

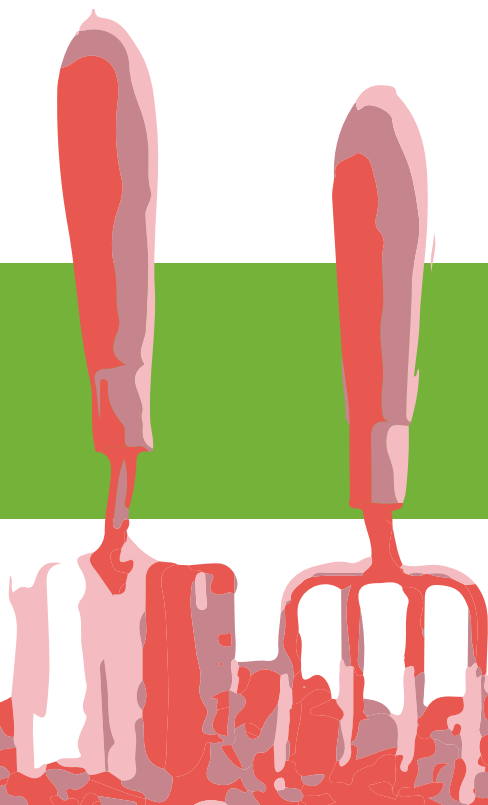


UGAIN

Urban **G**Ardens for the social
INtegration of migrants

Activity:

Permaculture garden





Joint sustainable food crop production following permaculture principles.



“Since the operation of the permaculture garden is very time-consuming and labour-intensive, good agreements between the garden users are necessary. Because of the many hours working together the users and helpers get to know each other better.”

Activity file

1. Name of the activity

Permaculture garden

2. Type of activity

Gardening

3. Description of the activity

There is a group of people who are engaged in vegetable cultivation according to the rules of permaculture, which means that “they work with nature and not against nature”. There is no use of pesticides or fungicides, and no use of artificial fertilizers. Plant production is carried out with green manure and natural materials as well as with suitable plants. Everything fits together and also protects against pests. Water is also managed in such a way that it corresponds to the natural conditions. As it is one of the most labour-intensive activities of the whole community garden, the help of the refugee family and other garden users becomes very valuable. The

harvested vegetables are almost exclusively used for common cooking activities in the community garden or for the helpers of the garden itself. Surpluses are also distributed within the church community.

4. Competences and training needed

Compared to other activities, the basic knowledge and requirements are very high. There is a core group of people interested and working in the permaculture area. There is one person who has not been at the garden long who brings the highest technical knowledge and experience in the field of permaculture. He is an absolute expert, giving some suggestions of themes to the garden, but he does not organise everything. Everyone else must always learn new things in order to further develop permaculture.

5. Steps for the implementation of the activity

- This is a very specific activity in gardening. Starting a permaculture garden requires high investment in soil preparation. Explicit knowledge and expertise are indispensable.
- The high amount of labour involved in extensive cultivation must be considered. Since one key person cannot always be there, it is important that the quickest basic knowledge and specific skills are learned by several garden users.
- Once a core team has been formed, it is important to organise the necessary labour-intensive activities so they are carried out during the season. During seasonal peaks, simple activities can also be carried out by additional helpers such as garden visitors or interested migrants.
- Each year the experience of the previous years can be used. Simultaneously, every garden user is free to participate in the permaculture Garden with his/her own ideas (e.g. new crops, alternative cultivation methods).

6. Materials and methods

- **Infrastructure:** The success of this activity from a gardener's point of view depends strongly on the preconditions. What needs to be done here is to create soil fertility development and have a basic knowledge on permaculture and for this you need a considerable amount of expert knowledge. If people experiment themselves it will take a longer time to establish the plants.
- **Materials and human resources:** A lot of materials from outside the garden are required (e.g.; garden tools, organic straw; wood waste and horse manure from organic farms. Specific experience, for example and understanding of activated carbon is needed. Because of a high amount of manual labour (e.g. soil working, tillage, loosen the soil) ergonomic equipment and knowledge on how to use it is welcome.
- **Time/Workload:** The permaculture garden is an important part of the whole community garden. The amount of time and workload is very high depending on the seasonal work

activities. Since the main people responsible for the permaculture garden do not have time every day to take care of the garden, the family living in the garden is involved in maintaining the garden. This responsibility is very important for them and increases empowerment and integration.

- **Costs:** High investments cost in setting up the garden due to high demands on soil quality and fertility. The foil greenhouse, material and other facilities concerning the permaculture section were donated by horticultural companies or procured at a reduced price.

7. Learning outcomes for the participants

Garden user in the permaculture section: "My learning curve regarding permaculture and alternative cultivation methods is very steep. Three years ago, I knew almost nothing about permaculture." In order to increase my knowledge very quickly and easily, seminars with external experts are organised and there is an exchange with other permaculture gardeners in Hamburg and surroundings. Both, the accommodated migrant family and migrants visiting the garden, have no experience with sustainable permaculture cultivation methods. The handling of nature and the value of food is taught. The freedom in the garden to design their own projects and, for example, to use their own parcel for cultivation, offers migrants a responsible task and gives them the opportunity to make their own decisions.

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