Let the World Eat Organic

Liza Burke, Communications Director

It’s not hard to find stories that say organic agriculture is a nice idea on a small scale but it could never feed everyone. But consider for a minute: what would it take for all of Seattle’s food to be organically grown? How about the entire US?

The United Nations declared in 2011 that organic agriculture can feed the whole world. Olivier De Schutter, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, conducted in-depth research and analysis on global food systems during his special six-year appointment, which ended in June 2014. His work is worthy of attention.

Even with population expected to reach 9 billion by 2050, producing enough food is not our top agricultural concern, according to De Schutter. He strongly recommends a global shift away from conventional practices towards “agroecology” that prioritizes longer term sustainability and socially just food systems.

According to New Scientist in July 2007, a study by Ivette Perfecto of the University of Michigan compared the productivity of organic agriculture to conventional methods. The study confirms that organic agriculture is nearly as productive as conventional, or even more so where it’s needed most. Perfecto concluded, “In developed countries, organic systems on average produce 92% of the yield produced by conventional agriculture. In developing countries, however, organic systems produce 80% more than conventional farms.” Other independent studies draw similar conclusions.

Productivity is not the only measure for farming. As we know, industrial agriculture has wreaked havoc on the environment.
Embracing Bounty

Andrea Platt Dwyer, Executive Director

Bounty. I’ve been thinking about that word ever since the staff declared the theme of this issue of Way to Grow to be “summer’s bounty.” Although bounty can mean other things entirely, words like generosity, liberality, abundance and plenty appear in the most common definitions.

My rumination on the topic of bounty led me to the garden and the board room. By this time of year for gardeners — with a little skill and a healthy dose of luck — all the hard work of seeding, transplanting and weeding has culminated in a garden full of ripening fruits and vegetables. For the nonprofit manager, the same proportions of hard work, skill and luck can lead to success of a different kind: effective programs, productive employees and financial stability.

In both cases, there are elements of opportunity and risk. On the risk side in the garden, temperatures can be too cold. Rainfall can be too much or too little. Pests can appear out of nowhere to devour crops. For those who are striving to solve a social problem, programs that once worked can become less relevant. Employees can become demoralized when they are stretched too thin. And adequate levels of stable funding can be elusive.

On the opportunity side, growers can harvest their bounty and eat it the same day. What can’t be eaten immediately can be preserved for the future, or shared with one’s family and friends. In the nonprofit world, opportunity exists due in large part to the generosity of its donors, the liberality of its volunteers, and an abundance of dedicated employees —who can accomplish great things together, now and in the future.

As both growers of food and nonprofit employees, we have plenty to be thankful for.

REVEL IN HARVEST Continued from page 1

apple sauces. There is plenty to do, but the reward is immediate—it doesn’t feel like such a chore. What better way to celebrate a neighborhood or family gathering than with a fresh baked fruit pie filled with peaches from your prized peach tree!

There are many ways to enjoy the foods you grow. A few summers ago, a wonderful volunteer in the community learning garden at the Good Shepherd Center hauled in a giant garbage bag full of kale to the weekly work party. He was so inspired by a Seattle Tilth class he had taken earlier that spring that he planted far more kale than his family could eat. His contribution doubled the crew’s weekly donation to Family Works, the local food bank. He could have made an excellent food and beyond. Bring the whole family for this all-day event and soak up the joy, music and festivities!

After a long and fruitful summer, we’re ready for a harvest party! Be sure to come to Seattle Tilth’s Harvest Fair on Saturday, September 6, at Meridian Park. You’ll find yearly favorites like our amazing organic farmers market, eclectic music stage, children’s garden activities and parade, compost wonderland, herb crown station, demonstration tent, and our urban livestock area with live goats, chickens and bees.

Vendors will be selling harvest specialties like herb and pepper braids, canned goodie, garden tools, gardening books, local farm crafts, organic clothing, excellent food and beyond. Bring the whole family for this all-day event and soak up the joy, music and festivities!

Seattle Tilth’s
Harvest Fair
Saturday, September 6
10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Meridian Park in Wallingford

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WAY TO GROW
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Techniques like large-scale monocropping and heavy use of petroleum-based fertilizers and pesticides have resulted in soil loss, reduced native habitat, loss of pollinators and water pollution. In fact, the long-term ability of our soils to maintain food production has been seriously compromised. That’s a big concern for people who eat food.

Unlike conventional methods, organic agriculture places high value on keeping farms fertile for the future, which is essential for global food security. With techniques like crop rotation, inter-planting, composting, mulching, using natural fertilizers and biological pest control, organic farmers protect the soil, habitat and natural waterways while prioritizing the quality of the food and the safety of workers.

Organic agriculture also creates more jobs, supports farming communities, reduces carbon emissions and improves public health. Recently, De Schutter has been emphasizing the importance of food quality and nutrition. On May 22, the social media savvy rapporteur tweeted, “U.N. food chief: Obesity, unhealthy diets a greater threat than tobacco.”

In Seattle and many cities and towns across the globe, there’s a groundswell of people—at the individual, community, business and government level—working to make organically grown food available and affordable for all people. Organic farmland and demand for organic food is increasing. From backyards, farms and farmers markets, CSAs, groceries, restaurants, bartering networks, cafeterias and community kitchens, opportunities abound. Everyone should be able to choose to eat organic.

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**Seattle Tilth Produce Growing Strong**

*Chris Iberle, Seattle Tilth Food Hub Manager*

We’re in the middle of a successful second year for the Seattle Tilth community supported agriculture (CSA) program. This year we welcomed 102 members to our CSA, directly supporting farmers in our farmer training programs: Seattle Tilth Farm Works, Seattle Youth Garden Works and at Rainier Beach Urban Farm and Wetlands. Members have been giving rave reviews on the quality of the produce, eggs and meat filling their boxes each week. Thanks to all our members for their support!

Sign-ups for the Seattle Tilth CSA this year have ended (join us next year starting in February 2015), but you can still share in the local bounty and support new farmers. You can order Thanksgiving turkeys from Windy Acre Farm and heritage pork shares from Feliz Farm. These farmers joined the Seattle Tilth Farm Works community in 2014, and are growing healthy, happy animals on organic pastures.

If it’s veggies you’re after, come find Seattle Tilth Produce at four farmers markets around the Seattle area! Visit us at at the Wallingford, Columbia City, University District and South Lake Union farmers markets. You will often be welcomed by friendly smiles of the Seattle Youth Garden Works crew. You can also find Seattle Tilth Produce in the produce aisles of Central Co-op and Stockbox Grocery - First Hill, and in tasty dishes served up by Seattle Salads, Local 360 and Madres Kitchen.

Or come visit us at one of our farms and get your local on—this June, we opened our farm stand at the Rainier Beach Urban Farm and Wetlands and are serving the community with fresh, local and organically grown produce every Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Our region has an enormous bounty to offer—enjoy harvest season!
Maria doesn’t require much – a dilapidated pool house with 250 square feet of unused interior space will do. Throw in some gently used mayonnaise buckets, gleaned coffee grounds and, of course, some spawn. With these few ingredients, Maria Anderson, a graduate of the 2014 Seattle Tilth Farm Works training program, and her sister Monica, have begun their first venture as owners and operators of Nook & Cranny Farm mushroom cultivation.

Maria came to Seattle Tilth Farm Works with a background in medicine and a passion for improving the health and livelihood of her local community by providing high-quality, nutritionally dense, whole foods. Maria’s vision is for Nook & Cranny Farm to grow food in small, overlooked places using closed-loop systems and unconventional methods.

“My main goal for this first year of operation is to successfully grow oyster mushrooms and perfect our production systems through repeated trials,” says Maria. She’s also working to establish market channels for Nook & Cranny mushrooms beginning with the Seattle Tilth CSA. Maria has crunched the numbers and if all goes well with production and she’s able to secure customers with the help of Seattle Tilth Produce, she conservatively estimates grossing just under $90k annually – that’s right, $90,000!

Maria loves farming and living in the presence of animals. She has worked at a raw goat dairy farm and interned at the Hallet Family Farm, a diverse livestock operation run by graduates of Seattle Tilth Farm Works. Eventually, Maria plans to diversify her farm, starting with additional varieties of mushrooms, then move forward with pastured sheep, cows, goats and poultry – a little neglected pasture would be just fine. Maybe a forest nook for shiitakes. And perhaps a brambled cranny for goats.

Farmer Profile: Maria Anderson
Growing Mushrooms by Nook & Cranny

Micah Anderson, Seattle Tilth Farm Works Education Manager

Save the Date for Our Festive Gala Auction

It’s nearly time for a festive and fun fall evening at Seattle Tilth’s Gala Auction! Gather your friends to support Seattle Tilth’s educational programs and indulge in an exciting and memorable night at Historic Hangar 30 on Saturday, October 18.

You will get a chance to score unique items in our live and silent auctions that you won’t find at other fundraisers, including farm dinners, clam digging adventures, brewery biking tours and more! Imbibe our signature cocktails, bid high for our decadent dessert dash, enjoy a catered meal by Herban Feast featuring Seattle Tilth-grown produce and get wacky for time immemorial at our photo booth.

Now’s the time to buy your tickets! Go to the Gala Auction web page and sign up to attend this great event. If you have any questions, please contact Amanda at (206) 633-0451 ext. 119 or amandaboyle@seattletilth.org.
A Magical Meal

Leika Suzumura, Community Kitchens Northwest Manager

Magical. It's the only word I can find to describe what happens when you cook and share a meal as a community. When you are standing alongside a stranger, shedding tears over chopped onions, stories and laughter slowly begin to fill the room. Folks who are comfortable sharing their techniques naturally step forward, and others who prefer a more passive role quietly watch and learn.

In a community kitchen, everyone has something to offer and something to learn. It gives a sense of belonging and of contributing to something larger than yourself.

At Community Kitchens Northwest (CKNW), we have a tradition of holding hands and giving thanks before the meal. Depending on the size of the crowd, it may just be one person who give thanks for the group, or everyone around the circle sharing one thing they are thankful for. The connection that is made around this tradition goes deep; creating a space for gratitude for what we have and reminding us the sentiment of true community over a shared meal.

"Give thanks for this meal...and to the farmers who grew this food...and the cooks who prepared it into the delicious meal we are about to eat." This is what one student at the Interagency Academy high school gave thanks for after taking a field trip to the Rainier Beach Urban Farm and Wetlands and seeing what he described as "what REAL food is -- the food we are supposed to be eating.”

Many of our students will tell us that they do not eat as a family at home, mostly because parents are out working at dinner time. There are many studies that document a positive impact on children who eat as a family. The list of benefits are impressive, surely enough to move it up on the list of priorities. According to an article in the Journal of American Medical Association, children who ate more meals as a family had a decrease in tobacco, alcohol and marijuana use, higher grade point average, higher self-esteem, and less depressive and suicidal behavior. Another study showed that children who ate more meals as a family had less incidence of obesity. Often it's not the meal itself that makes the difference, it's the intention behind it. Parents who prioritize this valuable time together create a space to have conversation and sharing which leads to stronger communication and a deeper sense of bonding.

If we know this to be true in the context of a family meal, imagine what is happening to us as a community when we share a meal together. Imagine if our community meals could reduce crime, drug abuse and increase job security in our communities. As we get more connected to each other and the land where our food comes from, we begin to have a greater appreciation for each other, our food and environment. Coming together to prepare and share these community meals could very well be a point of healing. This would truly be magical.

Young adults cook together with Community Kitchens Northwest.

Cluck, Cluck!

Translation: Thank You!

We had a great time at this year's Chicken Coop and Urban Farm tour. Those of you who joined us might have seen the baby goats, turkey poult, brooding chickens, crafty coops made from reusable materials, unique gardening techniques like hugelkultur and aquaponics, and many inviting edible food gardens all around Seattle. Thank you for joining us for such a special day!

Thank you Walt's Organic Fertilizer and Portage Bay Grange for being great sponsors and to our wonderful hosts. We hope you can join us again next July – maybe it will be your turn to be a host.

Yellowwood Farm earned the Frugal Urban Farmer award and showed it off during our Chicken Coop and Urban Farm Tour on July 12.
Don’t Let Your Garden Fade Away

Sharon Siehl, Garden Program Director

August and September signal the last summer days, providing a glimpse of autumn. But it doesn’t mean the garden season is ending—it’s ready to gear up for fall and winter planting!

- Enjoy the bounty—harvest the fruits of your late-summer garden. Continuing to harvest cucumbers and squash while they are small will promote an additional late-season harvest.
- In August, direct sow early fall crops such as greens and radishes, and overwintering crops such as cabbage, broccoli and spinach.
- In September, sow more overwintering vegetables such as beets, cilantro, snow peas and endive.
- Be on the look-out for powdery mildew and blight—harvest fruits immediately to eat.
- Cover soil with nutrient-rich compost. Warmer soil temperatures will help activate helpful fungi and bacteria for healthy soil.

Learn more in our fun hands-on classes, such as Planting the Fall and Winter Garden and Composting 101.

For more tips, including what to do in the kitchen, refer to our new Maritime Northwest Garden Guide, available on our website, at our Harvest Fair on September 6 or at local nurseries, book stores and the PCC.

Garden to Table

Zeaxanthin Zucchini Brownies

Laura McGrath, Community Kitchens Northwest Program Specialist

It is August and I have fully settled into summer in the Northwest. The warmth of the season will continue on into September, but the feeling of exhilaration that came with the budding and blossoming in my garden has suddenly turned to horror. Once again, I have been overzealous with seeds and starts and find myself with more food than I can handle!

I vow not to let myself be bullied by zucchini and have started drafting plans for how I will take them out, one by one. These plans include zucchini relish, baked fries, crispy oven chips and curried zucchini soup. I am eager to try out a lasagna recipe that uses zucchini in lieu of pasta, but my most anticipated recipe of the season is actually sweet, not savory: zucchini brownies.

Zucchini brownies are a great way to satisfy a sweet tooth, while packing in vegetables (the kids will never know!). Zucchini are great source for manganese and vitamin C. They also contain the antioxidant nutrients lutein and zeaxanthin, which are good for the eyes, protecting against cataracts and macular degeneration. So you can at least pretend you are making a healthy dessert when you whip up this delicious treat.

Zucchini Brownies  Yield: 24 brownies

**Ingredients**
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 1 ½ cups sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups flour
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups shredded zucchini
- ½ cup chopped walnuts (optional)

**Instructions**

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 9x13 inch baking pan.

Mix oil, sugar and vanilla. Sift together flour, cocoa, baking soda and salt; add to sugar mixture. Fold in the zucchini and walnuts. Spread evenly into pan.

Bake for 25 to 30 minutes. For a sweeter version, add your favorite chocolate frosting after baking.
Hot Questions from the Garden Hotline
Embrace Succession Sowing and Food Preservation

Justin Maltry, Garden Hotline Educator

Q. My lettuce is bolting! What can I do to keep it going?
A. I’ll give you the bad news first. When a plant bolts, it is focusing its energy on reproducing and there is very little you can do at that point to convince it not to. Lettuce will end up tasting unpalatably bitter, unless, of course, you catch it early enough to throw it in a tasty salad. The good news is that you can extend your lettuce harvesting season with just a little planning. Succession sowing is a technique where instead of sowing a whole bed or patch of one crop at one time, you spread out your seed sowing over weeks and months. This way, instead of everything maturing at once and then bolting, you will have a little to harvest every week or two. It’s also helpful to keep in mind that leafy greens like lettuce and kale do well in shadier spots where the cooler temperatures will help keep them from bolting before you’re ready to harvest. Bolting can actually be helpful, however, if you really enjoyed a certain lettuce variety and want to save the seed for next season. It’s all in the perspective!

Q. I’m harvesting so much food that I can’t eat it fast enough! What can I do with it all?
A. Gardeners often become experts at food preservation for this very reason. It makes the enjoyment of the harvest season last into the winter months. Greens like chard and kale can be blanched and frozen, making them easy to store. Tomatoes and cucumbers are great candidates for canning and pickling. Consider taking one of Seattle Tilth’s food preservation classes to learn about canning and pickling your surplus.

Food banks also love receiving fresh produce, so donating your extra veggies is a great option. Contact the Garden Hotline and we can help you find one near you and help you figure out all your gardening dilemmas.
Learn, Grow, Take a Class!

Three prices are listed for each class: for the general public, for Seattle Tilth members and for two members of a household taking the class together. For example: $45 (non-member)/$35 (member)/$68 (household). Become a member through our website or use the form on page 7. Advanced registration and payment are required for classes. Class details and registration information are found on our website under the “Learn” tab or by scanning the QR code. Questions? Call (206) 633-0451 ext. 128.

Class venue:
GSC: Good Shepherd Center, 4649 Sunnyside Ave N, Seattle
BGP: Bradner Gardens Park, 1730 Bradner Place S, Seattle
VSP: Victor Steinbreuck Park, 2001 Western Ave, Seattle

Organic Gardening
Secrets of Companion Planting, $36/$25/$54
Saturday, Aug. 2; 10 a.m.-noon, BGP

Organic Pest Management, $36/$25/$54
Saturday, Aug. 2; 2-4 p.m., BGP

Save Seeds, $36/$25/$54
Wednesday, Aug. 20; 6-8 p.m., BGP
Thursday, Sept. 4; 6-8 p.m., GSC

Planting for Wildlife, $36/$25/$54
Thursday, Sept. 4; 6-8 p.m., BGP

Comprehensive Organic Gardener, $275/$235
Wednesdays, Sept. 10-Oct. 1; 7-9 p.m., GSC
Saturdays, Sept. 13-27; 10 a.m.-3 p.m., GSC

Kitchen Classes
Make Herbal Infusions, $45/$35/$68
Thursday, Aug. 21; 6:30-8:30 p.m., GSC

Basic Canning 101, $45/$35/$68
Saturday, Aug. 23; 10 a.m.-noon, GSC
Thursday, Sept. 11; 6-8 p.m., GSC

Pickles and Fermentation, $45/$35/$68
Saturday, Aug. 23; 2-4 p.m., GSC
Thursday, Sept. 18; 6:30-8:30 p.m., GSC

Urban Livestock
Beekeeping 301: Harvest Honey and Winterize Your Hive, $36/$25/$54
Thursday, Aug. 14; 6:30-8:30 p.m., GSC

Raise City Goats, $36/$25/$54
Saturday, Sept. 13; 10 a.m.-noon, Madrona private residence

Native Bees: Introduction and Field Study, $45/$35/$68
Saturday, Sept. 13; 10 a.m.-1 p.m., BGP

City Chickens 101, $40/$30/$60
Saturday, Sept. 20; 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., GSC

Backyard Beekeeping 101, $36/$25/$54
Saturday, Sept. 27; 10 a.m.-noon, GSC

Apartment & Container Gardening
Herb Gardening in Containers, FREE
Thursday, Aug. 5; 5:30-7 p.m., VSP

Grow Edible and Ornamental Flowers in Containers, FREE
Wednesday, Aug. 13; 5:30-7 p.m., VSP

Composting for Apartment Dwellers, FREE
Tuesday, Aug. 19; 5:30-7 p.m., VSP

Fall and Winter Gardening in Containers, FREE, Wednesday, Aug. 27; 5:30-7 p.m., VSP

Kids Dig It
Summer camps
You can still sign-up for end-of-summer fun and learning.

School Tours
When the kids go back to school, tell their teachers about Seattle Tilth school tours.

Permaculture & Sustainable Landscapes
Grow Fruit in Small Spaces, $36/$25/$54
Wednesday, Aug. 6; 6:30-8:30 p.m., BGP

Intro to Permaculture, $45/$35/$68
Saturday, Aug. 9; 2-5 p.m., BGP

Start Your Fall and Winter Garden, $36/$25/$54
Saturday, Aug. 16; 10 a.m.-noon, GSC

Build Unique Raised Beds, $45/$35/$68
Saturday, August 16; 2-5 p.m., GSC

Grow Edible Perennials: Nuts and Berries, $36/$25/$54
Thursday, Aug. 28; 6-8 p.m., GSC