - The wood and bark of the Quassia tree, from South America, is a mild insecticide. Quassia chips can be kept in long term storage with little loss of potency.

Bacillus thuringiensis - A micro-organism that acts as a stomach poison for caterpillars. Sold under the name "Dipel".

Sulphur - A yellow mineral used as a powder. Fungicide and miticide. May damage tender plants.

White oil - Mineral oil used to control scale. Acceptable for occasional use.

Repellent sprays

Home-made repellent sprays are prepared as per herb tea then sprayed to protect vulnerable plants. Some have mild insecticidal properties. They include garlic, rhubarb, cloves, aniseed, sage, camphor; chillies, chives, onion, feverfew, wormwood, tansy. Mixing soap with a spray improves its wetting ability and increases the insecticidal effect.

Weeds are plants in the wrong place. They are survivors, being vigorous in growth and/or prolific in seeds. Weeds cause problems for gardeners by reducing productivity and affecting the appearance of the garden. Although weeds are often a problem, they may also have some benefits.

Methods of weed control

Organic weed control can be time consuming and hard work. It is important to practise good garden management to create conditions that reduce and prevent weed growth to minimise the amount of time needed for weeding. A number of methods may be used to achieve this, and to remove existing weeds:

1. Cultivation – digging out with a fork or machinery. Excessive cultivation damages the soil
2. Chipping - using a sharp hoe or spade to remove the weeds at or just below ground level with minimal soil disturbance
3. Smothering – covering with mulch, newspaper or other suitable material
4. Solarisation – cooking the weeds under plastic in hot weather
5. Barrier – solid or growing barriers contain the spread of invasive plants
6. Slashing – cutting the leafy growth after flowering and before seed set
7. Improving soil conditions – maintain good soil structure, fertility and mulch coverage to help prevent weed infestation
8. Crowding - dense plantings and green manures give weeds nowhere to grow
9. Hand pulling - the best method for getting weeds that are in amongst the plants you want to keep
10. Heat - flame or steam weeders kill by cooking the leafy top growth. You can also pour boiling water on them
11. Persistence - there are no instant fixes.

Invasive weeds

These are plants that spread by means of specialised underground stems. Includes couch, kikuyu, bamboo, mint etc. Control with methods 1,3,4,5,7 & 11.

Bulbs and persistent perennials

These are plants that die back (or can be cut back) and regrow. Includes oxalis (sour sob), onion weed, nut grass, dock, convolvulus. Control with methods 1,3,4,7,8 & 11.

Weeds as soil indicators

As weeds will grow wherever they are best able to, the types of weeds growing in a particular place may be an indication of soil condition.

| Soil Type | Indicator weed |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Poorly drained & acidic | Dock, Sorrel |
| Waterlogged | Bulrush |
| Overgrazed & compacted | Salvation Jane, Horehound |
| Saline | Saltbush |
| Sandy | Primrose, Coastal Galenia |
| Infertile, dry & compact | Caltrop, Wireweed |
| Rich fertile loam | Nettle, Sow Thistle, Chickweed |

Annual weeds

These are plants that grow, set seed, then die within one year. Includes a wide range of common garden weeds. Control with methods 1,2,3,4,6,7,8,9,10 & 11.

Recycling Weeds

Weeds are a valuable source of organic material. Their efficient root systems bring up nutrients from the soil, which, once returned to the garden bed, improve soil fertility.

Mulch

Provided the weeds cannot grow back, they may be spread over the garden as mulch. This is easily done over the soil from which they were removed. The weeds will grow back if they are invasive, gone to seed or have sufficient soil on their roots.

Compost

A well-made compost heap is a good means of disposal for any weed. The heat generated by compost as it breaks down will kill weeds and most seeds. An exception is seed of the Burr Medic (Bindi) which survives hot composting.

Drowning

Drowning is effective for recycling the nutrients from invasive, seedy and bulb weeds. Place the weeds in a container such as a rubbish bin, cover with water and leave to brew for a month or so. Have a close fitting lid over the container to keep the smell in. The resulting "weed tea" can be applied to the garden as a liquid manure.

Roots

The roots of some non-persistent or non-invasive plants may be left in the soil after their tops have been removed. The remaining root systems improve the soil by holding the soil structure together and providing nutrient/ water/ air channels as they decompose.

Healing Weeds

Herbalists and healers have used many wild plants, which are generally regarded as weeds, for centuries as traditional medicinal remedies. A few of the more common ones are listed below. Some healing plants are potent and should not be used without consultation.

| Weed | Traditional Medicinal Use |
|-------------------|--|
| Cleavers | Cancer; urinary disorders, blood cleanser, tonic |
| St Johns Wort | Lung, bladder; nervous problems, tumors |
| Scarlet Pimpernel | Mental disorders, liver; spleen, bladder stones, consumption |
| Horehound | Coughs and colds |
| Dandelion | Urinary, kidney and liver |
| Fumitory | Skin blemishes, tonic |
| Plantain | Externally – cuts, sores, ulcers, burns, skin irritations |
| Chickweed | Externally – skin problems, internally – inflammations |
| Wild Lettuce | Nervous disorders |
| Nettle | Asthma, blood cleanser; Externally - rheumatism and hair tonic |
| Willow Weed | Prostrate cancer |
| Marshmallow | Inflammations of alimentary, urinary and respiratory systems. |

Common edible weeds include nettle, sow thistle, dandelion, chickweed, marshmallow and purslane.

It is not normal for any living thing to grow in isolation, or in contact with only others of the same kind. Diversity and interconnection are basic ecological principles. Companion planting creates a diversity of species within the garden. Carefully arranged plants assist each other's growth by reducing pest numbers and creating favorable growing conditions.

Scent

Strongly scented herbs mask the scent of other plants, confusing pests, which identify their targets by smell. Example: broccoli and cabbage will suffer less damage from the caterpillars of the cabbage white butterfly when planted among sage, rosemary or dill.

Attracting Predators

Providing food and habitat for insects that are predators or parasites of insects that damage plants can reduce pest numbers. Example: parsnip flowers are a food for parasitic wasps.

Repelling or killing pests

Some plants are toxic to pests. Example: French marigolds will kill off some harmful nematode species.

Altering appearance

Flying pests often identify their food supply by its shape. Growing different plants closely together means that there are no distinctive outlines for pests to identify. Example: weeds grown amongst mung beans keep down beanfly numbers.

Shelter

A carefully placed stand of taller plants creates a sheltered spot by providing shade and alleviating wind. Example: plant corn near pumpkins.

Support

The stalks and branches of a large sturdy plant can support a climber. Example: sweet peas climbing through the low-lying branches of an orange tree.

Nitrogen fixing

Leguminous plants host bacteria in their roots. These bacteria fix nitrogen, supplying this nutrient to their hosts and indirectly, to neighbouring plants. Example: clover grown around cauliflower.

Allelopathy

Substances released from plants into the soil can affect the growth of neighbouring plants. Many plants inhibit the growth of others, but a few enhance it. Example: plants promoting the growth of others nearby include nettle, calendula, yarrow and (planted sparingly) chamomile.

Minerals

Deep-rooted plants draw up minerals from the subsoil, returning them to the topsoil. Example: comfrey draws up potassium, which is released into the soil as the leaves die off in late autumn.

Bad Companions

Plants to avoid planting near others include large trees, (particularly conifers, eucalypts and walnuts), strongly bitter herbs (wormwood, southernwood, tansy, rue) and heavy feeders which may also release growth inhibitors (brassicas, sweet corn, sunflowers).

Intercropping

Save space by growing small, quick growing vegetables between larger slower growing ones. The small vegetables can be harvested before the larger ones claim their growing space.

Guilds

A small number of plants which all grow well together is called a guild. A common three-plant combination is sweet corn, pumpkin and climbing bean. A common four-plant combination is tomato, basil, marigold, and lettuce.

Other factors to consider when deciding what to plant with what include: size, growth rate, root depth and type, nutritional needs, soil conditions, soil type and watering needs.

When to plant

Seedlings can be planted out into the garden when they are about four centimetres tall and have developed their second set of leaves (following the first 'cotyledons' that emerge from the seed). They should be full and strong, rather than 'leggy'. Some gardeners prefer to keep seedlings in the nursery, where it may be easier to protect them from pests and keep them watered, until they're bigger and stronger.

Avoid planting out at hot and windy times of day, as the plants will dry out quickly. Dawn or dusk of an overcast day when rain looks likely is ideal.

Biodynamic gardeners use the cycles of the moon to help decide when the best time to plant is. According to this method, seedlings are best planted out in the week following new moon.

Some people who are on speaking terms with their plants like to give them 24 hours notice before they plant them out, or even ask if it's ok first..

Hardening off

The plants you propagate (or buy) are usually grown in a sheltered, protected environment. They will need to be hardened off so they will suffer less of a shock when they go into the ground. Before they are planted in the garden, leave them for two to three days in a place with similar conditions to where they will be planted.

Planting the seedlings out in the garden

Push aside any mulch and make a hole one and a half times the depth of the pot with a hand fork or trowel. Fill in the bottom of the hole with compost and mix in with a little of the surrounding soil.

Squeeze the pot gently to loosen soil, then tip on its side so the plant slides out. If your seedlings are in egg cartons, newspaper cups, or other pots that will break down, they can be put straight in the hole without removing their containers.

It's generally best not to disturb the roots of the plant. However, if the roots have become 'pot bound' and are circling the pot, you may want to loosen them, either by 'tickling' gently or – if very tightly bound – by using a knife to make centimetre deep cuts from top to bottom at intervals around the root ball.

Place the plant in the hole and fill in with soil – make sure the soil level remains about the same as it was in the pot. Firm in gently.

Water your seedlings in well with a watering can or hose with a rose fitting. Always water newly transplanted plants, even if the soil's already moist. Keep your plants well watered for their first few days in their new home.

South Australia has wonderful conditions for temperate to subtropical fruit production. Our dry summers and lack of fruit fly are the envy of many in the eastern states. We can grow anything from apples to avocados in most areas. Community gardens are ideal places to demonstrate techniques for growing fruit trees in urban spaces, and to preserve delicious heritage varieties.

Selecting and planting fruit trees

Autumn is the time to prepare for deciduous fruit species. These include Mediterranean fruit trees such as apricots, figs, grapes, loquats, mulberries, persimmons, pomegranates and quinces.

Temperate species like apples, cherries, peaches, pears, plums and nectarines should also be on your list. A little homework first will pay dividends, as not all varieties will grow in all areas.

Some temperate fruit species require cold winter temperatures. Low-chill varieties such as

Sundowner, Pink Lady, Lady Williams, Granny Smith or Golden Delicious will ensure success with apples on the Adelaide plains.

Some varieties require cross-pollination, others are self-fertile. Selecting early, mid and late season varieties will extend the fruit-picking season. Your local nursery should be able to help you here, if not try the local library or the internet.

Site requirements

Your site should have full sun for at least half the day and some protection from wind, especially if using dwarfing rootstock. Soil needs to be free draining, as fruit trees do not like wet feet. If your garden is on clay soil, add gypsum and organic matter; or consider sub-surface drainage if drainage is very poor. Soil preparation can start in advance of planting, with a green manure crop sown to be turned in before planting or an application of compost.

How many can we fit?

The number of trees will depend on species, dwarfing characteristics and training techniques you choose. Dwarfing fruit trees are easily maintained for size but may not be as hardy or productive as semi-dwarfing varieties, which can be close planted and trained to limit their size. Training needs to start early, at planting time. Keeping your fruit trees to a moderate size allows for easier picking, pruning and netting, as birds will surely attack your best fruit just before they ripen.

For maximum utilisation of space especially on a wall or fence, fruit trees can be trained on a flat plane as an espalier. Examples of espaliered quince, citrus and plum can be seen at the Adelaide Botanic Gardens. Free-standing trees can be trained to a central leader to limit size. The open vase shape requires more space but is especially suited to apricots.

Finding out more

Visit your local nursery, library or orchard to get ideas and find out what's available. Notice what fruit trees are growing in older houses in your neighbourhood.

Visit the Rare Fruit Society of S.A. website at www.rarefruit-sa.org.au

Borrow or add to your library a copy of Louis Glowinski's 1997 book, *The Complete Book of Fruit Growing in Australia* Lothian 382pp.

Where do you find seeds?

- In seed heads – lettuce, parsley, basil, carrot, parsnip, silverbeet, beetroot, dill, fennel
- In pods – peas, beans, cabbages, broccoli, bok choy, mustard
- In fruits – tomatoes, capsicums, chillies, cucumbers, pumpkin

What's flowering or going to seed in your garden now?

How to save seeds

Start with good seeds when you start your garden.

- Choose local seeds because they are adapted to local conditions.
- Choose non-hybrid seeds because you can rely on them producing true-to-type seeds.

Take seeds from your own garden - start with tomatoes, beans and lettuces as they are the easiest.

Select the best plants to save seed from – let the most healthy, productive plants to go to seed. You need to keep more than one plant of some types of plants, like cabbage, corn and silverbeet. Label them as off limits to anyone harvesting the garden!

Collect the mature seeds. Seeds must be left on the plant until they are fully mature- this is critical for good viable seed. Pick them in dry weather.

Dry the seeds. Put the seeds in a closely woven basket, into a paper bag or onto a canvas. Dry away from the sun for between one and three weeks depending on size and weather.

Clean the seeds. Separate the seeds from their receptacles - shell the pods, shake the seed heads and squeeze out fleshy fruits. Winnow the seeds from the chaff and put them into a paper bag for further drying if necessary. Wash the flesh of fruits from the seeds and set them out to dry on paper, or a plate.

Store them safely. On a dry day store the seed in an airtight container with bay leaves to discourage insect attack. Keep them in a cool, dry and dark place.

Sowing seed

Sow in season.

There are two main planting seasons, spring and autumn; many plants can be planted in only one of those seasons.

Some, however, can be planted all year round.

Sow with care.

Sow large seeds directly in beds. Small seeds can be sown in punnets of fine sandy soil and compost, or may be direct sown if the soil is fine enough.

Sow each seed two to five times as deep as its diameter; depending on the texture of the soil -- deeper for sandier soil, shallower for clayey soil. Press the soil down over the seed gently. Water once a week.... unless it rains, of course.

Growing new plants from pieces of a parent plant will give you plants that are genetically identical, that is, clones.

Cuttings

Pieces of a plant stem are cut and placed the right way up in a striking mix. If possible, don't use pieces longer than 10cm or thicker than 1cm. The softer/greener the stem, the smaller the cutting. Always use healthy pieces of stem.

Taking stem cuttings

Make a clean level cut through a node at the base of the cutting. Cut the top of the piece at an angle 1cm above a node, or with a tip cutting, leave the tip of the stem intact. Carefully remove all leaves from the lower 3/5 of the cutting without stripping any bark. For large leafed plants, trim back and shorten the leaves that remain on the top of the cutting.

Fill a box or pot with striking mix and make holes in it with a stick to a depth of about half the length of the cuttings. Slot the cuttings into the holes, press them in gently then water with a soft shower.

Root Cuttings

Some plants can be grown from pieces of root placed in a cutting mix. Cut the pieces 5cm long. Bury them vertically in the striking mix, the right way up. To remember which way is up, cut the upper part of the root cutting flat and the lower part on an angle. If uncertain about which way is up, place them horizontally in the mix. Keep the mix damp. Take the cuttings at a time when the plant is dormant, for most plants this is during winter.

Shade and moisture

Cuttings are more successful if they are kept as moist as is practical without stopping the circulation of air. You may install misters in the propagating area or loosely place a plastic bag over each pot. All cuttings should be placed out of the sun.

Potting on

When the cuttings are growing new roots and/or leaves, remove them from the container of striking mix without damaging their roots, and put them in a pot with potting mix. Water immediately then regularly.

Division

Plants that form large clumps at the crown may be dug up in winter, broken into smaller pieces and replanted. Some plants need to be lifted and divided regularly to keep them in good condition. Cut back most of the leaf and root growth before tearing the clump apart. Ensure that each new leaf has a leaf, or an "eye" from which a new leaf may grow, and a portion of roots.

Layering

Sometimes, when a branch or stem lies on the ground, it will grow roots. Once a good root system is established, the branch may be cut from the main plant and relocated as a new plant. You can layer plants by pegging lower branches to the ground, covering them lightly with soil. A couple of longitudinal scratches on the underside of the branch should encourage root growth.

Organic matter for recycling tends to present itself irregularly. One minute you have a few veggie scraps, the next a pile of weeds and clippings from the garden. Worm farms are one of the easiest and most productive ways of dealing with the ebbs and flows of organic waste generated by a household or community garden.

It is a matter of setting up a system that suits you and the amount of organic waste that you have. Then you can start producing a constant supply of high quality fertiliser with little effort.

Compost worms

Compost worms are different to the earthworms that till the soil. They are active worms that thrive on organic matter, eating through their bodyweight daily. In the process they produce a high quality fertiliser, rich in humates and beneficial microbes. Humates help build soil, holding nutrients and moisture in the soil rather than letting them leach out, and making them available to plant roots and soil microbes. Most pathogenic microbes are destroyed in a worm's gut, including the common human pathogens. Any plant material infected by viruses, eg tomatoes and other solanums, should not go into a worm farm. Weed seeds will also survive in a worm farm – indeed worm castings are the ideal germinating medium for seeds.

Kinds of compost worms

The common species used in worm farms are the red, tiger and blue wriggler. All are subtropical worms which prefer a temperature range in the twenties (Celsius). They require moisture, without being saturated, and protection from direct sunlight.

What do they eat?

Any organic matter, other than citrus peel, onion and garlic, is suitable. Make sure that pesticide residues are minimal and that manures contain no worming agents. Powdered dolomite is the other ingredient you can sprinkle on as you add matter to the worm farm or if the contents go sour.

A home for your wriggly friends

A worm farm needs to confine the worms and hold organic matter. It should hold moisture yet drain, be vermin proof, and allow easy access. The depth need only be 25-30 cm. Surface area (and feeding) will determine worm numbers and size. There are a number of commercially available worm farms, including "worm factory" and "can o worms". These have a number of compartments that stack vertically and allow ease of worm management and harvest of the castings. The liquid that drains from worm farms is valuable for fertilising plants. There are other commercial systems that rely on the worms moving horizontally to manage them and harvest castings. Both systems are easy to make from a variety of containers.

Styrofoam containers can be readily adapted for a stacking system. Baths are useful for a horizontal system. I use two halves of a drum (cut lengthwise) mounted on a metal frame, one above the other. The top one drains into the bottom, which drains into collecting vessels. The harvested "worm wee" is used constantly to fertilise pot plants and the garden. Flywire screens cover the tops protecting the worms from vermin. This is important if you are adding any meat, eggs or milk as rats, mice and flies will follow if not excluded. Shade is important, particularly in summer. Mine are housed under a grapevine with shade cloth over the screens.

Setting up your worm farm

First put a bedding layer down. This can be compost or partly broken down organic matter and must drain freely. I usually use a 10 cm layer of semi-composted prunings then another 10 cm of compost. This is not spread evenly as the scraps go in the undulations. Water well, allowing a few hours for draining, then add worms.

Harvesting castings

Harvest castings by hand (squishy on fingers). To concentrate the worms in one part of the farm, feed and add water in one corner only for a week or so. The worms will head for this corner and the rest of the farm can be dug out and piled into a cone shape on a flat tray. The worms, being not liking sunshine, will congregate at the bottom centre of the cone after an hour or so and the castings can be "skimmed off".

Resources

Further reading or other research before starting is recommended. Books you may find at your local library include

- Allan Windust (1998) *Worms Downunder*, Allscape
- Allan Windust (1997) *Worms Garden For You*, Allscape (out of print but check your local library)
- Allan Windust (1997) *Worm Farming Made Simple-For The Professional*, Allscape
- David Murphy (1993) *Earthworms In Australia*, Hyland House
- Eric Wilson (2000) *Worm Farm Management: Practices, Principles, Procedures*, Kangaroo Press
- Amy Brown (1994) *Earthworms Unlimited*, Kangaroo Press

"Worm Digest" at www.wormdigest.org/ has loads of information on vermicomposting, including two page introductions for adults and for kids

Sample forms and documents



Sample forms and documents

These forms can be adapted for use in your community garden. They can be downloaded from the Growing Community website, <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx> and adapted to meet your needs.

Community Garden Site Assessment Checklist

Community mapping

What community and business groups and facilities are nearby?

- ☐ Churches, mosques, etc
- ☐ Schools
- ☐ Kindergartens
- ☐ Childcare centres
- ☐ Community and neighbourhood houses and centres
- ☐ Aged care facilities
- ☐ Neighbourhood watch groups
- ☐ Local environment groups
- ☐ Other community organisations.....
- ☐ Restaurants
- ☐ Business councils
- ☐ Garden stores
- ☐ Other businesses

Who lives nearby?

- ☐ What are the age groups of people?
 - ☐ What are employment and unemployment levels?
 - ☐ Is housing public, community, private rental, owned?
 - ☐ What are people's cultural and linguistic backgrounds?
 - ☐ What is the crime rate in the area?
 - ☐ What are other special characteristics of the people in the area?
- Tip: Use local councils and Census data.

Safety and security

- ☐ Is the site near community facilities (school, community centre, etc)?
- ☐ Is the site in view of houses, roads, shopping areas, etc?
- ☐ Is there graffiti or vandalism visible?
- ☐ Is there any lighting?
- ☐ Is there a neighbourhood watch group in the area?
- ☐ Is the site fenced?

Landuse

What are the main landuses surrounding the garden site?

- ☐ Businesses (what?).....
- ☐ Industry
- ☐ Parkland
- ☐ Major roads
- ☐ High density housing
- ☐ Medium density housing
- ☐ Low density housing
- ☐ Car parking
- ☐ What is the history of the land?

Current land use

- ☐ Who currently uses the land?
- ☐ Do people walk through or use it as a shortcut?
- ☐ Rubbish dumped
- ☐ Illegal activities
- ☐ Children's play
- ☐ Sleep
- ☐ Other uses

Plant knowledge

- ☐ What plants grow well in the area?
- ☐ Who are the experienced gardeners and seed savers in the neighbourhood?

Things to look for at the garden site

Size

- ☐ How big is the land?
- ☐ How much of the land is suitable for gardens?

Land tenure

- ☐ Who owns the land?
- ☐ How is it owned?
- ☐ Are there zoning regulations in place? What do they allow and restrict?
- ☐ What are/ would be the leasing agreements, how long, cost etc?

Sun, wind, soil

- ☐ What's the current ground cover? (grass, gravel...)
- ☐ What is the slope of the land?
- ☐ What plants (including weeds and trees) are already on site?
- ☐ What is the soil type?
- ☐ How many hours of sun does the land get in a day?
- ☐ Are there any large trees, buildings, etc blocking solar access?
- ☐ Is there a water source on site? (bore, tap...)
- ☐ How does water move through the site?
- ☐ What direction does wind come from?
- ☐ What do you notice about the wind? (strong etc)

Tip: Visit the site during or just after heavy rain to observe how water moves through the site, where it gathers, and how quickly it soaks into the soil.

Structures

- ☐ Are there any buildings on site?
- ☐ Seating
- ☐ Shedding
- ☐ Walls
- ☐ Fences
- ☐ Paved areas
- ☐ Other structures

Gardens

- ☐ What gardens, etc are already established?

Services

- ☐ Is there electricity on site or easy to access?
- ☐ Phone
- ☐ Sewers, stormwater drains
- ☐ Is there public transport nearby?
- ☐ Is a place for bicycle parking
- ☐ Car parking space
- ☐ Are there major roads nearby?
- ☐ Are there barriers to pollution from traffic?

What other features does the site have?

From *Growing Community: Starting and Nurturing Community Gardens*. May be reproduced freely for use in community gardens. May be downloaded from <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx>.

Sample volunteer wanted notice

Volunteer position available

Role description: (name of position)

Responsibilities/ tasks:

-
-
-

Skills or experience required or desirable:

(skills, training, qualifications, experience, knowledge)

-
-
-

Personal attributes required:

-
-
-
-

Special requirements:

(eg drivers licence, police check if working with children)

Time frame and attendance requirements:

-
-
-

Location of work:

-
-
-

Travel involved:

-
-
-
-

Supervision of the position:

-
-
-
-
-

What benefits will the volunteer gain from this position?

-
-
-
-
-

Community Garden Volunteer Registration Form

All information will be kept confidential.

Personal details

Name.....Gender.....Today's Date...../...../.....Address.....
 post code.....
 Home phone.....Work/ mobile phone.....
 Email address.....Date of birth...../...../.....
 Relevant health or physical information (eg pre-existing injuries)?.....

 In case of emergency, please notify..... Phone..... Relationship to you.....

What days and times are you available?

| | Times |
|-----------|-------|
| Monday | |
| Tuesday | |
| Wednesday | |
| Thursday | |
| Friday | |
| Saturday | |
| Sunday | |

How often do you want to participate?

- ☐ Once or more a week
☐ Once a fortnight
☐ Once a month
☐ Special projects/events

What activities would you like to be involved with at the Community Garden?

- ☐ Gardening
☐ Nursery
☐ Chickens
☐ Compost/ worm farm
☐ School groups
☐ Garden tours
☐ Facilitating workshops
☐ Administration/ officework
☐ Writing articles for newsletter
☐ Mail outs
☐ Promotion/ publicity/ media
☐ Stalls/ displays at events
☐ Organising events
☐ Research
☐ Arts projects
☐ Others

What are your reasons for volunteering?.....

What do you want to gain from volunteering at the community garden?

What skills, knowledge, and experience could you contribute through volunteering?

Volunteers are encouraged to become members of the garden.
 Membership supports the garden and allows you to be part of the
 gardens decision making processes.

Membership costs \$___ year for unwaged people, \$_____ waged.
 Would you like to join?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe later

From *Growing Community: Starting and Nurturing Community Gardens*, adapted from Northey Street City Farm's volunteer registration form. May be reproduced freely for use in community gardens. This form can be downloaded as a word document or pdf file from <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx> and adapted for use at your garden.

Booking Form for School' Group Visits to _____ Community Garden

Please complete form and post to _____ Community Garden, 16 Garden St, Adelaide 5000 or Fax to 8 _____ ; Phone (08) 8 _____ with any queries)

Date of Enquiry:/...../.....

Preferred Dates for Visit:/...../..... or/...../.....

School or Group Name:

Contact Person: Position:

Phone: Mobile..... Fax:

E-mail:

Postal Address:

..... postcode

Number of persons visiting: Grade / Ages

Please note: Maximum total numbers in any one group visit is _____.

Time of arrival: Time of departure

Subject of study / interest

Topic (please tick – see brochure for details):

Living Farm Life: Worms, Chooks, Herbs and Vegies ☐

Fun at the Farm..... ☐

Aboriginal Bushfood, Medicine and Culture..... ☐

The Cycles of Life..... ☐

Food, Diversity and Health..... ☐

Feeding the World's People..... ☐

Basic City Farm Tour..... ☐

Other (please specify) ☐

Office Use only

☐ Diary entry

☐ Confirmation letter, course material and maps sent

...../...../.....(attach copy of letter)

☐ Price agreed (\$.....per person)

☐ Send invoice forStudents @each

☐ Include GST Yes / No

☐ Invoice sent / /

☐ Payment received / /

☐ Timetable for visit

From *Growing Community: Starting and Nurturing Community Gardens*. May be reproduced freely and adapted for use in community gardens.
Available for download from <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx>.

Community Garden Plot Application Form

There can only be one garden plot for each household. Priority may be given to applicants who live closest to the Garden, or who have the least alternative opportunity to garden. This application form must be completed in English, and returned to _____ Community Garden.

Before you apply make sure you satisfy the following criteria:

Live in _____ Local Council Area

Be prepared to pay an annual fee and contribute to communal upkeep of the gardens

Be prepared to make the most of a plot (there is a long waiting list of keen gardeners)

Given Names Family Names

Address

..... Postcode

Telephone numbers:

home phone number work phone number

mobile email

Emergency contact:

Name Relationship Phone number

Are you a pensioner or health care card holder? ☐ Yes ☐ No

First or preferred language Second preferred language?

What is your date of birth?/...../.....

How much space do you have to garden at home ? metres, e.g. 6m x 4m

Do you have any prior gardening experience?

Do you have any special physical needs for your garden plot? ☐ No ☐ Yes - please provide details.....

When would you be able to attend garden working bees / meetings?

☐ morning ☐ afternoon ☐ evening

☐ Monday - Friday ☐ Saturday ☐ Sunday

I state that I live within the City of area described above. There is no other community garden plot allocated to my household.

Signature Date

From *Growing Community: Starting and Nurturing Community Gardens*, adapted from Collingwood Children's Farm Community Garden Application Form. May be reproduced freely for use in community gardens. Copies can be downloaded and adapted for use in your garden from <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx>.

Community Garden Training Survey

What would you like to learn more about?

Please tick 5 topics you'd like to receive training in

- ☐ Basic organic gardening
- ☐ Seed saving
- ☐ Propagating plants
- ☐ Dealing with pests and weeds
- ☐ Grafting
- ☐ Fruit trees
- ☐ Cooking with unusual herbs and vegies
- ☐ Permaculture
- ☐ Biodynamics
- ☐ Composting
- ☐ Worm farms
- ☐ Facilitating meetings
- ☐ Using power tools
- ☐ Supervising volunteers
- ☐ Leading garden tours
- ☐ Gardening with schools, children
- ☐ Mosaics, garden sculpture
- ☐ Basic carpentry
- ☐ Others (please list).....

What do you already know?

| Please tick relevant boxes | Some experience/ knowledge | Confident | Could lead or co-lead training |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Basic organic gardening | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Seed saving | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Propagating plants | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dealing with pests and weeds | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grafting | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Fruit trees | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cooking with unusual herbs and vegies | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Permaculture | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Biodynamics | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Composting | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Worm farms | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Facilitating meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Using power tools | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Supervising volunteers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Leading garden tours | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gardening with schools, children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mosaics, garden sculpture | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Basic carpentry | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Others (please list on back of page) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Growing Community

Thinking about starting a community garden?

Wondering how you can use community gardening as part of your health, education or community development work?

Helping to keep a community garden growing?

This booklet, and its companion website, were created to encourage the establishment of new community gardens, and to support existing community gardens. They have been designed to be relevant to community groups considering starting a community garden, professionals considering using community gardening as part of their programs, people who are asked to support community garden projects, and groups already running community gardens.

Additional resources, downloads and up-to-date links, as well as an electronic version of this booklet, are available at <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx/>

Why Community Gardens?

Community gardens:

- allow people to grow their own vegetables, fruit, herbs and flowers
- contribute to the creation of ecologically viable and socially just food systems
- are a convivial way of getting fresh air and exercise with no gym fees!
- foster community engagement and a culture of generosity, reciprocity and community self-reliance
- are great places to learn about gardening and share local and traditional knowledge
- preserve and improve the precious green spaces in urban environments
- develop innovative ways of living sustainably in the city
- provide a venue for community gatherings, cultural events, art projects, celebrations, workshops, and much more
- provide opportunities for cultural exchange and learning
- and some community gardens produce enough food to share surpluses and/or develop community enterprises.