



COMMON GROUND

ORGANIC GARDEN SUPPLY AND EDUCATION CENTER

SUMMER/FALL 2008 NEWSLETTER

A Demonstration Garden For You

Common Ground Garden Center's motto is "Creating Abundance in Community," and our vision is to promote edible gardens in neighborhoods throughout the San Francisco Mid-Peninsula. The Common Ground Demonstration Garden is a model for this vision and for you to learn the best ways to get started or continue gardening in your neighborhood.

Classes are held at the garden on GROW BIOINTENSIVE Mini-Farming, Permaculture, Drip Irrigation, California Native Plants, Seasonal Vegetable Gardening and more.

The core of the garden is a 14-bed GROW BIOINTENSIVE Mini-Farm area. There is also a home demonstration area surrounding a cedar-wood shed, that will soon include three vegetable beds, native plants, herbs, and different examples of composting.

A total of 17 beds are planted with unique crops including glorious grains and root crops: tomatoes, potatoes, amaranth, wheat, parsnips, oats, corn, Jerusalem artichokes, alfalfa, millet, and bush beans. Expect to soon see five apple and two pomegranate trees along with two old apricot trees that are a legacy of the former orchard.



Thursday is Volunteer Day in the Garden. There is a splendid core group of volunteers who enjoy welcoming new volunteers. If interested please inquire with Drew Harwell, the Garden Manager, at drewharwell@yahoo.com or when you are in shopping at Common Ground. Your tax-deductible donations are needed and appreciated to see the garden grow. Please contribute what you can at the Common Ground website or in person!



**559 COLLEGE AVE.
PALO ALTO, CA 94306
650.493.6072**

WEBSITE:
commongroundinpaloalto.org

Volunteer Spotlight

Kyle Suppes

I was born and raised in beautiful Palo Alto. A few months ago I was looking for a place where I could contribute to a positive cause, be in a positive environment and learn something new. When the opportunity to work at Common Ground was presented I was thrilled to help out.

I assist with a variety of tasks. I restock the soils, seeds, tools and other items. I water the herbs, plants and flowers and make sure the center is swept and well organized. I check in and price new deliveries and recycle boxes into trays the customers can use to carry their plants, and I help customers load their cars. I also complete other tasks periodically, such as refilling our drinking water at Country Sun or watering the wine barrels.



Volunteering at Common Ground has been a delight for me. Patricia and Don always make me feel appreciated. I am grateful to have the opportunity to work with such positive, knowledgeable people. I find my time at Common Ground to be very uplifting and would highly recommend volunteering to anyone interested.

OPEN: Monday- Friday, 10:00 - 5:30; Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 - 5:00



STARTING YOUR FALL GARDEN

Drew Harwell Saturday, August 23
 10:30 – 12:30 \$32
 12:45 – 1:30 optional garden tour

This popular class will inspire you to grow more vegetables and herbs. It will teach you how to extend the abundance of your summer garden into the fall and winter. Learn exactly what plants thrive now and how to grow them. Beets, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, onion and carrots are among the many vegetable varieties eager to germinate at this time of year. You will get plenty of ideas and instructions for direct sowing, transplanting, creating healthy soil and harvesting. Class will conclude with a tour of the Common Ground Demonstration Garden. Bring a snack! *Drew is the talented and wonderful Common Ground Demonstration Garden Manager, the manager of Jesse Cool's Seeds of Change Garden and the former manager of the Stanford Community Farm.*

GROWING CUT FLOWERS

Nancy Garrison Saturday, Sept 6
 10:30 – 12:30 \$27

You will be introduced to the best of the best easy-to-grow flowers with staying power. Common plant foliage will compliment and add wonderful effect. Learn which specific varieties do well in arrangements. Save money and have more joy growing your own flower bouquets. Purple orach, colorful amaranths, 10 different alstromerias, purple millet, peonies, and long-stemmed roses will be discussed. A slide show is included. *Nancy will share 20-plus years of knowledge on*



selecting and growing local cut flowers. She has been involved with the UC Cooperative Extension trialing over a hundred kinds of flowers to find the most beautiful. Her work with sunflowers has been featured in Sunset magazine. (1 CEU)

* A GROW BIOINTENSIVE® class
 CEUs are APLD Continuing Education Units

SUMMER/FALL 2008 CLASSES

Please register by calling Common Ground at 650.493.6072. Seniors and low-income persons may request a \$4 discount on classes.

* INTRODUCTION TO GROW BIOINTENSIVE

Dan Royer-Miller Saturday, Sept 13
 10:30 – 12:00 \$25

Learn the principles of double-digging, composting and soil-building, intensive planting, companion planting, carbon-farming (compost crops), calorie farming, and open-pollinated seeds. We emphasize a whole-system approach that builds soil fertility in a relatively short time, so that fertilizer inputs (other than compost) become unnecessary, or almost so, thereby making the garden and farm sustainable. *Dan is in his third year as an apprentice at Ecology Action's Research Garden in Willits, CA.*

* DOUBLE-DIGGING AND BED PREPARATION

Margo Royer-Miller Saturday, Sept 13
 2:00 – 4:00 \$27

Double-digging is the first step in a GROW BIOINTENSIVE garden. Learn how easy, fun and productive this method can be. Loosening the soil 24 inches deep will help to build essential soil structure. Plants will grow much better and need less water; weeds will come out easily. This ever-popular class includes some hands-on at the Common Ground Demonstration Garden. Margo is in her third year as an apprentice at Ecology Action's Research Garden in Willits, CA.

PLANT A FALL HERB GARDEN

Jody Main Saturday, Sept 20
 10:30 – 12:30 \$27

Celebrate Autumn and plant an organic herb garden! Bring beautiful diversity to your garden with a variety of culinary and medicinal herbs. They bring harmony and health to us and to our gardens with their beauty, fragrance, flowers (that attract beneficial insects), and everlasting qualities that enable them to be brought indoors to share and enjoy. Learn how to grow and harvest perennial and annual herbs, herbs in containers and in the landscape as well as essential herbs for the kitchen. You will take home herb cuttings and recipes. Plant lists will be provided. *Jody is a local organic food and garden writer, educator, and consultant. Her specialty is designing gardens that include vegetables, herbs and berries.*

* WINTER COMPOST CROPS and DIET

John Jeavons
10:30 – 12:30+

Saturday, Sept 27
\$27

John Jeavons will explain the selection, timing, growing and processing of grains, the rotation of cool-/cold-weather crops with legumes and the role of grains in the design of a complete annual diet. *John is the Executive Director of Ecology Action and author of How to Grow More Vegetables, now in its 7th edition and used in over 141 countries around the world.*



* ECONOMIC MINI-FARMING

John Jeavons
2:00 – 4:00+

Saturday, Sept 27
\$27

Learn the concepts, techniques and crops that can lead to successful economic mini-farming, beginning right in your own backyard. Recommended reading: *Backyard Homestead* and Ecology Action's Self-Teaching Mini-Series Booklets #18 and #26 available at Common Ground. *John is the Executive Director of Ecology Action and author of How to Grow More Vegetables, now in its 7th edition and used in over 141 countries around the world.* (1 CEU)

ALTERNATIVES TO LAWNS

Deva Luna
10:30 – 12:30

Saturday, Oct 4
Special free class
To register call 650-493-6072

Offered in cooperation with City of Palo Alto Utilities and Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency.

Tired of watering, mowing and weeding your lawn but don't know what to put in instead? Replacing your lawn appropriately reduces your water bill and your maintenance costs, encourages habitat for birds and butterflies and does not contribute to global warming. You'll come away from this inspiring talk with dozens of ideas, illustrated by pictures worth more than a thousand words. *Deva combines her passion for plants with a desire to enhance the environment. She is a Lifetime Master Gardener, Gardening Instructor, Coordinator of the Santa Clara Teaching Garden, Landscape Designer and Horticulturist for EarthCare Landscaping. She has a degree in "Plants and Art" from UC Davis.* (2 CEUs)

Many thanks to Jennifer Hewitson for allowing us to use her original art seen on pages 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

WORM COMPOSTING

Alane Weber
10:30 – 1:30

Saturday, Oct 11
\$32

Everything you always wanted to know about worms, but were afraid to ask. Come join us and learn all about this tidy and very efficient way to turn all your kitchen scraps into botanical gold. We will take a snack break. *Alane, "the worm lady of San Mateo," has been nurturing her compost worms for 16 years and teaching vermicomposting for the County of San Mateo for the last 8 years.*

* SEED PROPAGATION

Dan Royer-Miller
10:30 – 12:30

Saturday, Oct 18
\$27

It all begins with a seed! Learning the GROW BIOINTENSIVE seed propagation techniques will help you have a more productive and efficient garden. This class will explain the advantage of using flats and your own soil, transplanting, pricking out seedlings from flats, proper watering, and planting by the phases of the moon. *Dan is in his third year as an apprentice at Ecology Action's Research Garden in Willits, CA.*

* COMPOSTING

Margo Royer-Miller
2:00 – 4:00

Saturday, Oct 18
\$27

Composting with the GROW BIOINTENSIVE method is the basis for keeping your soil strong and healthy to grow the healthiest, most nutritious, and most disease-resistant plants. Learn the easiest and most effective way to compost. It is so fun and satisfying that we must warn you, composting can become addictive! We will go to the Common Ground Demonstration Garden and build our own compost pile. Bring a five-gallon bucket of "green material" (grass clippings, weeds, and/or non-meat kitchen scraps). *Margo is in her third year as an apprentice at Ecology Action's Research Garden in Willits, CA.*

TWO-DAY INTRODUCTION TO PERMACULTURE

Doniga Markegard/
Drew Harwell
10:30 – 4:30 Sat. – Sun., Oct 25 – 26
\$160

Learn the tools to create a sustainable future in your backyard and beyond. Permaculture is a holistic approach to land use and design, based on patterns found in the natural world and ecological principles. We use a solutions-based method to harmoniously integrate the land with people. This course will cover sustainable living systems — including food systems, water harvesting, waste cycling, home design, climate care, holistic land management, natural building and observation techniques. Participants will take part in a hands-on Permaculture project in Common Ground's Demonstration Garden to put theory into practice. *Doniga has extensive training in nature observation, Permaculture and regenerative design. She has a BA in Sustainable Community Development with Prescott College. She is currently a land management consultant and landscape designer, and is working on projects such as Permaculture food forests, erosion control, renewable energy and natural building. Drew is the talented and wonderful Common Ground Demonstration Garden Manager and the former manager of the Stanford Community Farm and has gardened in our Ecology Action Research Garden/Mini-Farm in Willits. (8 CEUs)*



FRUIT TREE VARIETIES

Nancy Garrison
10:30 – 12:30 Saturday, Nov 1
\$27

Learn which varieties of peaches, nectarines, plums, pluots, apricots, apples and pears are the delight of connoisseurs. You will be introduced to the best of the best-tasting deciduous fruits that grow in this area and learn where to source your own plants. *Nancy has been conducting and attending fruit tastings for the last 26 years in her diverse home fruit garden and in research facilities around the state. She has collaborated with Andy's Orchard and Dave Wilson Nursery and oversees the rare fruit plantings at Prusch Farm Park. (1 CEU)*

SOIL FOODWEB

Theresa Lyngso
10:30 – 12:30 Saturday, Nov 8
\$27

Learn how to greatly boost your garden's health through increasing biological life. There is a whole universe of living organisms under your feet. There is essential life you can either support or undo through your gardening practices. Learn how to increase and nurture the aerobic organisms that make fertile soil. When you have a healthy soil food web the plants in your garden will be much healthier and the food more nutritious for you and your family. *Theresa grew up in the family business, Lyngso Garden Materials, Inc. and was President for 20 years. She has come to understand that life in the soil may hold the answers and solutions to current challenging situations. Theresa has been brewing and applying Actively Aerated Compost Tea for 4 years. (1 CEU)*

CONTAINER GARDENING

Susie Mader
10:30 – 12:30 Saturday, Nov 15
\$27

Fall is the perfect time for cool-weather edible container gardens. A container garden lets you put some color, fresh herbs, vegetables and edible flowers in your life the easy way! Learn principles, techniques and how to choose containers and plants. We have everything you need to get started and maintain one or more containers of lovely plants. *Susie's approach to this always-popular subject will show you everything you need to get started. She is a long-time friend and a landscape consultant and contractor specializing in ecologically complete systems.*

SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Sherri Osaka
10:30 – 12:30 Saturday, Nov 22
\$27

You can have it all: A more sustainable and beautiful garden! Learn how to reduce the water needs through careful plant selection and proper maintenance techniques. Learn how to get rid of petroleum and toxic chemicals, while improving soil, plant beauty and health. You'll learn to flow with natural processes to minimize the time spent as your garden becomes more bountiful. *Sherri is the owner of Sustainable Landscape Designs and a life-long organic gardener. She is co-founder of the Sustainable Landscape Roundtable, an organization that encourages landscape professionals to adopt ecological practices, and a director of the Loma Prieta Chapter of the California Native Plant Society.*

Product Highlights!

Healthy at 100 by John Robbins

This book is a marvelous blend of wisdom, hope, courage and common sense. John Robbins reveals the secrets for living an extended and fulfilling life, gleaned from four very different cultures that have produced some of the world's healthiest and longest living people. With an emphasis on simple, wholesome and satisfying fare, a manageable daily exercise routine and the cultivation of strong, loving personal relationships, the book provides the tools for making our later years a period of wisdom, vitality and happiness.

Recipes from the Garden by Rosalind Creasy

Two hundred exciting recipes from the author of *The Complete Book of Edible Landscaping*. Nothing tastes better than food fresh from the garden. Eating seasonally, eating locally and eating organically have never been easier. We have been anxiously awaiting Rosalind's new book. **Autographed copies available!**

Can-O-Worms

Can-O-Worms, the #1 worm composter in the world, turns food scraps into an ongoing supply of rich organic liquid and solid fertilizer, which is nutrient-rich for growing healthy plants. Constructed of durable, lightweight, 100% recycled material, it features a ventilated lid on top, three stackable, mesh-bottomed "working trays" where the composting happens and a solid "collector tray" with a tap to dispense the liquid fertilizer. When the worms have composted one tray into castings, another is set on top. Attracted by fresh-food scraps, the worms migrate up into the new tray through its mesh base. Castings are harvested from the tray below. The Can-O-Worms comes with "Coco Peat" style starter bedding and a 16-page instruction book. It stands 29" tall x 20" in diameter.

Bonny Doon Personal Treats

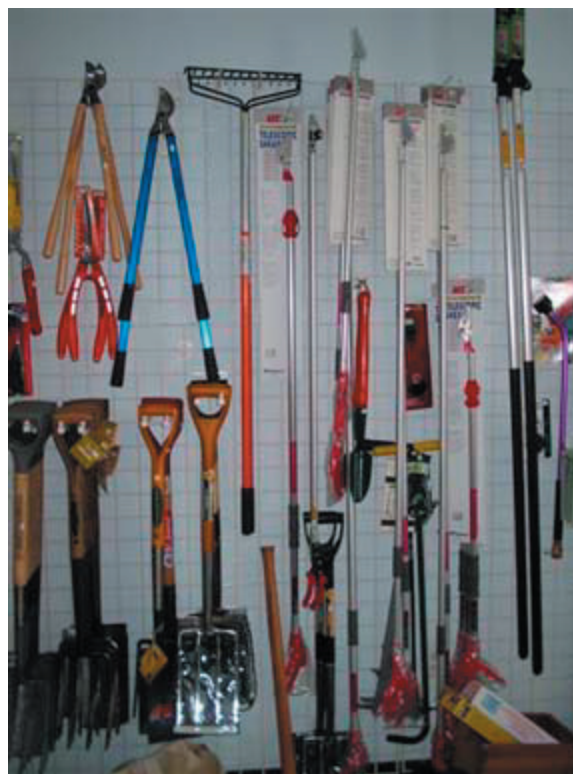
Lemon verbena, rose geranium and lavender spritzers, hand and body lotions, essential oils and hand-made soaps from Bonny Doon Farms in Santa Cruz. Customers come back again and again for these lovely treats for the body, mind and spirit for themselves and as gifts. Make yourself soft and beautiful with these products.

Nitrile Touch or Tough Gloves

The Touch is lighter weight and the Tough is thicker. Available in a variety of colors. This glove seems like a second skin that has a breathable nylon liner. Machine washable. Good in the garden or for any job! You can feel the seeds with your fingers! **Best seller!**

ARS Long-reach and Telescoping Pruners

Extend your reach up to 10 feet into the tree or vine and make clean, precise cuts. The hard steel blades are very sharp and durable. All the pole pruners have a convenient revolving handle that allows you to rotate the blade without changing your grip. The heavy-duty seven-foot pruner cuts branches up to 3/4-inch diameter.



Tool display at Common Ground

Dramm Colorstorm Premium Hose, 50 ft

This rubber hose is hot-water-resistant to 160° F. It resists kinking and coils easily even in cold weather. Fittings are crush-proof, nickel-plated and lead-free. It comes in six brilliant colors. Lifetime guarantee. Made in the USA.

Common Ground Organic Garden Supply and Education Center

... offers:



Design and layout by Glenda Jones

- Hands-on classes and events in organic gardening and sustainable lifestyles
- Seeds and plant starts – hundreds of edible, medicinal, native and ornamental varieties
- Organic composts, fertilizers and mulches – a broad selection
- Tools and natural disease- and pest- control products – the highest quality
- Books, magazines, cards and gift items
- Volunteer opportunities and new friends

Common Ground is a community-supported 501(c)(3) non-profit project of Ecology Action. We invite you to be a part of a 36-year tradition of sustainable gardening by joining our ever-growing circle of friends. Please make your **tax-deductible donation** by calling 650.493.6072 **or** visiting our center **or**, for secure on-line donating, going to

www.commongroundinpaloalto.org

With abundant gratitude we thank you!

Common Ground Garden Supply and Education Center
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