Community Gardening in SA
- Resource Kit

Acknowledgements The Community Gardens in SA Resource Kit was produced as part of the 'Community Gardening in SA Project' which was funded in 2003 - 2004 by the Government of South Australia through the Department of Health, and auspiced by the Community and Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association SA. This version of the Resource Kit has been produced with funding assistance from the Office of Sustainability, Department for Environment and Heritage.

Many people contributed to this Kit.
Thank you to all who were part of the planning process, particularly: Kelly Allen, Clive Bristow, Gloria Bristow, David Corkill, Deidre Knight, Margaret RainbowWeb, Jeremy Urquhart and the Community Gardening in SA Project Reference Group.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the South Australian Community Gardening Gathering in October 2003, particularly those who facilitated workshops/ sessions: Kelly Allen, David Corkill, Julie Firth, David Harrison, Mary Heath, Jacqui Hunter, Chas Martin, Lynda McCarty, Ben Neil, Bridget O'Donnell, Steve Poole, and Jeremy Urquhart. The information shared by gardeners at the Gathering contributed greatly to this Kit.

These people provided valuable feedback, advice and suggestions on draft versions: Dick Copeman and Ross Craig (Northey Street City Farm), Deidre Knight and Ian Lillington (Community Gardening in SA Project), Ben Neil (Cultivating Community), Rebequea Aitken, Kelly Allen and Christopher Day (Flinders University Permaculture Garden), Chris Banks (Duck Flat Community Garden), Carol Payne (Caboolture Community Gardens), Jeremy Urquhart (Permaculture Association of SA), Mary Ireland (The Gathering Tree Community Garden), Robyn Downing (House on the Hill), and Julie Coulls (Kurruru Pingyarendi Community Garden).

Special thanks to Victorian community gardening organisation, Cultivating Community for allowing reproduction of sections of its (2002) publication, Good Practice Guide for Community Gardens compiled by Greg Milne, and to Northey Street City Farm, who provided advice, access to their resources, and a sunny place to sit while typing up the Kit.

Researched, written and illustrated by claire fulton.

Graphic design and layout by Joel Catchlove <madhorsemanofmarrakesh@yahoo.com>

Printed by Single Step Printing

Internet version of the Kit designed by John Brisbin, available at www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening

Citation Department of Health, Government of South Australia, 2004. Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit, report prepared by claire fulton, Community And Neighbourhood Houses And Centres Association Inc, Adelaide

Why Community Gardens?

Community gardens are recognised worldwide as a great way to grow food, improve your health, meet people, and cultivate vibrant communities.

They:

- allow people to grow their own vegetables, fruit, herbs and flowers
- contribute to building an ecologically viable and socially just food system
- are a convivial way of getting fresh air and exercise with no gym fees!
- foster community engagement and a culture of generosity, reciprocity, trust and self-help
- 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
- create art projects, community events, celebrations, workshops, and much more
- provide opportunities for cultural exchange and learning
- and some community gardens produce enough food share the surplus and/or develop community enterprises.

"It's about taking back the ability to produce food for ourselves. At the supermarket, you not only don't connect to the food system, but the money goes out of the region. People are looking for a sense of community, and they find it in their local community garden" (Claire Cummings)

"Urban community gardeners are bringing life and liveability, seed by seed, back to their neighbourhoods. The gardens nourish the body and also the soul" (Patricia Hynes)

Essential Community Garden Resources

The South Australian Community Gardening Network can be contacted by phoning 1300 737 612 (cost of a local call)

Australian Community Gardens and City Farms Network
http://www.terracircle.org.au/garden/
has information on starting a community garden, news and updates about community gardens around the country and links to more resources.

Australian Community Foods
http://www.communityfoods.org.au/
contains contact details for community gardens in South Australia and across Australia.

The American Community Gardening Association
http://www.communitygarden.org/
has start up info and resources, links, and access to publications.

City Farmer
http://www.cityfarmer.org
This Canadian website has extensive information and links about urban agriculture and community gardening.

Contents

The Benefits of Community Gardening

Community Gardens are unique in their ability to bring people together to make all manner of magic happen. Blight sights are transformed into places of beauty, pumpkins emerge silently from compost heaps, and neighbours get to know each while sharing seeds and recipes.

Community gardens' impacts are as diverse as their landscapes. They provide a community meeting place, conserve and improve urban green spaces, foster healthy, engaged communities, and create many learning and cultural opportunities. Not to mention enabling people to grow their own delicious, clean, healthy food in the city!

Environment

Community gardens improve the quality of urban environments, rehabilitating degraded and often hazardous land, contributing to urban greening, providing sanctuary to urban wildlife, and creating a setting for environmental education. They are also part of broader moves to ensure a secure and ecologically sensitive food supply.

Ecologically sustainable food production

Community gardens demonstrate practical solutions to the negative environmental impacts of commercial food production. Bringing food production into cities reduces its ecological footprint by cutting down 'food miles' - the energy used to transport produce over many hundreds of kilometres from growers to processors to retailers to people's tables.

Care for soil and for biodiversity are at the heart of the organic practices used by most community gardens. These practices lower the economic and environmental costs of food production by minimising or eliminating chemical use, and returning nutrients to the soil.

The genetic diversity of our food is protected by community gardeners who grow and save the seeds of local plant varieties which are adapted to the particular conditions and cultures of the communities who grow them.

Resources
Ecological footprinting
www.epa.vic.gov.au/Eco-footprint/default.asp
Food Miles
www.sustainweb.org/chain_fm_index.asp
Seed saving
www.seedsavers.net,
Jude and Michel Fanton (1992) *The Seedsavers' Handbook,* Seed Savers, NSW

'Waste' minimisation and nutrient cycling

Community gardens promote waste minimisation and nutrient cycling strategies, demonstrating composting techniques that can be used by people in their home gardens, and providing community composting facilities. Community gardens also support waste minimisation by demonstrating strategies for the creative reuse of discarded resources. In community gardens all over the world, bath tubs become aquaculture systems, scrap timber and metal are shaped into tool sheds, bed heads become trellises, old tyres are used as stabilisers for banks and earth berms, yesterday's news smothers weeds, and the kitchen sink is transformed into a thriving wormfarm.

Connection and custodianship

A sense of belonging, connection and identity are vital prerequisites to a community which takes responsibility for the land it inhabits.

Parks, street trees, and manicured lawns do very little to establish the connection between us and the land. They teach us nothing of its productivity, nothing of its capacities. Many people who are born, raised, and live in cities simply do not know where the food they eat comes from or what a living garden is like. Their only connection with the productivity of the land comes from packaged tomatoes on the supermarket shelf. But contact with the land and its growing process is not simply a quaint nicety from the past that we can let go of casually. More likely, it is a basic part of the process of organic security. Deep down, there must be some sense of insecurity of city dwellers who depend entirely upon the supermarkets for their produce. (*A Pattern Language*, Alexander, et al. 1977 p.820)

Community gardens help to create a sense of place, of neighbourhood identity and cohesion. They provide opportunities for people to have an impact on the development of their community, and to take responsibility for its growth. Through redeveloping an everyday connection to the local environment, observing the quality of the seasons, nurturing a tree through its first months, taking sustenance from the soil and returning sustenance to it, we can take the first steps towards knowing and protecting our local regions.

Health

The British House of Commons (1998) "The Future for Allotments" committee report concluded that these community gardens

> will often form a component part of healthy neighbourhoods. Given the undisputed health benefits of allotments, we strongly recommend that allotment provision be explicitly noted in national public health strategy and be integrated in to the local delivery of that strategy.

Nutrition and food security

Perhaps the greatest health benefit of community gardens is the promotion of a wide variety of fresh, locally grown vegetables and fruit. Community gardens can supplement families' diets with wholesome organic vegetables, and can also be a means for educating gardeners and the broader community about healthy food, providing enormous scope for positive experiences of the sensuousness, fun, and pleasure of growing, preparing, and eating good food. Community gardens can address food insecurity by allowing people to grow some of their own food at relatively low cost.

Psychological benefits

Community Gardening enhances gardeners' 'self-esteem' through the practical accomplishment of producing harvests of vegetables and flowers.

> The deeper meaning of gardening may be found in the gardener's responses to its progress... Each sprouting seed, new leaf, or shoot provides immediate proof to the gardener that [her or] his nurturing activities have been successful. Such positive feedback serves to entwine [her or] him even more closely with [the] plants. The investment of time, physical labour, acumen, and personal aspirations are rewarded when a plant blooms or bears fruit, bringing almost parental feelings of pride. The gardener[s] gain a sense of accomplishment, self-esteem, and control over [their] surroundings. (Lewis 1990 pp. 246-7)

Community gardens provide many opportunities for recreation and exercise. This may vary from a simple stroll amongst the flowers, to the day to day work of maintaining the garden - exercise carried out in convivial company, with a real sense of satisfaction and purpose. Reconnecting to the earth and to the natural processes of tending to soil and growing food may have a balancing effect on the human psyche, alleviating stress and providing opportunity for reflection and relaxation. A breath of fresh air. Horticultural therapy has been become a key element of several community gardens in Australia.

Reference

Lewis, Charles A (1990) **"Gardening as Healing Process"** in Mark Francis and Randolph T Hester Jr *The Meaning of Gardens: Idea, Place, and Action* MIT Press, Cambridge

Community arts and cultural development

Celebrating cultural diversity

Community gardens are often a space for community members of diverse cultural backgrounds to practise and share traditional and contemporary expressions of their culture. This provides a unique opportunity for learning and exchange. Urban gardens can provide a critical link to culture through seeds that have been passed down for generations, and through the cultivation and preparation of traditional foods that are not available in local stores. Community gardens may also become venues for elders to explore their cultural traditions and celebrate their lives.

Community arts

Community gardens often integrate a range of community arts projects, from murals to sculptural installations, photo essays to poetry performance.

> Arts practice and creative expression are at the heart of a community's vitality. People have always come together to sing, tell stories, enact rituals, to celebrate, to mourn and to mark significant events in their lives... People need to participate in these activities. This is what is meant by the term community arts (Community Arts Network SA)

Events

Many community gardens create community culture through regular cycles of events. These may include fund-raising fairs, produce sales, music performances, story tellings or art exhibitions. Often, community gardens choose to mark the changing of the seasons, or events such as first fruitings, harvest, and sowing new seasons' seeds.

Community development

Community gardens engage and involve people in their own communities. They give people the chance to physically shape the character and culture of their neighbourhoods, and to take responsibility for their common land.

Community gardens are a meeting space, bringing together diverse aspects of local communities. They allow neighbours to meet on neutral soil, and provide common ground for people of varying cultural backgrounds, experiences, ages, and interests.

Food and social capital

Professor Fran Baum from Flinders University explored the links between food, social capital, and community health at the Eating Into the Future Conference held in Adelaide in 1999. Her studies have shown that food is a vital means of generating social capital, a 'social lubricant' frequently facilitating social interactions. Baum particularly emphasised the exchange of garden produce as a way people build relationships with people in their immediate communities.

In the beginning: Starting a new Community Garden

Starting a community garden from scratch is a major undertaking. Expect that it will take time, energy, endurance and commitment. Work slowly, emphasising community involvement from the outset. It can be helpful to break up the project into small thoughtful steps you know you can follow through - and celebrate all of your accomplishments.

Resist rushing in without planning and research. This Kit is a good starting point, but keep in mind that it is designed for long-established community gardens as well as for people starting out, so don't get overwhelmed! It may take years before you're ready to embark on your own training program, for example.

The 'community' aspect of community gardens is especially important at the initial stages. It's relatively easy to dig garden beds and build compost heaps, but forming a group of enthusiastic and committed participants who can sustain the project can take considerable effort and time - don't rush to get your hands in the soil before you've done the community-building groundwork.

There are many different kinds of community gardens, each with unique circumstances, visions, and people. What follows is not a prescription for establishing a community garden, but some ideas to help you develop your own process.

Who can start a community garden?

Community gardens have been initiated and run by individuals, small groups, community organisations, community and health agencies, and Local Councils.

Community participation is an important aspect of all community gardens. While a community health worker considering starting a community garden to promote food security and fruit and vegetable consumption will have somewhat different needs and resources to a group of residents wanting to rehabilitate derelict land between their houses, the basic steps to starting a community garden are similar whoever the initiator may be.

There is a section in this kit specifically for professional community builders. See *notes for health, housing, council and community workers*, page 17.

Deciding to start a community garden

The first step in initiating a new community garden is deciding that it's the right project to be working on.

Is there enough interest, energy and resource to get the project going? Would a community garden be an effective way to address some of the needs that exist in your community: for open space, food security, social opportunities, health promotion, environmental improvement, or training? (This is a more useful initial question to consider than "is there a demonstrated 'need' for a community garden?".)

Consider some of the other options:

- Could you join and support an existing community garden in your area?
- Could your particular area of interest be a sub-project at an established garden?
- Would another form of 'gardening in community' be more appropriate to your situation - gleaning and redistributing produce from neighbourhood fruit trees, gardening collectively in people's backyards, joining or starting a native plant revegetation project, or making sensory gardens on sidewalks?

The core group at the Gathering Tree Community Garden

Form a working group

At this initial stage of the process, you may choose to organise and promote an open public meeting, inviting many people to get involved, or to use your networks to form a small start-up group and invite more people's involvement later on.

The number of people needed in a start-up working group will depend on your unique situation and the resources you have access to. One or two Local Council workers, with the support and resources of their department may be able to get a sustainable community garden project up and running; five is probably a minimum number for a group of residents.

Finding working group members:

- Contact local environment groups, local gardening, organic and permaculture groups, residents' associations, and neighbourhood watch groups. Get an article in their newsletters.
- Make flyers and put them up in community centres, shops, schools, etc
- Do a letterbox drop of the immediate area, particularly if you have a site in mind
- Use your personal networks and invite people directly
- If you're setting up the garden as part of your job, you might include other workers in your team, people from your client group or target group, and people from other local organisations.
- Consider using local media

See the promotion section page 32 for more ideas.

Public meetings

Present the benefits of community gardens (see the first section of this Kit for information). Invite someone from an established community garden to share their story. Slides or photos in PowerPoint presentations can also be effective.

Make sure you have an experienced facilitator to run the meeting. You might invite a respected local, or someone from the Local Council or other organisation to facilitate for you. Also see the *Decision Making and Meetings* notes in this kit, page 51.

Be prepared to address concerns that people may raise, for example:

- noise
- smelly compost (have systems in place to make sure compost is well-managed and doesn't smell)
- carparking
- enclosing public space (will be enhancing the space and community will still have access)

For a checklist to help organise community meetings see
www.communitywise.wa.gov.au/tools/organise.htm

Community garden tours

Don't start your garden from scratch! There is no substitute for visiting established community gardens and talking to the people involved. There are over 30 community gardens in South Australia which have all gone through the start up process - they know what it takes and have learnt lots from their experiences. A map of community gardens in SA, including contact details is available by phoning 1300 737 612. Join the SA Community gardeners' email listserve to keep in touch with local community garden events by going to http://au.groups.yahoo.com/SAComGd. Community gardens are also listed at www.communityfoods.org.au.

Garden visits or tours generate and sustain excitement about your project and spark lots of ideas. An invitation to a community garden tour can be a great way to attract new people to your working group. Car-pool or see if your Local Council has a community bus available.

Russ Grayson and Fiona Campbell suggest questions to ask when visiting other gardens:

- how did the garden start?
- what type of organisational structure you have?
- what do you do about public liability insurance?
- where do you obtain resources (mulch, compost, seeds etc)?
- what are your links to local government?
- how are you funded?
- how do you make decisions, solve problems and resolve conflict?
- how do you pass on skills to new gardeners and improve everyone's skills?

See Russ and Fiona's guide to starting a community garden at http://terracircle.org.au/garden/start/making.htm

Take photos, keep notes, and discuss what you have learned and use it to make decisions about how you want to organise and manage your community garden. Keep in touch with the people you meet so you can call on them for (and offer) advice and support as your garden progresses.

Develop your vision and plan

You will need to develop a clear shared vision and intention for your garden. This will be particularly important at the initiating stages, and will continue to evolve as your garden grows and develops. It is important not to rush ahead with logistics before allowing time for this process.

Your work towards developing a vision and making a plan for the garden may happen in your start-up group, at public meetings, or with a client group. It will probably happen in a combination of ways, sometimes involving the wider community, sometimes just the core working group.

Design your planning sessions to invite everyone to share their ideas and hopes. See the Learning, Education and Training section on page 58 for ideas about creating welcoming spaces.

Plan visioning processes that help to clarify people's hopes, values, needs, and wants for the garden, and for the community as a whole. Invite people to talk about what really matters to them - this will not only give momentum to the project, but also strengthen the connections between people involved in the process. When questions are framed in this more general way, there is often significant common ground among participants' hopes for the kind of community (environment, public spaces, etc) they would like to see.

Visualisations can be a useful part of this process, assisting people to reflect on their experiences, knowledge and values before sharing ideas with the larger group. Suggestions for visioning processes follow.

Work towards developing a 'vision statement' and aims for your garden.

You will eventually need to make decisions about your garden: whether it will be a communally gardened space and/or have individual plots, whether it will be organic, if it will target a particular group of people for involvement, what will be on site

Once you have agreed on a shared vision, you can begin to plan your project - setting goals, working out what tasks need to be done, finding out what skills people have to contribute (see *skills auditing* on page 11), making timelines, and getting to work. See the sections in this kit about making meetings go well (page 51), and about *planning training sessions* (page 58).

Finding a place to grow your garden

Some groups begin with a particular site in mind, perhaps a vacant block in their neighbourhood, or the land surrounding the school or community centre where they work. Others develop a plan for a garden then look for land to work with.

Community gardens can be located on:

- Council owned land
- Existing parks
- Grounds of Housing Trust and other flats

- Grounds of community centres and neighbour hood houses
- Church grounds
- Hospital and Health Centre grounds
- School, kindergarten and childcare centre grounds
- Universities
- Unused private land, particularly when neglected
- Land owned by businesses
- Land near railway tracks and stations
- Rooftops (see www.cityfarmer.org/subrooftops.html)
- Old bowling greens
- Roadsides

Keep your eyes and imagination open and talk to people in your area to come up with ideas for potential locations.

Approaching the Local Council for advice and support is often the first step for start-up groups looking for land. See working with Local Government section. You may find it useful to approach an environment or community development officer as a first point of contact.

Information in the *Site Design* section (page 18) will help you decide if a particular piece of land is suitable for your project.

Security of tenure

This is a big issue for many community gardens. It's hard to plan for the development of an orchard if you only have a year to use the land.

Start by getting a lease - a year to start with and the option for 5 year renewals.

Try to increase your security by getting the garden incorporated into Council policy, or its master plan. You might also investigate zoning regulations and green space requirements to help secure your land.

While you're waiting to find the site

It can take time to find the right place, and to negotiate use. There are lots of things you can do to develop your community garden before you get your hands in the soil at your site:

- Keep visiting and forming networks with other community gardens
- Use libraries and the internet to research community gardens in other states and countries
- Attend other gardens' working bees as a group
- Build your skills by holding or attending workshops and by gardening in each other's homes
- Start a small garden bed in a community centre, aged care facility, etc
- Keep getting to know each other and developing your vision. Eat together, garden together.
- Work on developing management systems for the garden (see page 41)
- Learn how to propagate plants (see page 83) and start a nursery so you have plants ready to go when you're ready to begin on site.

Ideas for visioning sessions

Hot potatoes

A "Hot potato" brainstorm is great for getting the creative juices flowing and encouraging a little lateral thinking.

Divide people into small groups. Each group starts with a sheet of butcher's paper with one question written on it (a different question for each group). Each group has a different coloured pen.

Groups work on their sheet for 3-5 minutes, brainstorming and listing short responses. In effective brainstorming, all ideas are accepted, it's quantity rather than quality that's needed, all judgement is withheld, and speed is of the essence.

At the sound of a "gong", each sheet is immediately dashed over to the next group (hence the hot potato title). Group keeps their own pens. They read the topic and what's written so far, add new ideas and, if desired, enhance or 'piggy back' on previous ideas.

At subsequent gongs, the sheets rotate around to each group, with great haste at each change over - this enhances the fun of it all and keeps everyone on their toes.

The last step before sharing is for each group to receive back its initial sheet, have a read, and prepare for any sharing that's planned.

One of the benefits of this strategy is that each group is already familiar with the topic, has thought about it, and most people have read most of the things written. Therefore, sharing can be accelerated before moving on to whatever discussion (acceptance/ rejection, prioritising, deferring for later consideration etc.) or publishing is desired.

Ideas for questions

- Who (individuals & groups) will be involved with our community garden in 5 years?
- What built things (large & small) will be here at the garden in 5 years time?
- What things will be overheard (statements, ques tions, exclamations etc) at / about the garden here in 5 years time?
- The answer is: "our community garden" - what are the questions?
- What varieties of plants/ animals will be growing/ living here in 5 years time?

This process was contributed by Ross Craig.

A Community garden visualisation

This can be read out to people participating in your visioning process.

Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Close your eyes. Take three deep breaths, releasing any stress or tension you feel in your body. Let go of any thoughts. Just be. Relax. Be aware of any tension in your face. Feel it drain away. Hunch your shoulders. Now relax. Stretch out your hands and arms, tighten and release.

In front of you is a long hallway. Walk through this hallway, until you come to a set of steps. Walk down these steps. You are on a landing. You open a door and step into a garden. As you look around, you realize it is your community garden. It is so familiar, and yet what do you know about this place? Spend some time exploring your garden using your senses.

Look at the kinds of trees and plants you have here. How do they interact? Do they attract a lot of bird life? Do they produce food? What is their purpose? Do you have fruit trees and chooks? Where are they placed within your garden? Observe some of the other features in your garden. Let your garden speak to you. How do the individual plants, trees, flowers, water features, animals, etc. contribute to the whole garden? Take in the essence of what you feel, see and hear around you. Become one with nature, with the plants, the animals, the birds, the insects, the soil, the elements. They all have a place within the bigger picture, which is always changing from day to day, season to season, from birth to living to dying to decaying and recycling to start the process all over again.

You see your garden as it is and then as it could be. Sense a new possibility of creating, expanding beyond the boundaries of what you already know. Use this possibility to imagine what your garden is like in 2-5 years. You see a gathering of people interacting, laughing and having fun. They are sharing ideas, experiences, and practical applications. These people are working together and yet they are doing their own thing. The people have common interests, common goals.

As you walk around observing, you become aware of what a group of individuals can create together. Do you see yourself having a role within the garden? What opportunities would open up for you here? How would you contribute? Have you come here as a visitor or are you part of this community? You have a choiceWalk through this garden as you see it now, creating possibilities for the future.It is now time to go. Take one last look around, remembering any specific thoughts and ideas you want to bring back with you, from either your own garden or the community garden.

In the distance you can see the door. Walk over to it. Open the door and walk to the steps. You climb up the steps. You are at the top, looking down the long hallway. Begin your walk towards the end of your journey, being aware of your body on the chair.

Stretch your arms, legs and body, bringing your awareness back into the room. Listen to the sounds around you. When you are ready, slowly open your eyes.

Invite people to share what they 'saw' - perhaps in small groups or by writing on pieces of paper and putting them up for everyone to read.

This visualisation was written by Lynda McCarty

A start up budget for your garden

Planning a budget requires a reasonably well developed vision for the garden - will it be a small herb garden or an education centre with a passive solar classroom? Will it have fruit trees? Animals? Water features? Children's play ground? Raised beds for people with disabilities? The design section of this kit (page 18) provides some suggestions for options to consider if you are at this stage of planning.

For many community gardens, much of the cost is incurred in the initial stages. Seeking in kind support, and reusing 'waste' resources can reduce many costs. See *Finding Funding and Resources* section (page 34) for ideas about applying for grants, getting inkind support, and finding ways to cut expenses.

Costs to take into account

Costs will vary greatly according to the project, but some to consider include costs involved with consulting/ involving the community in the garden project - producing and printing a leaflet or poster, an advertisement in the local paper, a mail out or letter box drop to local residents, hiring a community hall for a public meeting, phone calls and general administrative expenses.

Training for people in the start-up group and for people getting involved.

Public liability insurance is essential for all community gardens (see page 49). It will be required by many groups such as schools who may use the garden, and covers the garden against charges of negligence if a visitor is hurt at the garden. The price may range from $400-$700/year or more. Ask local council or a community centre if they may consider extending their own insurance to cover the garden. Insurance for fire and theft is also recommended.

Services may need to be installed if the land does

not have them. Water supply is essential, and many community gardens will also need electricity and phone access. As well as the costs of fittings and so on, the labour may have to be carried out by a professional. Local councils may 'loan' workers.

You will need a tool library containing basic tools and equipment suited to the work which will be done in the particular garden. This may include a couple of forks and shovels, a leaf rake, a soil rake, a mattock, wheelbarrows, several hand tools such as trowels; watering cans, hoses and fittings, and possibly irrigation equipment. More specialised equipment, such as pruning saws, or propagation equipment may also be needed, depending on the project. Obtaining good quality, safe tools should be a priority. Also take into account the varying abilities and sizes of people using tools such as shovels - it may be appropriate to have several sizes available. Secure storage for tools is also vital.

Garden establishment materials such as compost and mulch, materials to build beds and make pathways should be considered. Council may be able to help with left over or used pavers or bed construction materials.

A small library can be a valuable resource for a community garden. It may only contain twenty carefully selected titles, again, chosen according to the particular needs of the community garden. Investigate non-profit organisations such as Urban Ecology Australia and the Permaculture Association of South Australia who may supply relevant books at a discount price. A specific grant application could be made to establish a community library.

Some community gardens have permanent or occasional paid staff, such as a co-ordinator, training facilitator, or design consultant whose wages may need to be covered.

Contacts

Permaculture Association of SA
www.permaculturesa.org.au
info@permaculturesa.org.au

Urban Ecology Australia
www.urbanecology.org.au
urbanec@urbanecology.org.au
ph (08) 8212 6760

Involving people and growing community

Inviting involvement

Let people know about the garden

Use a range of ways to let people know that the garden exists and about events that are happening there. See the *promotion* section (page 32) for ideas.

Get people to come to the garden

Getting people to the garden to experience it directly is the most important step in encouraging people to become involved.

Some ways of encouraging people to visit the garden include:

- Plant sales, nursery
- Workshops and courses
- Directly inviting people - local residents, businesses, community groups, schools...
- Non-gardening activities, such as art projects. Contact the Community Arts Network (www.cansa.net.au) for ideas
- Open days
- Festivals and community events
- Allowing spaces in the garden to be used for other activities - play groups, yoga classes, quilters' circles

Make people welcome

Make the Garden understandable to people who come - have clear signs, leaflets, explanatory displays. Make sure the garden landscaping appears welcoming, neat and interesting from the street front.

Encourage diversity and design for inclusivity (see page 22)

Think about ways to address preconceptions about not fitting in (eg. age, 'alternativeness')

Create a culture of welcoming people - say hello and have a chat with everyone who comes in. A kettle and teacups are some of the most essential community gardening equipment!

Encourage people to get and stay involved

Provide clear information about how people can get involved with the garden - for example renting a garden plot, joining a particular volunteer project, coming to monthly working bees. This could take the form of signage and leaflets.

Renting an individual plot is often a first step towards getting more involved.

Have ongoing activities at the garden so people keep coming back.

Have regular opening/ working days so people know the best times to come.

Encourage a sense of community ownership - invite and welcome the input of new gardeners and visitors. Allow people to share their skills, thinking and creativity. Let people name trees, or animals.

Volunteers

Volunteers are the lifeblood of all community gardens - take good care of them!

Getting ready for volunteers

Before you invite people to volunteer, make sure you have:

- A clear outline of what you need from volunteers - this may take the form of job descriptions (examples on page 12. Can also be downloaded from www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening). This is particularly important when asking for specific voluntary assistance from professional garden supporters
- A process for 'inducting' new volunteers (see page 64)
- A volunteer co-ordinator - someone who can show new volunteers what to do, and provide ongoing mentoring or supervision
- A safe work environment and space for volunteers to make cuppas, rest between tasks,

shade, water, etc
- Relevant insurance
- A volunteer application form (see sample on page 13. Can also be downloaded from www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening)
- Filing system for volunteers' info.

Recruiting volunteers

Provide positions that allow people to use and build on their skills and to take on leadership roles.

Use your networks and ask people directly, particularly when seeking specialist support (eg graphic design work or book keeping).

Be strategic about attracting people to your board or management committee who have skills and networks your garden needs.

Use agencies such as Volunteering SA and Volunteering Australia. Go volunteer provides free internet advertising for non-profit community groups seeking volunteers.

Register as a volunteer project with Job Network Members and employment agencies. Mature age unemployed people may be able to volunteer instead of seeking employment.

Investigate businesses whose workers can contribute voluntary projects on company time, eg BP, ANZ, The Body Shop, Telstra.

Universities have programs such as 'WorkReady Internship Program' at Flinders University, in which students gain work experience through placements with community organisations and businesses. Contact the Careers and Employment Liaison Centre ph (08) 8210 2832 for details.

Retaining volunteers

Find ways to acknowledge and support volunteers.

Ask people what they want from volunteering - for example on volunteer sign up sheets. Do what you can to help people achieve their aims, and be realistic about what the garden can support.

Allow people to contribute their skills, experience, and knowledge - and not just gardening skills! Take the time to find out what people have to offer - someone might not tell you that they're a fabulous bookkeeper if they think you're looking for someone to pull weeds…

Build volunteers' skills - allow them to do a range of work, provide training to enhance people's gardening and other skills.

Provide good facilities - cuppas, rest

Acknowledge the contribution of volunteers to the garden - think creatively about ways to do this…

- Say thank you
- Arrange special social occasions for volunteers
- Give volunteers a t-shirt or hat with the garden's logo
- Give honorary garden membership to volunteers, perhaps life membership to people who have made major voluntary contributions
- Certificates and appreciation rewards
- Provide references for people seeking employment
- Write articles in newsletters about what people are working on - be sure to include everyone

Employment and other programs

Some gardens host people on 'Work for the Dole' and other government employment programs or community corrections programs. These programs have made significant contributions to may gardens, bringing in new skills and energy. They require someone at the garden to be able to process the paperwork and administration involved, and a person with the necessary skills to supervise program workers.

Before taking on one of these programs, design a particular project for participants to work on - something they can carry through to completion, and which won't make garden volunteers feel displaced.

If you are hosting people on employment or corrections programs, give them the same consideration you would volunteers - provide training and mentoring in their areas of interest, involve them in the running of the garden, and find ways to acknowledge their work.

For more information about these options go to www.centrelink.gov.au or phone 132850.

People with special needs

Working in collaboration with the local mental health service creates an opportunity for people who are socially isolated due to their illness to be supported to participate in a community garden.

Skills auditing

It's clearly easier to utilise the skills of people involved with your garden if you know what they are. Because community gardens can work on so many levels, they can give people the opportunity to put into practice a huge range of skills, not just the more obvious things like making compost or harvesting vegies... Yet sometimes vital skills and

Volunteer position available

Role description: (name of position)

Responsibilities/ tasks:
O
O
O
O

Skills or experience required or desirable:
(skills, training, qualifications, experience, knowledge)
O
O
O
O

Personal attributes required:
O
O

Special requirements:
(eg drivers licence, police check if working with children)
O

Time frame and attendance requirements:
O
O
O

Location of work:
O

Travel involved:
O

Supervision of the position:
O

What benefits will the volunteer gain from this position?
O
O
O
O
O

Adapted from Northey Street City Farm's New Farmers Manual. *This template can be downloaded from* www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening/ *and adapted for your garden*

Volunteer Registration Form

Name ..... Gender ..... Today's Date ...../...../.....
Address.....
.....
.....
Home phone ..... Work/ mobile .....
Email address ..... Date of birth ...../...../.....
Relevant health or physical information?
.....
.....
.....
In case of emergency, please notify ..... Relationship
..... Phone .....

What days and times are you available?

Days	**Times**
Mon	
Tue	
Wed	
Thurs	
Fri	
Sat	
Sun	

How often do you want to participate?

1 Once or more a week
1 Once a fortnight
1 Once a month
1 Special projects/ events

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

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

What are your reasons for volunteering?

.....
.....

What do you want to gain from volunteering at .....?
.....
.....

What skills, knowledge, and experience could you contribute thorough 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? 1

Adapted from Northey Street City Farm's volunteer registration form. This form can be downloaded as a word document from www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening/ *and adapted for your garden.*

resources remain unknown, whether because people don't think they're relevant or don't because they don't recognise and promote their own skills.

What skills can we map?

People's resources include networks and access to materials, as well as practical skills and competencies, experience, formal and informal training and education, knowledge, and personal qualities.

Valuable assets which should also be part of skills audits include people's enthusiasm, passions, interests, values, and willingness to learn and their 'insider knowledges' of living with a disability, coming from a non-English speaking background, being a parent, being a child, and so on.

When embarking on an audit of the skills and resources of people at your garden, think broadly about both what your garden needs, and what it can provide the opportunity for someone to contribute. Here are a few starting points:

- Networks - membership of other community organisations, schools, faith communities, government bodies, media...
- Gardening - pruning, grafting, compost, propagation, plant identification.
- Technical skills - use of particular equipment, familiarity with systems at your garden.
- Access to equipment - a home computer, photocopier, fax machine, chainsaw.
- Administration - Designing systems, computer skills (specific programs or tasks?), answering tele phones, financial management, book keeping.
- Interpersonal and communication skills - welcoming people, dealing with conflict, relating to people of non-English speaking backgrounds or with disabilities.
- Leadership and learning - facilitating meetings, presenting training sessions, supervising volunteers, prioritising tasks.
- Fundraising - organising events, writing grant applications
- Promotion - marketing, writing media releases, public speaking, giving interviews, making flyers, webdesign.
- Knowledge - of local community and history, of gardening, community development, law.
- Licences - car, chainsaw, forklift.
- Research and writing skills - finding available support, producing publications.

Ways of finding out gardeners' skills

People sometimes need some good questions and a little encouragement to identify and share what their skills and resources are.

Ongoing record keeping

Include questions about skills, experience and interest on registration forms (see page 13) for new volunteers, and develop a filing or data base system that enables you to access and utilise this information.

Keep records of training sessions that people do at the garden and elsewhere.

Skills workshop

Getting people together to think about what skills, resources, networks, and enthusiasms they could contribute to your community garden can bring forth many new ideas, help people to identify what they have to offer, and give everyone a sense of the richness of your community.

If you are starting a new community garden, you might decide to spend some of your meetings mapping the skills of your working group.

Questions you might ask:

- What do you do at the garden (or in the process of starting one)?
- What skills and knowledge do/ could you bring to the garden?
- What are you interested in learning more about or getting more experience in?
- What areas of the garden are you particularly interested in?
- What role would you most like to be playing at the garden in five year's time?
- What would help you to move towards doing this?

Questionnaire

One way of composing a skills questionnaire is to list the skills you're seeking down the left hand side of a page, and allow people to tick along a scale from 'do often & confidently' to 'never tried' or similar. You might also want to include 'confident to teach/supervise'. Allow space for people to add extra skills.

	can teach / supervise	confident, have done often	have tried	have never done	interested in learning
watering nursery					
propagating cuttings					
planting seeds					

Gardeners at the 'Gathering Tree' Community garden have an afternoon tea break and reflect on the day's activities.

Community building

Ideas for growing community at your garden

Socialise together

Organise regular social activities so gardeners get to know and better understand each other.

Take breaks together. Morning tea time is a ritual at many community gardens, a chance for everyone to take a break from what they're working on and meet other gardeners, swap recipes, discuss upcoming events, identify weeds, and just chat.

Eat together. Regularly share the produce of your garden in co-operatively prepared meals.

Hold monthly or bimonthly working bee days, so people who don't usually visit the garden at the same time have a chance to meet. Have a shared lunch or cook up a feast from the garden.

Celebrate

Celebration is core business for any community garden.

Celebrations are essential to give recognition to your achievements large and small - a new fruit tree planted, a successful grant application, a good day's work, an anniversary.

Hold harvest feasts, morning tea parties, street parties, barbeques, impromptu rainwater toasts, and solstice bonfires. Celebrate cultural festivals and birthdays.

Incorporate music and food. Invite the neighbours, invite the Mayor, include everyone.

Use celebrations to tell stories about the garden and its gardeners

Celebrations can be part of your practices of acknowledgment of volunteers' and workers' contributions.

Celebrations are excellent ways to publicise your success and make it contagious - with members of the garden, the local community, in the media.

Value and share skills and knowledge

Be on the look out for opportunities to facilitate and encourage knowledge sharing and mentoring.

Recognise the benefits of sharing gardening knowledge, produce and recipes.

Accept and learn from different gardening goals and styles. Start developing a garden manual that outlines acceptable and considerate gardening practices, ensuring you include acknowledgment of different cultural approaches to the gardening and different visions of the garden.

Embrace diversity

There is great potential for community gardens to be heterogenous, culturally diverse places.

Recognise the benefits of drawing skills, experiences and knowledges from a wide range of people in the community

Design and redesign the garden so that as many people as possible feel welcome and can access the garden (see page 22).

Find creative ways to communicate

Plan to issue continual invitations to people to get involved, and provide lots of opportunities for new and old gardeners to be welcomed.

Come up with creative ways of letting gardeners and the wider community know what's going on at

the garden, and inviting their participation. Some community gardens have letterboxes at each plot. Some send out regular email updates. Notice boards on site are important for sharing information.

A garden diary can be useful: fill it in when you visit, note what you did, record a quick site check (fences, tools out, vandalism...) A communication box can be a way of inviting people who visit the garden when no one else is around an opportunity to share their thoughts, excitement, observations, etc.

Newsletters can provide a forum for discussing issues and sharing ideas, as well as keeping people up to date with things happening, upcoming events, and goings on in the wider community gardening movement and community.

Manage participation in the garden

Commit to the smooth running of the garden (this will be enhanced by the development of a garden rules and guidelines (see examples on page 41), adequate management support and having appropriate grievance procedures in place).

Be active in managing participation in the garden. Seek outside assistance if necessary (for example, if a difficult dispute cannot be resolved).

Build community beyond the garden gate

Be proactive in seeking outside support for garden activities. Work with the wider community to involve appropriate groups for support.

Look for opportunities to promote the gardens and invite people in (see page 32).

Make links with other community gardens - they will be your best resources for experiential knowledge, practical advice, and great ideas. Find ways to link with gardens in your local area, and with state and national community gardening networks. Visit www.communityfoods.org.au as a starting point.

Thanks to Northey Street City Farm for contributions to this section

Notes for health, housing, council and community workers

Developing policy

Recognise the unique dynamics of each garden and that there are multiple ways of managing and supporting different gardens and gardeners.

Recognise that there are different models for garden layout and organisation (ie separate allotments, common gardens etc).

Involve the community from the outset - the gardens must be led and fuelled by community desire for a community garden. A garden foisted on the community by those in management is doomed to fail.

Ensure community ownership of the project - this will naturally follow from a community-led project.

Maintain communication between stakeholders at all stages of planning, implementation and development of the garden.

Provide opportunities for community review during the planning and implementation process.

Look for opportunities to include marginalized and special needs groups (for example, people with disabilities, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, young people, children) in the gardens. This may require strategically targeting specific groups and the provision of a supportive infrastructure such as translators, culturally appropriate meeting places, inclusive design, education and motivational programs.

Develop cultural and social understandings of diverse gardening needs, dreams and hopes of the different groups in the garden (for example, the cultural relevance of gardens to different cultural groups and how this is manifested in gardening activities).

Implementation strategies

Work with the community to identify goals for their gardens (there may be different goals for different gardens).

Assist each garden to elect a management group and provide access to training in management skills.

Assist each garden management group to develop a garden protocol which sets out rules and regulations for acceptable, tolerant and considerate garden practices.

Assist the management group to develop a grievance process and to develop skills in conflict resolution.

Encourage ongoing self-management of the gardens, but recognise that there may be limits of capacity for some communities, particularly in the area of applying regulations and resolving disputes. Community workers need to be willing to step in when conflicts get out of hand and/or require an outsider to make a decision. Skills in mediation and conflict resolution are accordingly required.

Where the community expresses a need, or where one is clearly recognised, put in place some form of external support for the garden - for example, the need for 'independent' management support via a local community agency.

Establish a broad base of support. Support, both direct funding and in-kind for materials, information and training, can be found from a wide variety of sources including, but not exclusively, horticultural groups; botanical gardens; local councils; environmental and recycling groups; regional waste boards; educational institutions; nurseries and other commercial/industrial operations; city farm networks.

Ensure that there is adequate resourcing for gardens -including garden supplies and translators for gardeners of non-English speaking backgrounds.

This section was reproduced with permission from Northey Street City Farm

Garden Design

Community garden design is about planning your site so that it meets your needs in the most efficient, sustainable, and inspiring way your group can imagine. Community gardens can be models of sustainability and sociability, so work towards a design that shows how much is possible. Use recycled and local materials and create space for people to meet as well as garden.

Effective, participatory design processes are essential for starting and developing community gardens. Actively involve as many people as possible in the garden design. This:

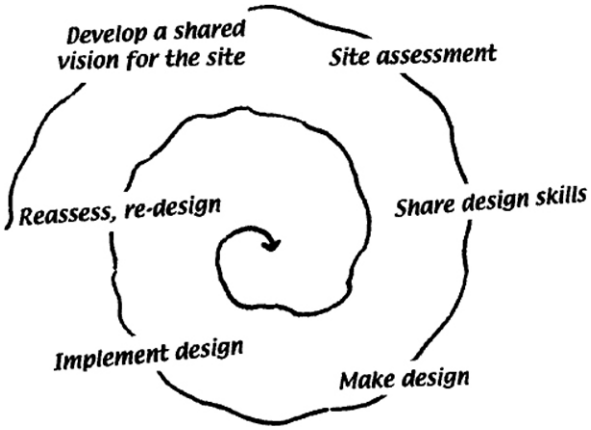
- Gives the garden the benefits of everyone's thinking and experience
- Encourages genuine community ownership
- Helps to make the garden meet many needs and visions
- Is a way of sharing design skills, increasing community capacity.

'Consultation' processes that do not involve people cannot achieve these things. Some gardens do, however, effectively utilise professional advisers such as landscape architects, permaculture designers, and urban planners.

Garden design is not just something that happens at the initial stages of a new community garden, it is a continual process. No design is perfect, and you will keep learning as you garden - expect and allow for your design to change as your needs and skills develop.

While some parts of the design process (such as sharing design skills) can happen before you find a place to create your garden, every site is unique and your garden design should only be made with the unique characteristics of a particular site in mind.

Community Garden Design Process



Developing a shared vision

Community visioning processes, mostly focused on determining shared aims and values, are discussed in the 'In the Beginning' section (see page 4). These processes will also help you work out who will be involved with the garden and who you want to feel welcome there. Here are some things to consider when deciding what physical elements may help bring your group's vision into being:

What do you want on site?

- artworks
- barbecue
- cob oven
- kitchen
- eating areas
- covered areas
- performance space (for festivals, parties, weddings, children's playgroups, etc)
- shady places
- sitting areas
- teaching space
- Tool shed
- bike racks

- signage
- information boards
- children's play space
- smaller plots for children
- bushfoods garden
- butterfly, bird habitat garden
- chickens
- other animals
- compost growing areas (for comfrey etc)
- composting areas
- worm farm
- demonstration gardens
- displays
- solar panels, cookers, etc
- drop off and storage areas for wood chips, straw, compost materials, etc
- fruit and nut trees or orchard
- Individual plots
- raised beds (wheelchair accessible)
- shared gardens
- irrigation system
- taps
- water catchment system
- pathways
- predator and pollinating insect attracting garden
- propagation area
- plant sales nursery
- sensory garden

Site assessment

A site assessment is a way of gathering information about the site you're working with - it is the research and observation phase of garden design. Allow plenty of time for this stage of the process - the more time spent getting to know your land and local community, the better equipped you will be when it comes to drawing up and implementing a site plan.

A site assessment is essential for

- selecting a site for your garden
- planning for a chosen site
- ongoing planning and design at an established community garden site.

The site assessment should include not only what is on your piece of land, but also information about the neighbourhood and community it is part of: remember that people and community networks are your most important assets.

Keep an open mind and to use your imagination when conducting a site assessment - don't immediately decide whether what you find is going to be good or bad for your garden, just observe what's there. Things that were not part of you initial plan may become valuable assets for the garden.

You can use the site assessment checklist on page 20 to plan your own unique site assessment (can also be downloaded from www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening).

Ongoing site assessment

Once a garden is established, you can begin to compile ongoing records of your deepening knowledge of the site. Some ideas:

- Make a rain gauge and record rainfall patterns
- Sun and shade patterns over the seasons
- Plants that grow well, plants that have struggled
- Community groups you've made contact with

All of these things will assist you in the ongoing development of the garden, and in developing a rich knowledge of the land and community you're working in - this can become a resource for the whole community.

Share design skills

Hold workshops, draw on the knowledge within your group, and consult with professionals.

You might decide to hold a series of gatherings and forums.

You will continue developing design skills as you garden - make sure to plan ways to formally and informally share them.

Making the design

Decisions: what of the things on your wishlist will you include now? What later? What features currently on site stay?

Make a map on paper - you may be able to obtain a survey map of the land from your Local Council. Include measurements, permanent features, and other information you've gleaned.

Some aspects of community garden design deserve special attention - see sections on designing for inclusivity (page 22), designing to enhance community safety and deter theft and vandalism (page 25), and designing individual plots (page 26). Also see the Garden Design Workshop outline in the training section (page73).

Implement your design

Take time into account. You may not have the funds, volunteers, or expertise to implement your whole design straight away. Go slow. Take on small sections that you know you can achieve - and celebrate - before taking on larger projects.

It makes sense for some things to happen before others. There's no point, for example, planting expensive fruit trees if they're going to be blown

Site Assessment Checklist

Community Mapping

Tip: Use Local Councils and Census data

What community and business groups and facilities are nearby?

1 Church, mosque, etc
1 Schools
1 Kindergartens
1 Childcare centres
1 Community and neighbourhood houses and centres
1 Aged care facilities
1 Neighbourhood watch groups
1 Local environment groups
1 Other community organisations
1 Restaurants
1 Business councils
1 Garden stores
1 Other businesses

Who lives nearby?

1 What are the age groups of people
1 What are employment and unemployment levels
1 Is housing public, community, private rental, owned?
1 What are people's cultural and linguistic backgrounds?
1 What is the crime rate in the area?
1 What are other special characteristics of the people in the area?

Safety and security

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

Landuse

What are the main landuses surrounding the garden site?

1 Businesses (what?)
1 Industry
1 Parkland
1 Major roads
1 High density housing
1 Medium density housing
1 Low density housing

What is the history of the land?

Things to look at the garden site

Size

1 How big is the land?
1 How much of the land is suitable for gardens?

Land tenure

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

Sun, wind, soil

1 What's the current ground cover? (grass, gravel…)
1 What is the slope of the land?

Current land use

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

Plants

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

1 What plants (including weeds and trees) are already on site?
1 What is the soil type?
1 How many hours a day sun does the garden get?
1 Are there any large trees, buildings, etc blocking solar access?
1 Is there a water source on site? (bore, tap…)
1 How does water move through the site?
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.
1 What direction does wind come from?
1 What do you notice about the wind? (strong etc)

Structures

1 Are there any buildings on site?
1 Seating?
1 Shedding?
1 Walls?

1 Fences
1 Paved areas
1 Other structures?

Gardens

1 What gardens, etc are already established?

Services

1 Is there electricity on site or easy to access?
1 Phone?
1 Sewers, stormwater drains
1 Is there public transport nearby?
1 Are there major roads nearby?
1 Are there barriers to pollution from traffic?

What other features does the site have?

over by the afternoon winds and the soil has little organic matter to nourish them. It makes more sense to plant leguminous 'pioneer' species first to create shelter, 'fix' nitrogen in the soil, and produce leaves and branches for mulch, creating an environment where the fruit trees are much more likely to flourish. Similarly, it is not a good idea to take on major projects without enough volunteers to share the work.

You may want to convert your design into an action plan - with specific objectives to be met by set dates. Give yourself plenty of time and set realistic goals - some of your design elements may take years to establish, but plan to achieve small goals early on - like putting in vegie beds with quick growing plants like salad greens so you can share a meal from the garden soon after work on site begins.

This is the stage when working with people and growing community (page 10) come into the fore.

Reassessment, re-design

Some things will work better than others will - all are an opportunity to learn more. Your garden may decide to start an ongoing site design working group or hold an annual design forum to assess and improve the design of your garden as is develops.

Site Design Resources

Mollison, Bill (2000) *Introduction to Permaculture* Tagari, NSW

Alexander, Christopher, et al (1977) *A Pattern Language*, OUP

Creating gardens for wildlife habitat
http://nccnsw.org.au/member/cbn/projects/earthalive/habgard.html

Aberley, Doug (ed) (1994) *Futures By Design: The Practice of Ecological Planning*, Envirobook Publishing & New Society, NSW

Clyne, Densey (1998) *How To Attract Butterfilies to Your Garden*

Mollison, Bill (1988) *Pemaculture: A Designers' Manual*, Tagari Publications, NSW

Landscape Architects in SA Housing Trust and Local Councils

Plus, look for garden design books at your local library.

Designing welcoming and inclusive gardens

Good landscape design can help create a community garden which draws people in and makes them feel welcome. Addressing people's diverse needs is an important way to express a desire to make everyone welcome.

Basic considerations like these are essential:

- shade from sun
- shelter from rain
- a place to sit
- information about the garden and how people can use it
- a friendly welcome from other gardeners

Street appeal

The way the garden appears to people walking by will have a big impact on how it is perceived: somewhere beautiful, welcoming and purposeful, or ramshackle, dangerous and exclusive. This doesn't mean avoiding the creative use of recycled materials, or making the garden appear like a conventional flower garden, but it does mean paying attention to aesthetics, ensuring composting systems are working properly, and storing mulch and other materials in an orderly way.

Clear, attractive signage is important to help people understand what the garden is about, who it's run by, how they can get involved, and what's permitted: can they can walk through? Can they pick produce? Incorporate visual clues for people with limited literacy or English language.

Seating and resting areas

The importance of the humble chair

Seating can make a huge contribution to community gardens - from enabling older people to

visit comfortably to helping to build connections among gardeners. Seating can provide a place:

- to eat - together or alone
- to rest
- to stop and experience the garden: observe, listen, smell…
- to sit and chat
- to be quiet or to be social
- to invite people stay around rather than leave once their day's tasks are done
- a point of focus in the garden, a place to walk to - inviting people to explore different parts of the garden
- a place for performances or workshops
- an opportunity for creativity or a community arts project (painting, sculpting, mosaicing).

Making seating accessible

Consider the needs of all the different people using the garden - and those you would like to feel welcome. Young children and their parents, people who use wheelchairs, walking sticks or walking frames, people feeling ill or visiting from a hospital, people who want to get exercise, homeless people, people who like sun and people who like shade, older people, teenagers, may each have unique preferences and needs.

Variety is a good general principle - try to integrate a range of different sitting options: high, low, wide, narrow, social and secluded, sunny and shaded.

Leave room for wheelchairs when designing sitting areas and picnic tables.

Place seats at regular intervals throughout the garden, so that people who need to can rest after walking short distances can still explore different parts of the garden. Places for leaning can also assist.

High seats and seats with handrails or places to hold can be of assistance to people who find it difficult to get up when they sit down, as can seats with high armrests you can sit on.

Do you want to make some seating that's good to lie on?

Seating materials

Seating can be made using a variety of materials:

- Cement, cob or strawbales, covered with mosaics.
- amphitheatres carved into the earth, covered with lawn or ground covers, or with wooden or other benches.
- 'naturally' occurring seats such as logs and large stones, grassy inclines, tree trunks for leaning against.
- stairs can make great sitting places - design any stairs so there is room for people to sit as well as move through.
- park benches, perhaps donated by local councils or service agencies - some local councils have used community gardens to 'trial' new seating designs.

Enhancing non-visual elements

People who are blind or have vision impairments require non-visual signals to find their way around: smells, sounds, textures, tastes. Paying attention to non-visual senses can enhance everyone's experience of the garden - reminding us to use and enjoy all our senses in the garden, and providing an extra memory-trigger, aiding learning.

Use plants with strong scents to define particular areas of the garden.

Wind chimes, bird feeders, and other gentle noise-makers can mark areas.

Use different materials on major and sub-pathways - sawdust, gravel, woodchips and grass each have different textures, sounds and smells. If you come up with a 'pattern language' of pathways, try to keep using the same materials in the same places. Be aware that some surfaces, such as grass, are more difficult to navigate for people using wheelchairs or crutches.

Plant specific 'sensory' areas in your garden - encourage people to smell, touch and taste the plants in these places. Brainstorm plants that are juicy, rough, aromatic, colourful, prickly, have interesting shapes and seedpods. Notice the different sounds plants make as well - the swoosh of wind through bamboo, the scratching of tree branches, crunching autumn leaves. There are many books and resources about creating sensory gardens. There are many books about creating sensory gardens - HTAV produce a useful booklet (see below).

Create a junk-music area in the garden - metal pipes to hit, bells to ring…

Make a three dimensional site map on a board, with different textures and raised areas to represent features of the garden.

Create vantage points to draw attention to sensory experiences in the garden - sitting places, lookouts.

Raised beds

Many community gardens integrate raised beds into their design. These allow easy access to the soil for people who use wheelchairs or have trouble bending down to ground-level gardens.

Raised beds can be made using a range of materials - let your imagination run free! Bricks, wood (untreated), steel, even plastics. Used car tyres are not recommended for use with food plants because of their potential to leach poisons.

Some raised bed designs allow a person sitting in a wheelchair or on a chair to fit their knees under the garden bed like a table.

The Horticultural Therapy Association of Victoria produces a useful booklet about building raised beds (see below)

Culturally appropriate design

Take into account different gardening practices of the people you want to involve in the garden and design to allow space for this.

Resources

Accessible Landscapes: Designing for Inclusion
Evans, Phillip S and Brian Donnelly (1993)
Department of Plant Operations, San Fransisco State University, ISBN 0-9641244-0-8

- Many ideas about designing welcoming, accessible public spaces, particularly for innovative seating ideas to meet a range of different needs. Major reference for this section.

*Gardening in raised beds and containers for older gardeners and individuals with physical disabilitie*s
Relf, Diane Available at
http://www.hort.vt.edu/human/pub426020d.html

CSIRO publish several information sheets about Access for People with Disabilities in their *Building Technology Files* series

- includes pamphlets on buildings, kerbs, ramps, bathrooms and signs. $5 each. Can be ordered online at www.publish.csiro.au or ph. (03) 9662 7555

Horticultural Therapy - Create an Enabled Garden
Schillen, Joyce available at
www.gardenforever.com/pages/artenabled.htm

- Useful ideas for gardening with people with disabil ities, including a section on coping with arthritis

Horticultural Therapy Association of Victoria
www.horticulturaltherapy.com.au

- Produce resources on raised garden beds, sensory gardens, and starting a horticultural therapy program. Ph.(03) 98489710

Disability Information & Resource Centre Inc.
www.dircsa.org.au

- Provides information, referral and advice 195 Gilles Street, Adelaide SA 5000. Ph: (08) 8236 0555 or 1300 305 558 (SA only), fax: (08) 8236 0566 TTY: (08) 8223 7579, email dirc@dircsa.org.au

Designing to enhance community safety and deter theft and vandalism

Most community gardens will experience minor theft or vandalism at some stage. It may be preferable to find ways to live with a low level of loss rather than investing substantially in deterring it. Many gardens, for example, find that hand tools such as trowels disappear fairly regularly - you may decide to include buying periodic replacements in your ongoing expenses budget rather than coming up with a complex way to chain them to the tool shed… Likewise, many gardens choose plant extra veggies, rather than attempting to completely eliminate unauthorised food harvesting.

Be prepared: take the possibility of theft and vandalism into account in your planning and site design processes, talk about the possibility with your gardeners, and think about how you would respond if theft or vandalism did occur.

A safe garden

Safety and crime prevention strategies should be incorporated into all community garden designs. Designs should not restrict visibility, and should encourage informal surveillance with sitting and meeting places to encourage community use. If possible, don't locate the garden in an isolated area. With people around the garden much of the time, a culture of community and security is created. Some community gardens work with the local Neighbourhood Watch group to encourage people to be aware of what's happening at the garden. As gardeners and residents come to recognise and know each other, looking out for potential unsafe activity becomes easy.

"Vibrant neighbourhoods, where the streets are alive with people... are places which are inherently safer than deserted streets where curtains are drawn" (Engwicht 1992, p.57)

Bring in the security clowns!

Encourage people to feel empowered to act on behalf of the garden's wellbeing

Safety can be fostered more powerfully through building community and a sense of belonging and connection, than through fences and security alarms.

'Nonviolent community safety' brings together strategies from the peace movement with community development and social activism to help develop strategies for community safety that are community initiated and controlled (Kelly 2004). Nonviolent community safety principles can help build a community where people take responsibility for a safe environment, and everyone's safety is valued. Basic ideas include:

- We all have the right to feel safe all the time
- We are all responsible for creating safety within our lives and communities
- We can respond powerfully, effectively and nonviolently to violence within our community
- Creating safety is a crucial part of building real and sustainable communities (Pt'Chang 1999)

Cultivate many allies

The more people who support and feel ownership of the garden, the more eyes you will have watching over it.

Involve as many people as possible from the beginning and as the garden grows. Particularly seek to involve or befriend residents of the immediate neighbourhood and people who may be potential vandals. Actively avoid any groups feeling excluded. Make sure people in neighbouring houses have phone numbers so they can contact one of the garden co-ordinators if necessary.

Cultivate good relationships with non-gardeners who live near the site - make them welcome to use the garden for walking through or sitting in, invite them to events, perhaps bring them excess produce every now and then.

Children and young people can be especially good allies to the garden. You may want to encourage their involvement by including special plots for children (perhaps offer a free child's plot for children of parents with a plot in the garden) or inviting school groups to visit. Involve young people in art projects at the garden - particularly people with aerosol art skills. Some gardens hold special events to invite young people's participation, offering enticements like cob oven pizza. Make contact with local youth agencies to get assistance.

Deterring vandalism and theft

Have clear signs and other information letting people know that the garden is for community benefit, who is allowed to pick produce, and how to get involved. You may want to mention if food is grown by volunteers, if it's donated to charity, etc.

Make occasional friendly requests for gardeners to check their tool sheds at home to make sure no community garden tools have found their way there.

Make sure the garden appears to be well

maintained. Harvest regularly so you don't create the impression food is going to waste. Fix any damage or remove any graffiti as soon as it occurs.

Spiky plants and vines covering walls and fences will help deter graffiti, as may murals and mosaics. Plants with thorns will also deter people from climbing fences.

Easily recognisable foods like ripe red tomatoes and butternut pumpkins are the most likely to be taken. Grow them out of site of passers by, hide them amongst taller, less attractive plants, or experiment with varieties which look different to what you see in the supermarket - like heritage varieties of tomatoes and eggplants that are not the usual colour when ripe. 'Unusual' plants or varieties are much less likely to be taken, as are root crops.

Some community gardens have sprinkled flour on ripening veggies to give the impression of pesticide dust and deter theft.

Plant extra food so there's enough for everyone. Some gardens have planted a "vandal's garden" at the entrance. Mark it with a sign: "If you need to take food, please take it from here."

Resources
Roelofs, Joan (1995) *Greening Cities* Keene State College, New Hampshire

Kelly, Andrew, David Alderson and Melissa Nonan (1999) *The Pt'Chang Report: Nonviolent Community Safety and Peacekeeping* Pt'Chang, Melbourne see http://home.vicnet.net.au?~ptchang/about.htm

Kelly, Andrew (2004) "Nonviolent community safety-building peace locally" in *PeaceNews* No. 2456, September - November 2004. Also available on line at www.peacenews.info/issues/2456/245630.html

Engwicht, David (1992) *Towards an Eco-City* Envirobook, NSW

See links at www.communitygarden.org

Garden plots

Things to consider if you choose to have individual plots.

- People - who will be using the plots?
- What are their needs? eg. wheelchair accessible raised beds, shady resting places, children's spaces.
- How often will they be visiting their plot? Will they be maintained daily, weekly, less often?
- What is their gardening experience? Are they ready to take on a big plot?
- What do they want to use the plot for? Do they intend to grow a substantial proportion of their food or are they more interested in learning or recreation?
- How many people to you estimate will want a plot?

Some ideas...

Some very small plots (1m square or even less) for new gardeners or for children to have their own garden plot.

A system where new gardeners start with a smaller plot, and can apply for a larger plot after managing it well for a year

A plot/ plots set aside for participants in courses and workshops at the garden to use.

Some community gardens have plots as small as one square metre. The US National Gardening Association recommends 25 foot square plots because they calculate that could feed a family of four.

The land

How much land do you want to devote to individual plots? Take into account all of the other things you want to use your land for.

How much of the land is appropriate for plots? Can you rule out areas that do not have sufficient access to sunlight, water taps, soil?

Plot design

Use good design to facilitate intensive gardening techniques so people can grow as much as possible on whatever size plot they have.

Make plot shapes narrow enough so that gardeners can reach the centre without stepping on the beds.

Use shared garden areas to grow plants that attract pollinating and predator insects, so people can use their plot space for productive plants.

Make pathways wide enough for wheelbarrows to pass through, and allow places for barrows to park. Use stakes at corners of garden beds to guide hoses, stopping them dragging across beds.

Plot holder agreements

It is important to have clear information for plot holders about what they are entitled to and what is required of them. Having a plot holder agreement for people to sign can be an effective way to communicate about plot holders' obligations and the conditions of participation.

Plot fees

Rent for plots can be a reliable source of core funding for community gardens. Some things to consider:

- Will different sized plots have different fees?
- Will you have concessional fees to reflect people's differing abilities to pay plot rental?
- How will you organise renewals? Will you have a rent renewal day once a year or quarter when every one pays?

Acceptable use of the plots

Are there any things people are not allowed to do with their plots? Things to consider:

- Is the garden organic? Is the use of pesticides, her bicides and artificial fertilisers permitted?
- Do the plots have to be food producing or is it acceptable to grow only ornamental plants?
- Are there plants that you don't want people to grow, for example things over a certain hight (which may shade nearby plots) or invasive species?

Plot holders' requirements

Will you ask plot holders to participate in other aspects of the garden, such as meetings, working bees, maintaining communally gardened areas?

Are there things you want to ask of plot holders - such as cleaning and replacing tools and hoses?

Do you have other garden rules that people need to agree to? Are dogs allowed? Parties? See Cultivating Community's Garden Rules (page 41) for one example of how to approach these issues.

Other considerations

Will there be conditions for plot leases being renewed?

What will the process be for reclaiming plots if not used for a specified period of time?

Examples of plot holder agreements
Collingwood Children's Farm (page 44)

Clinton Community Garden in New York, USA. Includes constitution and bylaws, plot assignment, and garden rules.
http://www.clintoncommunitygarden.org/rules_&_regulations.htm

Sample 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 ..... Farm. Before you apply make sure you satisfy the following criteria:

- Live in .....
- 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)

Title: Mr / Ms / Miss / Mrs / other .....
Given Names ..... Family Names .....
Address .....
..... Postcode .....
Telephone numbers: home ..... work .....
mobile ..... email .....
Emergency contact Name ..... Relationship .....
Telephone number .....
Are you a pensioner or health care card holder? .....
First or preferred language? ..... Second preferred language? .....
What is your date of birth? ..... / ..... / ..... (day/month/year)
How much space do you have to garden at home?
(Number of metres, e.g. 6m x 4m) .....
Do you have any prior gardening experience? .....
Do you have any special physical needs for your garden plot? 1 Yes 1 No

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

1 morning 1 afternoon 1 evening

1 Monday - Friday 1 Saturday 1 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 .....

Adapted from Collingwood Children's Farm Community Garden Application Form. Can be downloaded from www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening *and adapted to suit your needs.*

Gardening with Children and Schools

Gardening with children

Children all over the world are gardeners. They plant and harvest food, take care of animals, and have fun as they learn.

Children can enjoy all of the benefits of gardening - improved health and nutrition, community, a sense of place, relaxation, practical skills, and sense of accomplishment - they may gain even more than adults do.

Some gardens are designed especially for children, such as the Ian Potter Children's Garden (http://rbg.vic.gov.au/projects/childrens/index.htm) and Collingwood Children's Farm (www.farm.org.au).

Many community gardens find there are great benefits to including children at the centre of integrated garden projects. Children are involved in community gardens as plot holders, visitors with school and other groups, and come along with parents who are involved in many ways with the garden. Children bring vitality, creativity and imagination to community gardens. They contribute their ideas and skills, ask fantastic questions, and take on responsibility for the garden's wellbeing (see the 'Designing to enhance community safety and deter theft and vandalism' section on page 24 for ideas about children's potential roles in protecting the garden). Including children also has the extra benefit of helping parents participate in the garden.

As with any group of people you wish to include in the garden, involve children in the design process, and take their particular needs, skills and interests into account. Design to make the garden a welcoming place for them. Consult with children already familiar with your garden to get their ideas. Remember your own childhood garden experiences and draw on them in your garden design.

Gardens in schools

Why have gardens in schools?

Children have the opportunity work cooperatively on real tasks.

The gardens, particularly if combined with cooking programs, offer opportunities to honor the cultures comprising the school community.

The garden setting helps broaden the way teachers look at both curriculum and their students.

Garden experiences reinforce classroom curriculum and offer opportunities to integrate curriculum across subject areas.

Students learn about where food really comes from and understand the role of food in life

Gardens provide a context for understanding seasonality and life cycles.

Gardens can improve nutrition and highlight healthy foods.

In the kitchen and garden students build vocabulary...both small and large.

In the garden, students can observe all of the Principles of Ecology in practice.

They create common experience to build on in multiple settings from classroom to celebration.

Gardens provide opportunities for informal one-on-one time for teachers and students to talk.

They offer opportunities to teach life skills such as gardening and cooking.

The garden and kitchen are beautiful spaces that connect students to their school.

A kitchen and garden promote risk taking, such as trying new things...foods, activities and making new friends.

Students value the garden ˆ- their sense of pride

and ownership discourages vandalism.

Gardens provide opportunities for community involvement - a link with neighbors, volunteers, parents, and community businesses.

From: www.edibleschoolyard.org

Much of the general information in this kit will be useful for people starting school-based gardens. There are also resources available which address the specific needs of school gardens, such as forming links to curriculum areas and maintaining the garden over school holidays. Some of these are listed in the Resources below. A websearch will reveal hundreds more school gardening resources.

As with all community gardens, there is no substitute for learning from the direct experiences of people who have been through the process of getting a school garden up and runninig. Some schools have developed programs where their students visit other schools to instruct and mentor them in their initial stages of establishing a school garden.

Resources

Gardening with Children

Kindergarden: An introduction to the many ways children can interact with plants and the outdoors.

- Ideas for gardening with kids.in school and community gardens available at http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/kindergarden/kinder.htm

Gardening Launchpad
www.gardeninglaunchpad.com/kids.html

- Loads of links to activities and curriculum for gardening with children

The Ian Potter Children's Garden, Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne

- This magical garden is designed to encourage children's 'delight in nature' and 'discover a passion for plants'. It 'celebrates the imagination and

curiosity of childrens and fosters the creative nature of play'. Information at www.rbg.vic.gov.au/projects/childrens/index.html

Gaia's Garden, Living Earth Games Pty Ltd.

- A co-operative board game where players plant vegies and outwit pests using organic methods. $29.50.

Most local libraries have books about gardening with children.

Gardening with schools

Dig in: Creating an Edible School Garden, Queensland Health (2003)

- Comprehensive guide to the gardening aspects of school learnscapes including gardening methods, site analysis, tools, maintenance, worm farms, plant selection and calendar, and pests and diseases. 65pp.Free. Can be ordered at http://www.health.qld.gov.au/activeate

Greening School Grounds: Creating Habitats for Learning, Grant, Tim and Gail Littlejohn, (eds), 2001, Green Teacher, Toronto

- This anthology from the Canadian *Green Teacher* magazine includes step-by-step instructions for numerous schoolyard projects, for reception to year 12. Articles on rooftop gardens, practical tips on minimising vandalism, maximising participation and raising funds, outdoor classroom activities and curriculum links.144pp. ISBN 0-86571-436-3. Table of contents and orders at http://www.greenteacher.com/gsg.html

The Edible Schoolyard www.edibleschoolyard.org

- This middle school garden in the US has been an inspiration to many school gardens. The site contains resources and tips for starting a school garden, the process of their garden's creation, lesson plans, and lots of useful information.

"The Case For More High School Gardens" in *Urban Agriculture Notes*. Wei Fang
Available at
http://www.cityfarmer.org/highschool77.html

School and Community Cooperative
Landcare Projects: Best practice guide, PIRSA Sustainable Resources Group (2000) PIRSA, Adelaide

- Available from Primary Industries and Resources, 101 Grenfell St Adelaide, or can be downloaded from www.affa.gov.au/corporate_docs/publications/pdf/nrm/landcare/school_landcare.pdf

Organisations & Programs

Australian Association of Environmental Educators

- AAEE seeks to foster education for a sustainable future by developing people's understandings of the interrelationships between the elements of their environments and positive attitudes towards them. The Association brings together educators from diverse areas such as schools, universities and further education centres, industry, field study centres, zoos, museums, parks, State and local government agencies, community and conservation groups http://users.chariot.net.au/~aaee/ email aaee@chariot.net.au, Phone: (08) 8344 4966 (Convenor) or (08) 8264 1778 (Secretary) Fax: (08) 8395 7778

Sustainable Schools Program

- Becoming a sustainable school as part of the South Australian sustainble schools initiative will involve your school developing ways of including environ mental action and sustainable practices in all areas of learning, decision-making and school manage ment. Having created a whole school plan for becoming sustainable, your school will take action to make it happen.

Learning with gardens

A Children's Food Forest: An Outdoor Classroom Nuttall, Carolyn (1996) Food Forests and Learnscapes in Education, Brisbane

- Based on a school garden project in Brisbane. Curriculum focus. Permaculture perspective. 72pp. AU$15 plus $3 p&p

The Environmental Workshop: Valuable Learning Outcomes in School Gardens
Nuttall, Carolyn and Mary-Anne Cotter (1999) Dellasta, Vic

- Teaching resources for involving children in the development and maintainance of school gardens, and for linking gardening to curricula. Primary school focus. Many worksheets included. 48pp. ISBN 1 875 640 428. AU$20 + $3.50 p&p within Australia. Both Carolyn's books can be obtained from the author Ph 07 3844 7272 Email: c.nuttall@uq.net.au

Primary School Excursions in Landcare Education: Teachers' Resource Book
Fairfield City Farm (1995) Fairfield City Council and Dept. of Land and Water Conservation NSW

- A guide for teachers bringing primary school students on excursions to Fairfield City Farm. Includes activities at the farm and in the class room, worksheets, background information for learning about animals, local history and permacul ture, and links to curriculum outcomes. 57pp. ISBN 0 7310 5035 5

Heritage Fruit and Nut Trees in Schools: A bridge from past to future generations

- Jude Fanton and collaborators have prepared this kit for students in years five to ten. Includes activities based around a story of a boy and his grandmother. Download from http://www.seedsavers.net/schoolgardens/

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_____ ; Ring 8_____ with any queries)

Date of Enquiry: …. / …. / …. Preferred Dates for Visit: …. / …. / …. or …. /…. /….
School or Group Name: ……..
Contact Person: …….. Position:…….
Phone: …….. Mob/Home ph ……..……..……. Fax: ……
E-mail: ……..…….
Postal Address: ……..……
…… P'Code ……...

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):

1 Living Farm Life: Worms, Chooks, Herbs and Vegies
1 Fun at the Farm
1 Aboriginal Bushfood, Medicine and Culture
1 The Cycles of Life
1 Food, Diversity and Health
1 Feeding the World's People
1 Basic City Farm Tour
1 Other (please specifiy)……

Office Use only

1 Diary entry

1 letter, course material and maps sent …... /…... /…... (attach copy of letter)

1 Price agreed ($…….. per person)

1 Send invoice for …….. Students @ $….. each

1 Timetable for visit

From Northey Street City Farm - feel free to adapt to suit your needs. Can be downloaded from www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening/

Bio-what? A starter kit for primary schools to conserve and promote biodiversity in their school community
SA Urban Forest Biodiversity Program (1998)

- Lesson plans for upper primary school students linked to the SACSA curriculum framework. Includes many ideas easily adapted to use with school gardens. Available from SA Urban Forest Biodiversity Program www.urbanforest.on.net

Children's Participation
Hart, R (1997) Earthscan UK

- Involving young people in community development and environmental programs.

Special Places, Special People
Titman, W WWF UK in association with Learning Through Landscapes.
Available from Australian Association of Environmental Educators
http://users.chariot.net.au/~aaee/

Grounds for Celebration
Learning through Landscapes 1995

- A 14 minute video excellent for presentations to the school community. Available from Australian Association for Environmental Educators http://users.chariot.net.au/~aaee/

Learning through Landcare
Department of Primary Industries Forest Service (1994), DPI Brisbane

Using school gardens for health promotion
Children's Health Development Foundation

- Information on children's health, health promoting schools, nutrition, physical activity and school canteens. Including *Virtually Healthy*, a newsletter for schools, *Food Matters*, a newsletter for childcare providers and parents, professional development information for teachers. http://www.chdf.org.au/

The South Australian Health Promoting Schools Network

- An electronic communication network supporting Health Promoting Schools in SA. Free Membership. http://www.sahps.net/

Eat Well SA Healthy eating guidelines for South Australian schools and preschools
http://www.schools.sa.gov.au/schlparents/pages/63/12283/

Kitchen Kits and Teacher's Manuals, Children's Health Development Foundation 2003.

- The Kitchen Kits contain equipment ranging from an electric frypan to wooden spoons, as well as a 'Kids in the Kitchen Cookbook and Teacher's Manual. The Kit has been designed so that most recipes in the cookbook can be made with the equipment provided. Available for loan from loca tions in metropolitan and regional SA details at http://www.chdf.org.au/

An Introduction to Health Promoting Schools in South Australia, Lucy Angley and Anne Young (1996) DECS

- Assists schools to promote the health and well being of all school community members, and presents key questions schools can use as a check list. Includes examples of good practices occurring in South Australian schools. Free

Tooty Fruity Vegie Program
http://www.nrahs.nsw.gov.au/population/promotion/tooty_fruity/

- Increasing fruit and vegetable consumption among primary school children

YHUNGER: nutrition manual for youth workers
http://www.cs.nsw.gov.au/pophealth/dph/community/yhunger/yhunger_kit.htm

Thanks to Jacqui Hunter for contributions to this section.

Promoting your garden

Investing time to promote your community garden can really pay off. Effective publicity can help generate greater community involvement, attract financial support and give gardeners positive feedback and something to celebrate.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What local publications/ newsletters exist?
- What community notice boards are in your area?
- Who else regularly distributes information in your area?
- Where do community organisations and groups get together?
- What schools are in the area?
- Which local organisations regularly get positive press, radio or TV coverage and why?
- What TV and radio programs cover stories like yours? (current affairs, news, gardening, lifestyle, travel, children's...)
- What contacts do members of your garden have with local media, schools and community groups?
- Is there an organisation in your area that can help you with promotion and publicity?

On-site promotional materials

All community gardens should have clear signage explaining what the garden is about, when it's open and so on. See the *Garden design* section (page 18) for suggestions about making your garden welcoming and attractive to visitors and passers by.

Most gardens produce leaflets about their garden, with more detailed information about the garden's aims and how people can get involved. Make sure these are widely available at your garden, and in the local area.

Some gardens screen print t-shirts or hats for volunteers to wear so they are easily identified at the garden and when at events.

Events

Hold seasonal or frequent events at the garden and invite the wider community.

Offer the garden as a venue for celebrating local events.

Use workshops, open days, etc as a way of promoting the garden.

Participate in community events, such as fairs and festivals. Get display materials organised to take to where ever there is an opportunity: photo albums, scrapbooks, posters, leaflets…

Attend conferences and forums to promote your garden, and to build your networks.

Public relations

Find a prominent local person to become a patron for your garden - perhaps someone from a gardening program, from your Local Council, etc.

Enter competitions and awards.

Hold a competition, eg for local schools.

Ask a local business to donate window space to you, and design a display with a community gardening theme.

Community media

Tell your story on community radio (eg. Environment Show and Ecovoice on Three D Radio 93.7FM ph. (08)8363 3937, Back to Basics on 5RPH 1197AM). Or perhaps create your own community radio show..

Create your own newsletter.

Write articles and calendar items for community and voluntary sector newsletters (local community centre, health centre, Permaculture Association, Soil Association, Rare Fruit Society, Urban Ecology, Neighbourhood Watch, school newsletters, etc)

Write short articles for government department newsletters and publications (eg. "Trust Talk Tenant Link" SA Housing Trust's newsletter, which goes to Trust residents, government agencies and welfare workers is open to having a short community gardening article in each issue.)

Contacts
Permaculture Association of SA
www.permaculturesa.org.au,
info@permaculturesa.org.au

Soil Association of SA
http://homepages.picknowl.com.au/sasa

Rare Fruit Society www.rarefruit-sa.org.au/

Urban Ecology Australia www.urbanecology.org.au

SA Housing Trust
http://www.housingtrust.sa.gov.au/

Radio

Radio presenters are constantly on the look out for local content, and particularly like to interview people 'live' during an event.

Do interviews on gardening, lifestyle and community focused shows. Phone up talkback radio programs.

Ask radio stations to promote your garden or event as a community service announcement.

Print media

Regularly provide media releases for your local newspapers (*Messenger*s, *EcoVoice*, and other free street papers) - they are always seeking local 'good news' stories. For information about writing a media release, see http://www.hrconnection.org/hrc/media/release.htm

Write articles for magazines like *Earth Garden*, *Grass Roots*, *Warm Earth*, *ReNew*, etc. The ABC's *Organic Gardener* magazine has a regular community gardening column.

Contacts
EcoVoice www.ecovoice.com.au

Earth Garden www.earthgarden.com.au

Warm Earth
http://homepage.powerup.com.au/~warmearth/

ReNew www.ata.org.au/about_renew.htm

The Organic Gardener www.abc.net.au/gardening/

Computer technology

The internet and email can be a low-cost and effective way of promoting your garden.

Make a simple website - your local community centre or Council may give you a page on their site.

Set up an email list of supporters to publicise workshops, events, etc

List your garden at www.communityfoods.org.au

Let other SA community gardens know what's happening at your garden through http://au.groups.yahoo.com/group/ComGdnSA/

There are also profile raising suggestions in the fundraising section of this Kit (page 34).

Thanks to Cultivating Community for contributing to this section.

Finding resources and money for your garden

Although having money is important, it will not be the answer to all your problems. Money is only one of many ways to acquire what you need. Good advice, good volunteers, creative re-use of resources, and donations can meet many of your garden's requirements. Your most important and valuable resources are the people involved and the voluntary time and expertise that they contribute.

Fundraising principles

- reduce your need for money
- seek in kind resources and support
- raise money from a diversity of sources

This section contains information on reducing your need for money, seeking in kind resources, fundraising projects for your garden, and applying for grant funding. It also includes suggestions for accessing Local Council resources.

Reducing your need for money

Cutting costs

Use forward planning, creative recycling, and community networks to reduce your need for money.

Is your garden using the money it has efficiently? Are there expenses you could eliminate? Are you paying too much for services or products you use regularly?

Reducing unnecessary expenses:

- Do you pay bank charges?
- Do you have clear financial controls that help prevent wasteful expenditure?
- Do you have effective and cost efficient insurance?
- Do you have good recruitment and support systems for volunteers (see page 10)?
- Do you buy in bulk with other community gardens?
- Do you reduce, re-use, repair, and recycle?
- Do you make use of in-kind donations?
- Do you barter or belong to a Local Exchange Trading System (LETS)? (see www.lets.org.au/salets.html)

All of these are opportunities to save money. You are only limited by your imagination and your ability to learn from others.

Finding it for free

Tips for finding it for free

- Look for local resources going to waste
- turn wastes into resources
- make a problem for others a bonus for you
- cultivate many connections between your project and the local community.

Compost - make your own!

Look out for these valuable ingredients

Lawn clippings, prunings or leaves from local parks and gardens

Lawn mowers and landscapers often pay to dump their green waste - organise a system so they can leave it with you

Animal manure - do you have a local race track or stables? Often owners are happy to have their stalls cleaned out and you get all the good straw and manure

Food waste - this can include food scraps from restaurants or left-overs from fruit and veggie co-ops or retailers. If you develop a good relationship with these people they can ensure the material is sorted and suitable for composting. It can save them money too

Kitchen waste from nearby residents (particularly appartment dwellers) and schools

Juice pulp from juice bars is ideal compost or worm food.

Plants - Grow your own or get them donated

Save seed - a great cost saver that preserves genetic diversity and heritage varieties - see *The Seed Savers' Handbook* by Jude and Michel Fanton and www.seedsavers.net

Propagate plants from cuttings (see *Gardening basics* leaflets page 76)

Organise plant swaps with other gardeners or community gardens

Graft your own heritage fruit trees - contact the Rare Fruits Society for assistance www.rarefruit-sa.org.au

Approach local nurseries - they may have some older root-bound stock to donate. Try for bare-rooted fruit trees at the end of the season (late August).

Building materials - keep your eyes peeled

Make contacts with a demolition business - they may keep your needs in mind

Take a trip to your local tip and keep an eye on skip and hard rubbish contents around the streets (ask before taking)

Use recycled timber and bricks wherever possible

Make contacts with local street tree pruning businesses and Local Council tree loppers. Their chips/ mulch can make excellent path surfacing and it can save them time and money.

Water - it's free from the sky

Do you have roof run-off going down the drain? Install a tank and catch water for free.

Use swales, mulch, and wise watering methods see gardening basics (page 76).

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

In-kind resources

Volunteers' donated time, work, energy and expertise is the major in kind resource for community gardens.

Businesses are often more willing to donate goods and services than money because it's cheaper for them.

Approaching businesses

Look at what exists in your local area and draw on these resources.

Think about what you have to offer to businesses and others donating goods and services: advertising in your newsletter, a certificate of appreciation for their shop wall, their logo on garden signage, listing as sponsor on leaflets, etc.

Rather than approaching businesses and immediately asking for money or goods, invite potential supporters to have a cuppa at the garden, give them a tour, introduce the volunteers, and show them the dream. Build ongoing relationships.

Build relationships with your Local Council for wood chips, The Royal Show for used manure and straw, WOMAD for bamboo poles, etc.

What to ask for…

Negotiate ongoing discounts with local garden suppliers.

Ask nurseries to donate plants that are unsaleable.

Invite local nurseries to hold workshops at the garden and allow them to sell their products there on the day.

Local, state, and federal MPs may allow you to use their photocopiers for printing newsletters and fliers.

You could charge compost and manure suppliers to come and promote their products at your garden.

Ask supporters for services as well as materials - graphic design, sign writing, mediation... what ever your garden needs.

Fundraising

General principles

Make sure fundraising is effective - avoid organising a cake stall that ends up costing more in time and money than it makes.

Critically consider common fundraising activities such as raffles, car boot sales, etc and decide whether the money raised is worth the time and effort expended.

Below are some ideas to spark your thinking about ways to raise money at your garden.

Ongoing income

If your garden has individual plots, set the fees to provide a reliable source of income for ongoing costs.

Charge annual membership fees, and offer incentives such as newsletters, library borrowing rights, discounts on courses, invitations to special events.

A plant nursery can be a great way to raise funds, encourage people to come into the garden, and introduce productive plants into people's gardens.

Install donation boxes for visitors - use your creativity in the design.

Create a self-service deli with a small fridge and a money box for people to buy drinks and snacks.

If you have a meeting room or suitable outdoor area, lease spaces to other groups for workshops, weddings, yoga classes, meetings, playgroups, etc - a good way to invite more people into the garden at the same time.

Charge for educational site tours for schools, TAFE and university courses, community groups.

Events

Open days (gold coin donation for entry).

Festivals (donations for entry, plant sales, coffee shop).

Participate in the ABC Open Garden Scheme www.opengarden.org.au

Host a one-off or regular farmers' market.

Short courses and workshops (basic gardening, pest control, preserving fruit, bush foods, herbs, composting…)

Workshops and courses.

Goods and services

Offer your services to do garden designs, maintenance, etc in other community, public and private gardens.

Allocate space to grow small, high value commercial crops - ask local restaurants what they would most like to buy.

Sell preserves, craft items or other products made at your garden (check food regulations first!).

Produce a recipe book with ideas for using unusual, bush and permaculture plants.

Grant funding

Benefits of grant funding

Because community gardens contribute to meeting a variety of community needs, they may be eligible for a wide range of grants, with focuses such as environment, community development, health, and arts.

Small grants from Local Councils are often easy to get, particularly for materials such as straw.

Grant applications can be good opportunities for forming partnerships and beneficial relationships with funding bodies, businesses, and other community groups.

Drawbacks to using grants for funding

It can be difficult to get money for fixed assets, ongoing wages, and administration through grants.

The changeable funding priorities and grant schemes of government and private benefactors may not provide secure, continual funding. Applications may be accepted only once or twice a year, and this might not fit with your preferred schedule.

It requires ongoing effort to seek funding opportunities and prepare submissions - having a person who is prepared work on grant applications rather than spending time in the garden.

Most funders require regular detailed reports on the progress of the project.

Designing your project

Work out what your needs are - Develop a plan, prepare a budget

Be clear about what your garden's short and long term objectives are. Plan projects to meet your aims and work out exactly how you want to use any funds you apply for.

Make sure the project you design is one you can follow through - don't try to take on too much. Be

aware of what your existing resources are - people, office space, land, tools, etc.

You may decide to modify your proposal to meet the criteria of a funding body, but planning ahead will help you to be clear about what your organisation wants, and assist you in finding funding sources that will allow you to deliver what your objectives.

Draft a budget

Developing a thorough and realistic budget is essential. It is important not to exaggerate or underestimate costs.

Costs to take into account:

" Costs involved with consulting/ involving the community in the project - producing and printing a leaflet or poster, an advertisement in the local paper, a mail out or letter box drop to local residents, hiring a community hall for a public meeting

- labour - including wages, workcover, superannuation. Also include all the hours of work committed to the project by volunteers
- any consultants, trainers or other professionals to be called in
- insurance
- materials required
- postage
- phone calls
- internet
- office supplies and running costs
- travel
- equipment.

There are suggestions for a garden start up budget in the Starting a Community Garden section (page 4).

Preparing to make a submission or grant application

The planning, thinking, research, group work and networking you do before sitting down to write the submission or grant application is often the most important part of the process.

Don't leave submission writing to one person - get ideas and input from multiple people: many minds from your group, advisers, allied organisations, experienced grant writers.

Gather materials

Start a file to collect materials to support your proposals. Gather:

- Information and evidence that substantiates community needs you have identified
- copies of research or surveys that demonstrate the benefits of community gardening and the particular projects you're seeking support for
- information about similar projects - what they've learnt, how they got funding
- lists of potential partner organisations
- ideas about people who might be willing to provide letters of support - prominent and respected members of the local community, Local Councillors, politicians, people from service or community organisations (perhaps those addressing similar needs), experts, local businesses
- materials about your community garden - newspaper clippings, mission statements
- support documents you may need for applications - audited financial records, certificates of incorporation, documentation of other current and/or previous grants received.

Incorporation

Most funding sources require grants to be administered by an incorporated body such as an association or charity.

Community garden groups are eligible for incorporation as non-profit organisations under the 1985 Associations Incorporation Act (Government of South Australia 1999). Organisations are required to have a constitution in order to become incorporated - developing one can clarify goals, strategies, and decision making processes. See SACOSS's Constitutions Handbook (details below).

Auspicing

The alternative to becoming incorporated is being auspiced by another organisation. Strategically chosen auspicing bodies can be very useful. Seek out organisations that have a track record of receiving funding and a reputation for effectively delivering on their promises. These may include community centres, neighbourhood houses, service and welfare organisations, community health centres, environment organisations, or organisations associated with specific needs being addressed by your garden's project (eg disability access, recent migrants).

Large organisations are more likely to donate to Public Benevolent Institutions (PBI) with tax deductable status than to small community groups.

Bodies may vary in what they require in order to act as auspicers. In general they need to agree to sponsor the community garden's funding applications, and take responsibility for monies awarded, including having them deposited into their bank account. Auspicers generally require regular submission of financial records and

progress reports. They may also take a percentage of the grant for administrative costs.

Partnerships

Could the project be carried out as a joint venture with another organisation - a school, community centre, community group, residents' association….?

This can benefit your project by giving you access to additional resources and perspectives, and if formed strategically, can increase your access to funding.

Inviting people from a range of incorporated bodies to be part of your management committee or board can assist in fostering relationships with other organisations.

Identifying potential grant sources

To find out about upcoming rounds of grants:

- Stay in touch with your Local Council, particularly environment, community development and cultural development officers - these folks often have infor mation about funding opportunities
- Small grants are often advertised in local newspapers and Saturday editions of major papers.
- Visit websites such as Grants On Line http://www.grants.ord.sa.gov.au, a joint initiative of the State Government and the Local Government Association (LGA) with information on a vast range of grants offered by all tiers of Government and http://www.grantslink.gov.au, which also has information about a wide range of grants.
- Easy Grant is a subscription-based service that contains information about many grants available - you may be able to access it through your local community centre or other friendly organisation. www.ourcommunity.com.au

To find potential funding bodies

Get a copy of Philanthropy Australia's Foundations Kit www.philanthropy.org.au

Note the sponsors listed in the promotional materials of other groups

Visit the websites of Government agencies such as

- ARTSA (e.g. Health Promotion Through the Arts grants) http://www.arts.sa.gov.au
- Environment Australia (Grants to Voluntary Environment and Heritage Organisations www.deh.gov.au/programs/gveho/index.html, and Environmental Education Grants Program) www.deh.gov.au/education/nap/funding.html)
- Multicultural grants scheme - has provided grants for projects and events, festivals, community development, and 'multicultural awareness through the media' www.multicultural.sa.gov.au
- Office for Recreation and Sport http://www.recsport.sa.gov.au.
- Family and Community Services www.facs.gov.au/ (small equipment grants)
- Envirofund www.nht.gov.au/envirofund
- Regional Partnerships www.regionalpartnerships.gov.au/factsheet.aspx (for non-urban community gardens).

Contact church groups and community service clubs (Rotary, Lions, etc) - find your nearest at www.sacentral.sa.gov.au/information/community_services

The ABC Australian Open Garden Scheme provides an annual grant specifically for community gardening projects. At the website you can sign up for their mailing list for upcoming grant information Any queries should be directed to the National Office of AOGS: (03) 5428 1076.

www.opengarden.org.au/grants.htm

Some non-government organisations give small grants to community groups: www.greeningaustralia.org.au/GA/SA, WWF's Threatened Species Network has community grants for habitat restoration, weed control, and other activities www.wwf.org.au/How_you_can_help/Do_something_practical/Do_a_community_project/index.php

Urban Forest Biodiverisity Program offers support, information and resources for community groups, as well as funding www.urbanforest.on.net

Tips

- Contact organisations you're thinking of applying to - ask questions, find out if yours is the kind of project they are looking to fund. They may even help you write the application.
- Target funding bodies specific to what you're seek ing funding for - funding for fruit trees might be sought from one body, a community event from another.
- Arts grants can be very useful for funding garden projects - particularly for wages. Arts grants can often pay wages and can be used for community arts projects, mosaics, trellises, etc.
- Take advantage of themes such as 'Year of….'

Writing the grant application/submission

Allow sufficient time (2 months) to write applications and get feedback - including from people in your organisation and experienced

submission writers.

Come up with a good name for your project - make sure it is descriptive and doesn't promise too much!

Addressing Criteria

Most grant applications take the form of a series of questions requiring short answers - examples of the kinds of questions generally asked are below.

Make sure you are clear about the requirements of the grant and that you understand all terms used and directly and fully address all questions or criteria in your application.

Style

Your writing must be clear, concise and direct. Use bullet points and headings to help make your information easy to access for the people who will be reading your application (and possibly hundreds of other submissions). Avoid acronyms, jargon and technical language.

Notice the kinds of language used by the organisation providing the funding and take into account their aims and values.

Submitting the application

Make sure you get your application to the funding body on time! If you're sending it by post, allow a couple of extra days to make sure it gets there on time. Late applications will usually not be considered.

Sample grant questions

Grant applications generally require the following information:

- a contact person who will take responsibility for the grant
- a brief description of the body applying for the grant, including its legal structure, activities, and aims or 'mission statement'
- a description of the specific project or expense the grant is to cover, including
- specific objectives and how they will be met
- what community needs will be addressed and sometimes why these needs are not being met by other programs
- who will be involved in the project and who will benefit
- information about how your project will contribute to the particular objectives of the funding round (whether it's health promotion, community devel opment or environmental improvement)
- how the project will be evaluated, how success will be judged and recorded (see evaluation on page 47)
- a proposed budget (see drafting a budget on page 45)
- other sources of funding, resources, and support
- grants received previously
- some grants also require statements of support from local council members or recognised community organisations.

The results…

Whether a grant application is successful or not, maintain contact and a good relationship with the people who provide grant funding.

If you don't receive funding in a particular round, ask the funding body for feedback on your application.

If you get the funding, send a formal acknowledgment letter. Be prepared to write regular reports, etc as required.

Keep detailed and accurate records of expenditure of the grant monies.

Put energy into recording projects that have received grant funding - take photos, implement effective evaluation processes, produce beautiful reports. This will help you maintain good relationships with bodies that have given you funding, and impress bodies you approach in the future.

Resources

South Australian Council of Social Service Inc. (SACOSS) Grants Book
available for $22, or for loan from some libraries. 1st Floor Torrens Building, 220 Victoria Square, Adelaide. ph. (08) 8226 4111
www.sacoss.org.au/pubs/grants_book.html

Jean Roberts.com
www.jeanroberts.com.au includes information on submission writing and organisational development for non-government organisations

Australian Directory of Philanthropy
Produced by Philanthropy Australia ($49.50)
www.philanthropy.org.au

SACOSS (2001) Constitutions Handbook
The handbook is a simple and concise guide to the complexities of creating and revising your not-for-profit constitution. It includes draft constitutions that can be copied and used as the basis for your own. It is available in both printed (31pp) and CD forms. Available from SACOSS for $11.00 (members), and $13.20 (non-members) plus $3.00 postage and handling.
http://www.sacoss.org.au/pubs/hand.html

Thanks to Ben Neil, Dick Copeman, and Ben Yengi for contributing to this section.

Working with your Local Council

You need Council on side

Developing a constructive and supportive working relationship with your Local Council is of great benefit to community gardens. It is useful for your group to understand how the Council works, what its priorities are, and what help it has provided to other community and voluntary organisations.

Local Councils may help with land access, funding, promotion, access to materials (mulch, park benches), occasional loan of landscaping workers, advice and support.

Having a Local Councillor on side can help ensure ongoing support and advocacy for your garden - try to get support for community gardening into policy so you always have grounds for support.

The mechanics of Council

Find out where power lies, who has influence and where decisions are made. There are two important groups that make up the Council. First, the elected Councillors including those who represent the area where the garden is/ will be located, and those who serve on the sub-committees relevant to your garden. Second, Council officers - the Council's paid staff. They advise Councillors and carry out Council decisions.

Plan and present

To approach Council effectively it helps to prepare a well written and presented submission. This might contain:

- A description of your group
- your aims and objectives
- the skills and competencies of your members
- the characteristics and size of the land needed or used
- your actual or proposed legal structure (eg. incorporated association)
- case studies of other community gardens
- potential sources of funding
- what you require from Council
- how you (will) manage risk
- the benefits of community gardens to communities and councils
- a clear request for what you require (depending on your group - it could include access to land, funding to cover start up costs, staff advice/ support, etc.)

Your proposal would be first viewed and assessed by a Council officer then formally considered by the elected Councillors at their monthly public meeting. At this meeting the Council's planning officer would speak to the proposal, outlining their recommendations. This is an opportune time for you to make a brief and convincing presentation to the Councillors. It is helpful if at least some of the Councillors are aware of your proposal prior to this meeting.

Sell the benefits

Present the garden as something that will reflect positively on the Council. Put some thought into ways you can demonstrate that community gardens help meet the Council's service agenda and improve the local natural and social environment. Think about what you can offer to the Council, such as logos on signage.

Be aware of potential concerns

Try to anticipate questions or reservations Council may have:

- Traffic - have you thought through the parking requirements of your plan?
- noise - does/ will your garden disturb adjoining land uses?
- alienation of open space - gardening is a valid use, how will you maximise community access?
- odour - how will your compost system be managed?
- aesthetics - will your garden be attractive and not messy?
- vandalism - how will you deal with the risk of vandalism?
- liability - how you deal with risks generated by the site?

This section was adapted from Cultivating Community's Good Practice Guide for Community Gardens. *Reproduced with permission.*

Garden Management

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

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 also includes volunteer registration forms that can also be downloaded from www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening 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. (see induction workshop page 64). Ensure that you cater to the language groups of your gardeners - provide translations of all documents where required.

Following are examples of three community gardens' rules/ guidelines for gardeners. Feel free to draw from or adapt them to use for your own garden.

- Cultivating Community, who are an organisation managing 15 plot-style gardens in Victoria
- Collingwood Children's farm, Melbourne who also have individual plots
- And Kurruru Pingyarendi, Gilles Plains SA, who are a shared garden.

There are also suggestions of issues to consider in the plots section of this kit.

Resources

Clinton Community Garden in New York, USA.
http://www.clintoncommunitygarden.org/rules_&_regulations.htm
Includes constitution and bylaws, plot assignment, and garden rules.

Cultivating Community's Community Gardens Rules and Guidelines

There are Community Gardens on Public Housing Estates in Richmond, Collingwood, Fitzroy, Brunswick, North Melbourne, Ascot Vale, Carlton, Windsor, Prahran and Elsternwick. The gardens provide the opportunity for public housing tenants to grow herbs, vegetables and flowers for personal use. Cultivating Community is funded by the Department of Human Services (Office of Housing) to manage these gardens. Principles of environmental sustainability and community participation guide the management of the community gardens. Community Garden Support Workers support tenants in the garden.

1. Who can have a plot?

Public housing tenants living on the estate where the garden is located are eligible for a plot. Only one garden plot is available to each household. Preference will be given to tenants who do not have their own private garden. Other individuals or organisations may also be eligible for a garden plot at the discretion of the Community Garden Support Worker.

2. Fees

There is an annual fee required for a garden plot. This fee will be collected by Cultivating Community staff once a year, in the garden and will be used for garden supplies, maintenance, social gatherings for the gardeners and other costs as determined collaboratively by the gardeners and the Garden Support Worker.

3. Applying for a Garden Plot

Tenants wishing to apply for a garden plot must complete and sign an application form/contract. They must read or have read for them the Community Gardens Rules and Guidelines. Cultivating Community may check with the Office of Housing to make sure that any person applying is eligible for a garden plot.

4. Management

Cultivating Community has a contract with the Office of Housing to manage the Community Gardens. Therefore, the responsibility and authority for managing the gardens rests with Cultivating Community. Cultivating Community will work with gardeners to establish on going tenant management arrangements.

5. Allocation of Plots

If no plots are available at the time of applying, the applicants name will go on a waiting list and they will be advised when a plot becomes available. Allocation of plots will be based on:

- date of application
- physical needs of the applicant
- type of plants that the applicant wishes to grow

6. Keys

All gardeners will be provided with a key to the garden at the time of plot allocation. Gardeners must not give their key to another person without the permission of Cultivating Community. If a gardener loses their key, they need to inform the Community Garden Support Worker and pay for a replacement.

7. Forfeiture of Garden Plots

Plots are allocated to the person or persons named in the Community Garden contract. Plots are not transferable without the permission of Cultivating Community. Gardeners cannot give their plot to another person. If a gardener no longer wishes to maintain their plot or moves from the public housing estate, they must advise Cultivating Community and return their Community Garden key to them. The plot will be reallocated to someone who is on the waiting list. From time to time Cultivating Community will check gardeners' ongoing eligibility with the Office of Housing.

8. Plot Ownership

Each gardener is entitled to one plot. If there are vacant plots they may become available to gardeners if no waiting list exists. Gardeners must apply to the Community Garden Support Worker if they wish to have an additional plot. However,

when a tenant is added to the waiting list they will be given priority and therefore gardeners with additional plots will be asked to hand back those additional plots at the end of the season with adequate notice.

9. Responsibilities of Gardeners

9.1 General maintenance of plots

Gardeners are responsible for the care and maintenance of their individual plots throughout the year, even during the winter months. It is the responsibility of gardeners to maintain their plot and the area around their plot, keeping it free of weeds, rubbish and any items that may be obstructing the pathways. Mulching of garden plots is strongly encouraged to control weed growth.

If a gardener is unable to tend a plot, temporarily leaves the estate due to illness or for the purposes of travel, work or emergency, for two months or more, they must discuss their situation with a Cultivating Community Support Worker.

9.2. Climbing plants

Gardeners should use stakes for climbing plants, such as tomatoes and beans. If gardeners wish to store stakes when not in use, they should be bundled at one end of the garden plot without obstructing pathways.

9.3. Plot boundary fences

Gardeners who want a boundary fence around their garden plot may do so using wire mesh to a height of no more than one (1) metre.

9.4. Building and other materials

Permanent structures must not be built on garden plots or on vacant areas of the Community Garden. Gardeners cannot use the Community Garden to store building or other materials.

9.5. Additional planting space

Gardeners who want planting space in addition to their allocated plot i.e.: polystyrene boxes, planter boxes and containers, must seek permission to do so from the Community Garden Support Worker. Each community garden has restrictions on the number of polystyrene boxes permitted depending on space and safety issues in the garden. Once permission is granted gardeners are asked to put their plot number on their boxes so that they can be identified. Those gardeners exceeding the permitted number will be asked to remove their boxes from the garden.

9.6. Types of plants

Community Garden plots are for growing herbs, flowers and vegetables. Trees and large permanent shrubs are not suitable for garden plots because they may block sun to other plots. However, it may be possible to allocate a plot that does not shade or affect nearby plots. Gardeners who wish to grow large plants must advise Cultivating Community before plots are allocated.

9.7. Soil

Gardeners are responsible for improving the condition of the soil in their plot. It is important that nutrients are put back into the soil after every season as plants use up the nutrients in the soil as they grow. This can be done by adding manure, compost and mulch.

When a gardener hands back (forfeits) their plot, under no circumstances are they are permitted to remove any soil from their plot.

10. General Conduct in the Garden

Gardeners and visitors should respect the gardens as community spaces. Gardeners and visitors must not remove any plants or equipment from another gardener's plot without the gardener's permission. Likewise, plants and equipment must not be removed from other areas in the Community Gardens without the approval of Cultivating Community. Wilful damage to any area of the Community Gardens will not be tolerated. Each gardener has the right to quiet enjoyment of the Community Garden. Threats or abuse of any form will not be tolerated. The consumption of alcohol or any form of substance abuse will not be tolerated in the garden. Gardeners are not permitted to enter the garden under the influence of alcohol.

11. Dealing with problems or concerns in the Community Garden

Dealing with garden related issues is the responsibility of Cultivating Community. If gardeners have any concerns about the garden or about other gardeners they are strongly encouraged to contact Cultivating Community on this number- (03)94156580. Cultivating Community will deal with such matters efficiently and in a fair and reasonable manner.

12. Maintenance of Common Garden Beds and Public Areas

All gardeners are expected to take responsibility

for the care, maintenance and development of common garden beds and public areas in the Community Gardens. Cultivating Community encourages 'active gardening' in the Community Gardens. This includes:

Removing weeds along the border of garden plots and pathways adjacent to garden beds.

Sweeping pathways.

Picking up and disposing of any rubbish around the garden.

Participating in at least one (1) Working Bee/ Clean Up The Garden Day per year. This does not necessarily mean heavy labour. There are many simple ways of contributing to the communal nature of the gardens. The Community Garden Support worker will inform gardeners of the dates of these Working Bees/Clean Up days.

13. Waste Management

There are compost bins and worm farms in some of the Community Gardens and all gardeners are strongly encouraged to use them as a means of reducing kitchen waste, e.g. fruit and vegetable scraps, egg shells, leftover rice, noodles etc.. These recycling systems help to reduce household waste, and support the production of good compost for use in garden plots. Gardeners are encouraged to contact the Community Garden Support Worker if they need advice about using the compost facilities.

Gardeners are encouraged to place any suitable waste plant matter in the large composting bins/worm farms. Wood, plastic bags, tin cans or polystyrene foam boxes should not be added to the compost. Only waste that can easily decompose should be placed in the compost/worm farm. All other rubbish must be put in the rubbish bins provided. Gardeners are encouraged to chop up or break up any plant matter into small pieces, as this will assist in the composting process. Do not put meat, fish or chicken in the worm farms or compost bins.

14. Water Management

All gardeners are required to adhere to the guidelines for water use outlined by Cultivating Community. These guidelines were issued in January 2002 to gardeners and are also displayed in the garden. All gardeners are asked to avoid wasting water in the garden. Hoses should be hand held and should not be left running unattended. The use of watering cans is strongly encouraged.

15. Control of Garden Pests

No toxic chemicals for pests and weeds are to be used in the Community Gardens. Gardeners can use safe, environmentally friendly products such as garlic or rhubarb sprays.

16. Garden Tools

Gardeners must provide their own tools, eg, hand trowels. Where there is a shed, larger Community Garden tools will be kept securely locked in the shed. These tools are for the communal use of the gardeners and to be used only in the Community Garden.

Garden brooms are available for gardeners to sweep pathways. Garden hoses must remain connected to the tap and contained so that they do not lie across pathways.

If any garden equipment is missing, gardeners should report this to Cultivating Community as soon as possible.

17. Change in Circumstances

Gardeners must advise Cultivating Community of:

- any change in their address or telephone number.
- if they are no longer eligible to keep their plot.
- if they are unable to tend their plot for two (2) months or more.

18. Other matters

18.1. Animals

Dogs, cats and other pets must not be brought into the Community Gardens.

18.2. Garden security

Gardeners must close and lock the garden gate when they (enter or) exit the garden.

Gardeners must lock the shed if it is not in use and when they exit the garden.

18.3. Visitors to the Community Gardens

All visitors to the Community Gardens are the responsibility of the gardener who has invited them into the garden.

18.4. Children in the Community Gardens

Children are welcome in the Community Gardens. Adults must supervise children at all times.

18.5. Sale of Garden Produce

Garden plots are available for personal use only. Gardeners are not permitted to sell plants that have been grown in the Community Garden. The use of garden plots for growing plants commercially is not permitted unless it is an Office of Housing approved project.

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.

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. You can use the a sample volunteer application (page 13) form as a starting point. 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

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.

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 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 organisation (ie. 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.
In Victoria, the Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS) sells *Managing Money* - a guide to understanding finances for community management'. 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. It costs $15 - more details in the publications section of their website www/vcoss.org.au, phone (03) 9654 5058 or email vcoss@vcoss.org.au.

This section was adapted from Cultivating Community's Good Practice Guide for Community Gardens *reproduced with permission*

Evaluating garden projects

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.

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 can't tell achievement from failure
- If you can't see achievement you can't reward it or learn from it
- If you can't encourage achievement you're probably encouraging failure
- 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 & remove barriers (i.e. 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 will you 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
Wadsworth, Yaland (1997) *Everyday Evaluation on the Run.* Allen & Unwin
Basic info and reviews of evaluation resources
http://www.rwjf.org/news/special/researchPrimers.jhtml

Reproduced from Cultivating Community's Good Practice Guide for Community Gardens.

Health and safety in the garden

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 are the results identified by 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 eg how may 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 where first aid is available? For smaller 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! See Insurance section.

Five steps for a safer space

- Look for hazards
- Determine who might be harmed and how
- Asses 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 - make gardeners aware 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 e.g. 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 (see page 64) 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. See

Gardening basics leaflets and books on composting

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 (eg. barbed wire) pose a particular injury risk. Ensure such materials are banned from the garden.

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

Resources

www.nohsc.gov.au is the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission's site.

www.ohs.com.au has an extensive links section covering topics such as child safety, food, manual handling and risk assessment.

Adapted from Cultivating Community's Good Practice Guide for Community Gardens.

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 on your public notice board a copy of your public liability certificate.

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?

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.

Go to an insurance broker to get quotations and get them to explain to you in everyday language what is covered and in what circumstances. Make sure you have what you want. Premiums may be based on a number of factors: property size, number of sites, number of gardeners, type and intensity of activity, etc. Because community gardening does not fall under normal classification it can be difficult to find an agency that understands what you want. Due to minimum premium requirements, it is much cheaper to purchase an umbrella policy covering many sites rather than have individual sites purchase their own policies.

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. The Garden Club of Australia has provided insurance for some community gardens that are members. ph (02) 9452 1510 for information.

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.

Resources

The Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS) sells a book simply titled *Insurance*. The cost is $6 including postage & handling. Phone 9654 5050, e-mail vcoss@vcoss.org.au or visit www.vcoss.org.au.

Reproduced from Cultivating Community's Good Practice Guide for Community Gardens.

Decision Making and Meetings

Community gardens are managed in a variety of ways. Some have co-ordinators 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 the decision-making process. 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 lease 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. Sharing effective facilitation and decision-making skills and processes can help meetings not only to come to good decisions, but ensure that they are put into practice effectively.

This section includes information on decision-making structures and processes, and suggestions from facilitation trainer, Mary Heath on facilitation and on how everyone present can contribute to making meetings productive, inclusive and fun.

Management/co-ordinating committees

Community gardens that are incorporated as Associations usually have a management or co-ordinating committee as one of their decision-making structures.

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.

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

A management committee is accountable to 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, supporters, community members, workers, etc.

Are well informed about the workings and goings on of the garden.

Have good support from the community garden as a whole.

Target key 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.

With thanks to the 2003 Queensland Community Gardens and City Farms Gathering.

Working groups

Working groups may be ongoing groups, such as a finance sub-committee, or temporary ones like a working group to design a new seating area.

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 coordinator.

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 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.

Consensus decision-making

What is consensus decision-making?

Consensus decision-making grew from the Quaker model, as adapted by the peace and environmental movements in Australia in the 1980s. The model 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 achieve consensus, that is, to reach decisions that everybody in the group agrees 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. However, it is also a very flexible model, adaptable to the structure and goals of very different organisations. Feel free to adapt the model to suit the purposes of your own organisation.

Principles of consensus

The basic principles of the consensus decision-making model are:

Equality - all members of the group are equally valued, and their ideas and opinions should be sought and listened to with respect.

Respect - the practice of respectful and reflective listening is a key element of the decision-making process.

Shared knowledge - members share relevant knowledge so the group can reach informed decisions.

Mutual responsibility - problems, once identified, become the responsibility of the group as a whole, and all members of the group are responsible for the decision-making process.

Support for creative and alternative view points - solutions to problems arise from the creative thinking of the group as a whole; dissent and alternative viewpoints are encouraged as they contribute to a fully-considered decision; dissent explored within decision-making is preferable to dissent which undermines group commitment to follow-through after decisions are made.

Mutual agreement - decisions must be acceptable to all members of the group.

The process of consensus decision-making involves encouraging 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.

Reproduced from Kate Lawrence (2000) "Consensus Decision Making"

The consensus process

Consensus decision making is different to voting - it does not settle for a decision that a small majority of people support, but aims to find creative solutions that draw together the passions and best thinking of everyone involved.

The consensus process begins with encouraging everyone present to share their ideas, thoughts, hopes and concerns about the issue under consideration.

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 in the form of a proposal. For example, "it seems like we're all thinking that 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 tests for consensus by asking if there are any concerns or reservations about the proposal (this is a more useful question than 'does everyone agree?').

If no one raises any other issues, the group has achieved a consensus and can move on to the next issue at hand.

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.

While not all groups require full consensus for every decision made, many find better decisions are made and effectively carried out when they work towards consensus by addressing the concerns of dissenters, rather than acting on a proposal that only a small majority of people support.

Resources

Consensus Decision Making, McGhee, Mary
Introduction to consensus, including why use consensus, what's required, key guidelines and variations. PDF download at (http://www.apirg.org/assets/Consensus%20Decision-making.pdf)

On Conflict and Consensus a handbook on Formal Consensus decision making,
Butler, C.T. and Amy Rothstein
A comprehensive guide to consensus decision making, including structures, dealing with conflict, roles, and techniques. Available at the Consensus Project (http://www.consensus.net/)

From *Turning the Tide* Quaker non-violent action site:
http://www.turning-the-tide.org/infoSheets/consensus.htm

Meetings: a guide for facilitators

Always keep in mind the fact that the smooth running of the meeting is in everyone's best interests. Where necessary, remind people who have lost sight of this for the moment

Reason

The long-term survival of the garden depends on it. If meetings are lengthy, boring, and ineffective, if people feel too afraid to speak up, and the environment is unfriendly or outright hostile, we won't achieve much, and we'll lose a lot of passionate, skilled people. Assuming that it's in everyone's interests for meetings to go well allows the most creative solutions to tricky situations.

Suggestions

If the group has agreed on procedures it wants to follow, it's your job to remind people about them if they forget. Sometimes it will help to say them at the beginning of the meeting: "At the last meeting we agreed that we would all listen to each other with respect. Is everyone here prepared to keep to that agreement tonight?" or "Just a quick reminder that we've agreed that meetings will end at 9.00 p.m. There's a lot to discuss tonight, so we'll all need to be brief and stick to the point to keep our deadline." If people break the group's agreement, wander from the point or talk at length they may need a gentle reminder from you.

The same goes for values that the group has agreed to uphold: "this group has agreed that to make meetings run smoothly and to encourage everyone to participate, we all need to use language that isn't sexist or racist." Or it might be appropriate to suggest an alternative: "Perhaps we could minute that as staffing the door at the concert rather than manning it?" Don't forget to keep to these agreements yourself.

If people get snittish with you for drawing these sorts of things to their attention, gently remind them that the group has agreed that these things are necessary to make the meeting run well, and you're just keeping your part of that agreement as facilitator. On this occasion that might mean that you've just told them it's not yet their turn to speak. You'll need to be told the same thing one day when you're passionate about the issue under discussion and someone else is facilitating.

Don't waste time getting defensive if people respond to your reminders about group agreements as though you've attacked them personally. If

there's something wrong with the procedure the group has agreed on, it can be changed anytime and this is in all our interests if the present system isn't workable.

You will make mistakes: everyone does. You can't let that stop you from doing everything possible to make the meeting function well. Take courage in yourself and set up support you need to do your job well and learn from any mistakes you make. If you think you have genuinely made a mistake, clean it up on the spot if appropriate, or later if that will avoid taking up the whole group's time. Always act on what you believe makes sense for the whole group rather than on soothing individual people's feelings (including your own) no matter how unreasonable they are!

Involve yourself in organisational issues

Reason

These things are central to the efficient running of the meeting.

Suggestions

Make sure you can see everyone in the meeting. Rearrange the chairs if necessary. Make sure that there is someone taking minutes.

Make sure that the agenda has been worked out before the meeting begins and that it is logically structured. Check for late additions.

Once the group has taken a decision, make sure someone/some people have taken responsibility for following it up.

Make sure that those who've agreed to take on tasks are minuted so that they won't be forgotten.

Ask people who have agreed to get information to send a written report to the next meeting if they can't get to it in person.

Make sure the date, time and place for the next meeting are clear before the current meeting ends. Decide on the facilitator of the next meeting in advance so that s/he can prepare.

Be observant. Listen carefully. Notice where you can make the meeting run better and take action

Reason

Making the meeting run well is the core of your task as facilitator. That means making sure that clear and efficient processes are followed. It also means making sure that everyone at the meeting has the opportunity and enough encouragement to participate

Suggestions

Notice when agreement has been reached. Summarise the agreement you think has been reached and ask the group if they agree with you. On important issues, look around the room and seek a nod of the head from every person. You can double check by asking, "Does anyone NOT agree?"

Notice if several issues are being discussed together when one of them really needs to be decided first. For example, it's a waste of time and energy to discuss dates, times and a workshop list for the conference without having discussed whether we want to run the conference at all, and then having worked out whether anyone is prepared to put in the amount of time and energy it will take to do it. Draw the problem to the attention of the group and suggest a structure.

Notice if two or more issues are getting muddled together when they could be discussed more efficiently separately. For example, time and valuable ideas will be lost if we discuss how much to charge for the fundraiser, what date to have it on, what to write on the poster and what bands to have - all at once. Break the question down into sections and suggest a structure: "It seems to me that we're getting a bit lost here. I suggest that we discuss price first, then the date, then the bands..."

Notice who is waiting to speak, and in what order. If keeping track of this is preventing you from following what is being said or is distracting other people in the meeting, take action. You can stop the discussion, ask who wants to speak and write their names down on a queue, or ask someone else to keep a speaking list while you focus on the rest of your job. Double check whether anyone else wants to be placed on the list.

Always notice groups or individuals that aren't speaking. Look for body language: ask fidgety people if they want to speak. Make sure that people know that their contributions are valuable. If you've noticed that none of the people from organisation X have spoken or that none of the women have said anything yet, say that you've noticed it and ask if any of them would like to speak.

Be on the look out for confusion. Provide clarification yourself or ask for someone to explain. For example, "It seems as though some of us thought that we'd decided to do X already, but others are still discussing whether or not we should

do it. I think we need to clear that up before we go any further." If you haven't understood, ask for explanation, because you won't be able to do your job properly if you can't follow the discussion.

Don't blame anyone. That will only make for more confusion. Discourage people from blaming too - it won't help anyone work out the best way to move forward, but will make for a more heated discussion which is likely to produce more confused people.

Notice when a summary of what has been decided so far or what points of view have been expressed so far would help, and provide it.

Notice when confusing words or lots of acronyms (bunches of initials, such as A.P.T) are being used and explain them. Encourage people who are in the meeting to do the same. For example: "Could you please explain what you mean by SAGFIN?" "I suggest that for the sake of those here who don't know all the abbreviations that the first time anyone uses one, they explain what it means."

Notice when the debate has stopped and people are repeating points. Invite people to remove themselves from the queue unless they have a new point to make.

Focus your attention on facilitating the meeting rather than your own feelings and ideas about the content of the discussion

Reason

As facilitator, you've accepted the job of helping the meeting run well for everyone. The chair is not the place to air your opinions and grudges. Like the director of a play, your job is to work out the best way to do things, not to speak all the parts, do the acting, or write the script.

Suggestions

Before the meeting, ask someone to listen to you talk through your fears and strategies so that you can clear your head and clarify the issues. Think through your approaches to situations that are likely to come up and that you might find difficult or distracting. For example, if someone always uses sexist language in meetings and it makes you feel like punching them out, first work out a strategy for keeping your cool. Then think over how you could effectively bring it to their attention. If it's an ongoing problem, it may be something the whole group needs to address.

If you have strong views on an agenda item that no one else seems likely to speak about, try to see to it (before the meeting begins) that someone who agrees with you puts your point of view to the meeting.

If in spite of planning in this way, you feel that you really must speak and no one else has covered the point you want to make, pass responsibility for facilitation to someone else while you make your point and while the group discusses it. Do this very clearly and directly. For example; "I would like to address this point, so I'd like to pass responsibility for facilitating to Robyn while we discuss this issue." When the discussion is over, take back responsibility for facilitation in the same way.

The idea here is to make the facilitator's role as neutral as possible, making sure that when you speak you're subject to the same limits as everyone else. It also allows you to give all your attention to the point you're trying to make while someone else takes responsibility for the running of the meeting. It's important that everyone at the meeting knows who is facilitating so that they know whose eye to catch when they want to speak.

Don't be fazed by conflict. Don't take sides. Be as neutral as you can

Reason

The meeting will run better if everyone in the group knows that you will listen to their point of view and allow them to be heard by others. Of course you have opinions and feelings, and these will often be known to the group. The people in the group need to be confident that when you are facilitating you will not act on your prejudices, cut off people whose opinions are different from yours, or use the chair to talk about your opinions and your feelings. Otherwise there will not be enough safety for everyone to participate.

Suggestions

Be aware of your own biases and take steps to get them off your chest somewhere else, where they won't affect the meeting.

Never do things, make remarks, or make jokes that put down any person or group present at the meeting. Many people find meetings intimidating and don't need encouragement of their shyness.

Your neutrality is especially important where conflict arises. Never contribute to a feeling of 'us and them'. If things get really heated, ask the people or groups involved to say what they're

hoping to achieve from their proposals. What are their goals? What are they hoping to achieve? When all viewpoints present have answered these questions, aim to draw out whatever common ground is present and encourage the group to maximise it as co-operatively as possible. Bear in mind that your job, as facilitator is not to keep everyone happy but to assist in reaching a workable solution to the problem, conflict or goal.

If the group has come to a clear agreement about an issue with the exception of one or two people, make sure that those people have a chance to express why they disagree and what they propose instead.

Your facilitation strategies for dealing with difference and conflict will depend on the decision-making processes the group has agreed to. If you are using consensus and a disagreement isn't overcome through discussion, you can ask the dissenters if their disagreement is so serious that they are prepared to block consensus because of it. If they are, no consensus has been reached and the issue will have to be postponed. If the group has decided on a 'majority vote' you may ask the group if they are ready to put the issue to a vote.

Ask for help when you need it

Reason

As facilitator, you have an important job to do. If you don't do a good job, the whole meeting will suffer. Your wellbeing is in everyone's interests.

Suggestions

Ask for a break if you need one, help with setting the agenda, help from someone/s with skills or information you need, someone/s to discuss strategy with, someone/s to give you constructive feedback, hugs, or a glass of water... Ask a friendly person to sit across the circle from you and smile at you when you look at them!

Ideas for members of the group

For a facilitator to do a good job, the group needs to agree on what the job involves. Two things are needed:

1. Agreement about what procedures the group wants to follow. Do we work by consensus or do we vote about things? Do people who have spoken once have to wait for everyone else who wants to speak about a particular issue to speak before they get another turn? Is there a time limit on how long you can speak? Do we agree that we should split into small discussion groups to talk about the main item on the agenda in every meeting? Do speakers have to go through the facilitator? Do we take time at the end of every meeting where everyone has a chance to say how they felt the meeting went? ...and so on.

2. Agreement about the values that the group wants to uphold in meetings. Do we agree that we don't want sexist, racist, or homophobic language and remarks in our meetings? If we do, how do we put that into practice? Do we have a 'no blaming' rule? Do we agree that we don't want put-downs in our meetings?

For meetings to work well, we all need to take responsibility both for ourselves, and for the way the meetings run. The facilitator is there to help with the running of the meeting, not to act as a police officer and keep people in line... we need to realise that we're all on the same team and work at co-operating.

Support people who take on jobs like minute taking and facilitating. They will do the job better, learn from their mistakes, and be prepared to take the job on again.

Reproduced from "Meetings: A friendly guide" by Mary Heath.

Resources

Facilitating Meetings Effectively, Mary McGhee
Available at http://uhc-collective.org.uk/knowledge/toolbox/meetings_and_organisation/facilitating_meetings_effectively.htm

Taking minutes

available at http://uhc-collective.org.uk/knowledge/toolbox/meetings_and_organisation/taking_meeting_minutes.htm

A user's guide to meetings

Every person in a meeting has the responsibility and the capacity to make a difference to the way that meeting works.

What can meeting participants do to make a difference?

Decide to be an active co-operator rather than a passive consumer of the meeting

Some examples of what this means:

- Really listening to what others have to say: it cuts down on repetition and increases understanding.
- Actively thinking about your own contributions: Are you following the agreements the group has set? Is what you have to say constructive? Can you say it more clearly or more briefly?
- Considering whether physical changes are needed to make the whole meeting go better: would it help to bring something for people to eat together? Could you volunteer to take minutes, write notes up on the board, keep a speaking list, or undertake other jobs that you see need to be done? You don't need to wait for someone else to realise these things are needed.
- Making sure you speak at a volume everyone can hear and in words that everyone can understand.

Support people who have particular roles in the meeting

Some examples of what this means:

- Supporting the facilitator: They are central to the meeting. Anything that assists them to do their job will benefit everyone. Listen to their requests and abide by them. Address your contributions through them. Realise that the facilitator is not there to arm wrestle the group into sticking to the agreements they have made together in spite of themselves! Do your part in keeping group agreements without having to be kept to them by the facilitator's intervention. If you forget a group agreement, accept the facilitator's reminder graciously.
- Supporting the minute taker: make sure s/he is get ting the information s/he needs down on paper. Stop to let her or him catch up if necessary.
- Support translators. Watch carefully to see that you are speaking at an appropriate rate for translation to be undertaken with clarity and without undue stress. Ensure that translators are provided with the physical circumstances and the amount of breaks necessary for them to do their jobs well. Don't patronise them or the people they are translating for.
- Give up criticism: there is no room for criticism for the sake of it in this world. Most of us have had more than our fair share already. People will not change if they feel attacked or alone. Tell people what they did well in their roles, and provide them with constructive suggestions only if they ask for feedback.
- Train people for important tasks: don't expect them to know what is needed without having a space to learn.

Put the group's needs before your own

Ultimately the two have more in common than may be apparent to you on a bad day!

Realise that you don't need to act on or share your feelings just because you have some. Decide whether this meeting is the appropriate time and place. A meeting is usually not the place to tell people about the bad day you had, attack individuals, prove how intelligent and witty you are, etc.

Realise that putting the group's overall needs first is not the same as being on your nicest, nicest behaviour. It requires you to be honest, thoughtful and generous. It may mean heading directly toward conflict and making sure it is productively dealt with, rather than being 'nice' and preventing conflict making its way into the open, resulting in bad decisions and bitching after the meeting is over. Refusing to be 'nice' is not about making a decision to be nasty but about making a decision to be real, no matter how difficult that may feel to you.

Take courage! The best thing for the group (and for your life too...) might mean you decide to do things that are difficult for you. If you usually speak a lot, challenge yourself to speak less and let others take a turn. Think very hard about whether here is the constructive time and place to say what is on your mind. If you never speak, challenge yourself to let the group know about your ideas.

Experiment, innovate, try out new ideas. If you don't, how can you know whether they would have been improvements on the past?

Learning, Education and Training

Most community gardens find that much sharing of skills and information occurs naturally through the everyday happenings of the garden. People learn as they garden, share ideas, and pass on knowledge. Make a point of noticing how this occurs and find ways to support and promote it - simple things like encouraging people to take morning tea breaks together can make a big difference. It's important to actively encourage mentoring so that people with skills have opportunities to share them and others have the opportunity to learn - see *Succession planning* (page 58). Informal, everyday learning can be supported by having books, leaflets, and other resources available for gardeners to refer to.

Many community gardens take the next step, and offer their own training programs, or make connections with training providers.

This section includes ideas for linking with programs in universities, TAFE colleges, and other training organisations, the essentials for designing a training program for your garden including a training needs form (download), 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
- Dealing with pests and weeds organically

Established Training Programs

A range of education and training programs delivered by TAFEs, universities, training organisations, and informal programs are relevant to community gardeners.

These programs can provide training for staff and volunteers, helping to build the skill base of your garden.

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

- hosting interns and students doing workplace placements
- as sites for field trips
- as sites for practical projects or hands-on demonstrations
- acting as guest presenters/ trainers

This can be a way of involving more people and organisations in your garden, and may be a way of generating funding.

Universities

Community gardens have linked with a wide range of university departments and courses. In SA there are three universities: Adelaide www.adelaide.edu.au, Flinders www.flinders.edu.au and University of SA www.unisa.edu.au Use the 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

Accredited Training

Accredited training leads to formal qualifications in vocational areas. It is available through Registered Training Organisations and TAFE

colleges www.tafe.sa.gov.au Some courses that may be relevant include:

'Train small groups' and other modules of the certificates in Workplace Training and Assessment. These courses are run by many organisations, including TAFEs, and are sometimes offered through organisations such as Volunteering SA www.volunteeringsa.org.au, Conservation Volunteers www.conservationvolunteers.com.au and permaculture organisations.

Accredited Permaculture Training - in 2004, the permaculture community registered certificates 1 - 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)

Community Education (TAFE)

Conservation and Land management (TAFE)

Youth work (TAFE)

Volunteer management certificates are offered by Volunteering SA www.volunteeringsa.org.au

Non-Accredited Training

In addition to the informal learning that takes place everyday, community gardens in SA have run or hosted workshops on a great variety of topics - from organic gardening to green cleaners. One way of keeping in touch with local community garden events is to join the email listserve by going to http://au.groups.yahoo.com/SAComGd

Greening Australia provides training in plant propagation, plant identification, seed collection and surveying, with an emphasis on native plants. www.greeningaustralia.org.au/GA/SA/EandT/Training/ general@greeningsa.org.au ph (08) 8372 0120

Trees for life also offers training in seed collection and bush management www.treesforlife.org.au/news.html

Permaculture Design Courses and Introduction to Permaculture Courses can provide an excellent grounding for the diversity of skills required in community gardening - from site design to community development. Course information can be found in the Permaculture Association of SA's newsletters and website. www.permaculturesa.org.au

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. www.cansa.net.au

Further afield, the Seed Savers Network in Byron Bay run a range of courses on seed saving and biodiversity conservation, as well as project management. www.seedsavers.net

SEED International, based in Queensland run courses on "Sustainable Neighbourhoods" which include content on community gardening, city farms, community food systems, local economics and community development. www.permaculture.au.com

Designing a training program

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.

Steps to designing an education program for your garden

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?

What are the gaps?

Resources for making a needs assessment include:

- Skills audit (see page 11)
- Volunteer registration forms (see page 13)
- 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. See funding section (page 34).

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 references to other training packages and programs that might be relevant (page 60).

Design your program

Use workshop resources in this kit 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

Where will the workshop be held?

What costs will be involved? (include morning teas, venue hire, facilitators' fees, materials)

Dates

Cost to participants

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. See promotion section (page 32) for ideas about promoting events. Some gardens offer free training to people who have completed x hours of volunteer work, and charge others.

If you are producing a leaflet about the workshop or training program, include

Name, address, phone, email, emergency contact, special needs, previous experience, deposit required, outline of course…

Deliver the training

See delivering training section (page 58).

Review after each session

Redesign to incorporate feedback

Thanks to Tash Morton at Northey Street City Farm for information in this section.

Relevant training packages

New Farmers Manual
Tash Morton and Dick Copeman (2004) Northey Street City Farm. 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, 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. A curriculum for the ACGAs 'From the roots up' mentorship program. Includes community building, leadership, planning, fundraising, and much more. Available from www.communitygarden.org/pubs/

Improving Nutrition through Home Gardening
UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (1995) FAO, Italy. Training package outlining a 6-day course on horticulture and human nutrition with teacher's notes and reproducible info sheets. Designed for development workers in South East Asia. 171pp. Order from: Ellen.Muehlhoff@fao.org Nutrition Officer Food and Nutrition Division FAO Via delle Terme di Caracalla 00100, Rome, Italy. Manual is supplied free-of-charge

Heritage Fruit and Nut Trees in Schools: A bridge from past to future generations

Training needs survey

What do you want to learn more about?

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

- 1 Basic organic gardening
- 1 Seed saving
- 1 Propagating plants
- 1 Dealing with pests and weeds
- 1 Grafting
- 1 Fruit trees
- 1 Cooking with unusual herbs and vegies
- 1 Permaculture
- 1 Biodynamics
- 1 Composting
- 1 Worm farms
- 1 Facilitating meetings
- 1 Using power tools
- 1 Supervising volunteers
- 1 Leading garden tours
- 1 Gardening with schools, children
- 1 Mosaics, garden sculpture
- 1 Basic carpentry
- 1 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	1	1	1
Seed saving	1	1	1
Propagating plants	1	1	1
Dealing with pests and weeds	1	1	1
Grafting	1	1	1
Fruit trees	1	1	1
Cooking with unusual herbs and vegies	1	1	1
Permaculture	1	1	1
Biodynamics	1	1	1
Composting	1	1	1
Worm farms	1	1	1
Facilitating meetings	1	1	1
Using power tools	1	1	1
Supervising volunteers	1	1	1
Leading garden tours	1	1	1
Gardening with schools, children	1	1	1
Mosaics, garden sculpture	1	1	1
Basic carpentry	1	1	1
Others (please list)	1	1	1
.....	1	1	1
.....			

A kit for students in years five to ten. Includes activities based around a story of a boy and his grandmother. Can be downloaded from: www.seedsavers.net/schoolgardens/

The National Volunteer Skills Centre has a range of training materials available on its website, including modules from accredited training packages. Topics range from running community meetings to managing finances. Can be downloaded from www.nvsc.org.au/TrainingMaterialList.html

Other resources
The Manual For Teaching Permaculture Creatively
Robin Clayfield and Skye (1995) Earthcare Education, Queensland. Excellent introduction to using creative processes to facilitate learning about a range of topics. Permaculture focused, but applicable to any community garden training.

For training involving children and young people, see the resources section in the Gardening with Children and in Schools section (page 27).

Running training sessions

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

Planning workshop sessions

This kit 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
- 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.

Introductions, icebreakers and energisers

Why use them?

Much of the learning that takes place in training workshops happens through the interactions of participants. It's useful for group facilitators to know a range of games and fun processes to use through out their workshops to help people's learning. These can include 'icebreakers' and introductions, which help people to

- earn each other's names
- get to know each other
- introduce people to the idea of collective learning
- build group energy, particularly at the beginning of a workshop, or the beginning of the day in longer training programs
- build community among people who will continue to work together at the garden
- help people become comfortable with each other, so they feel supported and safe in taking risks and experimenting with new ideas

Energisers which can assist in

- Reminding everyone to have fun - making it easier to learn
- Building group energy
- Helping people to focus after lunch breaks or after a long session of talking
- Wake people who are loosing concentration or falling asleep!
- Relieve tension after a challenging session
- Mark a transition between topics or sessions
- Reinforce ideas or skills being learnt

The processes and games suggested below are often suited for a range of these purposes, can easily be adapted to meet the needs of the group.

Postcards

Spread out postcards or other pictures of gardens, permaculture projects, people, communities, etc and ask people to pick one that they relate to, that expresses something they like about community gardening. Each person briefly tells the group why they chose their picture. Can be useful as a lead into discussion about people's visions for the garden, understandings about permaculture, hopes for community, etc, as well as being a way to learn more about people in the group.

Life stories

In groups of 3 or 4, ask each person to tell the story of their life as a journey to community gardening (or what ever the focus of the workshop is). The facilitator explains that they will let people know when it's time to change turns talking and that other group members are to listen attentively while each person shares their story. The facilitator could introduce the culture and importance of storytelling as a way of passing on knowledge.

Insects

Each person chooses an insect that they relate to

Human Bingo Card

Speaks a language other than English	Has been in a newspaper, on radio or tv	Is a volunteer
Can name a plant local to the area	Grows veggies at home	Has a child/children
Has made compost	Has carpentry skills	Has a favourite plant

in someway - you might specify it should express something about how they're feeling today, their role in the community garden. Each person acts out their insect while the others guess what they are, then the person briefly says why they chose that particular insect. You could also use animals, plants, etc

Ball throwing

Participants stand in a circle and throw a soft ball, hackey sack, or similar object saying a word for each throw. When starting a new group, this can be used as a way for people to learn each other's names, with people saying someone's name when they throw the ball to them, or using it as an opportunity to ask for someone's name if they've forgotten. Don't throw the ball twice to the same person before everyone's had a turn. With a group that already knows each other's names, use this process with 'garden' or 'community' words - each person has to come up with a new word. Introduce another ball or two when people start to get good…

Have you ever..?

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 what ever people what to know about each other…

Human Bingo

Give each person a bingo card (photocopy this one or create your own). Instruct people to find a person who answers yes to one of the questions, and ask them to tell you a story about it. When someone gets a yes for a question, they must move to a new person. The first person to find someone who can say yes to each of the questions wins - but they must be able to remember something about each of the stories behind the answers. The facilitator should encourage people to enjoy hearing people's stories rather than rushing to bingo!

These are just a few ideas. There are many resources for more

Make a point of collecting processes you see other facilitators using - and give credit to them when you use them.

Resources

The Manual for Teaching Permaculture Creatively
Robin Clayfield and Skye (1995) Earthcare Education, Qld. Has many ideas for creative processes, with a particular focus on permaculture, but relevant for all training. Highly recommended.

Silver Bullets
Karl Rohnke (1984) Kendall/Hunt Publications. A classic source for trust games, co-operative exercises, and group processes

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
- over head projector, data projector, 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!

Workshop outlines
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 (page 65).

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 together them together as a new volunteers' kit. You could also include a set of Basic Gardening Leaflets (page 76).

Participants' Requirements

A hat, water bottle

shoes suitable for site tour

Introductions/Prior Knowledge; 20 minutes

- 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); 10 minutes

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 what ever people what to know about each other…

Site Tour; 1 hour

Plan a trail around the garden that will enable you to talk about various garden features and activities that take place. Design your route to 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.

Morning tea; 30 minutes

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.

Introduce the Garden and volunteering opportunities; 15 minutes

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 timetables and signup sheets for particular projects or working groups. Ensure everyone has filled in a volunteer's registration form (see page 13).

Allow time for questions.

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

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 stand alone 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 manual handling and permaculture backcare handouts from this kit (both are downloadable as pdf files from www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening) and your garden's Occupational Health and Safety policy or guidelines (or egs from other garden/s)

Introduction

Introduce the facilitator, venue, and session.

Introduction/ icebreaker if running as a stand alone 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.

Community Garden Health and Safety Handout

Manual Handling

What is Manual Handling?

Manual Handling is any activity by a person, which requires the use of force to lift or shift an object.

Injuries Caused by Manual Handling

Manual handling of heavy or awkward objects is the commonest cause of injury at work. The most frequent injuries from manual handling are:

- lower back injury - damage to the ligaments, muscles or inter-vertebral discs
- injury to other parts of the body, such as the knee and shoulder
- fatigue, leading to accidents, such as trips and falls
- aggravation of heart or lung diseases, such as heart failure or asthma
- abdominal hernias

How to Reduce the Risks of Manual Handling

- Eliminate or reduce the hazard or use a safer alter native e.g. use lightweight bamboo instead of heavy hardwood for fencing
- Use an engineering or design solution e.g. store heavy and frequently used objects between shoulder and knuckle height
- Devise a safer work practice e.g. use lifting aids such as trolleys, barrows or ropes, lift in teams, roll rather than lift
- Use personal protective equipment e.g. steel capped boots, gloves

3-Stage Approach to Manual Handling

1. Stop and survey the situation to identify the risk
   - clear the path
   - look high, look low, look where you want to go
2. Assess the risk
   - weight of the load
   - shape of the load and ease of gripping
   - position of the load in relation to your body
   - for how long will you have to lift or push
   - how far will you have to lift or push
   - how many times will you have to lift or push the load
3. Do the manual handling only when you have worked out how to control the risk.

Weight limits

Legal limits:

- Women (all ages): 16 kg
- Men aged 16 to 18: 18 kg
- Men over 18: no legal limit

Advisory limits in codes and workplace awards:

- weight limit for men varies from 20 kg to 55 kg
- when seated, do not lift in excess of 4.5 kg

How to Lift

Traditional advice to keep the back straight and knees bent in a squatting position when lifting is no longer recommended.

It is safer to follow your instincts as to what feels most natural and comfortable in each situation.

Situations to Avoid

- lifting above the shoulders
- twisting movements
- sideways bending
- sudden jerking movements
- lifting at arms length
- awkward shaped objects
- objects without suitable grips
- prolonged or repetitive manual
- handling without rest breaks

Potential Hazards at Community Gardens

- lifting timber, sleepers, lumps of concrete, benches
- pushing heavily laden barrows, especially over uneven ground
- improper use of tools
- sun exposure
- can you identify any others?

The Golden Rule:

Don't be afraid to ask for help if you have to lift or push a heavy object.

Adapted from Tash Morton and Dick Copeman, New Farmers Training Manual *Northey Street City Farm, Brisbane 2003*
Can be downloaded from
www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening

Community Garden Health and Safety Handout

Permaculture Back Care

Permaculture is about caring for the earth, for ourselves, each other and other living creatures. We usually apply permaculture principles to our houses and gardens or land, with ourselves in the landscape doing the work. But we can apply permaculture principles to design systems and strategies that help us look after our bodies, particularly our backs. Looking after our bodies and backs often helps us choose strategies that are also good for the earth. Here are some suggestions based on the permaculture principles described by David Holmgren in his book, *Permaculture Principles and Pathways Beyond Sustainability* (Holmgren Design Services 2002).

Observe and interact

- Get to know your body - read about it, go to a slow yoga class, move one part and observe what happens to the other parts.
- Notice how you feel: if it feels like hard work or it hurts, there must be another way. Often, doing as little as possible to the garden or land is the best way to help the environment. So, for example, not digging helps your back and is good for the soil, planting perennials saves labour and aids soil fertility.

Catch and store energy

The stronger you are, the more you can do in the world.

- Eat good food - especially whole grains and home-grown fruit and vegies
- Get plenty of sleep
- Build up your muscles.

Obtain a yield

Our yield from looking after ourselves is our feeling of wellbeing. It spreads outwards to other people and to our gardens and land. The better we feel, the more yield we're likely to get from our relationships, and from the garden or land.

Apply self-regulation and accept feedback

- Be disciplined enough to do a moderate amount of exercise
- Listen to your body: don't do anything that hurts or that wears you out
- Accept the ageing process: slow down if necessary.

Use and value renewable resources and services

- Have faith that your body knows how to renew itself. Usually, all it needs is reasonable food and water, gentle exercise, a bit of TLC from family and friends, and sometimes a session or two of physio or similar.
- If you have a bad back, understand that it will heal in time - be patient and gentle on yourself.
- Get help wherever possible, eg be open to suggestions from all types of healers, mainstream and alternative; ask for help with heavy lifting or moving or anything that might hurt your back.

Produce no waste

Produce lots of waste! It's a sign of a healthy body.

- Eat lots of fibre
- Drink lots of water.

Design from patterns to details

Our backs and bodies are details within the big picture. We can design strategies to maximise our own wellbeing just as we can design systems and strategies for the bigger picture of maximising the well-being of the earth. Some suggestions:

- Have steep slopes terraced, if necessary, so you can stand upright to garden
- Keep garden beds small enough so you don't have to reach far to pick up things or weed
- Keep frequently picked vegetables at the front of the beds
- Plant perennials whenever possible to minimise labour
- Whenever possible, don't dig. Keep weeds down with mulch, or just loosen the soil around weeds without turning over.

Integrate rather than segregate

Human backs aren't designed to do everything on their own. Nor are human hearts!

- Share the weight/task
- Help to build community.

And remember that - like the rest of the earth - everything in our bodies is connected to everything else:

- Keep generally fit - walk, bike or swim
- Backs benefit from strengthening and lengthening muscles in our shoulders, arms, tummy, thighs, buttocks, calves, ankles, feet, even wrists!

Use small and slow solutions

Fitness and a strong back don't happen overnight. Be patient.

- In the garden and around the house, carry less weight at a time; take longer
- Only do a small amount of physical work before resting a while
- But, if you have a sitting task, get up and move about often.

Use and value diversity

Do a variety of tasks, working a while on each so you don't overdo the load on any one part of your body.

Use edges and value the marginal

Having good balance helps prevent falls. It also helps strengthen the same muscles that keep our spines in alignment.

- You could practice balancing on the borders of garden beds. Lots of edges mean lots of borders to balance on!

Is this a marginal point?!

Creatively use and respond to change

Our bodies change as we get older. If you have a bad back, that's a change too. We can look for solutions to ageing and bad backs that enable us to surrender to the changes without compromising our quality of life. Some suggestions:

- Garden from a low stool, bending forward over your thighs
- Learn to lift using the strength of your thighs to minimise back strain.
- Use long-handled garden tools so you can stand upright as much as possible
- But long-handled pruners can be bad for the back. Either leave the pruning, or use a ladder and short-handled pruners
- Don't try to lift heavy things right up - lift a corner and shift them a bit at a time, use a sack truck, or get help
- Try to find alternatives to pushing a wheelbarrow, eg use weed sheets (keep them light and lift them in front of you)
- Store things as much as possible at waist height so you don't have to lift them up from low down or lift them down from overhead
- Work at a bench at a comfortable height for your back, rather than stooping or being uncomfortable on the ground
- Kneel or sit on a chair to pick fruit which is below shoulder height so that you don't have to stoop. Or you could spread your legs wide to bring your arms lower and keep your back straight. Wide legs also works for washing up in a sink that's too low.

From the Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit. *Written by Chris Banks and Pam Gunnell. Originally published in* Permaculture SA *Spring 2003. Can be downloaded from* www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening

Meeting facilitation workshop

It is preferable for this workshop to be run by a team of two facilitators. The Decision Making and Meetings (page 51) and Learning, Education and Training (page 58) sections of this Kit could be useful for planning the content of this workshop.

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 and ways of working with them

Materials

Paper, whiteboard, blackboard, markers, etc

Role play cards (see below)

A watch or timer

Handouts: (Facilitation: A 10 point checklist and Facilitation: 10 Useful Ideas can be downloaded from www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening and/ or develop your own) - you might like to add a list of your favourite facilitation books or websites

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.

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 (eg. planning a community garden open day). The person role playing the meeting facilitator 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 2 or 3 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.

Thank you to Jeremy Urquhart and Mary Heath

Community Garden Facilitation handout

Facilitation: A 10 point checklist

- Decide to see yourself as central. Assume you can make a difference to the way this meeting will run.
- Make the assumption that everyone wants the meeting to go well and that it is in everyone's interests for this to happen.
- Set things up the way you want them, both physically and in terms of personal support, before, after and during the meeting.
- Ensure basics such as minute taking and agenda are organised.
- Listen carefully, observe carefully. Remember your job is process not content (relax!)
- Focus on the meeting process and not your own opinions and feelings.
- Include everyone. Be creative in working out how this can be achieved.
- Once a decision is made, make sure everything necessary to carry it out has also been organised.
- In case of conflict, remember your first two assumptions. Keep a cool head and look for the common ground and the minimum necessary agreement.
  Invite people's co-operation.
- Take courage! Always do what you believe is best for the group as a whole, rather than trying to soothe people's feelings, including your own.

Community Garden Facilitation handout

Facilitation: 10 useful ideas

- Rounds: each person gets a chance to speak or to answer a question. Frame the question carefully to get the best results.

- Small groups: break up into small groups to discuss different issues or just to hear people's ideas in more detail.

- Pairs: an opportunity for people to listen to one another in some depth and with more safety than a larger group usually allows. Especially useful if people need to talk about how they are feeling.

- Breaks. Stretch and yawn breaks, getting your thoughts in order breaks, breaking the mood breaks. Even short silences can be useful.

- Energy watcher: someone whose task in the meeting is to watch the energy and mood level and decide when a break, game or other activity would make a difference.

- Time limits: on single agenda items or whole meetings. They focus the mind and counteract the idea that 'we will be here forever!'

- Co-facilitation: organise two people to facilitate half the meeting each or simply to provide resources and support for the one who is facilitating, who can then ask questions if s/he gets stuck-especially good for apprentice facilitators. People need to learn how to do their job well, not just be thrown in at 'the deep end'.

- Explicit agreements: it is very useful to be explicit about what we expect of one another, whether that is to speak without interruption, to be treated with respect, or to arrive on time.

- Listening partnerships: ask someone to listen to you talk through your plans and concerns before the meeting, and then to listen to you about what you did well and what you would like to have done better afterwards. Ask them to agree not to give you advice and to give you only constructive feedback, and even then only if you ask for it.
  Most of us are criticising ourselves enough already, we don't need help!

- Records: a clear agenda worked out before the meeting and brief notes of key decisions and the people who agreed to carry them out will prevent needless repetition and forgetfulness preventing the task at hand from getting done.
  A contact list of those involved will help people make contact with one another between meetings too.

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/ 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 how 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

- 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
- 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.

From Jennifer Savenake 2003 Community Nutrition and Food SecurityTraining *package for use by dietitians and nutritionists Women's & Children's Hospital, Adelaide p. 45*

Share the food together...

This not only makes the workshop more fun, but helps people remember the recipes. Pay attention to presentation of the food you serve. Sit down together and introduce food as a community ritual as well as a form of nourishment.

Design workshop

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.

Handouts - could be based on the Design section of this kit.

Welcome and introduction to the workshop; 10 minutes

Outline of day, introduction to venue and facilitator

Introduction Game: Postcards; 20 minutes

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.

Brainstorming; 15 minutes

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

Role play; 2 hours

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 the 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; 10 minutes

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

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

Handouts - you could use the "Organic Pest Control" leaflet from the Gardening Basics section (page 79)

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.

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

Handouts - you could use the "Organic Weed Control" leaflet from the *Gardening Basics* section (page 76)

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 (other than cultivation) 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.

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.

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 10 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.

These leaflets can also be downloaded in pdf format from www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening.

Companion Planting

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. 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.

From the Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit. *Originally written by David Corkill for organic gardening courses at Fern Ave Community Garden. May be reproduced for use in community gardens. November 2004*

Mulch

Bare soil rarely occurs in nature. A thin layer of debris comprising dead leaves and twigs, with small amounts of various manures covers it. 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 ore 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.

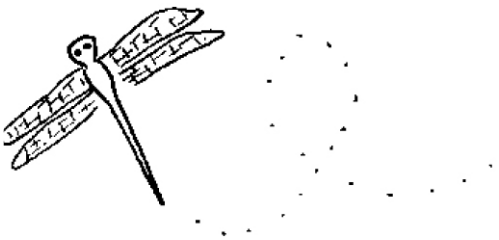
Seagrass: Long lasting cover that breaks down very slowly. Collect after rain to avoid salt, or water it down before applying.

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, where as 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.

Organic Pest Control



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, dragonflies, 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. Even though these products are from natural sources, they can still be toxic to humans if used incorrectly and 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 thuringeinsis - 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.

From the Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit. *Originally written by David Corkill for organic gardening courses at Fern Ave Community Garden. May be reproduced for use in community gardens. November 2004.*

Planting seedlings

When to plant

Seedlings can be planted out into the garden when they are about 4cm 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.

Keep in mind that many garden plants can become environmental weeds and threaten local biodiversity. Consider the potential impact of your planting, particularly if you're near native bushland

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.

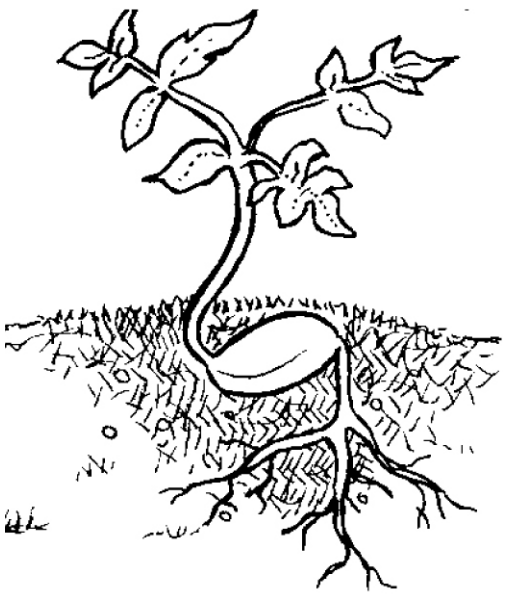
Some people who are on speaking terms with their plants like to give them 24 hours notice before they plant them out, or even ask if it's ok first...

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.



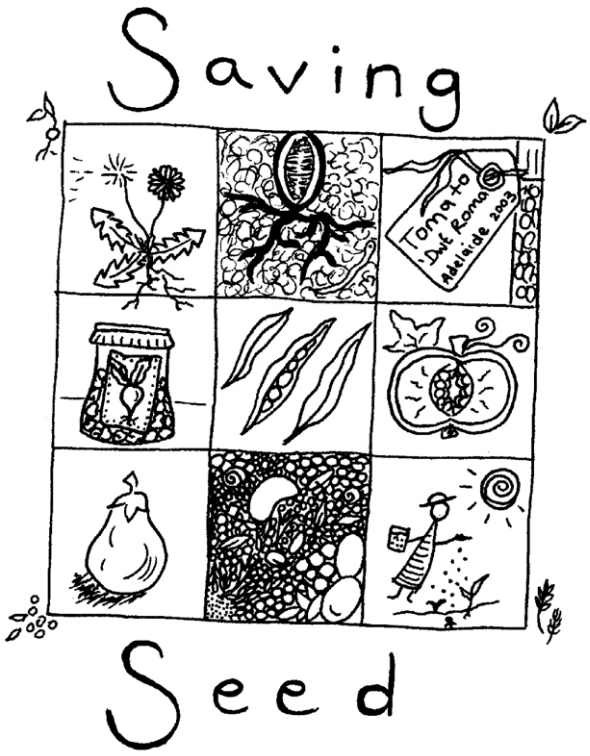
Squeeze the pot gently to loosen soil, then tip on its side so the plant slides out. If your seedlings are in egg cartons, newspaper cups, or other pots that will break down, they can be put straight in the hole without removing their containers.

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.

From the Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit.



Where do you find seeds?

- In seed heads, e.g. lettuce, parsley, basil, carrot, parsnip, silverbeet, beetroot, dill, fennel
- In pods, e.g. peas, beans, cabbages, broccoli, bok choi, mustard
- In fruits, e.g., 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 down the soil over the seed gently. Water once a week….unless it rains, of course.

Note the collecting of seed from native plants on public lands requires permission in the form of a permit that can be obtained from Department for Environment and Heritage. Info is available at www.environment.sa.gov.au/biodiversity/seed.html

Written by Michelle Mohyla for the Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit.

Growing fruit trees

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, citrus, cherries, peaches, pears, plums and nectarines should also be on your list. A little homework first will pay dividends, as not all varieties will flourish 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, particularly in warmer areas.

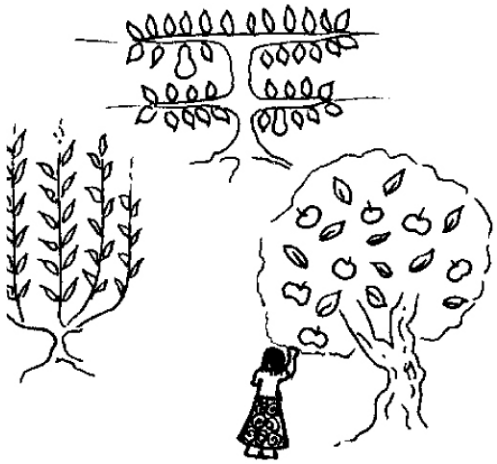
Some varieties require cross-pollination, others are self-fertile. Selecting early, mid and late season varieties will extend fruit-picking season. Your local nursery should be able to help you here, if not try the local library or the internet.

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

So 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 the neighbourhood.

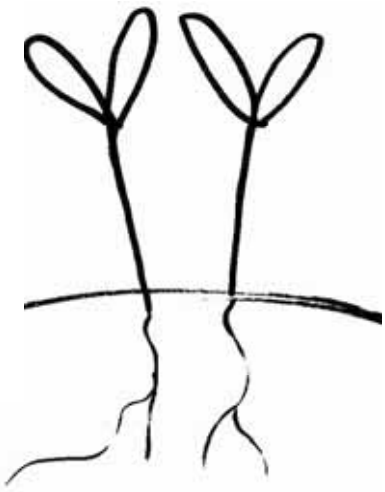
Visit the Rare Fruit Society of S.A. website at www.rarefruit-sa.org.au

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

Written by David Harrison for the Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit. *May be reproduced for use in community gardens. November 2004*

Vegetative Propagation

Growing new plants from pieces of a parent plant will give you plants that are genetically identical, ie 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 makes 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 leaf, or an "eye" from which a new leaf may grow, and a portion of roots.

Layering

Sometimes, when a branch 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.

From the Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit.
Originally written by David Corkill for organic gardening courses at Fern Ave Community Garden. May be reproduced for use in community gardens. November 2004

Tips to save water in your garden

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

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

Take notice of weather conditions - turn off automatic systems if it is raining! Use soil moisture metres to determine when gardens need watering. Never water in the sunshine or wind.

Permanent water conservation measures limit the use of sprinklers to after 5pm and before 10am, or after 6pm and before 10am during daylight saving. For further details contact SA Water on 1800 130 952 or visit www.sawater.com.au/SAWater/YourHome/SaveWaterInYourHome/

For more info visit www.sawater.com.au/sawater and www.watercare.net/

Written for the Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit. *May be reproduced for use in community gardens. November 2004*

Worm Farming

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. For me, worm farms are the easiest and most productive way 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 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.

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".

I would recommend some further reading or other research before starting. 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
- my Brown (1994) *Earthworms Unlimited* Kangaroo Press

"Worm Digest" at www.wormdigest.org/ has loads of information on vermicomposting, including 2pg introductions for adults and for kids

Written by David Harrison for the Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit. *May be reproduced for use in community gardens. November 2004*

Organic Weed Control

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 practice 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 weeds that spread by means of specialised underground stems. Includes couch, kikuyu, bamboo, mint, etc. Control with methods 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 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, convovulus. Control with methods 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 11.

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 and 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 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.

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 and acidic	Dock, sorrel
Waterlogged	Bulrush
Overgrazed and compacted	Salvation Jane, Horehound
Saline	Saltbush
Sandy	Primrose, Coastal Galenia
Infertile, dry and compact	Caltrop, Wireweed
Rich fertile loam	Sow thistle, Nettle, Chickweed

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. John's Wort	Lung, bladder, nervous problems, tumours
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	Prostate cancer
Marshmallow	Inflammations of alimentary, urinary and respiratory systems

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

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.

From the Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit. *Originally written by David Corkill for organic gardening courses at Fern Avenue Community Garden.*

Community Gardening in SA - Resource Kit

- Thinking about starting a community garden?
- Considering using community gardening as part of your community, educational or health program?
- Keeping a community garden growing?

The Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit includes information on community garden design, gardening with children and in schools, using gardens for learning and education, involving volunteers, and using gardening to build community. It was created to encourage the establishment of new community gardens, and to support existing community gardens.

Information in the Kit is 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.

Contents were determined by the needs of South Australian community gardeners and people in the initial stages of creating new gardens, and advice from experienced community gardeners about the most important things people should know when embarking on community gardening projects.

Also available on line at www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening/