Successes & Failures of Various Sustainable Farm Techniques in Urban Gardening

FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL ARBORETUM

WASHINGTON YOUTH GARDEN

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Washington Youth Garden – Garden CoManagers

Agenda

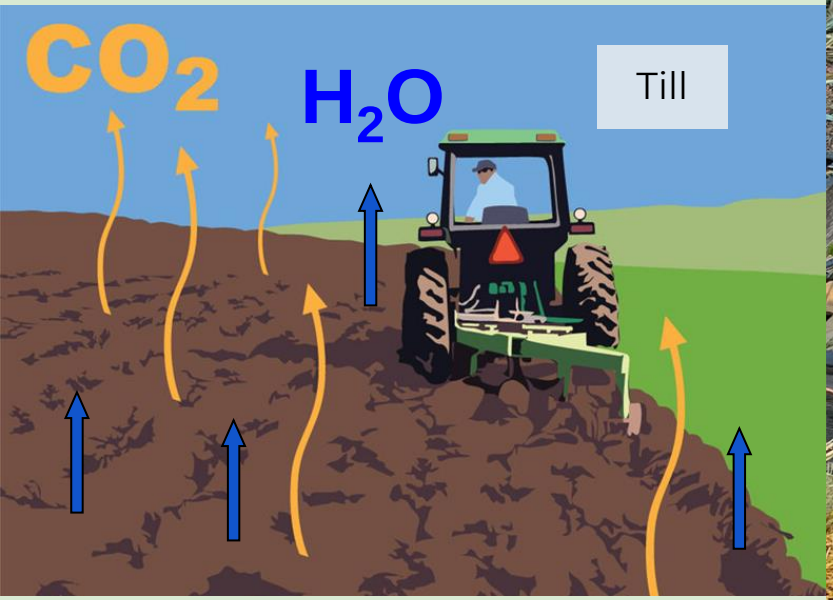
- Check-in
- Sustainable Practices
  - No-till/Deep mulch compost/Cover Crop
  - Companion Planting
  - Understanding Your Pests
  - Vertical Planting
- Q&A

How to best care for the land in the most time-efficient way?

Sustainable Gardening Practices

- No-till
- Mulch
- Crop rotation
- Companion planting
- Physical barriers (row cover, netting, fencing)
- Perennials and native plants
- Understanding pests and challenges
- Vertical growing

No-till



Deep Mulch Compost

Cover Crops

Sun hemp

Helpful for Summer with no maintenance

Buckwheat

Rye

-Over-wintering
-Pea shoot snack in spring!

Field peas

Companion planting

Tomatoes
Marigolds
Basil

Bush Beans
Cucumbers

Understanding Pests

- First…understanding your environment!
- Challenges: Climate Change, multiple life cycles in one season
- Successes: researching seeds of varieties of crops that are adaptable to your location & space, using multiple methods together (vertical planting), using physical barriers like row cover

Vine borer

Vertical Growing

- Space saver, increases air flow which helps with pests and fungus
- Maximizing space you have, choosing the right crops for your garden goal
- Trellis design/materials used
- Relationship with companion planting
- Working with nature/succession planning


Material Resources
KOBALT

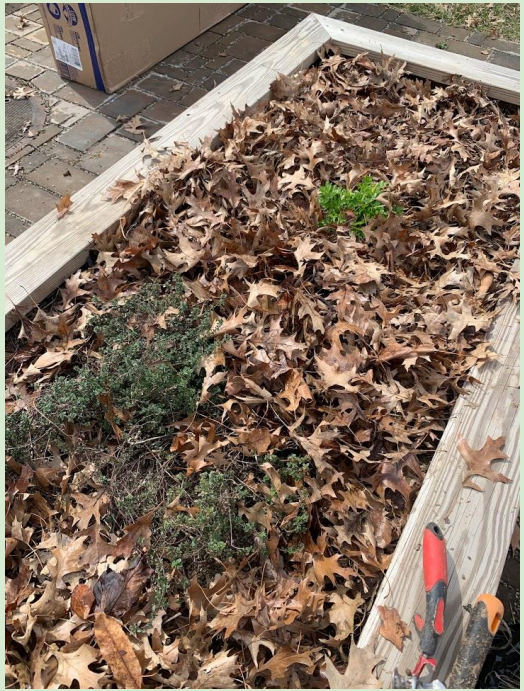
- **COMPOST:**
    - Veteran Compost $35/cubic yard + delivery fee https://www.veterancompost.com/our-products/
    - City of College Park: $28.00 per cubic yard including tax. Anyone (residents or non-residents) can purchase – If you have a truck we will load it, or you can dig your own. Mon-Fri 8:00-11:30 am & 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. https://www.collegeparkmd.gov/compost
- **TOPSOIL & MULCH:** Merrifield Garden Center; can deliver a maximum of 12 cubic yards on one truck https://www.merrifieldgardencenter.com/product-category/landscape-delivery/
- **HORSE MANURE:** Rock Creek Park Horse Center
- **BLOOM:** Class A composted humanure - DC's finest! https://bloomsoil.com/
- **STRAW BALES:** Todd Greenstone $8/bale if you pick up http://www.toddgreenstonecustomfarming.com/hay-and-straw-for-sale
- **SEEDS:** Share-a-Seed – Free seed exchange in DC; Instagram: @share_a_seed https://www.slowfooddc.org/share-a-seed

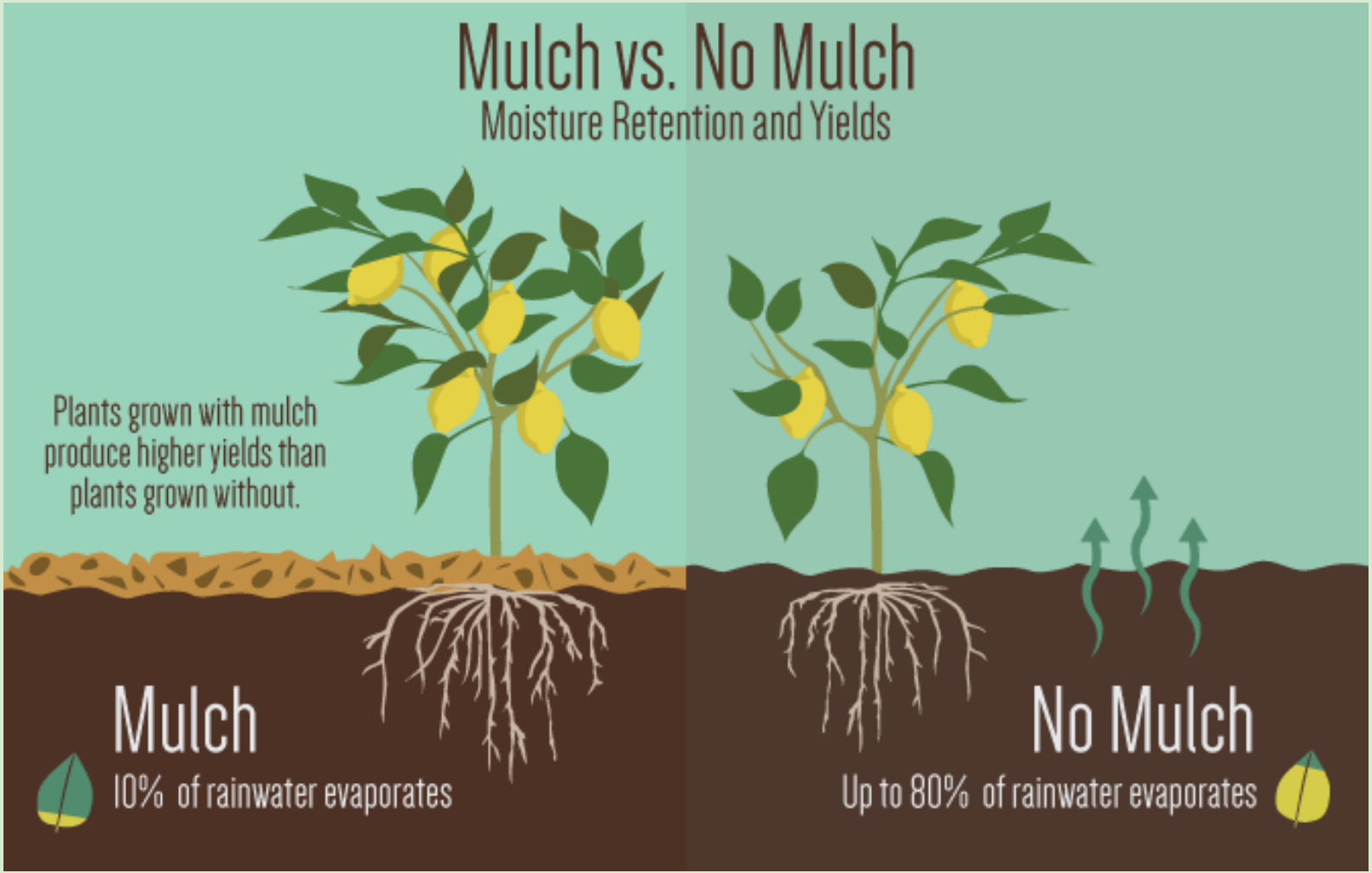
Community Resources

- For hands-on garden experience at WYG: We have volunteer hours Tues, Thurs, and Sat mornings 9-12pm starting in April
    - WYG does seedling/compost/straw donation every Spring & now Fall!
- Tool rentals: http://dugnetwork.org/garden-supplies-2/#Tool%20Rentals
- Slow Food, many other orgs do a seed swaps in the Spring & Fall (Plantita Power, DOL, DC Mutual Aid Apothecary)
- Monthly Outdoor Learning Gathering that are virtual in winter/in a different school garden and give practical tips on gardening and garden-based learning (find out about these through Sprout it Out and the google group)
- No-Till Growers resource

Q&A

Mulch

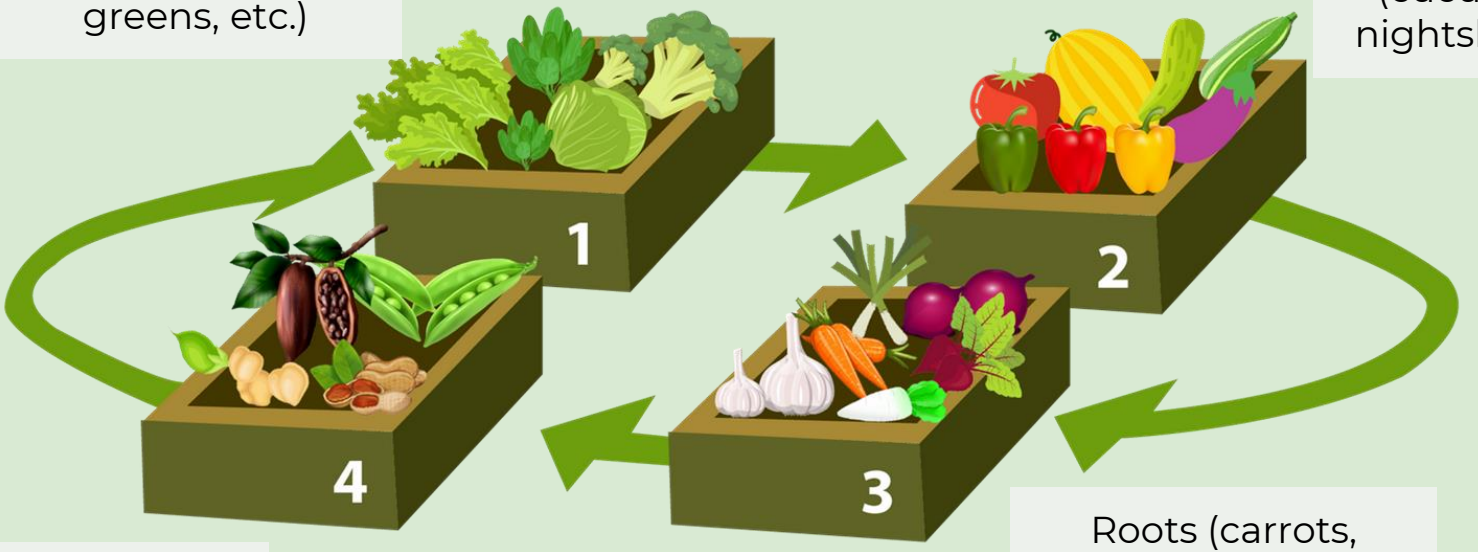



Mulch vs. No Mulch
Moisture Retention and Yields
Plants grown with mulch produce higher yields than plants grown without.
Mulch
10% of rainwater evaporates
No Mulch
Up to 80% of rainwater evaporates

Crop rotation

Brassicas (kale, broccoli, leafy greens, etc.)

Fruits (cucurbits/ nightshades)



Legumes (beans, peas, etc.)

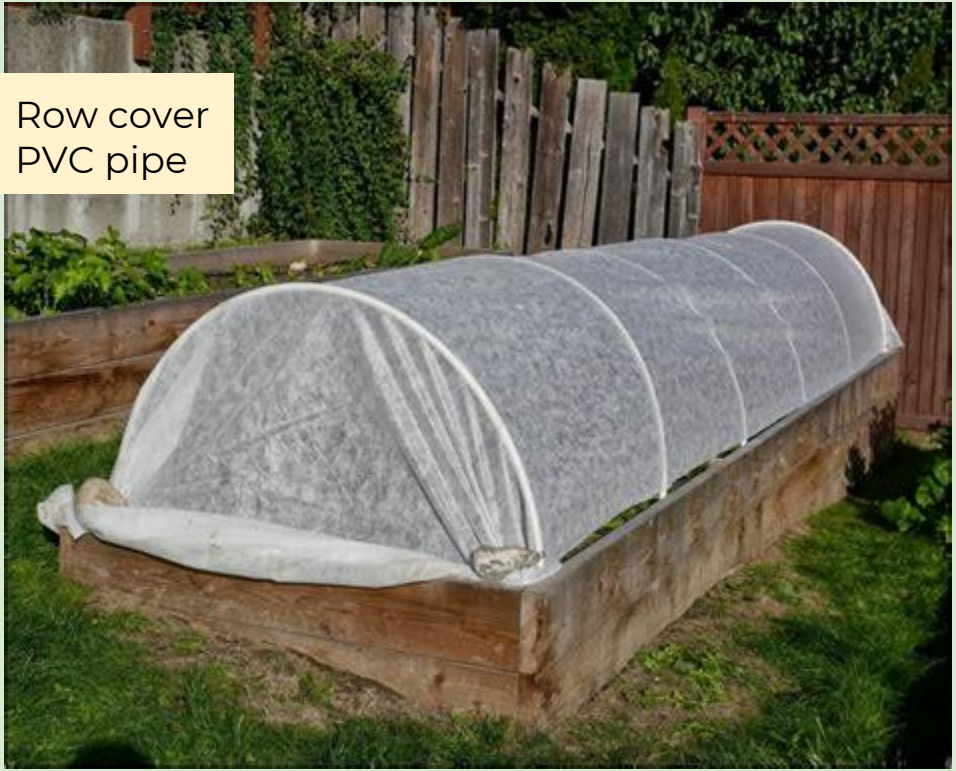
Roots (carrots, onions, garlic, etc.)

THE BENEFITS OF CROP ROTATION

1 Reduces pressure from pests and diseases.

2 Prevents exhausting soils. 3 Can help with weed control.

Physical barriers



Row cover
PVC pipe

Bird netting

Perennials and native plants

Asters

Echinacea (cone flower)

Asparagus

Sorrel

Nanking Cherry