As gardeners, we find ourselves practitioners and provisioners. Practitioners of the art and science of gardening, a focused, managed endeavor. And as good stewards, we provision or provide for many things. In the garden, this often involves “setting the table” for other entities and processes (sometimes physical, but so often biological and chemical) to aid us in growing healthy plants.

With stewardship in mind, we would do well to design or amend our fields, orchards, and gardens to provision for beneficial insects—and not to get too alliterative, but, principally the 3 P’s: pollinators, predators, and parasitoids.

**Plant Diversity Encourages Beneficials**

In provisioning it’s often about providing plant diversity to help create a habitat that both shelters and nourishes beneficial insects. Habitat is enhanced by creating a tiered canopy—plants from ground level to tree top high—as well as by offering a range of annual, perennial, herbaceous, and woody plants (shrubs and trees). Flowers provide insects with protein (pollen) and carbohydrates (nectar)—the building blocks of any diet—and in return are pollinated, fertilized, and set seeds to propagate a new generation.

So, why attract and foster populations of the 3 P’s?

- Our fruit crops (tree and berry), cucurbits (melons, squashes, pumpkins, and cucumbers), among other food crops, rely on pollination to set a crop.
- Beneficial predatory and parasitic insects (along with insectivorous birds) can exert a huge control of detrimental insects such as aphids, thrips, mites, scale, mealybugs, caterpillars, etc.

Dr. Mariah Spivak, professor of apiculture and social insects at the University of Minnesota and a 2010 MacArthur Fellowship (aka “Genius Grant”) recipient, sums up this simple but sophisticated notion eloquently:

> “Improving habitat for native pollinators and beneficials is a step-by-step guide for changing our stewardship of the earth; it is a tangible way for people of all ages to make a difference. Active participation in this vital, grassroots revolution is easy: plant flowers. Sure, by creating floral and nesting habitat, bees, butterflies and countless other wildlife species will prosper. But through this same simple effort, you will be ensuring abundance of locally grown, nutritious fruits and vegetables. You will beautify our cities, roadways and countryside. You will be helping to spread the word about the urgent need to reduce pesticide use, while at the same time creating habitat for beneficial insects that prey upon crop pests. You will be increasing natural diversity and ecological resilience through pollinator gardens, bee pastures and flowering field borders that stabilize the soil, filter water runoff and pack carbon into roots of native prairie plants. For many of our earth’s current environmental ills, you will be part of the solution.”

And I say—viva la revolución! The quiet revolution.

**Plants That Provide for the 3 P’s**

Among the flowering perennial plants that we at the UCSC Farm and Garden are offering you at the upcoming Spring Plant Sale (May 5 and 6), so that you too can “join the revolution” and encourage the 3 P’s are –

- The yarrows (genus *Achillea*), with 4 varieties available this year at a special price of 3 for $20 in 1-gallon containers—
  - ‘Moonshine’— Silver-gray foliage topped by broad, flat, soft sulphur-yellow flowers in May and June; these simple, broad flower forms offer easy access to the 3 P’s. Flowers can be used either fresh or dried in bouquets.
  - ‘Powell’s White’—Blooms late May–July and is a preferred food source for many parasitic wasps that help control pest species in the garden.
  - ‘Terra Cotta’— Terra cotta pot-colored, this yarrow adds a lovely touch to almost any bouquet’s color scheme.
  - ‘Coronation Gold’—In addition to its aesthetic and entomological qualities, the dried stalks are used in throwing the I-Ching.

- *Origanum adriatica*—While the species name may be a bit sketchy, I can virtually see it growing on the calcium-rich chalky cliffs of Greece or Italy. In the garden it is a preferred species of bees, both native and the managed honey-
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bees. While billed as an ornamental (tons of blooms with a blend of sepia tones and soft pinks), good fresh and dried, it also simmers up into a nice marinara sauce.

_Aster novi-belgii_, Michaelmas Daisy—The reference being to the old Euro-Christian feast of the archangel Michael—we call this the fall/autumnal equinox. While here on the “Left Coast” it starts blooming in late August, it carries on well into October. This variety is quite tall (4’–5’) and covered in a profusion of blue daisies preferred by all 3 P’s. In honor of it being remnant from the Alan Chadwick era we reverentially refer to it as ‘Big Blue’ / ‘Big Al’s’.

_In honor of it being remnant from the Alan Chadwick era covered in a profusion of blue daisies preferred by all 3 P’s._

_Stachys lanata_, Woolly Lamb’s Ear—Downy gray foliage topped by similar-textured stems with soft mauve flowers, a big bee plant that will occasionally wander from its appointed place.

Two of the many Salvias (sages) available this year include these favorites of bees and hummingbirds—

_Salvia guaranitica_ ‘Argentine Skies’ (soft blue) and ‘Black ‘n Blue’ (dark black calyx with midnight blue flowers)—This is a deciduous sage from the wetlands of Bolivia and Paraguay, so be forewarned, it doesn’t “give up the ghost” and die in fall, it is merely dormant—a long-lived perennial that actually likes frequent garden water.

_Salvia mexicana_ ‘Limelight’ (green calyx) and ‘Black Calyx’—This is a striking foliage shrub the year round. From mid summer to late fall it is covered in blooms that attract bees, hummingbirds, predatory and parasitoid insects, and those two-footed “marauders”: bouquet makers in search of stunning spike-like flowers.

_Fragaria vesca_, Alpine Strawberry—or as the French call it Frais du Bois, strawberry of the woods. This is a rare variety, ‘Padua’. This is not your grandmother’s Alpine strawberry. Turns out it is a friend’s (Marco and Elizabeth Romanini) grandmother’s Alpine strawberry. She, reportedly, dried the seeds between paper napkins and “smuggled them in” from Italy. In addition to being almost everbearing and sweet/tangy, they are loved by bees.

_Fuchsia thymifolia_, Thyme-leaved Fuchsia—Hard as it is to believe, if there is a fuchsia that can be small, almost petite flowered, then this is it. A graceful, rounded 3’–4’ x 3’–4’ shrub, usually in bloom and usually covered with bumblebees—useful for pollinating tree and bush fruits when it is cold and windy and the European honeybee is “hunkered down.”

_Linarea purpurea_, Baby Snapdragon—A self-seeding perennial that is both elegant and “cute as the dickens.” It is a mauve-colored, scoped-down, delicate snapdragon flower visited by all the 3 P’s and makes a good cut flower.

_Nicotiana sylvestris_, Woodland Tobacco—Sylvestris means sylvan or tree-like (5’–6’ tall). Think flowering tobacco on steroids, with a wafting, alluring, almost sweetly narcotic scent that lasts as a cut flower, and activates as evening descends, as the flower is moth pollinated. It also traps aphids, which then pierce into the sticky leaf and stems and suck out plant sap laden with nicotine. As a result their nervous systems get zapped and they die.

_Nepeta x faassenii_ ‘Walker’s Low’, Ornamental Catmint—A striking, gray-foliaged bee and beneficial (non-stinging) wasp favorite topped with scads of soft blue flowers. An indestructible plant, even though your cats will get goofy from rolling in it.

_Perovskia atripicifolia_, Russian Sage—You can look at this 3 P’s favorite as either having a Latin name that is a serious mouthful, or you can practice having it roll off your tongue in staccato fashion and impress folks at those cocktail parties. But however you choose to see it, it casts a striking silhouette (to 4' high) on the garden skyline. It is covered in soft blue flowers on very cut-able, downy white stems.

Our “provisioning” annual flower six-packs feature: Scabiosa, Bachelor’s Buttons, Asters, Zinnias, Tithonia (a.k.a. Mexican sunflower, a monarch butterfly magnet in the fall), Rudbeckia, Stock (the single forms). Also available: the greatest hits of long-time friend and supporter Renee Shepherd’s (of Renee’s Garden Seeds) sunflowers. They will create a virtual textural, terrestrial Monet-like effect in the background, towering and tilting to the sun as they do.

Adding Vegetables to the Mix

Now that you’ve provisioned for pollination, aesthetics, and insect control concerns, why not venture out beyond the usual suspect varieties of sweet peppers and grow a class of peppers that are long (8”–14”) and impressively crescent shaped, waxy, shiny red and yellow, crunchy and sweet, and way easier to grow (as per disease issues) than the best of the bell peppers.


You can also put together a great mixed salad with the lettuce varieties featured at this year’s sale, including the butterhead/mini Romaine types—‘Little Gem’, ‘Focea’, ‘Australe’—and the mini head, loose leaf types—‘Panisse’, my new “fave,” with soft, sweet, melt-in-your-mouth leaves that still hold up in the harvest process, and the red equivalents, ‘Parada’ and ‘Jamaï’. Grate some of Renee’s Garden Seeds’ cute little succulent ‘Pixie’ cabbage and ‘Little Jade’ mini Napa cabbage into it and you’re livin’ right.
Spring/early Summer Calendar of Events

Farm & Garden Spring Plant Sale
Saturday, May 5, 10 am – 3 pm, and
Sunday, May 6, 10 am – 2 pm
Barn Theatre Parking Lot, UC Santa Cruz
Note: Friends of the UCSC Farm & Garden have pre-entry priority, Saturday, May 5, 9 am – 10 am
Enhance your home and garden with organically grown flower, herb, and vegetable starts as well as perennial landscape plants and some perennial vegetables. Friends’ members receive 10% off all plant and merchandise purchases. Use your Plant Sale receipt for a 10% discount at Companion Bakeshop during the week following the sale. See cover story and pages 4–5 for additional details.

Compost Making Workshop
Saturday, June 9, 10 am – 1 pm  UCSC Farm
Learn how to make and manage compost on the home garden and market garden scale with Zoe Hitchner and Sky DeMuro of Everett Family Farm. You will learn how to incorporate compost into your garden system, and how to turn your kitchen scraps and garden “waste” into “black gold.” Dress for the outdoors and bring a snack. $20 for Friends of the Farm & Garden members, $30 for general public, $5 for UCSC students, payable the day of the workshop.

A Garden of Poetry and Music
Saturday, June 23, 12 noon – 2 pm
Alan Chadwick Garden, UCSC
Join us for one of our favorite events as we gather in the Chadwick Garden for poetry and music from some of the region’s most talented artists. Enjoy the Garden at its early summer best at this free event. Snacks provided; free parking at Stevenson College, across the street from the Chadwick Garden.

Grow & Arrange Your Own Bouquets
Saturday, June 30, 10 am – 1 pm  UCSC Farm
Learn how to grow and arrange cut flowers at this hands-on workshop taught by local organic grower Zoe Hitchner, who specializes in growing cut flowers at Everett Family Farm. No pre-registration necessary. Dress for the outdoors and bring a snack. $20 for Friends of the Farm & Garden members, $30 for general public, $5 for UCSC students, payable the day of the workshop.

Market Cart Opens in early June!
Sales of fresh produce and flowers grown at the UCSC Farm & Garden take place at the Market Cart, located at the corner of Bay and High streets (base of campus) beginning in early June. The Market Cart is open Tuesdays and Fridays from 12 noon to 6 pm through October. Call 831.459-3240, email casfs@ucsc.edu, or see casfs.ucsc.edu in late May for the exact opening date of the Market Cart this spring.

Culinary Herb Workshop
Saturday, May 12, 10 am – 1 pm
Louise Cain Gatehouse, UCSC Farm
Join Emily Jane Freed, Regional Production Manager of Jacobs Farm/ Del Cabo, as we enter into the world of perennial and annual herbs, and culinary flowers. Come learn which herbs grow best in the Central Coast climate. You’ll be surprised to learn that most of the flowers growing in your backyard are edible! Herb and flower samples provided, along with herb starts to take home and plant in your own garden. No pre-registration necessary. $20 for Friends of the Farm & Garden members, $30 for general public, $5 for UCSC students, payable the day of the workshop.

Springtime “Follow the Fruit Trees” Class
Saturday, May 12, 10 am – 4 pm Alan Chadwick Garden
A few spaces are still available in this day-long workshop focused on springtime fruit tree care; see page 4 for details.

Garden Cruz Organic Gardening Course
Friday–Sunday, May 18–20  Alan Chadwick Garden
This spring, immerse yourself in the nuts and bolts of what you need to know to create and maintain a healthy, productive organic garden in a new 3-day “Garden Cruz” community course at UC Santa Cruz’s Alan Chadwick Garden. See page 4 for details.

Grow & Arrange Your Own Bouquets
Saturday, June 30, 10 am – 1 pm  UCSC Farm
Learn how to grow and arrange cut flowers at this hands-on workshop taught by local organic grower Zoe Hitchner, who specializes in growing cut flowers at Everett Family Farm. No pre-registration necessary. Dress for the outdoors and bring a snack. $20 for Friends of the Farm & Garden members, $30 for general public, $5 for UCSC students, payable the day of the workshop.

If you’d like more information about these events, need directions, or have questions about access, please call 831.459-3240, email casfs@ucsc.edu, or see our web site, casfs.ucsc.edu.
Please note that we cannot accept credit card payments for classes or at the plant sale (cash or check only). UCSC student participation in workshops is supported by UCSC Measure 43 funding.
Sponsored by the UCSC Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS), and the Friends of the UCSC Farm & Garden.
Get Your Share in the 2012 CSA Program!

The UCSC CSA program (Community Supported Agriculture) runs for 21 weeks, from the beginning of June through the end of October (weather permitting). Members pick up at the UCSC Farm or at the Barn Theatre at the base of campus, every week on Tuesday or Friday. The pick-up site at the base of campus is served by all transit buses coming to the UC campus. Boxes include same-day harvest of a wide range of vegetables, and fruits, including strawberries & blueberries, plums, apples and pears. Members receive a complimentary membership to the Friends of the Farm and Garden. A pick-your-own herb and flower garden is offered to members at the farm pick-up site.

Shares for the 2012 season cost $560, and include 8-12 items per week. Payment can be made in full, or divided up into two or four installments. Limited-income shares at $280 are also still available. In 2012 we will once again accept SNAP/EBT Benefits.

If you’d like to receive our CSA Brochure and Pledge Form or have any questions regarding the CSA program, please contact Liz Milazzo at 831.459-4661 or email farmcsa@ucsc.edu. More information and the CSA Brochure and Pledge Form are also available at http://casfs.ucsc.edu/community-outreach/produce-sales/community-supported-agriculture.

3-Day “Garden Cruz” Course This May

Immerse yourself in the nuts and bolts of what you need to know to create and maintain a healthy, productive organic garden in a new 3-day “Garden Cruz” community course at UC Santa Cruz.

This intensive class will provide a solid foundation to further your lifelong study, enjoyment, and practice of organic gardening. Class instructors include Orin Martin of the renowned UCSC Farm & Garden Apprenticeship Program, and local organic farmers Zoe Hitchner and Sky DeMuro of Everett Family Farm.

The 3-day course will be offered Friday through Sunday, May 18–20. Classes will take place from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. A second session will be offered July 20–22.

The course will cover the basic suite of skills involved in developing a successful organic garden, including soil analysis and bed preparation, composting, planting, irrigation, crop care, and harvest. Each day will include both lectures and hands-on practice.

Classes and hands-on activities will take place at the Alan Chadwick Garden on the UC Santa Cruz campus. The cost of the course is $300, with a $25 discount for Friends of the Farm & Garden members. Pre-registration by May 4 (for the May session) or July 6 (for the July session) is requested and class size is limited.

To enroll, send a check made payable to “UC Regents” to: Amy Bolton, CASFS/UCSC Farm, 1156 High Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95064, attn: Garden Cruz. Please include your contact info (email/phone). For additional details, contact Amy Bolton at 831.459-3240, or casfs@ucsc.edu, or see casfs.ucsc.edu.

Follow the Fruit Trees” with Orin Martin

There are a few spaces available in upcoming “Follow the Fruit Trees” workshops, focusing on organic fruit tree care. The next class takes place Saturday, May 12, from 10 am–4 pm at the Alan Chadwick Garden.

At the May class, garden manager Orin Martin will address spring fruit tree care, including fruit thinning, pest and disease control, summer cover cropping, monitoring growth, fertility, and tree training.

Cost of the workshop is $100, or $90 for Friends of the Farm & Garden members. Pre-registration is required. To enroll, please send a check made payable to “UC Regents” to: Amy Bolton, CASFS/UCSC Farm, 1156 High St, Santa Cruz, CA 95064. Please include your contact information (email/phone).

For additional information, please contact Amy Bolton at 831.459-3240 or casfs@ucsc.edu. Additional seasonal fruit tree care workshops will be offered on July 14, August 18, and September 16; please contact Amy Bolton for details.
Ornamental Grasses Add Color, Texture to the Landscape

This year’s Spring Plant Sale on May 5–6 features some wonderful ornamental grasses, ideal for landscaping. You can find them for the special price of 3 for $20 in 1-gallon containers. The selection includes –

**Eleocharis machrostachya: Pale Spikerush**

The long, green stems of the Pale Spikerush congregate in groups along the banks of a cool, secluded pond. Waterfowl flock to the attractive and delicate seed heads, thriving on the nutrients this grass generously provides. With room to spread out, the Pale Spikerush can flourish and contribute to wetland ecosystems all throughout California.

If you live near a pond or wetland, you may have seen this beautiful native grass species. This semi-evergreen grass brings color to a wet and grey winter and is the ideal grass to place by your backyard pond, or at that pesky part of your garden or yard that can never seem to drain water. This plant thrives in moist soils and is especially adapted to clay soil. If given the space, Pale Spikerush will distribute its rhizomes and can fill an area of up to 15 feet. This grass typically grows to 1’–3’ in height and likes both sun and shade. It has a high tolerance of saturation and flooding, but does not do well in droughts or dry climates.

**Calamagrostis foliosa: Coastal Reed Grass**

On a warm, sunny day, you take a stroll along West Cliff Drive, and your legs brush against the soft, light ends of the Coastal Reed Grass. This rare and beautiful grass provides the perfect accent to your coastal front yard, rock garden, meadow, or woodland area. Native to the Northern Coast of California, it highlights the coastline with its stunning, arching mounds of blue-grey blades. In the springtime, Coastal Reed Grass produces silvery purple flower spikes on its ends, and by the end of summer these flowers mature to a rustic, golden color, reflecting the summer sun nicely. This tough and undemanding grass is deer resistant and thrives well under oak trees.

Coastal Reed Grass grows to about a foot in height and up to 1 1/2’–2’ in width. If the grass is near the ocean, it will thrive in the full sun, and is equipped to tolerate the ocean breeze and the cool salt spray. Inland in a warmer climate, it will require partial shade and more water.

**Stipa gigantea: Giant Feather Grass**

For a powerful, uncultivated, natural look, add the Giant Feather Grass to your rock or grass garden, and let the tall foliage provide shade for your other plants. This grass is also great on the edge of gardens or yards, providing erosion control. Giant Feather Grass form in clumps at the base and then extend long stems that can reach up to 8’ tall. Feathery, light-purple flowers open at the ends as panicles, and mature to shades of wheat. The delicate purple panicles look great in dried flower arrangements, creating an everlasting beauty for your home or office.

Native to temperate and warm regions of the world, this grass is suitable in well-drained soil and full sun. The spread can range from 3’–4’, and it is especially low maintenance. It has high tolerance for drought, frost, and deer. It grows at a moderate pace, and will last through many winter in order to thrive and bloom again.

**Festuca californica: California Fescue**

Like something out of a Dr. Seuss book, this perennial bunchgrass adds character and personality to any landscape, from dry, open ground to moist stream banks. Fanning its thin and linear blue-green leaves out in all directions, it can grow up to 2 feet tall and can be 3 feet wide. It blooms yellow from March to July, with its most abundant bloom in the early spring. When in bloom, the flower culms can stand up to 3’–4’ high. The California Fescue has a dense, fibrous root system, serving as erosion preventer for the outskirts of your yard or on the cliffs of California.

California Fescue thrives in sun or part shade, and prefers fine to medium soil. It requires moderate water, but is both drought tolerant and deer resistant. According to gardenguides.com, this grass can be challenging to find in nurseries, so use this opportunity to obtain this rare species for your landscape!

**Deschampsia cespitosa ssp. holciformis: Tufted Hairgrass**

Butterflies flutter by the mounds of native perennial Tufted Hairgrass that grow densely along the riparian landscape. Usually found in wetland areas, this reliable grass grows to about 18 inches, with flowers that rise to about 2 feet. The dense flowers resemble stalks of wheat. Like tufts of unruly hair, it frays out in all directions and adds a unique shape and texture to meadows, wetlands, and coastal edges.

Tufted Hairgrass fares well in sunny spots along the coast; inland, it requires a little shade and more moisture. Its ability to stand strong in moist areas provides a wetland area with good erosion control. This grass also tolerates clay soil and resists deer. In perfect conditions, it can reach 3’ high and 3’ in width. Its fast growth rate ensures a quick and easy way to enhance your personal ecosystem for the spring and summer and also to attract colorful butterflies to your garden.

—Abby Huetter
Meet the 2012 Apprentices

Here’s a brief introduction to the new group of apprentices who joined us on April 16 from across the U.S. as well as Guatemala and Ghana. For the next six months they’ll be learning organic farming and gardening skills at the UCSC Farm & Garden, part of the Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS).

Your membership in the Friends of the UCSC Farm & Garden helps fund this 45-year-old internationally known training program by providing funds for scholarships, teaching staff, equipment, and facility improvements. Many thanks for your ongoing support.

Onika Abraham: I was raised in a Manhattan high-rise by two parents who were raised on farms. Inspired by memories of my grandmothers’ gardens and a yearning for a healthier, more beautiful environment, I planted my first organic garden in 2010 and began participating in greening projects beyond my own overly shady backyard. I hope to use sustainable agriculture and horticulture in marginalized areas to improve health and well-being and build pride and community involvement.

Armando Alvarez: I was raised in Southern California. I started growing food a few years ago. As a math and science teacher in Texas, organic gardening is a major part of the curriculum that I teach. I have also been apprenticing at a local organic farm. After the program is over, I plan on farming land that my parents own in Northern Baja California.

Sara Arredondo: I was raised Quaker in Pennsylvania and grew up growing organic veggies in the family garden. After college, I volunteered on organic farms in California, the Southwest, and Hawaii. I then completed my Permaculture Design Certification at the Regenerative Design Institute and moved to Colorado to work with at-risk youth in a holistic wilderness therapy program. I love plants and look forward to starting a horticulture therapy program with my husband Paul.

Elizabeth Band: I am 26 and originally from England. I studied agro-ecology at the University of Hawaii at Hilo on the Big Island of Hawaii. After which, I worked at the Organic Studies Center (Rural Business School) in Cornwall, England on sward health and crop trial research. My long-term goals are focused on becoming a part of a community supported agricultural system.

Hedda Brorstrom: I grew up in Sebastopol under walnut trees and concord grapes. After graduating from UC Berkeley I’ve worked in environmental edu-tainment at Save the Bay, EdventureMore and the Academy of Sciences. For the past four years I’ve loved being a garden teacher and coordinator in San Francisco. We dig, discover and devour our growing gardens. I hope to form partnerships with fellow apprentices and continue to teach in the field.

John Campbell: I recently completed my undergraduate degree at UC Berkeley with majors in integrative biology and peace and conflict studies. Since graduating I have been working on a research project on soil quality effects of various fertilizers in a UCB lab. I have a goal of starting a cooperative farm at my parents’ 11-acre home in Santa Rosa, California.

Hamutahl Cohen: I’m from Los Angeles, California. While interning in an agroecology lab at Berkeley as an undergraduate, I started gardening at nearby community gardens. I particularly enjoyed my role as volunteer coordinator at UC Berkeley’s Memorial Victory Garden in 2009, as well as time in the Berkeley Student Organic Garden Association. I’m hoping to utilize knowledge I learn at CASFS in future graduate study of entomology and agroecology. I’m also interested in urban agriculture projects.

Emily Cronk: Born and raised in Minnetonka, Minnesota, my farming experience began four years ago as an intern at a large organic farm in Carnation, Washington. For the following three years I was the greenhouse, planting, and seeding manager at this farm. I look forward to continuing to live this lifestyle, advocating for the importance of giving back to the land and teaching the meaning, difference, and value of eating organically raised food.

Brad Direnzi: I grew up near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Upon graduation I worked with the Student Conservation Association (SCA), serving as the coordinator for an urban garden project with high school students and leading urban youth in hands-on conservation projects in Pittsburgh’s city parks. I have also constructed and maintained a vegetable garden with high school students in New York City. My future plans include continuing to empower urban youth through hands-on environmental service.

Dean Fernandez: I was raised in San Diego, California. My bachelor’s degree is in business management and entrepreneurship from the University of Notre Dame. I have organic gardening and permaculture design certificates. I love the sea, permaculture and Alan Chadwick’s biodynamic and French intensive gardening practices of building soil fertility. My future plans are to develop sustainable community and empowerment through growing food, living harmoniously with our earth, and loving life.

Emily Chu Finkel: I hail from Oakland, California. My first farm experience was as an apprentice with the food justice organization People’s Grocery in 2009. Since then I have been building my skills by working with a variety of urban agriculture projects. In the future I hope to farm with community and youth involvement in or around Oakland, but I am coming into the apprenticeship with an open mind to see where farming takes me.

Leo Grandison: I was born and raised in San Diego, California, lived in Santa Cruz for 14 years, and have a B.A. in language studies (Spanish). A permaculture design course opened my eyes to the empowering possibilities of food production according to natural systems. My future plans are to empower under-resourced communities with the knowledge of how to create healthy food systems that serve as medicine, build community, and create sources of economic empowerment.

Laurel Greyson: Originally from California, I became interested in farming during a year spent in Hungary, where I first experienced eating seasonal and local foods. This led me to work on farms in Italy and Costa Rica. Later, I ran school gardens in Hayward, California. Currently, I am pursuing a M.A. in food systems at New York University. In the future, I hope to start my own farm and work on creating a sustainable and healthy food system.
Layton Guenther: I grew up in the New York City area, and got my first taste of growing food in a community garden in New Orleans in 2006. Since then, I’ve worked on farms in Alaska and Massachusetts. I believe that healthy, fresh food is a human right, as are living wages for farmers. To combat the symptoms of historically constituted inequity, I want to develop a public health program that empowers youth through farming and gardening.

Victoria Gutierrez: I was born and raised in Southeast Los Angeles. While living in Oakland, I was fortunate enough to learn from and be inspired by several Indigenous food and medicine growing projects. About two years ago, I began working with the Land & Life Collective, turning an abandoned East Oakland lot into a vibrant community garden. I hope to use the knowledge I am collecting toward creating spaces of healing for marginalized communities.

Peter J. Harrington: I am originally from Princeton, New Jersey. I was first introduced to gardening while working in Soquel, California in a small Camphill community (intentional communities serving the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities). After three years of gardening in Camphill, I apprenticed for six months at the Esalen Institute’s Farm and Garden in Big Sur, California. My goal is to have a small organic farm and CSA on my family’s property in Ghent, New York.

Mary Hildebrand: Born and raised in Ann Arbor, Michigan, I now live in Austin, Texas. I first experienced farming as a volunteer on two family farms in Argentina. Soon after I worked with a youth development non-profit in Austin called Urban Roots that inspired me to use agriculture to create social change. I hope to develop a farming organization that empowers folks to grow their own food and creates community through agriculture.

Kyla Langen: I was raised near the beach in Carlsbad, California, by a musical family. In 2003, I received a BA from UC Santa Cruz in environmental studies, with an emphasis in agroecology. After graduating, I traveled the globe as a professional surfer, competing in worldwide surf events. Eventually I returned home and got involved in outdoor and garden education on Catalina Island. I hope to soon start my own demonstration garden to help educate and inspire others.

Sam Lipschultz: I was born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts, and have spent most of the last eight years in New York. I’ve worked on farms in New Mexico and New England, and on food access, farm-to-institution and youth empowerment projects in New York. I hope to leave this apprenticeship ready to make food production and education central to my work and life.

Molly Logan: I’ve always been delighted by the growing and sharing of food. With a professional background in ministry, I’ve particularly enjoyed cooking for homeless families in Philadelphia, helping plant a museum’s edible garden in Los Angeles, and exploring the complexity of sustainability while flipping burgers and serving as a chaplain in Yosemite. I plan to use my apprenticeship learning to create opportunities for communities to grow hospitality, healing, and vitality through growing food together.

Moises Huz Lopez: I grew up in Guatemala and Mexico, practicing traditional Mayan organic farming and “Campesino a Campesino” techniques at my family’s teaching farm, Centro Agro-ecologico El Mirador. We practiced soil and water conservation, intercropping, and agro-forestry. We also kept small domestic farm animals. After the apprenticeship I plan to return to Guatemala where I will teach, farm, and help indigenous Guatemalans achieve food self-sufficiency.

Zea Luce: I grew up in the Finger Lakes Region of New York State on a small family farm, with a large organic garden, fields of asparagus, blueberries, sheep, and chickens. I have continued to garden in various capacities and look forward to increasing my agricultural knowledge so that I may teach others. I currently work in the zero waste field, teaching recycling and composting.

Kylie Manson: I grew up in California and now live in Colorado. I learned to love gardening in my urban home in Denver, where I have a vegetable garden and five chickens. In 2010, I co-founded the Denver Handmade Homemade Market, which is a monthly marketplace that provides the space and support for new, local food and craft producers to vend their goods. I hope to continue this kind of food inspired, community-based work in the future!

Dominique Mayes: I was born in Saint Louis, Missouri. I first became interested in agriculture through my family, planting flowers with my grandmother in her garden and growing vegetables with my uncle in his garden. The whole concept of growing and sustaining plant life fascinates me greatly. In my future plans I would like to be involved in crop sciences and the regulation of crops to insure absolute quality.

Christopher McGuire: I am interested in the topics of small-scale agriculture and urban ecology. Since completing a course with the Urban Permaculture Institute of San Francisco last spring, I’ve helped design and establish a community garden in the Corbett Heights neighborhood along with the organization Kitchen Garden SF. I’m eager to get more hands-on experience with farming, and plan to pursue graduate studies in agriculture and ecology in the future.

Eric Nelson: I am a student at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington. I have farmed in several locations around the Pacific Northwest, including the beautiful San Juan Islands. I am on a journey to nourish myself so that I can aid others in their own unfolding in eating healthy foods and the practice of sustainable agriculture. Market gardening paired with outreach to marginalized communities is a part of my future plan in food and farming.

Jessie Nichols: Originally from North Carolina, I have spent the past two years working at Veggieolution Community Farm in San Jose, California where I developed a youth empowerment program for high school students, the Dig Crew. I played the role of Mother Hen to our youth and 35 laying hens, taught workshops, and facilitated community volunteers in farm work. I plan to continue working in farm-based alternative education and hope to develop a community center in the Appalachian mountains.

Brenda Quintero: Native born in Tijuana, Mexico; however, essentially raised most of my life in Los Angeles. I first became aware of sustainability in 2005, following an intensive permaculture course in New Mexico. In 2009, I immersed efforts with Milagro Allegro Community Garden as it gave birth to its existence; building foundation, establishing organic urban gardening and maintenance. My forthcoming endeavors include establishing community based market gardens as food equality and independence within the underprivileged.

Rachael Richardson: I live in Pescadero, California. I’m a San Francisco native and have spent the past ten years farming in rural Northern California and working as a community organizer in New York state. My long-term aspirations include creating an efficient, beautiful farm-based business alongside a non-profit garden designed for use by people with disabilities, and other forms of specialized horticultural therapy/education.
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Ryan Roseman: I was born and raised in Santa Cruz, California. My first experience farming was volunteering at the Homeless Garden Project in Santa Cruz three years ago. I spent last summer apprenticing at Pie Ranch, a non-profit educational farm in Pescadero, California. I hope to start my own farm in the area that works to educate and build community around local sustainable food.

Claudia Seixas: Raised in New Jersey, I helped start and manage the student organic garden at Swarthmore College. Afterwards, I worked at an urban educational CSA farm in Sunnyvale, California. While living in northern Brazil, as a student and again as a Fulbright fellow, I studied agroecology and rural social movements, and WWOOFed at coffee and vegetable farms. I hope to work towards a more socially just and environmentally sustainable food system.

Ryan Silsbee: I am from Santa Ynez, California and graduated from UC Berkeley in December 2011. My first farm experience was developing a community garden program in Nicaragua last summer. Most recently I worked at Mohala Farms in Waialua, Hawaii and wrote articles for a food transparency website called www.realtimefarms.com. My future plans are to work with organizations that advocate food transparency and encourage communities to develop their own food sovereignty.

Ayelet Singer: I grew up in New York and I first became interested in farming when I was an environmental studies major in college interested in sustainable agriculture and food justice issues. I have been working as a farm apprentice for the past two years at two different farms on the East Coast. I hope to share my love and experience with farming with urban communities that lack access to healthy food.

Holly Stein: For eight years I was a union organizer and coordinator for youth organizations in New York City. I designed curriculum, ran youth groups and managed a staff of 150. I became concerned with how our youth’s (and my own) alienation from food and the environment shaped our development. So, I left my job to work on a small CSA farm in Massachusetts. I now look forward to teaching agriculture to young people in urban and suburban settings.

Neil Thapar: I was raised in California, though I spent three of my childhood years in India. My exposure to poverty there and a growing concern for the health of the planet sparked my interest in agriculture. Law school gave me the opportunity, as a student, to work at an organization that promotes small-scale, organic agriculture. I look forward to contributing my skills and knowledge to creating an environmentally just and sound agricultural system.

Stephen Tolpinrud: While at the University of Utah studying the environmental crisis, I took an organic gardening course. That class sparked my interest in farming and I have been passionately pursuing similar avenues since. I look forward to obtaining a certificate in organic horticulture so that I may volunteer in communities lacking the knowledge to create sustainable food systems. Also, I hope to own a farm, through which I will promote ecologically minded farming practices.

Elaine Walker: After farming in South America, I wanted to learn more about food sovereignty in my hometown of San Francisco. I studied permaculture in Oakland, worked with SF’s Garden for the Environment and taught in public school gardens serving at-risk youth. I also interned at Pie Ranch in Pescadero, California and farmed while teaching English in Spain. I envision creating a farm that supplies food to school cafeterias and creates green job training opportunities for young adults.

Susie Yeo: I was born and raised in Chicago, and I have spent several years on the East Coast, most recently in New York City. I worked at Fifth Crow Farm in Pescadero, California and regularly volunteered at the Queens County Farm and the Brooklyn Grange Rooftop Farm in New York City, and Blackberry Meadows Farm in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. My previous work includes massage therapy and chocolate making. I will continue with urban farming in the future.

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