

ORGANIC GARDENING

productive, safe gardening for home & community gardeners



JUICY ORANGE CARROTS...

...shiny green capsicums, rich purple eggplants and bright red raddichio — all good to eat and all grown by you in your organic community or home garden.

You thought organic growing might be difficult, but now you know it is easy.



Organic gardening is easy...

Organic gardening is an approach to growing food, ornamentals and native plants using both traditional and scientific gardening techniques.

The principles of organic growing can be applied at any scale — from large commercial farms to container plants on your apartment balcony. Most community food gardens make use of organic gardening.

For home and community gardeners, organic growing is low-cost and safe. Organics avoids the possibility of gardeners contaminating themselves and the city's waterways through the erroneous use of synthetic chemical pesticides, fertilisers, fungicides and other biocides.

A practice based on knowledge

Organic gardeners learn about the ecological processes that go on in the garden. We use this knowledge to:

- control insect pests without damaging beneficial insects
- increase the fertility of our soils
- place plants that benefit each other close together
- increase the productivity of our gardens.



Gardeners harvest fresh food from their organic community garden



Gardening author and teacher, Jill Finnane, has vegetables, herbs, fruit trees and chickens in her small but productive organic home garden in inner-urban Sydney

Healthy soil, healthy plants...

Fertile soil is the key to successful organic gardening. Building up the fertility of our soil ensures healthy, disease resistant plants. It provides the nutrients our plants need to grow strong and productive.

We improve soil fertility by adding:

- compost
- vermicompost (worm compost)
- mulch
- organic fertilisers.

Saving seeds...

Many organic gardeners practice seed saving. Seeds are collected from the most productive and healthy plants in a garden, dried and stored until they are planted at the start of the next growing season. Only the seed of non-hybrid herbs, flowers and vegetables is suitable for saving.

The Seed Savers Handbook can help you make a start in seed saving. There may be a seed savers group near you.

Information: Seed Savers Network, info@seedsavers.net
PO Box 975, Byron Bay NSW 2481. P: 02 6685 7560.

■ The principles of organic gardening are sensible and easy to adopt... ■■



information, knowledge

use information and knowledge derived from traditional gardening combined with modern science to make your garden productive; use observation and reasoning to learn about your garden

diversity

grow a diversity of plants to obtain a range of foods and as habitat for beneficial insects, which control pests

fertile soil

increase the fertility of your garden soil by adding compost, mulch and organic fertilisers; plant legumes — the pea and bean plant family — to build soil fertility

quality plants, seeds

obtain vegetable and herb seeds adapted to regional climate and soils; they are more likely to cope with local pests and diseases; non-hybrid seeds can be collected for replanting next season

irrigation

install water-efficient irrigation — hand hosing, drip irrigation, porous hose, micro-sprinkler — to conserve water and keep costs down; check on water restrictions that may affect irrigation systems

pest, disease management

use integrated pest management to select from a range of techniques for managing garden pests without damaging beneficial insects, birds and lizards; crop rotation reduces soil-borne diseases of plants

local resources

use resources such as compost, mulch and seeds that come from the local region, where possible; local plants are more likely to be adapted to local climate, soils and conditions; obtaining gardening needs from local suppliers helps maintain local economies and livelihoods; using local resources reduces transportation and its contribution to pollution, road congestion and global warming

“FOOD PLANTS, GROWN ORGANICALLY, THAT HAVE ADAPTED THEMSELVES TO YOUR GARDEN... WILL PERFORM NOTICABLY BETTER IN YOUR KITCHEN...GOOD GARDENING PRODUCES GOOD PLANTS AND GOOD PLANTS PROVIDE WHOLESOME FOOD. ANY THINKING COOK WILL PICK THE VITAL CONNECTION BETWEEN SOIL, SEED, PLANT AND SELF. IT IS THE STRENGTH OF REGIONAL COOKING”... Jude Fanton, Seed Savers' handbook www.seedsavers.net



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