

NEWSLETTER



To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow!



STATS

- 88 Edible Garden installed to date
- 7540+ Students impacted – plus the trickle to their families
- 883 non -profit housing dwellings
- 38 Fruit trees planted
- 126 Berry bushes planted
- 2 green houses built

HOW DO I PLAN FOR SEED SAVING.... A TRICK I LOVE TO USE.

Saving seeds from the food grown in the garden should not be an afterthought. Historically farmers and people with a kitchen garden saved seeds from all crops to ensure a secure future, growing enough food for their family.

- Saving seeds from the best of your crop is key. These will produce the best seeds.
- Ripen fruit and vegetables on the plant so that the seeds produced are fully matured
- Plant continues to feed the seed with everything it needs to successfully reproduce a healthy plant next season.
- This is a trick we use. (especially if there are multiple people harvesting from the garden.) Tie a bright string or ribbon around the fruit or vegetable that you want to save for seeds. This will remind you and others

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There are no garden mistakes, only experiments



WHAT IS A FRUIT TREE GUILD?

Guilds are polycultures of diverse plants, insects, and animals that support each other in a mini ecosystem. It creates best health because the variety of plants provides best health above and below the ground. Guilds consist of a taller central tree, like an apple tree, followed by shorter shrubs, plants and ground cover. Each one bringing something vital to the guild:

- Nitrogen fixing for free fertilizer for heavy feeders
- A pest deterrent like marigolds and nasturtiums
- Beneficial insect attractors, pollinator plants
- A tap root (aerates the soil, and provides soil stability)
- Ground cover (living mulch, moisture retention)

Guilds are gardens that follow a permaculture system with the goal of creating an interconnected ecosystem that reduces the need for labour and materials, while increasing your harvest.

RECIPE: CARROT GINGER WITH COCONUT SOUP

Ingredients: (makes 4 litres)

2 tbsp of your choice of oil
 3 medium onions (diced)
 2 lb carrots (peeled and chopped)
 3 tbsp grated ginger
 2.5 litre water
 1 can of coconut milk
 Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

In a soup pot that will hold the 4 litres of soup put oil and diced onions. Sautee until soft but not browned. Add Carrots and ginger and sautee for 5 minutes. Add water, salt and pepper. Cook until the carrots are tender. Turn stove off and add the coconut milk. Blend until the soup is very smooth and creamy. ENJOY!

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TESTIMONIALS

“We were able to harvest a huge zip lock bag full of green leaf veg per student to take home for thanksgiving! Thanks so much for the success!” (Pierre Elliot TrudeauPS)

“Thank you ever so much for coming by and helping with the garden with your colleague. Our cucumbers are already immensely grateful!” Christian Faith Outreach Patron

“My eco team has a couple grade 8 leaders who have been fantastic so far (they also maintained the garden all summer). Alexander Graham Bell PS”

“The gardens out front of Gordon B Attersley are fantastic”

“Our garden has been amazing and lots of our families have accessed fresh veggies throughout the summer.” David Bouchard PS

“Our garden is producing veggies like crazy. We had our custodians and some teachers stopping by all summer to harvest the veggies. We have to do a little tidying up before the spring, but it has been a huge success. Thank you and your team for bringing this to our school. Regards, Paul Madigin Inclusive Student Services Department Head Pickering High School”



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DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WGF VOLUNTEER



I get up early in the morning, put on my 'We Grow Food' T-shirt and tatty jeans shorts. This is my day to volunteer in the garden; an exciting day, especially in the spring once we've shrugged off the cold of winter. It feels good to dig our hands into the soil again and have it run through our fingers, as we prepare the beds. The seeds we plant, particularly the lettuce seeds, are so small that I'm sure I have scattered too many in the little trench I have made with my finger. In a week or so, we look for the tiny flecks of green and are pleased when we find the new growth. Soon they are shooting up. We watch as the plants come into leaf and begin to mature. And, before we know it, they have flowered and the vegetables start to form and develop. We observe the plants growing, knowing that we will start to harvest them in the days the come.

As I stand in line at the grocery store I think about the vegetables we are growing. I try to avoid those that are not grown in Canada, but it is very difficult. It makes so much sense that we are teaching how to and growing food in so many locations.

Harvesting the fresh vegetables is both satisfying and rewarding. Apart from feeling good about the hard work we have done and the earth's bounty we are collecting, the food is delicious. Its taste is not the taste that manufacturers think our food should be like, but has the aroma, flavour and essence of what the vegetable actually is. And it contains more nutrients!

As well as indulging ourselves and the community with the produce, 'We Grow Food' gives to food banks, institutions and people in need. Many of the garden boxes are set up in local neighbourhoods and particularly schools. For an older person like myself to go into the local schools to teach the pupils about growing food is an interesting experience. I am so used to young people pushing passed me on the sidewalk as I tut-tut to myself in protest, that to see well-behaved, enthusiastic children, excited about planting a garden and growing vegetables, is gratifying.

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DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WGF VOLUNTEER

In the classroom, they are equally as eager as we teach them about wicking pots and how to make them. With their newly acquired horticultural words, it is amusing to see the pupils vying with each other to come up with the best sentences, naturally using the new-found vocabulary. At the end of a session, they carry their pots cautiously back to their classroom, to be carefully tended, watch the sprouts grow and later savoured with pleasure.

During the summer students and families are busy with a variety of different activities. We, as mentors, check on the gardens, helping support them and harvesting the vegetables. And, even though school is out and there is an absence of students in the yard, there are a host of other neighbourhood people to talk to, help care for the plants and taking some of the fruits of our work. I know that, at the end of a long day, some school children come by and help themselves to the cherry tomatoes. A favourite.

When my daughter and grandson come for a visit from Japan, in the summer, I take them to the gardens. They help pull the weeds and harvest the vegetables. But my grandson's best part is when he is given a freezie ice pop as we have a cold drink and cookies with other volunteers. My daughter claims that the reason I volunteer is because of the joy of watching things grow and the social aspect with others that I get in return.



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SCHOOL BUILDS

AJAX

- Ajax HS
- Alexander Graham Bell PS
- Bolton C Falby PS
- Bellwood PS
- Cadarackque PS
- Carruthers Creek
- Da Vinci PS
- Duffins Bay PS
- Eagle Ridge PS
- Lord Elgin PS
- Nottingham PS
- Romeo Dallaire PS
- Rolland Michener PS
- Southwood Park PS
- St. Patrick Catholic School
- Terry Fox PS
- J Clarke Richardson
- Vimy Ridge PS

BEAVERTON

- Beaver Ridge P.S

CANNINGTON

- McCatskills Mills P.S.

COURTICE

- Lydia Trulls P.S

OSHAWA

- CF Cannon PS
- Clara Hughes PS
- College Hill PS
- David Bouchard PS
- DR SJ Phillips
- Elsie MacGill PS
- Forest View PS
- Glen St PS
- Gordon B Attersley
- Hillsdale PS
- Kedron PS
- Maamawi Iyaawag PS
- Mary street
- Northern Dancer PS
- Norman G Powers
- Pierre Elliott Trudeau PS
- Sherwood PS
- Seneca Trails PS
- Stephen Saywell
- Sunset Heights PS
- Sir Albert Love
- villiage union
- Vincent Massey PS
- Walter Harris PS
- Waverly PS
- Woodcrest PS

PICKERING

- Altona Forest PS
- Dunbarton HS
- Bayview Heights PS
- elizabeth b. phin
- Father Fenelon CS

PICKERING

- Fairport Beach PS
- Frenchmans Bay PS
- Gandatsetiagon
- Glengrove PS
- St Isaac Jcgues
- St Mary CSS
- Vaughan Willard PS
- St Marys HS
- Valley Farm PS
- St Elizabeth CPS

PORT PERRY

- Port Perry H.S

UXBRIDGE

- Uxbridge SS
- Uxbridge PS

WHITBY

- Blair Ridge PS
- Colonel JE Fairwell
- Chris Hadfeild PS
- Dr Robert Thornton
- EA Fairman PS
- Father Leo J Austin CS
- Julie Payette
- John Dryden PS
- Meadowcrest PS
- Robert Munsch
- Sir Samuel Steele
- Sir William Stepens
- West Lynde PS
- Willow Walk PS
- Henry St. HS

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NON PROFIT NEIGHBOURHOODS

AJAX

- Harwood Manor
- Christian Faith Outreach Center

BEAVERTON

- Gillespie Garden

BOWMANVILLE

- Mearns Meadows
- 244 Nelson

CANNINGTON

- Allan's Place

OSHAWA

- Beatrice Terrace
- Beatrice Woods
- Lakeview
- Olive Ave
- Victim Services
- Wilson Village

PICKERING

- Highbush Village
- Orchard Park

WHITBY

- 850 Green Street
- Christian Faith
- Dryden Heights
- Garrard Heights
- Marigold Court
- Perry Terrace