

BROOME PERMACULTURE WEEKEND – JULY / AUGUST 2014

Many gardens were visited which were all different and inspiring in their own way. All gardens were natural and spray free but no gardens were fully sustainable or 100 % organic.

The variety of gardens was interesting from large semi commercial gardens, newly installed gardens and aquaponics systems, home companion planted with raised beds, wicking bed gardens to native verge and street revegetation gardens.

SEED BANK

Some gardeners were collecting their own seed , but it is critical that every gardener has their own safely stored seed bank and that there is a community vegetable/herb seed bank storage in Broome, consisting of as many different varieties as possible. These seeds must be open pollinated seeds Due to the many different nationalities living and growing food in Broome over many decades, this means Broome is unique and seed collection/storage is very important.

FRUIT TREES

The amount of different fruit trees in and around Broome is amazing. A database with records of the many different fruit trees in Broome area would be beneficial so that trees can be propagated or used for research /education etc.

SEASOL

Many gardeners were using Seasol or similar products on their vegetable gardens. These are good products for the plants, though not sustainable. There are many different solutions that can be produced at home and fed to vegetables including diluted human urine (worth researching), plant and compost teas. The optimum product to use on all plants from germinating seedlings to harvest is WORM CASTINGS.

TOWN WATER

Every garden visited was 100% relying on town water supplied which is very dangerous and expensive. Dangerous as there are many chemicals added. Filters can be fitted to town water to remove chlorine.

Rain water storage for watering in nursery and home veggie gardens are essential if people are to grow organic food with life force in their food. However, this is somewhat restrictive with Broome's rainfall patterns.

Grey water reuse is also a valuable water source as is condensed water from air conditioners.

TIP WASTE MULCH

It might be worth testing the mulch for chemical residue before using. Chemicals used for pest containment around homes and gardens could be taken up by plants and end up in the public mulch. These chemicals have been used for many decades.

ANIMAL MANURE

Using any fresh animal manures which haven't broken down over time to grow vegetables will result in high nitrate uptake by the plants. They will look great but not so good for you and much more vulnerable to insect attack. If possible feed manure (with a mixture of organic material like cardboard, newspaper, and straw) to compost worms, and then use the worm castings in your vegetable gardens. If using any animal or human manure in any gardens/orchards use only very old manure.

**Using manure from animals (including humans) that has been treated for intestinal worms will result in the death of any compost or native worms in your garden or worm farm.

SMALL ANIMALS

We saw some chooks, but there is scope for more small animals in people's home gardens in Broome, especially Khaki Campbell ducks. Guinea Pigs are also very helpful in sustaining your gardens.

The gardens that really felt in harmony with nature are the ones where small animals are being utilised.

Small animals are an important part of sustainability and it's important that if you or your family are going to eat meat then you have to know how to produce organic meat. Small animals combined with aquaculture makes this possible in your home garden.

COMPOSTING WORMS

Composting worms will survive very easy in Broome, but only in containers (bath tubs are perfect) with protection from extreme heat Composting worms will also survive in heavily mulched garden beds.

Composting worms will recycle anything organic and will consume their own body weight per day

The worm castings can be used for potting mix but most importantly as a plant food, due to a neutral PH

CHARCOAL

Making charcoal and Biochar is simple and creates a practical asset that everybody can do in their own backyard. It is a very enjoyable and somewhat addictive activity!

SOIL IMPROVEMENT

Red pindan soils are beautiful. It would be very interesting to see a Broome garden using Biodynamic principles growing veggies in raised wicking beds using red pindan that has been infused with worm castings and bio-char, watered using worm juice and diluted human urine, with a 70% sandstone/beige colour shade cloth covering.

From observing and listening to Broome gardeners, this is a gardening method people in Broome should try; to produce their own home grown delightful organic produce. To produce organic food with life force, you require soils with life force.

TRANSPORTABLE PORTABLE GARDENS

Designing your vegetable and herb gardens, worm farms, aquaponic system, animal housing as transportable is advisable. Life changes, so if you need to move location you can at least have a healthy part of your life still with you.

MONTHLY, SEASONAL PLANTING

People asked often about when to plant which vegetables. Refer to the Broome Planting Guide.

NETWORKING- WORKNETTING

In Permaculture we prefer to use the word work netting, rather than net working, so please keep in contact and support each other with all your interesting projects.