

Food Friendly Yard Winter Email Gardening Course

Session 2 Site Selection and Planning

The first principle of Permaculture garden design is *Observe and Interact*. By taking the time to engage with nature we can design solutions that suit our particular situation. Of course, the middle of winter is not the ideal time to determine the amount of sunlight your property receives for growing food producing vegetables since the angle of the sun in winter is much lower and the trees do not have leaves which will shade your yard in the summer. However, it is good to get a start noticing the orientation of your yard north/south and you can observe slope and water movement as the snow begins to thaw. Also, take note of areas where the snow melts first. These are good spots to plant early blooming spring bulbs which provide much needed forage for pollinators. Late April/early May are good times to start sun mapping on your property.

This week's videos will present lots of ideas to consider as you begin to plan your gardens. These ideas are all useful but it's important not to be too overwhelmed juggling so many variables. The main thing is to make your best plan and get started. You will learn from experience and there is always opportunity to make changes as you *observe and interact* with your growing plants.

Your phone camera can be very useful in helping you keep records of sun and water movement. Taking pictures of areas at different times of day and throughout the seasons will allow you to have a better understanding of your property's micro climates. Your phone also has a compass that you can use to determine orientation. I have included an article on using a camera to map sun and shade for those of you who are tech talented.

Even if you feel you do not have "ideal" growing conditions there are ways to amend the soil, make smart plant choices, and use containers and structures to create opportunities. Many of these will be presented in up-coming sessions.

Videos: Determining Sun and Shade and other planning tips.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCYp1E3qQS0> Understanding plant labels

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqui7_nGrL8 Mapping sun exposure

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AiryMZWTgas> 5 tips for garden planning

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7HCLf0g-rA> Planning a garden for beginners

Articles:

<https://getbusygardening.com/how-to-determine-sun-exposure/> mapping sun exposure.

<https://104homestead.com/sun-map-101/> sun mapping 101

<https://www.mnn.com/your-home/organic-farming-gardening/blogs/how-make-sun-map-your-garden>
using a camera to map sun and shade