

Organic Gardening and Composting

February 23
10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
\$85.00

An organic green thumb In the North

This workshop will awaken the organic gardener in you while it is freezing outside. N. W. Ontario has a long winter and a short growing season, 10 weeks to get everything in- and then out of the ground . Let's prepare now to realize those garden dreams. We will discuss the benefits of gardening organically and what it involves. You will learn about choosing seeds and plants, practical tool choices, season-extension methods, and regional challenges and success stories. Plant some seeds to take home. You will receive a handbook full of resources and tips from a variety of local organic gardeners. Learn the basics of soil building, natural fertilizers and pest control and composting. Problems associated with composting will also be outlined and solutions will be provided. No yard for a composter? Don't despair! We'll help you start your own vermicomposter. For the seriously sustainable types, we will also give you the dirt on "humanure" and take a look at the Eco Centre's composting toilets. That's right: how to compost our own nutrient rich "waste" and why we should embrace it.

Composting makes a lot of sense: it's good for your garden, it helps cutting back on your garbage, and it's easy.

co-ordinators: Karen Copeland and Lucie Lavoie

As a young environmentalist, Karen came to organic gardening first through the act of composting. She set down roots in 1998 southwest of Thunder Bay, providing food for home and the Country Market. In 2005, Karen co-founded Cattails Farm, which ran a trial Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project, providing produce to eight subscriber/members, followed by a 16-family CSA in 2006. Karen dreams of a day when part of every yard is devoted to growing nutritious fruits and vegetables, much like is done in other countries, helping people to re-connect with the source of their food, as well as acquiring independence from a food system which is lacking in nutrition, taste and soul. She believes growing food locally and organically is one of the most important investments we can make for future generations and for the planet.

Lucie Lavoie considers herself an 'urban farmer', growing most of her own food using intensive organic gardening techniques on a number of city lots. Intensive gardening is only possible because of high soil fertility, thanks to the mountain of compost that is worked into the garden beds each spring. Lucie has been working with a number of environmental non-profit organizations over the past twenty years. Her interests include schoolyard greening, school and community food gardens, naturalization of urban green spaces, and stream stewardship.