



# COMMON GROUND

ORGANIC GARDEN SUPPLY AND  
EDUCATION CENTER

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## FALL / WINTER 2010 NEWSLETTER

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### Product Highlights



#### Gilmour Dial-a-Mix Hose-end Sprayer

Now comes in two styles: 20 oz pistol grip valve and 32 oz twist valve. It automatically mixes concentrate with water from your hose. No pre-mixing is needed. Unused concentrate can be poured back into its original container.

#### Bosmere Bos Trugs

A must have! These handy strong and flexible garden trugs allow for ultimate strength. The two handles let you carry small loads in one hand or larger loads in two. Available in green and purple, 26 and 40 liter.

#### “How to Grow More Vegetables” by John Jeavons, 7th Edition

Common Ground’s best seller and every gardener’s essential guide-book. Explains how to produce a beautiful organic garden with minimal watering and daily care. The method works in harmony with nature’s cycles, preserving and enriching earth’s nutrients, and nourishing the soil for future crops. The book includes updated gardening charts and the latest techniques.

#### “Wicked Cool Sustainable Solutions for the Earth”

An activity and coloring book that focuses on solutions. This book covers everything from worm composting to windmills. Have fun with activities that include word search, maze, connect-the-dots and more!

#### Root Guard Gopher Basket

Wire barrier STOPS gophers from damaging plant roots. The right wire for the job. The basket is made of strong 20 gauge galvanized steel. Its 3/4-inch mesh is small enough to keep critters out. It opens in seconds with no sharp wires. Basket comes in three sizes, 1 gal (8”), 5 gal (12”) and tree size (17”).



*Sergey Tsybanov, a long-time multi-talented star volunteer, holding How To Grow More Vegetables, 7th edition, by John Jeavons.*

More Product Highlights on page 5...

#### Bonide Wettable Sulfur

Controls rust, leaf spot, powdery mildew and much more. It also controls russet mites on tomatoes. Use on fruits, vegetables and ornamentals. Joe has used this on his tomatoes and loves the results.

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

WEBSITE:  
**[commongroundinpaloalto.org](http://commongroundinpaloalto.org)**

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

## \*COMPOSTING

Natasha Fernandez

Saturday, September 18

1:30 – 3:30

\$31

GROW BIOINTENSIVE composting is the basis for growing the healthiest, most nutritious, and most pest- and disease-resistant plants, but not all compost piles are qualitatively and quantitatively equal. Learn the easiest and most effective way to compost, including how to effectively recycle your kitchen scraps and how to maximize carbon and nitrogen in your pile. Bring a five-gallon bucket of “green material” (grass clippings, weeds, and/or non-meat kitchen scraps). This ever-popular class includes a hands-on demonstration at the Common Ground Demonstration Garden. *Natasha is in her second year of GROW BIOINTENSIVE work/study. City-bred, she had little exposure to farming, but after visiting many farms, she eventually found a path which she thought was truly sustainable.*

## ORGANIC FALL GARDENING

Jody Main

Saturday, September 25

10:30 – 12:30

\$31 plus materials fee \$7

Plant an organic veggie garden now before winter arrives! You too can harvest fresh edible goodies from outside your door. It's the perfect time for garlic, fava beans, lettuce, kale, chard, spinach, pak choi, tatsoi, mizuna, gailaan, endive, arugula, cilantro, herbs and wildflowers. Class will cover garden bed prep, planting, organic plant care and harvesting. Everyone will plant fall veggies to take home. Tasty samples and recipes are provided. *Jody is a local organic food and garden writer, educator, and consultant. Her specialty is designing gardens that include vegetables, herbs and berries.*



## \*COMPLETE-DIET MINI-FARMING

Ed Fernandez

Saturday, October 2

10:30 – 12:30

\$31

People often wonder how they can grow all their own food. Are a few fruits and veggies enough? How do you plan to grow a complete diet? This class will show you how to plan a highly productive and ecologically sustainable garden or mini-farm that will produce healthy, nutritious food in the smallest space possible. *See Ed's bio in the Introduction to GROW BIOINTENSIVE class description.*

## \*BED PREPARATION AND DOUBLE-DIGGING

Natasha Fernandez

Saturday, October 2

1:30 – 3:30

\$31

Bed preparation is the first step in a GROW BIOINTENSIVE garden. It can improve the long-term sustainability and ecology of your soil, potentially making the difference between good and poor soil structure and between high and low crop yields. In well-prepared beds, plants will grow better and need less water, and weeds will come out easily. Learn how easy, fun and productive this approach can be. This ever-popular class includes a hands-on demonstration at the Common Ground Demonstration Garden. *See Natasha's bio in the Composting class description.*



## BACKYARD CHICKENS

Jody Main

Saturday, October 9

10:30 – 1:30

\$39 plus materials fee \$7

Learn everything you need to raise happy hens, including a hen house and yard set-up, nesting boxes, water, feed, local suppliers, caring for your hens and chicks and favorite crops to grow for your chickens. You will see how easy it is to raise chickens and how great a role they play in creating a healthy organic vegetable garden. Give them food scraps and garden greens – they give us eggs and fertilizer. Chickens are wonderful pets that fully participate and contribute to the whole. Garden snack included. **Meet at Common Ground then car pool to Jody's garden and hen house in Woodside. Return to Common Ground by 1:30 pm.** *Jody has raised backyard chickens in her organic vegetable and herb gardens for many years.*

## \*USING THE MASTER CHARTS

Mark House

Saturday, October 16

10:30 – 12:00

\$31

Getting seedlings started at the right time and in the right quantities can help you make the best use of garden space. **YOU BRING:** a copy of *How to Grow More Vegetables*, 7th edition (always for sale at Common Ground), a sharp pencil and a calculator. *Mark is the Research Garden Assistant Manager at the Ecology Action Research Garden in Willits, CA. He is a certified teacher of Permaculture and has studied and taught Biodynamic farming methods. Before moving to California, Mark was Farm Manager for a 350 acre organic farm and craft community near Rochester, NY.*

## WORM COMPOSTING

Alane Weber  
10:30 – 1:30

Saturday, December 11  
\$39

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 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 17 years and teaching vermicomposting for the County of San Mateo for the last 10 years.*

## GARDENING FOR A HEALTHY BACK

Esther Gokhale  
10:30 – 12:30

Saturday, December 18  
\$31

Are you applying good posture principles in your gardening? We'd like to help you make sure! Learn how to have a healthy back while you are weeding, lifting and pruning. You will be hip-hinging, a basic technique of gardeners all around the world. *Esther is an international back-pain expert and author of the book 8 Steps to a Pain-Free Back.*

## FALL GARDENING TIPS

Fall is here, and it's time to get busy in the garden. In the Bay Area we are blessed with a mild climate that lets us have a thriving garden all year round. I find this the nicest time to garden, not too hot, not too cold, and I don't have to do much watering – not my favorite activity (see Gatorhyde Hose on this page). Late August and early September is the time to get out and have fun in the garden. A large variety of edible and ornamental seeds can be planted in the fall. These include edibles such as beets, carrots, garlic sets, peas, spinach and turnips and ornamentals like sweet peas and poppies. Autumn is a good time to transplant starts of broccoli, cabbage, kale, chard, onions and leeks. You can transplant calendulas and carnations for fall color.

Get a head start on preparing your garden for winter. Build and renew compost piles as you clean up summer beds. Sow fava beans and other cover crops, continuing through December.

As fall progresses you can continue planting edibles and even more ornamentals in October. These include California natives, grasses, columbine, fox-glove and poppies. You can also plant bulbs, herbs and wheat for June harvest.

Thin the raspberries by removing the canes that have fruited. Apply pre-emergent corn weed blocker to keep down winter weeds and provide a good dose of fertilizer. This stuff is great. I put some down in a bare area that had been filled with weeds the previous winter and got fewer than a dozen. These pulled out easily since they had almost no root. Harvest herbs for drying and other uses.

You can continue planting in November. There is still time to start lettuce in flats. As things wind down into winter remember to spray dormant oil on fruit trees.

Fall is a busy time here at Common Ground. Visit us for all your gardening needs, and take a class so that you will be well prepared for next year as you garden. So close that book, or laptop, and start your fall gardening.

– Joe



## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Share your gardening success with other gardeners; let them learn from your mistakes. Tell your fellow gardeners what products and plants you like best. Gardening is an adventure enjoyed more when shared. Common Ground has a Facebook page that provides a forum to exchange ideas, post photos, and ask gardening questions with others who are interested in discussing organic gardening and sustainable lifestyle topics.

Recently we asked on Common Ground's Facebook page – "What are your favorite gardening tools and products at Common Ground? Please do tell!"

You can go to Facebook and see what people say and add your comments. We would like to hear from you!

### Product Highlights



continued . . .

### Gatorhyde Hose

The best hose we know. It is super lightweight and absolutely will not kink. It is easy to use and easy to store, has nickel-plated ends, and is drinking-water safe. It comes in three lengths: 25 ft, 50 ft and 75 ft. Joe gave one to his wife for her birthday, and she and he love it. No longer does he drag a heavy hose over their plants and have to trudge back to unkink it. Watering can be fun!

### Bird-X Netting

Protect your garden and enjoy the fruits of your labors. Use to protect fruit trees, grapes and berries and vegetable beds.

## \*SEED COLLECTION AND SAVING

Mark House  
1:30 – 3:30

Saturday, October 16  
\$31

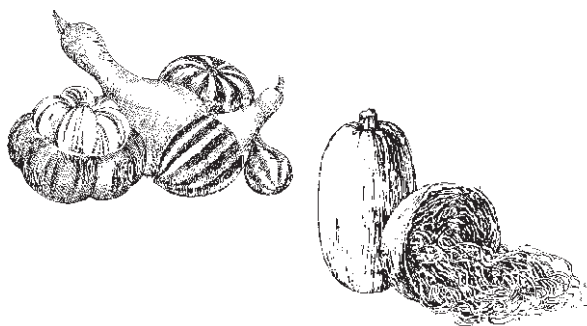
Your garden can produce the seeds you need for next year! If you save your own seeds, you can save money and preserve your favorite varieties for many years. You will learn the basic principles involved in producing, collecting and saving your own seeds. See Mark's bio in the *Using the Master Charts* class description.

## INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

Frank Niccoli  
1:00 – 3:00

Saturday, October 23  
\$31

To spray or not to spray, that is the question. Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous insect infestations or to take arms against the sea of aphids, and by spraying, end them. With profound apologies to the Immortal Bard, come learn when to spray and what to spray on whom. Learn the very best strategies to help you control the pests in your garden with a minimum of chemicals and maximum effectiveness. Frank teaches at Foothill College and for the Landscape Contractors Association. His company, *The Village Gardener*, has won numerous awards in flower design, landscape management and installation.



## SOIL FOODWEB

Theresa Lyngso  
10:30 – 12:30

Saturday, October 30  
\$31

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 foodweb, 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 6 years.

## GOLDMINERS' WHEAT AND BREAD

Monica Spiller  
10:30 – 12:30

Saturday, November 6  
\$31

Sonora wheat, an historic local wheat variety, is being grown again by California farmers. Come, see Sonora wheat and taste whole Sonora wheat bread as it was made in 1849, from stone-milled flour. The extra steps of mashing and making a sponge will be demonstrated for this old-fashioned barm sweet-sourdough bread method. Soft Sonora wheat can be made into beautiful cohesive dough, and then into ciabatta and pocket buns. Barm is the old English word for a sweet-sourdough starter. Both the sweet-sourdough starter and the word barm are worth bringing to light again after 130 years of neglect. Take home barm stock and recipes. Monica founded the *Whole Grain Connection* in 2000 to supply old-fashioned locally appropriate wheat seed to California organic farmers via a catalog and website. Now farmers can supply local whole grain bakers. Common Ground carries this wheat in bulk.

## GIFTS FROM THE GARDEN

Jody Main

Saturday, November 13

10:30 – 12:30

\$31 plus materials fee \$25

Join us in celebrating this harvest season by creating lovely gifts, wreaths, swaths and table arrangements with herbs and flowers from Jody's organic garden. Learn the best herbs and flowers to plant now for harvesting this spring and summer for bountiful gifts from 'your' garden. Learn to organically grow, harvest and decorate with these everlastings. You will make and take home lovely hand-crafted gifts and many ideas for growing useful plants in your garden. See Jody's bio in the *Organic Fall Gardening* class description.

## INTRODUCTION TO BIODYNAMIC AGRICULTURE

Del McComb

Saturday, November 20

10:30 – 12:00

\$31

Introduced by the Austrian philosopher, scientist, and mystic Rudolf Steiner in 1925, this early form of holistic gardening is practiced worldwide today by growing numbers. Participants will be given an introduction to the philosophical background of Biodynamics. You will be taken through the basic techniques. A description of the eight unique herbal preparations used will be given, along with ideas on how to work with cosmological rhythms in the garden. Additionally, participants will be taken through a step-by-step explanation of one of the preparations that will help demonstrate how Biodynamic Agriculture is based on an exacting science, not in the way formulas are precise, but in the way poems are. Learn how to integrate biodynamic practices into your current gardening methods. See Del's bio in the *Using Native Plants in the Garden* class description.

# FALL / WINTER 2010 CLASSES

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

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## EDIBLE GARDEN SERIES: FROM DESIGN TO HARVEST

Drew Harwell Five Saturdays

August 28, September 11, September 25,  
October 9 and October 23

10:00 – 3:00

\$325

One-hour lunch break; bring your own lunch.

Class size is limited – Register Early

Learn garden design and planning, composting, soil testing and preparation, seed propagation and transplanting, watering and how to nurture healthy edible crops. You can create a garden oasis of beautiful edibles in the front, side or back of the home. Master harvesting techniques and learn what compost crops to plant after harvest. Permaculture design and GROW BIOINTENSIVE methods harmonize together in this special series. Home owners and professional landscape designers will gain valuable knowledge to create gardens of nutritious and delicious organic food in your homes and communities. Make lasting friendships! Learn about proper tools, supplies, books and resources throughout the course. Bring your copy of *How to Grow More Vegetables* to the classes. Drew is an edible-garden consultant, the manager of Jesse Cool's *Seeds of Change Garden* and the former Common Ground Demonstration Garden Manager.

## BOUNTIFUL CONTAINERS FOR YOUR FALL AND WINTER FOOD GARDEN

Rose Marie Nichols McGee

Saturday, August 28

10:30 – 12:30

\$31

Many of our most beautiful and nutritious vegetables are good producers in the cooler months. Start now to grow the container garden that will carry you through winter. Special attention will be paid to organic methods, potting soil, container selection, light requirements and best varieties. Herbs and edible flowers will be included in our discussion. Almost any food plant that grows in the ground will grow in a container; it's only a matter of selection. Rose Marie is co-author of *McGee & Stuckey's Bountiful Container*. She is president of Nichols Garden Nursery, a family-owned seed company in western Oregon.



## USING NATIVE PLANTS IN THE GARDEN: A DEEPER PERSPECTIVE

Del McComb

Saturday, September 11

10:30 – 12:30

\$31

Explore using California native plants in the garden not only for their beauty and appropriateness in our climate but also to help develop and recapture a respect of nature and our place in it. Topics covered will include an overview of Native American views and uses of plants and how they shaped the landscape of California. Their uses of plants created habitats for beneficial wildlife, and they used native plants as sources of food, dyes, medicines and fiber. A list of natives that work well in the Bay Area will also be covered along with cultural information on how to use them. *Del has a degree in Ornamental Horticulture and currently designs and manages large private estate gardens locally. In addition, he is a certified Permaculture designer and a Biodynamic gardener.*

## \*INTRODUCTION TO GROW BIOINTENSIVE

Ed Fernandez

Saturday, September 18

10:30 – 12:30

\$31

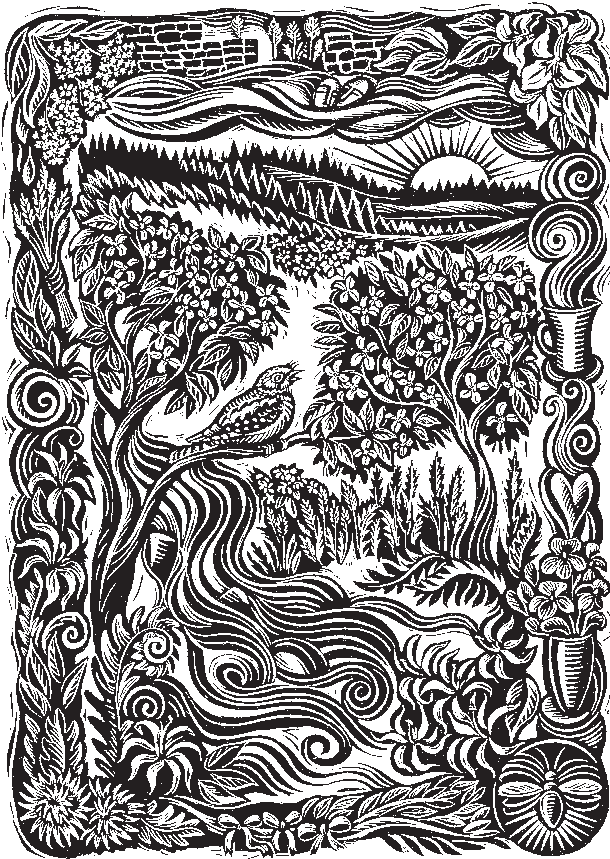
Food security is an ancient, but increasingly modern dilemma that offers us wonderful opportunities to make a difference. How can you grow all of your own food in the smallest possible space while simultaneously building up soil fertility? GROW BIOINTENSIVE is a whole-system approach to sustainable gardening and farming. Learn the principles of deep soil preparation, composting and soil-building, intensive planting, companion planting, carbon farming (the use of compost crops), calorie farming and the use of open-pollinated seeds. *Ed is in his second year of GROW BIOINTENSIVE work/study. Raised in a city, he had little exposure to farming, but he visited many farms and eventually came to a path which he concluded was truly sustainable.*

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\* A GROW BIOINTENSIVE class

## Common Ground Organic Garden Supply and Education Center

... offers:



- 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 – the highest quality
- Natural disease- and pest-control products
- Books, magazines, cards and gift items
- Volunteer opportunities

Common Ground is a community-supported 501(c)(3) non-profit project of Ecology Action. Please make your **tax-deductible donation** when you visit our center or with secure on-line donating at:

**[www.commongroundinpaloalto.org](http://www.commongroundinpaloalto.org)**

Many thanks for the illustrations by Jennifer Hewitson above and on pages 2, 3 and 5. Also thanks to Dick and Jan Raymond's *Gardens For All* for the illustration on page 4.

Design and layout by Glenda Jones.  
Photograph on page 1 by Patricia Becker.

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**Common Ground Garden Supply and Education Center**  
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