

# Permaculture Cairns Newsletter

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES WITH SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR 10 YEARS



**Care for the Earth, Care for people, Fair share the excess**

Permaculture Cairns Incorporated Web Site: [www.permaculturecairns.org.au](http://www.permaculturecairns.org.au)

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April**

**Meeting will be held on FaceBook and Youtube, more information to come**

## **AGENDA**

**Welcome to all and Info on upcoming local events.**

**6:00 PM - 6:30 PM**

Pre-meeting set up (We are learning as I go so this will be interesting)

**6:30 PM - 6:35 PM**

Meeting start – Introduction and upcoming events by Craig Phillipson

**6:35 PM - 6:55 PM**

First Speaker – Jenny Tresize will show a few ways to make cheese

**6:55 PM - 7:15 PM**

Second Speaker – Craig Phillipson will show the easiest food plants to grow in a tropical garden in Cairns

**7:15 PM – 7:30 PM**

Answering questions and meeting ends

## *The Tropical Veggie Patch*

### *Gardening in the hot, wet, humid Tropics*

The weather is still hot during the day but seedlings need to be undercover out of the heavy rain anyway. Most of the seedlings I planted earlier have been planted out in the garden and are growing well. I had to pot them on because of the continual rain so they were quite big plants when finally planted.

**Microgreens/Sprouts** - Give Microgreens or Sprouts a try they are easy, fast and tasty and don't take up much space on the kitchen bench near a window with sunlight. Fresh greens at your fingertips everyday. Grow a plant on like Sunflowers and collect the seed for next year or later in the year. Bok choy, rocket, radish, mung beans and coriander are easy to save as well.

**Tropical Perennial Food Plants**. All the tropical perennial veggie plants are going fantastic, so lush with the rain. If you havnt got any in the garden, now is the time to make them part of your landscaping. Grow these in the part shade under fruit trees, Sambung, Brazilian Spinach, Okinawa Spinach, Rungia and Lebanese Cress. Others to plant now are the Timor Lettuce, the Moringa tree, Aikiba shrubs all these have edible leaves with valuable nutrients and some have medicinal properties as well.

Grow a hedge of Sweet Leaf, keep it to one metre high and harvest the lovely tasty high protein leaves all year round. Other easy to grow food crops for the tropics, cocoyam, taro, cassava, sweet potato, Ceylon spinach, kang kong so much to eat and you can grow it in your backyard.

**Wet season soil improvements**. - Lots of trees and shrubs need pruning at this time of year, so there is a huge amount of leaves and branches to use for mulching and for adding to the compost bins or banana circle. If it looks a bit untidy, cover with hay.

**What to plant now** -Direct seed leaf amaranth, corn, beans, bok choy, gai choy, cucumbers, pumpkin, radish, melons, egg plant, tomatoes, kale, beetroot, carrots, broccolenni, womb bok and watercress.

**Herbs** - all the basil, Mexican tarragon, mints, garlic chives, chives, lemon thyme, thyme, oregano and spices turmeric, ginger, galangal, cardamom, Vanilla, Pandan and mother of all herbs.

**Grow some flowers for the birds and bees**, salvia, marigold, coleus, zinnia, sunflowers, basil all sorts, cosmos, dianthus, sun jewels, five in one herb, bees love flowering native plants, flowers on palms, bananas, shrubs and trees.

# Syntropic Agriculture and Permaculture



I've been asked few times what is syntropic farming and whether we apply the syntropic farming methods into our permaculture gardening, courses and designs. Short answer: YES! Then comes the next question, what is the difference? Or is there any? Note: apart from the quoted texts in this article, any views or opinions are my own.

First of all, let's get into the bottom of it and find out what the word syntropy actually means. It actually comes from Greek syn=together, tropos=tendency and according to the Wiktionary, the free dictionary (wiktionary.org): *"It was first coined by the mathematician Luigi Fantappiè, in 1941, in order to describe the mathematical properties.... As noted by Viterbo, syntropy is "the tendency towards energy concentration, order, organization and life".... In contradistinction to "entropy," syntropy is a result of retrocausality leading to persistent and more complex organization..... Buckminster Fuller developed a definition in relation to "whole systems" as "A tendency towards order and symmetrical combinations, designs of ever more advantageous and orderly patterns. Evolutionary cooperation. Anti-entropy"*

The definition in the dictionary.com says: *Syntropy: The psychological state of wholesome association with others.*

Now let's get into the syntropic farming. Ernst Goetsch is the founder of the Syntropic agriculture movement. *Syntropic agriculture is all about ecological and sustainable natural farming and gardening methods to improve the soil quality and increase the yield* and so is the Permaculture farming, too! Permaculture is about creating ecologically sustainable human environments and Syntropic gardening and farming is a permanent part of every Permaculture Design.

Bill Mollison and David Holmgren are founders of the Permaculture movement. In his book "Introduction to Permaculture", Bill Mollison says: *"Permaculture is a design system for creating sustainable human environments. The word itself is a contraction not only of permanent agriculture but also of permanent culture, as cultures cannot survive for long without a sustainable agricultural base and land use ethic. On one level, permaculture deals with plants, animals, buildings, and infrastructures (water, energy, communications). However, permaculture is not about these elements themselves, but rather about the relationships we can create between them by the way we place them in the landscape. The aim is to create systems that are ecologically-sound and economically viable, which provide for their own needs, do not exploit or pollute, and are therefore sustainable in the long term."*

Both systems, the syntropic agriculture and permaculture, are working with the nature and not against it, both are creating food forests with abundance of food, both are planing and mapping before planting and choose the right plants and both systems are about growing food naturally. It does not matter whether you call it "chopping and dropping"(permaculture term) or you say "pruning and using it as a mulch"(syntropic term)

I also love to mention here, that it is all about the natural farming methods which already Masanobu Fukuoka (1913-2008) re-introduced and used on his farm since he left his scientist job in the city and went back to his home village. Masanobu was a Japanese scientist, farmer and philosopher celebrated for his natural farming and re-vegetation of desertified lands. He was an inspiration for many and his natural food and lifestyle movement went way beyond farming. I highly recommend his book "One Straw Revolution"

In saying that, it doesn't matter what term you use or prefer. It is important that more and more people are interested and are willing to learn about the sustainable living choices we all can make every day to improve the quality of our food and quality of our life. Everyone who tried a home grown fruit or veggie knows what I am talking about Observing the nature and working with the nature is the key to a healthy and happy future of ourselves and of our planet. Its so simple! We can show you how we do it. Visit our website and contact us or register to get informed about our workshops and courses or send us an email if you would like to transform your front or backyard into a food forest with an abundance of food and only minimal work required.

***"Though the problems of the world are increasingly complex, the solutions remain embarrassingly simple."* – Bill Mollison (1928-2016)**



**FUNGAL WIZARDRY 101 FW101 - only \$49**  
**1 HOUR INTRO HANDS ON WEBINAR**  
**(INCLUDES MAKE AT HOME MAIL OUT KIT)**

Join Urban Culture on our new virtual tour of Australia to bring you a wonderful short course of hands-on skill development in gourmet mushroom cultivation! It only takes us an hour to teach you how to grow your own mushrooms at home in this interactive workshop. You will receive instruction on growing: Oyster, Shiitake, Pioppino, Lions Mane, Reishi and many other varieties of mushrooms using our super simple low tech methods.

This is our introductory 1hr hands on based workshop that covers the home scale production of mushrooms from grain spawn, using non-sterile techniques that require no special equipment. You will learn the steps involved to produce mushrooms from grain spawn by creating fruiting bags utilising various substrates. We will teach you to create your own fruiting blocks using five different urbanly available substrates: cardboard, paper pellets, hardwood pellets, spent coffee grounds and straw.

These types of mushrooms can be grown indoors in small spaces so it doesn't matter if you live in a van, an apartment, a farm or a mansion. This is the easiest, highest success rate low tech method around. Mushroom growing is for everyone!

**INCLUDED IN THE TICKET PRICE:**

- Presentation of terminology, the cultivation cycle, mushroom varieties, food sources and our very own method of cultivation

- Course materials available to you online for simple repetition of the work we do on the day
- Create and take home your very own oyster mushroom fruiting kit at the workshop. This kit will give you your first crops of delicious oyster mushrooms within weeks of doing the workshop and is capable of producing over a kilo of mushrooms over its life span. (VALUE: \$25)
- Lifetime membership to the Fungal Wizardry 101 group on Facebook for ongoing support and education in your mushroom cultivation journey (VALUE: PRICELESS!)

Go to <https://www.urbankulture.com.au/event-details/mushroom-to-mushroom-m2m-live-webinar?fbclid=IwAR27iADNWOZEDOP23Y9asfq-jAelQR4HBMG8D5KFttpLeWCMVv9aQ7RESwg> to book.

### *Some interesting You tube sites*

*Charles Dowdling (on Instagram as well) No Dig organic gardening in UK but what he does is very interesting. Lots of information. He grows to sell the produce all year and has some good tips for a market gardener." Even though it is in the Uk just switch the months around June is their summer whereas June is our growing season.*

*Geoff Lawton has lots of videos on his "Permaculture Institute Website*