

Lyons Community Farm Project nonprofit org.

Members- Vasi Smith, Adrean Kirk, Florine Valerie, Tyler Stellern

Presenting to the Town Board of Lyons

Mission -

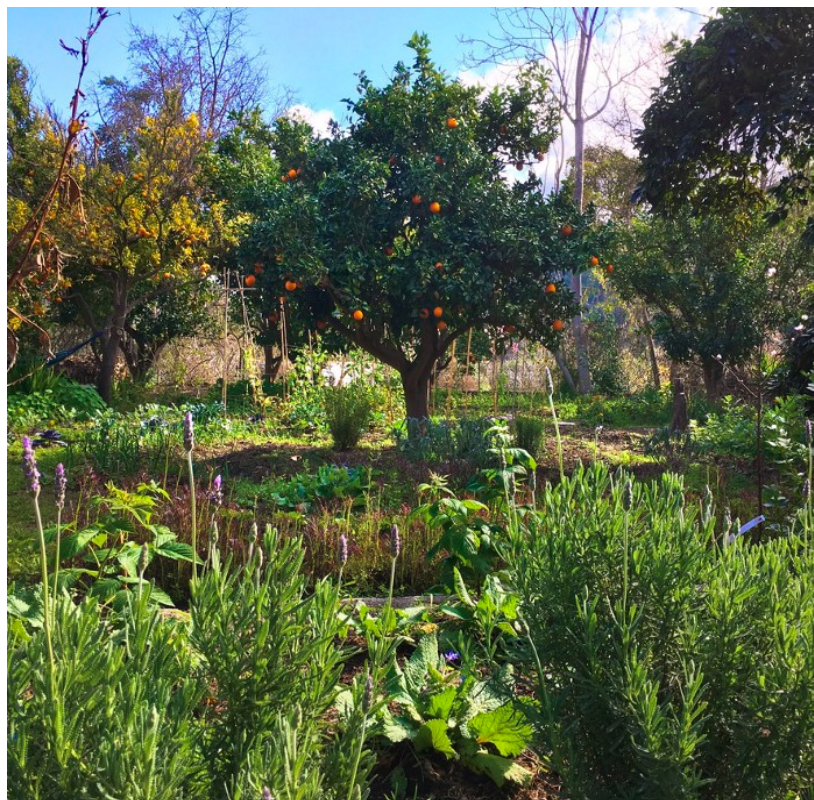
Through creating regenerative ecosystems in our community, we will create a space where food such as fruits, vegetables, herbs, nuts, and eggs can be enjoyed in creative ways by everyone. By spurring interest, involvement, and education for local and sustainable fruit, vegetable, nut, and herb production, we will develop greater food resiliency for the Lyons community and beyond, supporting families and individuals in need.

Vision -

Creating a sustainable organization which provides greater access to quality, organic food, and education around regenerative agriculture and regenerative living for everyone in our community and beyond.

Practices -

We use permaculture and regenerative agriculture practices to help nourish the Earth as the Earth nourishes us. Below is a picture of a food forest, something like what we intend to create in Lyons.



Current Goals -

- Hosting a Permaculture Design Certification Course for the Lyons Community which is accessible to all who are interested, regardless of financial situation.
- Planting a community food forest and children's garden for the community of Lyons.
- Restarting and supporting a free seed bank in the Lyons Library.
- Applying for grants and organizing fundraisers to help us accomplish our goals.

Future Goals -

- To secure a grant which would allow us to obtain land and set up at least two greenhouses. This would permit us to grow food and herbs year round and to offer classes about plants that don't typically grow in Lyons such as figs, citrus trees, bananas, avocados, etc.
- To find appropriate land to house animals such as chickens and ducks which can provide eggs and support the soil, and alpacas-whose manure can help support the gardens and who are friendly enough to have visits from the community.

Funding -

- We have started a website on the Square platform to take donations and share our events with the community. You can find it here - <https://lyons-community-farm-project.square.site/>
- We have been grateful to receive offers of manure, mushroom logs, and plants from members of our Facebook group. Most recently, Shellie Honemann donated her time to help us with the graphic design of a logo.
- We hope to eventually sell plants and guilds of plants to folks who want to create food forests in their own yards. These plants would be grown on private property, not on the buyout land. Selling merchandise with our logo and offering free outdoor movies on sustainability topics for the community are other ideas.
- We have applied for the Goodwill Community Grant and are researching other grants that would be appropriate for projects like ours.

Volunteers -

- We have a group of over 90 folks who are interested in our project on the Lyons Community Farm Project Facebook group. We will post work days and events there.
- We have also signed up with Lyons Volunteers, and will let them know when we have bigger community work days.

Requests from Town of Lyons -

- We request help around water from the Town Board.
 - 1.) We are asking for a spigot to be placed on property number 319 5th Street, using the meter pit that was discovered by the Town Public Works team. This area was originally intended by the town to be an orchard and we are helping to make this happen, but we do need water!
 - 2.) We are asking to be able to pay town rate for the water consumed on plot 315 and 319 5th Street, since we are creating spaces that will serve the Lyons Community.
- We are exploring no till methods of soil preparation and request permission to temporarily use animals such as goats or pigs to help turn the soil, for no more than two weeks and utilizing a temporary fence.
- We request permission to put bee hives on a part of parcel 315. It would be placed away from where many people would tread. Tyler Stellern would take care of the bees. He would lead educational workshops on bees for children and adults.
- We could use the town's help taking down a dead tree on the back part of lot 315, and turning it into mulch which can be added back to the land-either this year or next.

Thank you so much for your time and attention!!


On the next page is an article about the Basalt Food Park. Basalt is a small town in the Colorado Rockies, dealing with similar challenges that we would be facing. If they can do it, we can do it!!

<https://www.aspentimes.com/news/local/edible-garden-blossoms-into-one-of-basalts-most-intriguing-parks/>

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Edible garden blossoms into one of Basalt's most intriguing parks

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Basalt Town Manager Ryan Mahoney checks out currants at the edible garden in Ponderosa Park. He said he stops by often to 'graze.'

Scott Condon/The Aspen Times

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While residents have bickered for the better part of this decade over the size of the Basalt River Park, a “weird other park” has blossomed just a few hops and skips away.

An edible garden at Ponderosa Park has gotten renewed attention since Ryan Mahoney took over as town manager in June 2017. Sidewalks and paths have been improved. Trees and flowers intended for bees and other pollinators have been added. An inviting split rail fence replaced an 8-foot chain link variety. The initial plan to let it have a totally wild feel was tweaked to allow more weeding and maintenance — but no pesticide use.

“We don’t spray at all,” Mahoney said. “The idea is you can come and eat right off the plant.”

The offerings are impressive. Black raspberries are just starting to ripen. All sorts of currants are available in abundance. Apple trees are loaded for coming months.

“ “Some people still ask, ‘Is it OK to pick it?’” Stephanie Syson Garden co-founder

Wild rose and other medicinal plants such as black beauty elder and sky blue sage make the site pop with pink and purple.

There are Harko nectarines, Chinese apricots and Blue Damson plum trees.

The edible garden is on west end of Ponderosa Park. It's a deceptively large site although less than an acre tucked between Basalt convenience gas stations of Valero and 7-Eleven, just off the Basalt Avenue roundabout. It's next to a high-traffic pedestrian corridor and within earshot of the gurgling Roaring Fork River.

"It's relaxing here. It's by the river. It's a great town park," said David Huysman. He stopped by the park while walking to the nearby bus stop on Highway 82. "There's lots of great stuff here."

He's collected spices for dinner and chives for tea in past visits. He's gained extensive knowledge of the park's offering, obvious and hidden. Many of the plants have signs or placards with their name and use.

There are 80 different varieties of edible and medicinal plants in the park, according to Stephanie Syson, a plant expert who helped create the edible garden in 2014 with Lisa DiNardo, the town of Basalt's former horticulturist. She credits Basalt with taking a progressive step.

"It was the fifth edible park in the U.S. when we built it," Syson said.

It is one of a handful of gardens featured in "The Community Food Forest Handbook," a recently released book by Catherine Bukowski and John Munsell.

It helps people understand where food comes from, even though it can be a difficult concept to grasp. It's not a community garden, where participants tend to their individual plot of whatever they want to plant. It's not like a commercial orchard, where one type of fruit tree is typically grown. Instead, it's a public place where food is growing that can be picked and eaten by anyone.

"I can't tell you how many times I've had people ask me if the raspberries were poisonous," Syson said. She assures them the raspberries wouldn't be in an edible park if they weren't OK to eat.

Nevertheless, some people have to adapt to the concept of walking into a garden and pulling fruit off plants they don't own.

"Some people still ask, 'Is it OK to pick it?'" Syson said. Numerous signs assure visitors it's cool.

One of her personal favorite plants is the Chinese gooseberry. Many people don't like gooseberries because thorns make them hard to harvest and the berries have a tart taste. But the Chinese variety is more like a green grape, she said.

Syson continues to advise the town on additions to the park. Tim Vogel, from the town of Basalt's gardens, parks and forestry department, sought her advice on what types of trees to add. On Arbor Day, Vogel and fifth-graders from Basalt Middle School planted two apple and two plum trees on the southern end of the property.

"There is room in here to grow," Vogel said. All it will take is expansion of the irrigation system. A master plan outlines future steps.

Syson said the essentials are a front entrance arbor, an information kiosk and an open-air outdoor structure for education.

She said the edible garden is a great place to take students. She estimated she's been involved with 200 tours or presentations of Basalt's garden. She's enthused about the garden's future given the town government's renewed interest in the park. She suspects the debate over the development and green space at the Basalt River Park, the former Pan and Fork Mobile Home Park site, overshadowed development of the Ponderosa Park site.

"It was kind of the weird other park," she said with a laugh.

Mahoney is a regular visitor of the weird other park.

"Every time I do a bike ride by here, I stop on by and graze," he said.

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