

GROW BIOINTENSIVE
Community Garden Integration Intensive Series
Spring 2013 Session

6 Classes will be held from 9:30 am - 2:30 pm on the following Saturdays:
February 16 and 23, March 2, 9, 16 and April 6
In signing up for this workshop, participants agree to attend all 6 classes.

ABOUT THIS WORKSHOP SERIES

This six-class intensive series is designed to enable established and newly created community-based gardening and farming programs to integrate the biologically-intensive, holistically sustainable and optimally productive GROW BIOINTENSIVE (GB) mini-farming method into their projects. Gardeners who manage, are involved in, or seek to establish community based gardening and agriculture sites will come away from this series with an intuitive understanding of sustainable soil and garden management, the hands-on skills they need to apply that understanding, as well as the tools to measure, document, and study their progress.

The classes will include presentations, demonstrations, hands-on practice, and guided discussions. Participants will have the opportunity “cross-pollinate”: to get to know each other’s programs/projects and to build greater collaboration and community among the Bay Area’s gardeners and gardens. Setting achievable goals together for our respective biologically-intensive demonstration sites will be an integral part of the 6-week program.

By using GB methods, community-based garden and agriculture programs can improve their yields while decreasing their need for external fertilizer and compost inputs. The efficiencies of GB speak for themselves.

GROW BIOINTENSIVE sustainable mini-farming techniques make it possible to grow food using:

- 67% to 88% less water
- 50% to 100% less fertilizer
- 99% less energy than commercial agriculture, while using a fraction of the resources.

These techniques can also:

- Produce 2 to 6 times more food than conventional methods
- Build fertile soil up to 60 times faster than in nature, if properly used
- Reduce the amount of land needed to grow comparable amounts of food by 50% or more

In addition, the data-based GROW BIOINTENSIVE approach makes it easy for gardeners to track their project’s progress, and to record their yields and to track them over time. By keeping track of the work they do to improve their soil and then seeing their results, gardeners are inspired to keep their gardens growing and improving every year. This measurable progress can also serve community-based garden programs in fundraising.

GB community gardens can serve as models of self-sufficient sustainability for participants' constituents and neighbors to learn from. The relationship between the gardens and communities can be synergistic; in fact, the community structure can make the GB approach even more sustainable. In addition to creating greater access with less investment by sharing tools and infrastructure, community gardens and farms also pool human resources by accumulating gardening experience and knowledge, utilizing the power of many observers, allowing a distribution of tasks according to ability, availability and interest. These gardens and programs are able to have greater success than the sum of what their individual members would be able to accomplish alone.

Through training programs like this six-class Saturday series in GROW BIOINTENSIVE Agriculture, Ecology Action hopes to create a network of skilled Bay Area gardeners, and community gardens that support each other in their communities' quest for food security and resilience.

Tuition: \$250.00

Materials Fee: \$10

Work-trade Option: In exchange for 15 hours of garden work (to be completed after classes or during regular Wednesday morning workdays), a \$125 tuition refund is available. This is a great opportunity to practice garden skills as you learn them.

Registration Deadline: February 1, 2013

Register online at www.growbiointensive.org/6SessionWorkshop

If you decide to cancel your registration before Feb. 1, \$125 will be refunded to you or can be applied to another Ecology Action workshop during 2013. No refunds will be available after Feb. 1; if you decide to cancel after this date, \$125 can be applied to another Ecology Action workshop during 2013.

Location: Common Ground Demonstration Garden, 687 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto, CA.

Schedule: 9:30 am - 2:30 pm

February 16 and 23, March 2, 9, 16 and April 6

In signing up for this workshop, participants agree to attend all 6 classes.

Class Overview

Class 1: Soil

What is living, healthy, productive soil?
Organic material, organic matter, compost, humus, nutrients, and microorganisms
How nature creates soil, and how GROW BIOINTENSIVE (GB) creates soil
Introduction to the eight principles of GB

Class 2: Compost & Compost Crops

Basic plant botany: Metabolic vs. Structural Carbon
Not all compost piles are equal: how to optimize your compost.
Growing compost crops.
Compost Crop Personalities

Class 3: Special Root Calorie Crops and Complete Diet Farming

Weight-efficiency vs. area-efficiency
Introduction to Diet Design.
How to use the Master Charts
Growing special root calorie crops.
Calorie Crop Plant Personalities.

Class 4: Open-Pollinated Seed & Benefits of Using GB in Community Gardens and Farms

What are open pollinated seeds? Why are they important?
Saving seed
Harvesting, processing, and storing grains and other challenging crops

Class 5: Best Practices for GB Sites and Goal Setting

Setting goals together for our respective biologically-intensive demonstration sites
What EA hopes to see in a biologically-intensive demonstration site
(what needs to be included, and where adjustments are welcomed and encouraged).

Class 6: DATA COLLECTION

Examples of the difference data collection makes: much higher yields, less work, greatly reduced organic fertilizer and water consumption, more compost production from a smaller area.

Demonstrations and Hands-on Activities will include:

Setting up a GB growing bed
Deep Soil Structure Preparation: Double Digging (and amending)
Building, turning, and sifting compost
Using the Master Charts to determine seed requirements
Starting and pricking out seedlings
Transplanting
Low-tech threshing and grinding
Diet design and basic garden planning
Data collection and management

WORKSHOP TEACHER:

Zuzanna Drozd is the Coordinator of the Common Ground Garden in Palo Alto. This garden is a community-based mini-farm project of Ecology Action that serves as an outdoor classroom for classes for the community and local schools.

REQUIRED READING/WATCHING BEFORE 1st CLASS:

This course will be fast-paced, and will cover a lot of material. In order to facilitate a deeper understanding of the material, participants will be required to do additional readings and watch instructional videos before the first class, and between subsequent classes. The readings will cover the scientific basis for and findings of GROW BIOINTENSIVE, the details of how to use various GB techniques, as well as the global and local need for transformation of our food-raising systems.

- *“Worldwide Loss of Soil and a Possible Solution”*: on soil depletion rates
- *A Hopeful Solution*: UN article on how Biointensive farming prevents desertification
- *Unforgetting Lessons Our Father Farmers Taught Us*: readings on ancient sustainable farming practices in China from *Farmers of 40 Centuries*.
- *Understanding what happens to civilizations that do not fully care for their soil*: from *Soil and Civilization*
- *Getting Started with GROW BIOINTENSIVE*: GB DVD (all segments)
- *How To Grow More Vegetables—and Fruits, Nuts, Berries, Grains and Other Crops Than You Ever Thought Possible On Less Land Than You can Imagine* 8th edition, pp. 15-32
- *The Sustainable Vegetable Garden* pp. 27-32.

SUPPLEMENTAL CLASSES Available at Common Ground Center: (Optional classes registered & paid for separately online at www.commongroundinpaloalto.org): **TBA**

COMMON GROUND GARDEN
PROJECT OF ECOLOGY ACTION
687 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto, CA 94306
Phone: 707-450-0150

RELEASE FORM

Name: _____ Date: _____

Age: _____ Male / Female: _____

Emergency Contact:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Country: _____ Telephone: (____) _____

Do you have a heart condition, back condition, or other present and/or pre-existing conditions that could limit your full participation in the hands-on activities during this class?

If so please describe in detail:

Please list any medications you are currently taking:

Date of last medical examination:

Please provide your current primary/catastrophic medical insurance coverage information

Carrier: _____ Policy No: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Waiver:

I hereby certify that I am in good physical condition and do hereby release, acquit and discharge ECOLOGY ACTION, its staff, officers and members, of any and all claims, causes of action or damages whatsoever, in any way arising out of or in any manner connected with their program or any medical treatment rendered in event of need. I understand that I am responsible for the coverage any medical expenses during my time at the Common Ground Garden and the Common Ground Garden Supply and Education Center.

Signature: _____ Date: _____