

Earthkeeper's guide to:



Sustainable Practices for Planting and Forestry



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LJUDSKA
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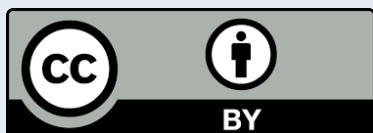


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Erasmus+

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Introduction:

Welcome to the Earthkeepers' Guide: Sustainable Practices for Planting and Forestry. This guide is designed to empower individuals, communities, and organizations with the knowledge and tools needed to practice sustainable planting, reforestation, and harvesting. By adopting these practices, we can all contribute to the health and resilience of our ecosystems.

You will learn how to properly set up and fill your garden bed and how and what to plant.

You will get to know different plants and their uses and different tricks and tips on how to use up foraged plants.

This handbook is a product of the Go Green project, which focuses on sustainability and responsible consumption. This collaborative project in adult education, funded by Erasmus+, lasts from 1.9.2022 to 1.9.2024.

The project aimed to promote sustainable living practices and equip participants with the knowledge and tools necessary to make environmentally conscious decisions. The main topics included maximizing the use of waste food and local produce, reforestation and planting, and upcycling.

The project was spearheaded by Escuela de Idiomas Oficial de Loja in Spain who was the lead partner, with partners Ljudska univerza Ormož in Slovenia and Valo-Valmennusyhdistys in Finland.

By implementing small changes in our daily routines, we can collectively enhance the health of our planet.

HOW TO FILL YOUR GARDEN BED?

Filling a garden bed properly is essential for healthy plant growth. Here's a step-by-step guide to ensure your garden bed is well-prepared:

Clear the Area:

- Remove any weeds, rocks, and debris from the garden bed area.
- If the area has grass, you may need to dig it up or smother it with cardboard or newspaper.

Install a Weed Barrier (Optional):

- Lay down landscape fabric or cardboard to prevent weeds from growing up through the soil.

Add a Layer of Organic Material:

- Place a 3-4 inch layer of organic matter like straw, leaves, or grass clippings at the bottom. This layer will decompose over time and enrich the soil.

Fill with Topsoil:

- Add a layer of good-quality topsoil. For deeper-rooted plants, ensure the soil layer is thicker.

Incorporate Compost:

- Mix in a layer of compost with the topsoil. This will provide essential nutrients for your plants.



Filling a raised garden bed properly involves creating layers that promote good drainage, nutrient availability, and healthy plant growth.

Internal structure of a filled garden bed should look like this:





Preparing the area



Filling the raised garden bed

HOW AND WHAT TO PLANT INTO YOUR GARDEN BED?

The raised garden bed that we filled in and planted at Ljudska univerza Ormož is looking very abundant these days.



Here are some tips and tricks on how and what to plant to ensure success in your raised garden beds!

Planting in a raised garden bed offers numerous benefits, including improved soil conditions, better drainage, and easier access for maintenance. Raised garden beds are also more inclusive for users.

Here's a guide on how and what to plant in a raised garden bed:

Assess Sunlight:

Determine how many hours of direct sunlight your garden bed receives. Most vegetables and flowers need at least 6-8 hours of sunlight daily.

Plant Selection:

Choose plants based on the sunlight, your climate zone, and what you enjoy eating or viewing. Group plants with similar water and sunlight needs together.



PLANTING TECHNIQUES

Direct Sowing:

For vegetables like carrots, radishes, and peas, sow seeds directly into the soil at the depth recommended on the seed packet.

Cover seeds lightly with soil and water gently.

Transplanting Seedlings:

For plants like tomatoes, peppers, and herbs, dig a hole slightly larger than the root ball of the seedling.

Place the seedling in the hole, fill with soil, and press gently to firm the soil around the roots.

Water thoroughly after planting.

Succession Planting:

Plant fast-growing crops like lettuce and radishes in succession, meaning every few weeks, to ensure a continuous harvest.

Companion Planting:

Plant compatible plants together to maximize space and deter pests. For example, plant basil near tomatoes to enhance flavor and repel insects.

Companion planting cheat sheet



Tomato



Marigold



Basil



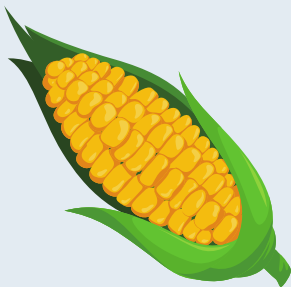
Onion



Pepper



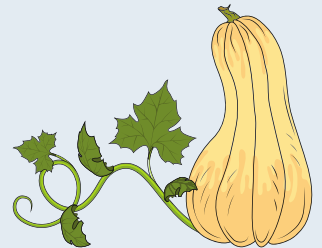
Garlic



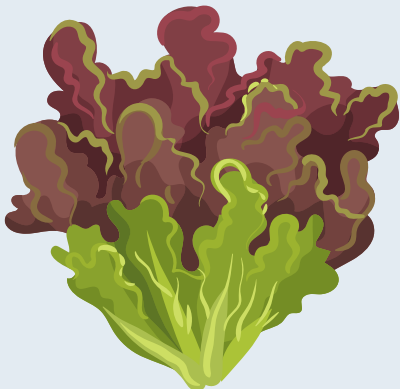
Corn



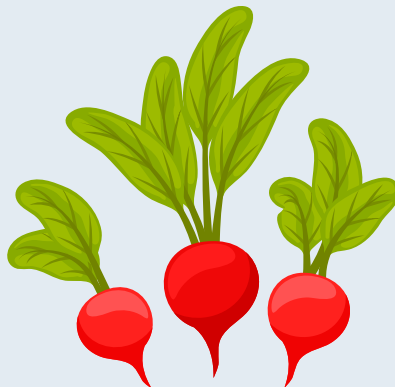
Beans



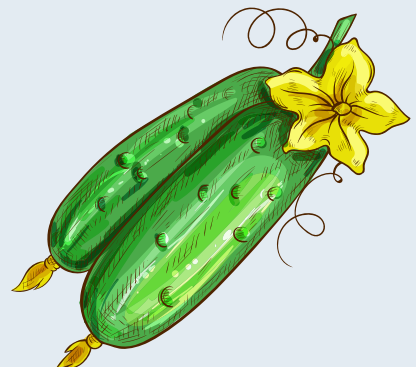
Squash



Lettuce



Radish



Cucumber

Our lead partner took a walk through the Sierra de Huétor Natural Park and compiled valuable information about the plants native to the area. This chapter includes photographs of these plants in their natural habitat and a herbarium with descriptions of their various uses.

CISTUS



Used in cosmetics, skin revitalizing effect

MARJORAM



Thyme family, used for gastric problems, just like chamomile

ROSEMARY



To season and marinate meat, anti-inflammatory. It can be macerated in oil or alcohol. Rosemary oil strengthens the hair.

THYME



To season and marinate poultry, olives, etc. Well-known as “the antibiotic of the poor”. Antiseptic, antibacterial: as tea or tisane, gargle in case of throat infections; in urinary tract infections (UTI), apply to wash the area.

DOG ROSE (Fruit: ROSE HIP)



Wild rose or dog rose (fam. ass-blocker). Its fruit is called rose hip; it must be peeled to avoid constipation. It is one of the fruits with the highest concentration of vitamin C.

CRATAEGUS/HAWTHORN



Upon medical supervision, its fruit (haw) helps improve cardiovascular diseases.

SALVIA



Synonym of fresh breath (it's the toothpaste of shepherds). It strengthens gums. It helps to fight against sweating during menopause.

LAVENDER



Over 20 species. It has anti-stress and calming properties.

RETAMA/BROOM



For decoration and also to make brooms.

DANDELION



Diuretic effect.

ESPARTO



To make different types of baskets (wicker baskets, hampers, to carry heavy loads), cords, strings, sandal soles, and cheese moulds.

In this concluding section, you'll discover recipes from our Finish partnes that will teach you hot wo make herbal teas, natural fertilizers, and some handy tips for utilizing leftovers and surplus plants.

Herbal tea

Make your own herbal tea from fresh or dried herbs. As ingredients, you can use the leaves of raspberries, currants, strawberries, fireweed, birch or rowan.

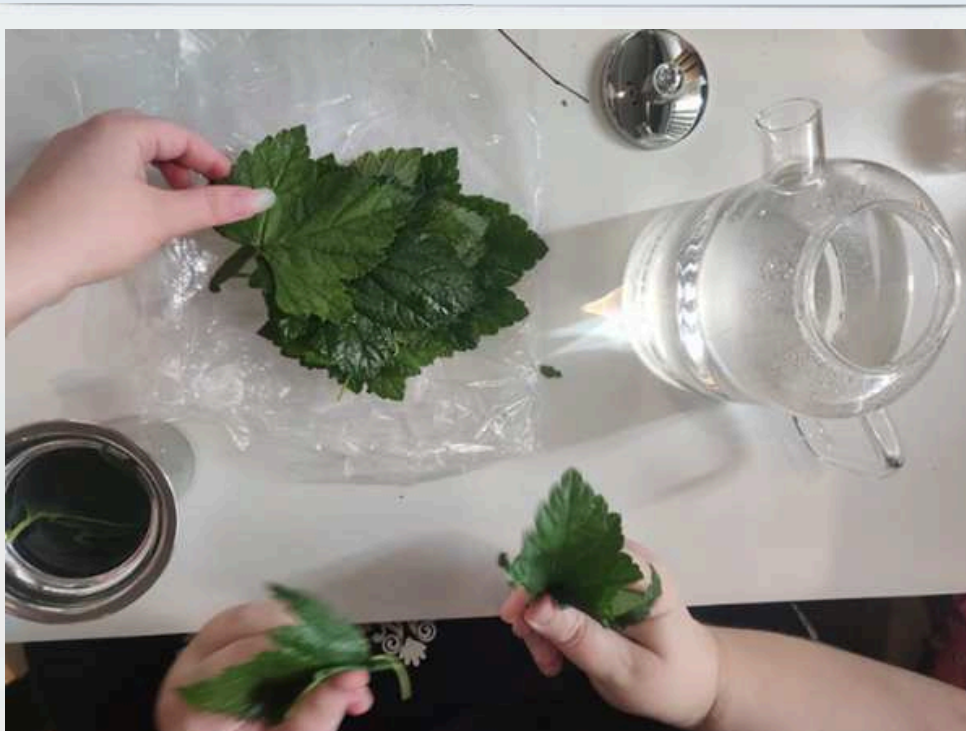
You may also try meadowsweet, yarrow, clovers or lemon balm. Sort the ingredients and combine as you wish.

Ingredients for tea what we made :

- A few leaves of blackcurrant
- Hot water (80-90 C)

Instructions:

1. Let fresh leaves simmer in hot water for 5-10 minutes.
2. Remove leaves and enjoy!



Dyeing with plants

Materials:

- Pot (enamel, steel, aluminum)
- Wooden spoon for mixing
- thermometer
- scale
- scissors and yarn
- dyeable material
- Alum for mordanting
- Sieve
- PH neutral detergent
- vinegar

Instructions:

1. Add the dye plants into a pot and add water until the plants are covered.
2. Let the pot boil mildly for an hour. If you're using harder parts of plants like stems or bark, soak them in water at least overnight before boiling, and boil them for a longer duration.



3. Use the sieve to get the plants out and add the fibers into the pot. Maintain about an 80 degree temperature and stir now and then. Be careful it doesn't boil!

4. You can leave the fibers to cool in the pot. Once cooled down, wash them with pH neutral detergent, and add a bit of vinegar into the water for the last rinsing.



sauna scent

Materials:

- Birch leaves
- satchels / filter paper pouches
- stapler

Instructions:

1. Fill the satchels with birch leaves and staple them closed.
2. Store the satchels in the freezer or use shortly

How to use:

Put a frozen satchel into the pail and pour boiling water in it.
Let soak for 30 minutes to an hour while the sauna is warming up.
Remove the satchel and enjoy the fragrant sauna!



Banana peel fertilizer for the garden

Use banana peel fertilizer to boost your garden growth. Banana peels are filled with essential nutrients that can feed the soil and encourage strong plant growth. Banana peels are full of e.g.: magnesium, potassium, calcium.

Materials:

Banana peels

Vinegar

Brown sugar

Jar with lid

Water

Instructions:

1. Save banana peels. Put peels in clean water.
2. Add brown sugar and pour a small amount of white vinegar
3. After two days of sealed fermentation, you can remove the peels
4. add peel water to water your garden



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