

What is Feeding The Self?

Feeding The Self is an innovative food security, education, and community development project. We started off in university providing student support services and lecturing, before we realised that the problems in education were much deeper down; students were not interested in what they were learning, did not know how to learn, and had serious problems that needed to be addressed before they could concentrate, like not having enough to eat.

In response, we developed an integrated course that requires no resources aside from labour, land and seeds, adaptable to any environment it might find itself in. We started from the idea that people need to see quick results, and to be interested and social in their learning, and that without these, no project could sustainably succeed. We provide them with what they need to expand the garden first around the school, then into their homes, then into the community. After all, who needs advisors and experts when you've got an excited (and well trained) child?



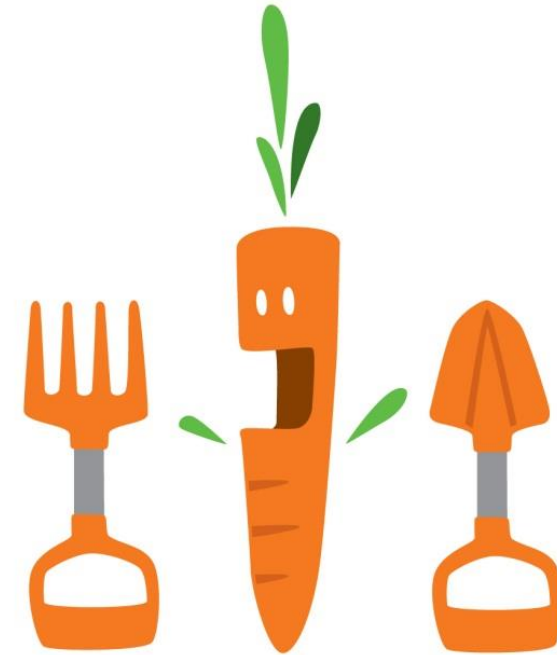
What we can do for you

- Install a productive food, herb, or flower garden in your home, school, or company. This will be a true ecosystem, based in permaculture, attracting local birds and wildlife as well as being a productive garden. We design these gardens individually to meet your needs and help maintain them.
- Consult and help on making your business, home, community, or school environmentally and economically sustainable.
- Design and run workshops or projects tailored to meet the needs of your home, school, community, or business.
- Can help improve the level of education and skills within your workforce through innovative and hands-on educational methods, improving flexibility and productivity.
- Provide non-invasive, low maintenance, and inexpensive greening for homes, businesses, communities, and schools.

Email us, visit www.feedingtheself.org, or check our Facebook & LinkedIn pages for more simple, practical and above all free gardening tips and activities!

Gardening The Easy Way

**Six simple steps to getting the most out of your garden
(with the minimum effort and maintenance, just in case you get lazy...)**



feedingtheself

Seamlessly integrating food security, education and community development

Feeding The Self is a trademark of Apotheosis, PBO# 930038248

1. Is my soil good for planting in?

If the soil is...	then....
... sandy and pale in colour	... there's too much sand; add rich dark soil/compost.
... heavy and very hard	... there's too much clay; add rich dark soil/compost.
... dark and crumbles easily	... it's perfect! All you need to do now is dig.

2. Making the perfect bed; dig deep or build high



Digging down: Remove the top 10cm of soil and put it to one side (this is where all the good microbes live, and breaking it up means your plants will grow much slower) Dig down 30cm. With a pitchfork or pick loosen the soil underneath and add mulch. Return the top soil to garden bed. The resulting bed should be slightly raised.

Building up: Make an area with tyres, bricks, or stones. Put a layer of gravel at the bottom for drainage, then add 30-40cm of top soil. Put a layer of rich soil or compost at the top, and mulch on top of that.

Remember: most of all, roots need lots of loose, rich soil to grow into.

3. Plant by building communities

Do not plant a bed of with only one type of plant in it!

Just like people, plants thrive in diverse communities.

If you mix plants just right, they'll help each other grow.

Plant type	Examples/ type	Companion	Antagonists
Cucurbits	squash, gourds, cucumber, melons	Fences	Field planting
Alliums	garlic, onion, chives, leek, shallots	nightshades	legumes
Brassica	cabbage, spinach, cauliflower, broccoli	legumes or alliums	nightshades
Legumes	Beans, peas, lentils, and peanuts	brassic, nightshades	alliums
Nightshades	Potatoes, tomatoes, chillies, and peppers	beans	brassica

This table tells you what plants can grow well together. Herbs and flowers will keep insects away from your veggies, and bring wildlife into your garden; plant them all around to get the most out of your veg



4. Protecting with mulch



Mulch is a layer of plant material like wood chips and dry leaves (**NOT** grass); you can even use paper or cardboard.

Add mulch underneath the garden bed and onto of it, around the plants.

Thick mulching stops unwanted weed growth, prevent water evaporation, protect the soil from exposure to the elements, provides nutrients to your seedlings, and slowly turns into more soil.

5. Enriching with home-made compost

It's easy to maintaining soil quality by making a **compost pit**.

- Select a 1m² section of ground that gets both sunlight and shade during the day.
- Dig out the marked area to a depth of 30 cm or start your pile on a flat surface.
 - *A compost pile/pit needs heat to decompose plant material.*
- Mix green and brown plant matter (no meat) into the compost pit with soil.
 - *Compost smells if there is too much nitrogen (green); to fix this add dried crushed 'brown' leaves/grass and soil into the compost and turn it.*
- With a pitchfork every two weeks turn the compost. Heap it into the center of the pit, add soil and poke holes in the stack for air.
- If too dry add a little water. Cover with black plastic during heavy rain if it's not a pit.
- When thoroughly decomposed and crumbly use the compost. Mix into soil for nutrient rich organic gardening or add as top soil.

Did you know? Peeing in your compost will activate it and make much better fertilizer!

6. Last, but never least: Watering

The good news: If you did the dig and added mulch then the garden will not need lots of water. This is because a deep bed acts as a water tank, and mulch stops water evaporating from the bare soil.

- Only water twice a week, less if there is good rainfall.
- Water early in the morning or at dusk – it reduces evaporation.



In nature the only watering is rainfall!