



Heading Towards Sustainability- Part II: Community Orchards

A Resource List

THIRD THURSDAY WEBCAST SERIES

The Third Thursday Webcast Series is a monthly webcast held at the lunch hour and made possible through support from The Home Depot Foundation and USDA Forest Service. The goal is to provide training opportunities for local urban and community forestry practitioners. The trainings highlight successful programs and practices that you may want to adapt in your communities. Webcasts are open to all.

Correctly planting and protecting trees is a good thing to do. However, planting and protecting trees also requires coordinating time and resources. ACT minimizes such requirements by sharing the innovative ideas and organized approaches of successful projects and models for members to replicate. We invite you to join the Alliance for Community Trees for more ways to get involved. Together, we create a strong voice on behalf of the urban forest and make a great difference in the health, beauty, and livability of our communities. We strengthen communities by offering action-oriented approaches that bring people together around a common purpose.

TOPIC

Think globally, eat locally. A ready supply of fruit is more than just healthy. Community orchards may be part of the solution to helping reduce our footprint in several ways. For starters, having locally grown food nearby supports the immediate economy, saves a drive to the store, and less fossil fuel is burned. Combine community gardens with homeowners in low-income neighborhoods and you have a community-building, social-network-building, crime-fighting unit on your hands. There is a need for local tree organizations not only to operate community orchards and seed such programs, but also to help residents find high quality trees and revitalize blighted municipal land. Some communities are even setting up programs whereby their AmeriCorps staff maintains and gleans homeowners' orchards, just for the use of their land. Whether in a backyard or a parking strip, maybe you, too, should be envisioning community orchards.

More information at: http://actrees.org/site/resources/events/heading_towards_sustainability-_part_ii_commu.php

TRAINERS

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Ashley Atkinson is the Director of Project Development and Director of Urban Agriculture for The Greening of Detroit. She has worked in the field of community gardening, urban greening, and vacant land reuse for over ten years - first in Flint, where she co-founded The Flint Urban Gardening and Land Use Corporation, then as the director of the Detroit Agriculture Network, and currently with The Greening of Detroit where she works with community groups to plan tree plantings, community gardens, and other greenspace in Detroit. Ashley is a graduate of both Michigan State University and The University of Michigan where she studied International Development, Community Organization, and Environmental/Land Use Planning.

Dave Jacke, the primary author of the award winning two-volume book *Edible Forest Gardens*, has studied ecology and design since the 1970s, and has run his own design firm—Dynamics Ecological Design—since 1984. An engaging and passionate teacher of ecological design and permaculture, he has designed, built, and planted landscapes, homes, farms, and communities in many parts of the United States, as well as overseas. Dave cofounded Land Trust at Gap Mountain in Jaffrey, NH, and he homesteaded there for a number of years. He holds a B.A. in Environmental Studies from Simon's Rock College and a M.A. in Landscape Design from the Conway School of Landscape Design.





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SUCCESS STORIES

The Greening of Detroit (Detroit, MI)

Between 2003 and 2006, The Greening of Detroit with many other community partners transformed Romanowski Park, a 26-acre park located in southwest Detroit, into a new destination point and resource for urban agriculture. The Romanowski Farm Park, Detroit's newest urban farm, is now a thriving community resource with a two-acre community farm plot, teaching pavilion, playground with integrated teaching gardens, 118 fruit tree orchard, sugar maple grove, 1-mile walking trail, soccer complex, and numerous athletic fields. Through the Romanowski Park project, The Greening of Detroit provides community members increased access to food, and promotes nutritional awareness and health among residents living in the neighborhood. The park serves as an anchor for urban gardeners throughout the city of Detroit, providing a site for farmers to come together for workshops and training programs, and a place to meet and learn from each other, as well. The park also serves as the primary training ground for The Greening's Farmers Apprentice Program, creating a new crop of urban farmers each year. Perhaps most important, the Romanowski Urban Farm Park has allowed The Greening of Detroit to demonstrate how urban gardening can play an important role in combating hunger and improving nutrition for Detroit families, a significant problem for many residents who sometimes struggle to buy food. The Greening also works in partnership with three neighborhood schools at Romanowski Park, teaching gardening and nutrition to over 300 students on a weekly basis during the growing season.

More information at: <http://www.greeningofdetroit.com>

Canopy (Palo Alto, CA)

Thanks to a partnership between Canopy and Collective Roots, the garden at East Palo Alto Charter School now has the largest and most diverse stand of fruit trees in East Palo Alto. Utilizing the trees and the garden, Collective Roots has developed extensive 12-week standards-based science units that are taught to the Charter School's students in grades K-5. There is also a middle school elective class that focuses on developing and planning a produce program for the school cafeteria. The students learn about everything from business to nutrition through this elective class. The fruit trees planted at the School's garden are a part of the East Palo Alto Tree Initiative, a collaborative effort by the City of East Palo Alto, the California Department of Forestry, and Canopy to plant 1000 trees in East Palo Alto by 2010.

More information at: <http://www.collectiveroots.org/initiatives/environment/trees>

TreePeople (Los Angeles, CA)

TreePeople has always connected communities with trees. In 1984, distributing fruit trees to low-income communities in Los Angeles became an important part of this mission. Generous donations from TreePeople sponsors make the purchase and distribution of these trees possible. These sponsorships allow community partners to receive fruit trees and offer them at no cost to individuals. Since then, the organization has distributed more than 80,000 fruit trees to be planted in backyards, on school campuses and in community gardens throughout the city. TreePeople tripled the number of free fruit trees they provided to low-income families when they distributed 9,000 trees throughout the city in 2008. In January 2010, another 9,000 trees will be distributed from locations in the South Bay, the San Fernando Valley and East Los Angeles. TreePeople looks to qualified community and faith-based groups, schools and public orchards to help reach individuals or groups who may otherwise be unable to obtain fresh fruit or fruit trees.

More information at: <http://www.treepeople.org/fruit-tree-program>





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SUCCESS STORIES (cont.)

Parkway Partners (New Orleans, LA)

New Orleans lost an estimated 80% of its fruit trees during Hurricane Katrina. Since the storm in 2005, only about half of the city's community gardens have been restarted. Since many returning neighborhoods still lack the strong cohesion and population size needed for a full-fledged community garden, Parkway Partners suggested that communities commit first to orchards, which are lower maintenance while still highly productive. In November 2009, the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation teamed up with Parkway Partners to plant a total of 87 fig, persimmon and citrus trees at five sites around the city. Over the course of three days, volunteers from Parkway Partners, the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation and various neighborhood groups planted trees at the Oak Park Civic Association Garden, the Life is Art Foundation on North Villere Street in the 7th Ward, and three locations in the Lower 9th Ward: Gorilla Garden, the Chartres Community Garden, and Our School at Blair Grocery. The school in the grocery store is a particularly appropriate location for these efforts. Founded by an education professor who moved to New Orleans from New York in 2006, the school provides an alternative high school education for at-risk students. In addition to basic courses required for GED preparation, the half dozen or so students also study agriculture, the building trades, history and a course called "food justice" in which they learn about food distribution and production in their community. The school is housed in an old neighborhood grocery store. Next to the store building is a large garden in which students raise chickens and grow greens, bell peppers and now, kumquats, figs, and grapefruit. Now the school is providing food for the community much as the grocery store did in the past.

More information at: http://actrees.org/site/news/newsroom/planting_fruit_trees_is_part_of_hurricane_rec.php

Fruit Tree Planting Foundation (Kykotsmovi, AZ)

In September 2008, the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation's Reservation Preservation program worked with the Hopi tribal administration and Hopi Tutskwa Permaculture to create 3 community orchards in Kykotsmovi. With 30, 30, and 72 trees, respectively, the orchards are open to all members of the tribe. Fruit trees were also distributed to 40 local families to provide a healthy source of improved nutrition for decades to follow. The community orchards are helping restore a rich arboricultural tradition of self-sustenance through fruit tree production and the project was so well-received that it was noted by tribal officials as having a deep mobilizing effect on the community. This was seen from the residents who came out to join the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation volunteer planters day after day. The organization held a horticultural workshop for about 60 tribal members at the Kykotsmovi community center. The Fruit Tree Planting Foundation donated a total of 212 trees, along with full dripline irrigation for all the orchards with generous support from Accurate Backflow, Inc.

More information at: <http://www.ftpf.org/accomplishments.htm>

City Fruit (Seattle, WA)

Phinney-Greenwood Sustainable Harvest, a branch of City Fruit, has collected more than 2,600 pounds of fruit from surrounding resident trees within their neighborhood. City Fruit is a Seattle-based organization that believes city-grown fruit is a resource for the entire community. Because most residential tree owners can't- or don't- use all the fruit produced on their properties, much of it falls to the ground and rots. In addition, much of the fruit grown in urban landscapes is infested with preventable pests. City Fruit works neighborhood by neighborhood to help residential tree owners grow healthy fruit, to harvest and use what they can, and to share what they don't need. City Fruit collaborates with others involved in local food production, climate protection, horticulture, food security and community-building to protect and optimize urban fruit trees. In the Phinney-Greenwood neighborhood, 50 families have participated in over three dozen harvests, with all the collected fruit donated to local food banks and senior living facilities.

More information at: http://actrees.org/site/news/newsroom/local_group_harvests_donates_neighborhood_fru.php





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SUCCESS STORIES (cont.)

Village Harvest (San Francisco, CA)

Village Harvest is a nonprofit volunteer organization in the greater San Francisco Bay Area which harvests fruit from backyards and small orchards, then passes it along to local food agencies to feed the hungry. Since its founding in 2001, Village Harvest has grown to be one of the oldest and largest organizations of this kind in the country, harvesting a total of 2 million servings of nutritious fresh fruit for the community. The organization's flagship Harvesting for the Hungry program harvests over 120,000 lbs. each year and has garnered national attention for Village Harvest. While harvesting is the group's largest activity, it views a fruit tree as a resource for the entire community as well as the owner. Village Harvest provides educational materials and advice on fruit tree care and harvesting, and on food preservation such as making jams and preserves from home-grown fruit. They also work with local public and private orchard owners.

More information at: <http://www.villageharvest.org/index.htm>

Solid Ground (Seattle, WA)

For the past five years, Seattle social services agency Solid Ground has been running the Community Fruit Tree Harvest, a program that gathers unused fruit from residential trees and donates the bounty to those in need. The program spawned from another Solid Ground Program, Lettuce Link, which performs a similar service with fresh greens. What started as a hyperlocal charity in Wallingford now has over 80 volunteer harvesters that reach all around Seattle, including Queen Anne, South East Seattle, Central District, and Capitol Hill. The donation process operates like a delivery service: homeowners that signed up as donors give the Community Fruit Tree Harvest a call when their fruit tree is ripe and volunteers in the area pick the fruit, then donate it to food banks and other community organizations. Community Fruit Tree Harvest harvested over 10,000 pounds of fruit in 2007, and over 14,000 in 2008. More information at: <http://solid-ground.org/Programs/Nutrition/FruitTree/Pages/default.aspx>

Home Orchard Society (Portland, OR)

If you are a serious orchardist or perhaps a curious hobby gardener, Home Orchard Society provides the best source of technical, historical, and practical information and knowledge to make fruit growing an enriching experience. Home Orchard Society is a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to assisting both novice and expert growers and promoting the science, culture, and pleasure of growing fruit. They offer hands-on learning through an experimental orchard highlighting old and new fruit varieties, training techniques, plant combinations, edible landscaping, and pest control. Their library offers a wide collection of rare, historical, and modern printed and video materials, publications, extension service bulletins, and horticulture books are available for purchase, and they staff a full range of events including summer field trips to various orchards and gardens.

More information at: www.homeorchardsociety.org

Growing Gardens (Portland, OR)

Growing Gardens gets at the root of hunger in Portland. They organize hundreds of volunteers to build organic, raised bed vegetable gardens in backyards, front yards, side yards, and even on balconies. They support low-income households for three years with seeds, plants, classes, mentors, and more. Their Youth Grow after school garden clubs grow the next generation of veggie eaters and growers. Through Learn & Grow workshops and work parties, they teach gardeners all about growing, preparing, and preserving healthful food while respecting the health of the environment. They plant seeds for good food and healthy people by making sure low-income people have the resources they need to grow organic vegetables at home. Through this work, community members meet over the backyard garden, through volunteering, by attending classes, and through sharing extra produce.

More information at: www.growing-gardens.org





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SUCCESS STORIES (cont.)

Philly Orchard Project (Philadelphia, PA)

The Philadelphia Orchard Project (POP) plants orchards in the city of Philadelphia that provide healthy food, green spaces and community food security. POP works with community-based groups and volunteers to plan and plant orchards filled with useful and edible plants. POP provides the plants, trees, and training. Community organizations own, maintain, and harvest the orchards, expanding community-based food production. Orchards are planted in formerly vacant lots, community gardens, schoolyards, and other spaces, almost exclusively in low-wealth neighborhoods where people lack access to fresh fruit.

More information at: www.phillyorchards.org

Greater Grand Rapids Food Systems Council (Grand Rapids, MI)

The Greater Grand Rapids Food Systems Council (GGRFSC) was founded in 2001 with a goal to build and develop a just and sustainable food system and help establish food security for everyone. They bring together chefs, environmental and religious organizations, planners, farmers, community gardeners, conservationists, educators, health professionals, parents, and others seeking to broaden the dialogue about our present food system and create alternatives. Their projects include: Community Gardens, Cultivating Urban Seeds of Prosperity, West Michigan Fresh Guide to Local Food, Farmers' Markets, and Fostering Community Dialogue.

More information at: www.foodshed.net

City of Bath (Bath, ME)

A few years ago the Board of Education approved for one of their middle schools to plant a 140 tree apple orchard as an outdoor classroom. The site was chosen in part because the city maintains a municipal tree nursery with 2,500 trees next door. Fifth graders plant tree seedlings in 1-gallon pots and ultimately transfer them to the nursery. Middle school groups them are responsible for weeding and space out the trees as they grow. The key is to be visible to them and work with them and their teachers. Additionally, high school age individuals with alternative sentencing orders occasionally help out, too.

More information at: www.cityofbath.com

City of Flint (Flint, MI)

Growing vegetables and flowers is easy, building a simple greenhouse with donated materials is not. Organizers found it to be a three-year tale of permits, reviews, site plan requirements, and endless rounds of meetings with the city Planning Commission. It's not that Flint officials are opposed to residents growing their own food in backyards or on nearly 2,800 vacant residential lots within the city limits (a list that's still growing to the tune of about 500 vacant lots per year). The problem is the laws on the books simply predate the city's new urban reality. The zoning ordinance hasn't been revised since 1968, when the city was a booming industrial city and didn't have to think about agriculture as part of city planning.

More information at: http://actrees.org/site/news/newsroom/flint_to_consider_ordinance_changes_to_enhanc.php





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PUBLICATIONS/TECHNOLOGY/FUNDING

EDIBLE FOREST GARDENS

By Dave Jacke with Eric Toensmeier

Edible forest gardening is the art and science of putting plants together in woodlandlike patterns that forge mutually beneficial relationships, creating a garden ecosystem that is more than the sum of its parts. You can grow fruits, nuts, vegetables, herbs, mushrooms, other useful plants, and animals in a way that mimics natural ecosystems. You can create a beautiful, diverse, high-yield garden. If designed with care and deep understanding of ecosystem function, you can also design a garden that is largely self-maintaining. In many of the world's temperate-climate regions, your garden would soon start reverting to forest if you were to stop managing it. We humans work hard to hold back succession—mowing, weeding, plowing, and spraying. If the successional process were the wind, we would be constantly motoring against it. Why not put up a sail and glide along with the land's natural tendency to grow trees? By mimicking the structure and function of forest ecosystems we can gain a number of benefits.

Dave Jacke and Eric Toensmeier's groundbreaking two-volume book spells out and explores the key concepts of forest ecology and applies them to the needs of natural gardeners in temperate climates. In Volume II, the authors take the vision of the forest garden and basic ecological principles from Vol. I and move on to practical considerations: concrete ways to design, establish, and maintain your own forest garden. Along the way they present case studies and examples, as well as tables, illustrations, and a uniquely valuable "plant matrix" that lists hundreds of the best edible and useful species. Taken together, the two volumes of Edible Forest Gardens offer an advanced course in ecological gardening—one that will forever change the way you look at plants and your environment.

Jacke and Toensmeier also offer a guide and how-to series on these topics on the Edible Forest Gardens website, where you can order their book and find out about upcoming events, the Forest Gardeners Network, recent accomplishments, and more. A section of the website, About Forest Gardening, provides more information on several aspects and necessary steps required for successful forest gardening:

Vision

Picture yourself in a forest where almost everything around you is food. Mature and maturing fruit and nut trees form an open canopy. If you look carefully, you can see fruits swelling on many branches—pears, apples, persimmons, pecans, and chestnuts. Shrubs bear raspberries, blueberries, currants, hazelnuts, and other lesser-known fruits, flowers, and nuts at different times of the year. Edible forest gardening means gardening like the forest, expanding the horizons of our food gardening across the range of the successional sequence, from field to forest, and everything in between.

Ecology

Edible forest gardens mimic the structure and function of forest ecosystems—this is how we create the high, diverse yields, self-maintenance, and healthy ecosystem we seek for our garden. It is therefore critical to understand forest ecology and its implications for design. Four aspects of forest ecology are key: community architecture, ecosystem social structure, the structures of the underground economy, and how the community changes through time, also known as succession.

Design

At its simplest, forest garden design involves choosing what plants to place in your garden in which locations, at which times. However, these seemingly simple acts must generate the forest-like structures and functions we seek, and they must also achieve your design goals. A forest garden design process, then, must be information intensive if it is to achieve even moderately complex objectives.

More information at: <http://www.edibleforestgardens.com/PUBLICATIONS/TECHNOLOGY/FUNDING> (cont.)





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Neighborhood Fruit

Neighborhood Fruit is a website designed to help you find and share fruit locally, both backyard bounty and abundance on public lands. Currently, they have over 10,000 registered trees nationwide. Fruit growers start by registering their fruit bearing trees, and answering a few simple questions such as what type of fruit, harvest information and location. If Growers chose to participate in the Urban Forest Mapping Project, they can enter information about their trees to be saved in a profile and made available when the fruit is ready to share. When their fruit is ripe, growers use the Share My Fruit Form to notify the community that the fruit is ready.

More information at: <http://neighborhoodfruit.com/>

Fruit and Vegetable Intake Among Urban Community Gardeners

Katherine Alaimo et al, published this article in the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior in 2007. Their research was to determine the association between household participation in a community garden and fruit and vegetable consumption among urban adults. Using the setting of Flint, Michigan, they analyzed data from 766 adults. They found that adults with a household member who participated in a community garden consumed fruits and vegetables were 1.4 more times per day than those who did not participate, and they were 3.5 times more likely to consume fruits and vegetables at least 5 times daily.

More information at: [www.jneb.org/article/S1499-4046\(06\)00854-2/abstract](http://www.jneb.org/article/S1499-4046(06)00854-2/abstract)

Endyne, Inc.

Endyne is a full-service environmental testing laboratory with locations in Williston and Randolph, VT and also in Plattsburgh, NY. Endyne specializes in the analysis of organic, inorganic, metals, and microbiological contaminants in a variety of matrices including drinking water, wastewater, soil, hazardous waste and air.

More information at: www.endynelabs.com

Heading Towards Sustainability- Part I: Agroforestry

Agroforestry is a system that intentionally combines growing trees and shrubs with other crops and/or livestock. A well-managed agroforestry system may just be part of the solution to sustainability. It improves soil and water quality, reaps economic benefits for the producer, and yields a suite of environmental benefits. Once established agroforestry projects may require less labor compared to agricultural crops of equal economic value.

More information at: http://actrees.org/site/resources/events/heading_towards_sustainability-_part_i_agrofo.php

USDA Hatch Funds

Hatch Act funds are provided for agricultural research on an annual basis to the State Agricultural Experiment Stations (SAES's) which were established under the direction of the college or university or agricultural departments of the college or university in each State in accordance with the act approved July 2, 1862 (7 U.S.C. 301 et seq.); or such other substantially equivalent arrangements as any State shall determine. These funds are distributed according to a statutory formula. The scope of the agricultural research which may be conducted under the Hatch Act is very broad. It includes research on all aspects of agriculture, including soil and water conservation and use; plant and animal production, protection, and health; processing, distribution, safety, marketing, and utilization of food and agricultural products; forestry, including range management and range products; multiple use of forest rangelands, and urban forestry; aquaculture; home economics and family life; human nutrition; rural and community development; sustainable agriculture; molecular biology; and biotechnology. Research may be conducted on problems of local, State, regional, or national concern.

More information at: www.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/formula/hatch.html

