

UF/IFAS Extension

The Journey to Sustainability Begins with Education





Contemplative Food Gardening: “FEED YOUR HEAD” (EDIBLE LANDSCAPING & DESIGN)

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OUTLINE

- **Overview & Goals of Contemplative Food Gardening Presentation Series**
- **Short Review of Contemplative & Organic Food Gardens**
- **Edible Landscaping**

Contemplative Food Gardening Series Titles

- Introduction
- Feed Your Head (Edible Landscaping & Design) ←
- Growing Food When People & Place Matter
(FL Climate, Crops and Soils)
- Ancient Traditions (Companion Planting and
Biodynamic Agriculture)
- Sacred Community (Attracting Beneficials)
- Soil Food (Compost & Earthworms)
- Back to the Future (Contemplative Design &
Container Gardening)

Goals for Talks on Contemplative Food Gardening

- Food for your freshest nutrition
- Food for thought
- Food for community benefits
- **Food for your soul**



Approach of Talks on Contemplative Food Gardening

- Integrate the concepts of contemplative gardens to edible landscaping, using organic food gardening practices
- Provide background information on the science and principles from agroecology for successful organic food gardening
- Offer an opportunity to participate in the setup of a contemplative food garden
- Provide additional educational resources

Review:

What is Contemplative Gardening?

- A contemplative garden provides an ambience conducive to examining issues beyond and/or larger than oneself in a thoughtful, deliberate, perhaps religious or mystical way.

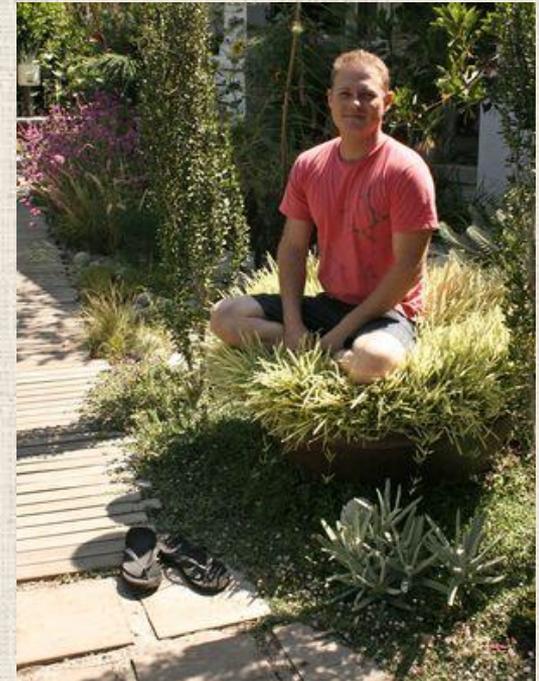


Gerlach-Spriggs & Healy. The Therapeutic Garden: A Definition.
<http://www.asla.org/ppn/Article.aspx?id=25294>

Why Do Contemplative Gardening?

- Relief from stress of modern life
- Promoting inner growth and wisdom
- Reflection and synthesis of knowledge
- Exploration and mindfulness
- Source of inspiration

Images of Contemplative Gardens



Review:

What is Food Gardening?



Cultivating a wide diversity of edibles including vegetables, fruits, herbs flowers, etc.

Review:

What Is Organic Food Gardening?



Organic Food Gardening

- It's a science and art
- Incorporates the entire landscape design and environment, e.g., to improve and maximize the garden soil's health, structure, & texture
- Maximizes the production and health of developing plants without using synthetic commercial fertilizers, pesticides, or fungicides

David Knauft, Horticulture Department, Univ. of GA

www.caes.uga.edu/extension/clarke/anr/documents/Organicgardening.pdf

What is Different About Organic Food Gardening?

- *Incorporates a Systems Level Approach to Management and Design of the Agroecosystem*
- *Consider a message from excerpt from Sand County Almanac by Aldo Leopold (1949)*
 - Message in the value of biodiversity for the function of the ecosystem
 - These teachings served as foundation in land ethics for many applications



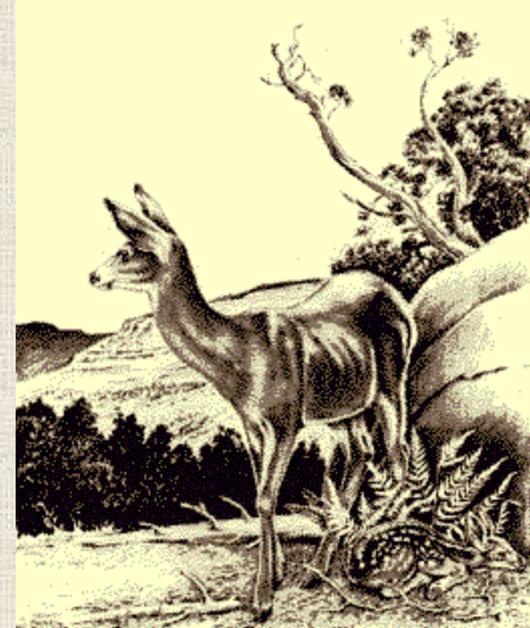
Aldo Leopold

“Thinking Like A Mountain”

“A deep chesty bawl echoes from rimrock to rimrock, rolls down the mountain, and fades into the far blackness of the night.

It is an outburst of wild defiant sorrow, and of contempt for all the adversities of the world.

Every living thing (and perhaps many a dead one as well) pays heed to that call.”



“Thinking Like A Mountain”

“To the deer it is a reminder of the way of all flesh, to the pine a forecast of midnight scuffles and of blood upon the snow, to the coyote a promise of gleanings to come, to the cowman a threat of red ink at the bank, to the hunter a challenge of fang against bullet.

Yet behind these obvious and immediate hopes and fears there lies a deeper meaning, known only to the mountain itself. Only the mountain has lived long enough to listen objectively to the howl of a wolf.”

“Thinking Like A Mountain” - Aldo Leopold



- Message = Wolf – Deer – Forest dynamics & inter-relationships are critical for ecosystem function !
- Similar message in the value of biodiversity applies to organic food gardening too !

What is Edible Landscaping?



The thoughtful arrangement of edible plants in the landscape into a unified, functional biological whole to maximize their aesthetic appeal and food production.

Treating Edibles as Ornamentals

Why Do Edible Landscaping?



Best of both worlds – edible & ornamental

Inter-planting reduces pests

New textures, forms, colors

Grow what you like best

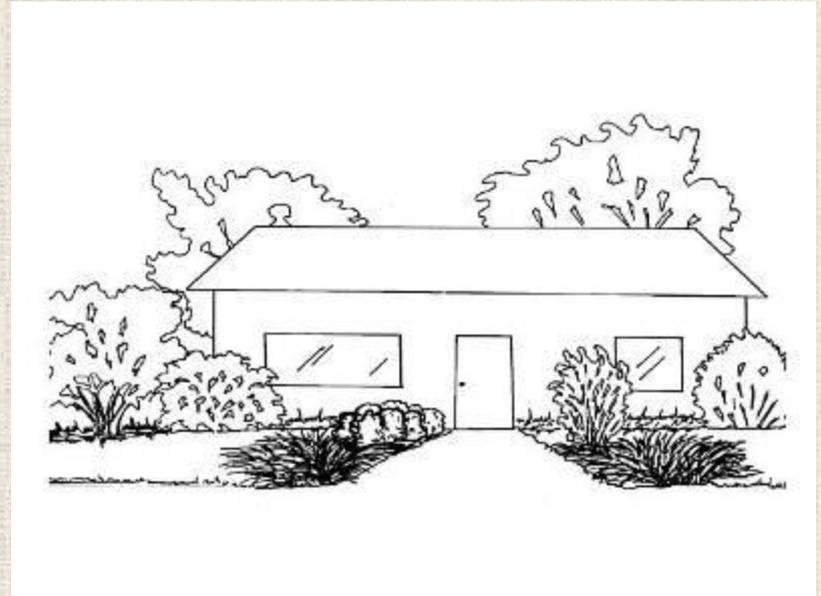
Fun for kids

Responsible water use

Great conversation piece

Any Landscape Can Become an Edible Landscape

- Choose for appropriate size
- Plant what you like to eat
- Choose for desired maintenance level
- Select appropriate varieties of edibles



Edible Landscape Homestead Level Example



Edible Landscape Plant Growth Requirements

- Light
- Support
- Nutrients
- Temperature
- Water
- Seasonality

Design Element: Color



**Leaf
lettuces**



Kale



Chard

Design Element Examples



Beans & peas on trellis for height



Strawberry for groundcover



Squash for size and form

Design Elements with Herbs



Basil
colors &
flavors



Sage
texture &
colors



Thyme
aromas &
flavors

Design Element: Edible Flowers





Edible Landscape Design Example



Edible Landscape Design Examples

Edible Landscape Installation Example



Food For Beauty And Nourishment



Contemplative Garden Design Elements

Properties for the “rooms” in your garden:

- Clarity
- Complexity
- Mystery
- Refuge

Contemplative Garden Design Elements: Clarity

- ✓ The area is not confusing to those looking at it. It has, first of all, clarity of purpose



Threshold – a clear entry



Border and pathway

Contemplative Garden Design Elements: Complexity

- ✓ There is enough of interest going on within a given space that there is a reason to enter it and dwell there for a while, e.g., with a mix of textures, colors, smells, shapes, sizes and spaces



Contemplative Garden Design Elements: Mystery

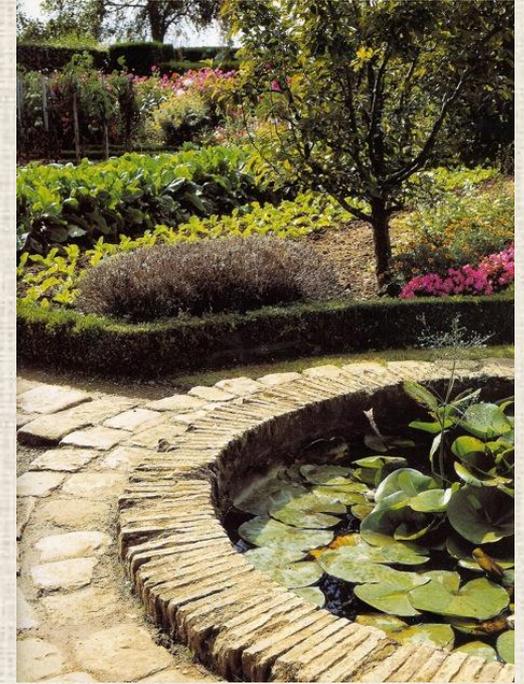
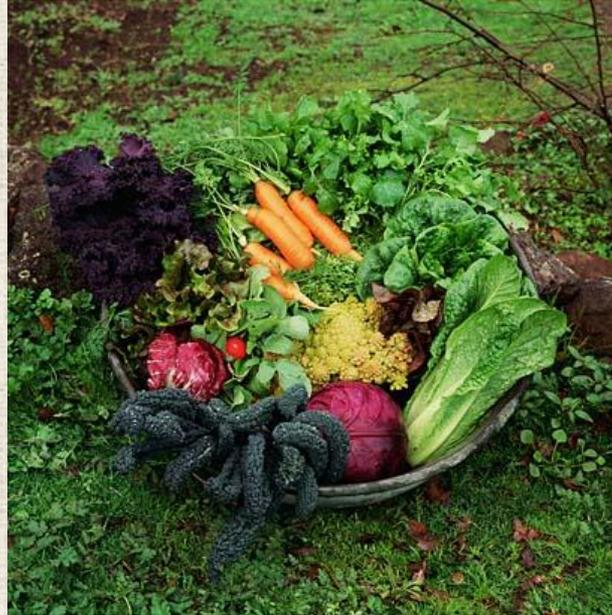
- ✓ The surprises and hidden features that may be hinted at but not revealed unless the visitor actively seeks them out.



Contemplative Garden Design Elements: Refuge

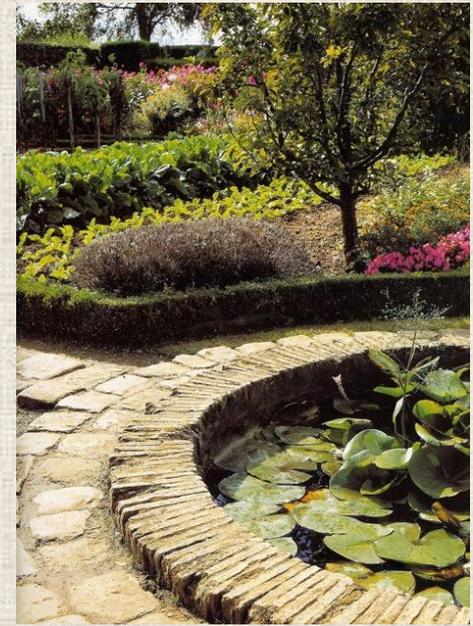
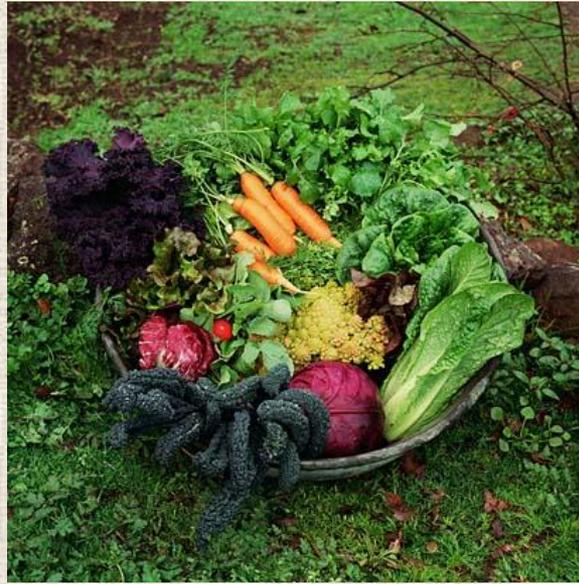
- ✓ The "garden spots" both public and private should give off a feeling of retreat from the cares of the world.





Contemplative Food Gardening with Edible Landscaping

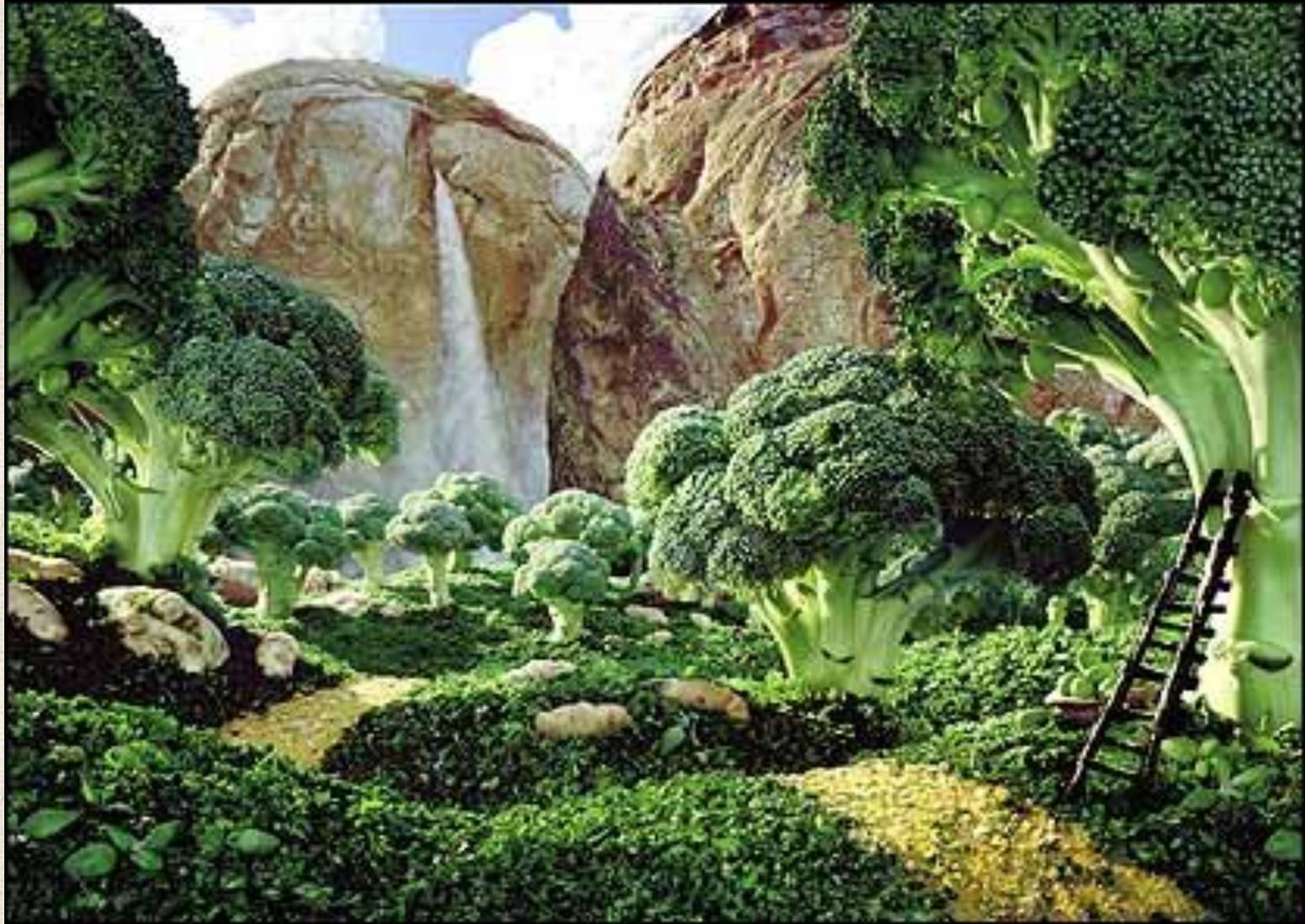
Gardening outside the rows...creatively for personal inspiration and growth, as well as physical nourishment and growth



A few tips:

- Remember timing, habit, requirements
- Start planning early
- Be creative...think outside the rows!
- Think about combinations
- Don't be afraid to try something new.

Contemplative Food Gardening Art



Resources

- Creasy, R. 2010. Complete Book of Edible Landscaping. Sierra Club Press.
- Kourik, R. 1986. Designing and Maintaining Your Edible Landscape Naturally. Metamorphic Press, Santa Monica, CA.
- Langenheim, J.H. and K.V. Thimann. 1982. Botany: Plant Biology and Its Relation to Human Affairs. J.Wiley & Sons, N.Y.
- Messervy, J.M. 1990. Contemplative Gardens. Howell Press.
- MacCubbin. T. 2000. The Edible Landscape. Charles B. McFadden Inc

Resources

- Nardoizzi, C. Edible Landscaping Primer. National Gardening Association – see <http://www.garden.org/ediblelandscaping/?page=edibleprimer>
- Stevens, J.M. 2009. Organic Vegetable Gardening. UF/IFAS EDIS Publication #CIR375 – see <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh019>
- Stevens, J.M. et.al. 2010. Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide. UF/IFAS EDIS Publication #SP103 - see <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021>
- Worden, E. and S.P.Brown. Edible Landscaping. UF/IFAS EDIS Publication #ENH971 - see <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep146>