

Sustainability in the City



SUSTAINABILITY + URBAN FARMING & FOOD

Welcome!

.....to the inaugural issue of 'Sustainability In The City', a monthly newsletter presenting news, advice and information focusing on the basics of life in the city: growing and eating healthy food, and living in greater harmony with the environment.

Every issue of *Sustainability In The City* will feature informative articles, practical – and seasonal – advice, environmental news, and special offers, all aimed at helping and motivating people to **live smarter, healthier, and more sustainable lives.**

Cover story

FACING CLIMATE CHANGE

United We Stand, Divided We Die

Part 1 of an exclusive 2-part special report presenting the key impacts and challenges we face as a result of climate change – a battle we are fighting against ourselves for the very future of our and every other species.

We have a choice: make history, or become history.

→ [Read more](#)

September gardening tips

September is the start of the autumn growing season in Japan and it there is still time to get stuck into sowing and planting crops to provide food for the cooler months. Here's some key tips:

- Refresh soil in your pots, containers and garden. Mix in fertilizer as necessary.
- Clean and tidy your gardening tools.
- Pull out old/dead plants.
- Keep plants well watered, using greywater if possible.
- Decide what you are going to grow: shrubs, trees, fruit bushes, perennials, bulbs?
- Check seed catalogues and shops for seeds and seedlings.
- **Start planting!**

What to plant in September

Baby leaves	Broccoli
Gobou	Cabbage
Chinese cabbage	
Daikon	Mizuna
Lettuce	Onion
Radish	Rocket
Shiso	Shungiku
Spinach	Kabu
Parsley,	Chingensai,
And more..	

9 tips to keep your garden going while on vacation

Your bags are packed and you've got your tickets for that long awaited holiday. But what will happen to your plants while you are away? Here's **9 ways** to help ensure your plants are thriving when you return. Find out how to:

- Water well and mulch
- Automatic irrigation system
- Self-watering jugs
- Time your vacation.

→ [Read more](#)

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SPECIAL FEATURE: [How to grow lettuces](#)

FACE TO FACE: Building an appetite for organic food in Japan

P3 **Duco Delgorge**, founder of MIE PROJECT, a leading importer and supplier of top quality organic, natural, and fair trade products into Japan, discusses how his business is developing Japan's appetite for organic food. → See [P3](#)



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NEW SUBSCRIBER SIGN-UP PACKAGE

Join the Sustainability In The City mailing list and receive:

1. How to build a mini raised garden (right)
2. How to build a chain garden
3. 1 urban farming [Teacher/Parent Pack](#).

→ Simply mail info@businessgrow.net and ask to register!





GROWING ADVICE

VITAL VEGETABLES

How to grow amazing Lettuces



U R B A N

F A R M I N G

How to grow baby leaves

Baby leaves are very easy to grow and are great enjoyed in salads and as garnishes in gourmet dishes.

- WHEN TO GROW:** Spring, summer, autumn.
- HOW TO SOW:** Sow seeds at a depth of approximately 1 cm at spacings as specified on packet.
- WATERING:** Water to ensure soil stays damp.
- HARVESTING:** Leaves can be picked when 3-4 cms.
- NUTRIENTS:** Depends on specific type of leaf.

What's possible?

Grow food on balconies

Maximize your growing space by growing vegetables in planter boxes attached to your verandah. Braces can be purchased from home stores and some supermarkets.

For more ideas, search for 'Food Havens Tokyo' in your Facebook search bar.



Quick-click news & articles

Building fertile soil

Want to learn how to make super soil? This informative article outlines how to build fertile garden soil using leaves and other organic material, mulch, cover crops, and more. → [Read more](#)

Self-watering container blueprints – Whether you live in a dry climate or you lack the time you desire to consistently take a watering can to your container garden (or rooftop) plants, this garden project is for you. → [Read more](#)

8 vegetables and fruits you can grow indoors from scraps – Why buy when you can simply re-grow your own vegetables? Find out how – using nothing more than food scraps – you can re-grow old food into new! → [Read more](#)

10 ways to cut food waste – Every year, millions of tons of good food is thrown out, creating pollution, filling dump sites, and wasting valuable energy and resources. Here's **10 tips to reduce food waste** at home. → [Read more](#)

News

- [United Nations calls for an end to industrialized farming](#)
- [Pope Francis's edict on climate change](#)
- [Farming the Bluefin tuna could save it from extinction](#)

Not much room to start a vegetable garden? No problem. A little space on a balcony or windowsill that receives a few hours of sun each day will provide you with a healthy supply of lettuce in around 6-8 weeks.

"Lettuce is like conversation: It must be fresh and crisp, and so sparkling that you scarcely notice the bitter in it." - C.D. Warner

Growing tips

1. Select the seeds

Keep in mind that varieties with the darkest leaves provide more nutrients. Packets of Sunny and Great Lake varieties, among others, are readily available in and around Tokyo at shops such as [Simachu](#). Before you shop for seeds, check you have enough general purpose soil, a planter box(s) (45 x 25 cm is a suitable size) or similar, pot nets, pot stones and a trowel.

2. Prepare soil

Place pot nets on the bottom of the planter box (cut to size if necessary) and cover with a thin layer of pot stones. Fill the planter box with soil up to approximately 3-4 cm below the top edge. Use your hands or a trowel to break up any large chunks. Mix in compost if desired. If you have the option of planting near tall plants, the shade provided by the latter will prevent wilting and enhance the flavor of the lettuces.

3. Sow seeds

Once you have broken up the soil, use your finger or the tip of a trowel to make a shallow trench about 1 cm deep. Following the guidelines mentioned on the seed packet, sow a few seeds at appropriate spacings accordingly. Lightly brush some soil over the seeds and gently pat it down.

4. Watering

Water in the cooler part of the day, either morning or evening. Be aware that watering in the evening can attract various bugs and slugs depending on your location. If you find this happening, water in the morning. To prevent leaves burning in hotter weather, try to water the soil only. The amount of water required will vary depending on the time of year you are planting. As a general rule, water so that the soil does not dry out, and if you see your leaves starting to wilt, cool them off with an extra sprinkle.

5. Harvesting

Leaves are generally ready when they look big enough to eat which should occur around 60 days after planting. Pick sooner if you like them fresher. To enjoy the full crispness of the leaves it is best to pick them in the morning before they are exposed to the full rays of the sun.

Have any questions about any of the featured topics? Mail us and we'll do our best to answer them.

Building an appetite for

Organic food in Japan



MIE PROJECT

Busting long-held attitudes towards food quality and safety is tough enough in many countries, but probably most difficult in a country as demanding of quality as Japan.

Jonathon Walsh sat down with MIE PROJECT President & CEO Duco Delgorge to discover how his company has been developing Japan's appetite for organic food since 2005.

What is organic food and how does it differ from "standard" food?

Organic food has been grown and prepared in as natural a way as possible. It avoids the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers, and of genetically modified organisms (GMO). In the case of processed foods, it avoids as much as possible the use of food additives, although there are some allowances for a limited number of what are considered to be essential and safe additives.

Organic food aims to help reduce the amount of chemical substances that enter the human body as well as the soil and ground water, and eventually the rivers, seas and oceans. Large scale commercial farming, which is widely practiced today, is resulting in huge quantities of chemicals entering our ecosystem, and in severe soil erosion.

Why did you start MIE PROJECT?

My epiphany was reading the book, "Beyond the Limits" in 1992. This was the follow up to "The Limits to Growth" published in 1972, widely recognized as one of the key references for sustainable development. The key message for me was that we had/have a choice: a choice between continuing on the path we are going, in terms of development, economics, lifestyles, etc., in which case collapse would be inevitable (around the middle of this century), or to move to a more sustainable model of development. Although we still have a choice, we have already moved to a point whereby the positive scenario

options are not as positive, and time is running out. I wanted to start a business that I believed could play a small role in helping us move to sustainable development.

How would you describe the Japanese organic food market?

It is not easy to get accurate up to date statistics about Japan's organic food market. We estimate the market to be worth perhaps JPY 150 billion or about Euro 1.1 billion. About half of this is primary produce, the other half is packaged foods. Nearly everyone is surprised at how underdeveloped the Japanese organic food market is. Japan has the world's 3rd largest economy but only the 10th largest organic food market, smaller than Switzerland's,

KEY ISSUES

What are the 2 biggest growth-inhibiting issues the organic food industry is facing today? Duco says:

- Lack of inspiring organic retailing (both an issue and an opportunity)
- Lack of local organic agriculture / produce.

"By far, the biggest threat to the development of the organic food market in Japan is any divergence of global organic standards resulting in foreign organic food no longer being able to be labeled and marketed as organic food in Japan."

PROFILE

Duco Delgorge

Founder and President, MIE PROJECT Co., Ltd.

MIE PROJECT is an importer, distributor and retailer of Exceptional Food For Thinking People.

No. staff: 12

Launched MIE Project: 2005

a country with a population nearly 16 times smaller than Japan. This is a huge anomaly when you consider that organic food demand is normally closely correlated to economic development and people's concerns about health and environment.

There would seem to be many reasons for this huge underperformance of organic food in Japan. First of all, there is a lack of supply of locally produced organic food. In Japan, only about 0.5% of agricultural land is certified organic, compared with about 20% in Austria.

→ [Read full article](#)

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SMART SUSTAINABILITY

100+ ways to conserve water

Water conservation can come down to little more than making small adjustments that can lead to big payoffs in usage over the long term. The following article presents nearly 200 water-saving tips, that can be downloaded, printed and shared on your favorite social media platforms.

Ideas range from using less water when cooking and collecting shower water in buckets while it warms, to having a plumber re-route your grey water into the garden and checking your toilet for leaks.

→ [Read more](#)



S U S T A I N A B I L I T Y

Sweden is now recycling 99 percent of its trash. Here's how

Sweden has set a new global bar in trash recycling – it recycles almost all of its trash. As of 2014, only 1 percent of the country's waste ends up in a landfill.

What's their secret?

Sweden's aggressive recycling policy focuses on key priorities in the following order: prevention, reuse, recycling, recycling alternatives, and as a last resort, disposal in a landfill.

→ [Read more](#)



Recycling greywater for gardening

When our gardens need a soak, most of us reach for the nearest hose giving little thought to the alternatives. One is greywater, the term for all wastewater streams generated in households or office buildings except from toilets. Our washing machines, sinks, showers and baths all produce greywater, which can be reused to flush toilets and for irrigation. Considering over 50-60% or more of our household water is greywater, the advantages of reusing it in terms of reducing fresh water usage alone becomes obvious. Here's a range of greywater ideas to get you thinking about what is possible.

→ [Read more](#)

How to get what you want without paying for it

Protecting the environment can seem like a near impossible task at the best of times but it doesn't have to be that way. The great thing is that with a few simple ideas, it's easy to not only take steps to protect the environment but also to save money, access services for free, forge new friendships, improve our health, and strengthen communities at the same time.

Find out about time banking, day trading, bartering, and more.



→ [Read more](#)

What's possible?

Unique homes in Japan: living "inside" a mountain in Kagawa prefecture

Welcome to the world of Miyawaki Gurindo, a unique housing project built into the side of Mineyama mountain in Takamatsu, Kagawa Prefecture, Japan. This creative diversion from the convention building standards we are used to seeing in our own communities is a good example of how Japanese developers are using their country's largely mountainous landscape to their advantage.

→ [Read more](#)



Quick-click news & articles

Sushi eaters push bluefin tuna towards extinction

A conservation group has warned that Pacific Bluefin tuna - popular among sushi eaters - is nearing extinction as global food demand is placing "unsustainable pressure" on the species.

→ [Read more](#)

Cyclone prompts Queensland inventor to turn an ice box into a sustainable power supply

Proving that we don't always have to rely on large corporations to spearhead our drive into sustainability through clean energy, one Queensland inventor answered the call for energy created by the disruptions of Cyclone Yas in 2011 by producing his own solar powered drink cooler.

→ [Read more](#)

How time banking is creating a new generation of volunteers – Time-banking strengthens communities by encouraging people to volunteer their time to help others in exchange for "time credits". Learn how it's working in the UK and around the globe.

→ [Read more](#)

Alaska's heat wave ignites fires as glaciers rapidly melt

Alaskan glaciers have shed 75 billion metric tons of ice every year from 1994 through 2013 leading them to punch above their weight in terms of contributing to sea level rise.

→ [Read more](#)

News

- [New York Gov. to ban fracking in New York State](#)
- [Aust. scientists announce solar energy breakthrough](#)
- [Pope Francis's edict on climate change](#)
- [10 tips for living with less plastic](#)

FACING CLIMATE CHANGE

United We Stand, Divided We Die

Part I: Impacts and Challenges

*As a warming planet and a swelling global population puts a steady squeeze on critical resources – principally food and water – sustainability consultant **Jonathon Walsh** says we should be thinking seriously about how we can provide these for ourselves – now.*

Water, water everywhere?

We can feel it. The planet is warming. Hotter summers, wildfires, droughts, floods, hurricanes, desertification, melting glaciers and a warming and acidifying ocean are all symptoms of a planetary ecosystem – the same one we depend on for life – under stress.

Which leads to a key question that we may have to deal with sooner than we think:

What options would we have if we turned on the tap and no water came out? This could happen today if a major earthquake hit, or be the result of extreme weather if we live in a drought-affected area such as California. [[California wake-up call: Extreme drought will lead to migration exit and real estate collapse.](#)]

For people living in cities who rely on piped water, the only realistic (legal) options would be to buy, borrow, or capture rain water. But what if there was no rain?

For cities fed by rain water, it may take only a few years of dry summers or droughts until water supplies are exhausted. [[California's Clean Energy Goals In Danger As Drought Drains Reservoirs.](#)]

Other areas that source their water from either underground [aquifers](#) or snow and ice – including large swaths of China, India, North America, and South East Asia – are likely to suffer critical water shortages in coming years as population-driven well drilling leads to [groundwater depletion](#), and mountain snow packs that feed rivers and agriculture continue to shrink. [[Where Has All the Ice Gone?](#)]

“How this competition and the approaching resource crunch will play out is anyone's guess but the bottom line is that access and control of food and water is becoming increasingly important.”

What then? Let's not be too euphemistic: many who can will migrate, others will quickly become desperate to secure water for themselves and their families, rioting and violence will erupt, and people will start dying – either from violence, thirst, or both. Some areas may simply run out of water. This is not a scary forecast; it's [happening now](#). [[Where the world's running out of water, in one map.](#)]

Since water is a crucial component in crop production, serious water shortages will cause vital food supplies to quickly die.



And while climate change is likely to bring more rain to certain parts of the globe, if that precipitation does not fall when crops need it, or comes as [flooding](#), it may still lead to crop die-off.

People in many parts of the world are already witnessing increasing competition for water from human and animal populations, conservation areas, and, of course, industry. Money and power will continue to come into play and influence access to key resources. [[Nestlé doesn't want you to know how much water it's bottling from the California desert.](#)]

Another sign of this race for resources is the [global land rush](#) in which more and more countries are scrambling to buy arable land abroad to grow basic crops – including wheat, soybeans, rice and corn – for food and biofuels. Of course, these land acquisitions are also water acquisitions as any water used to irrigate the purchased land will ultimately be sourced from the host country.

➔ [Download full report](#)



SUSTAINABILITY DASHBOARD & ACTION PLAN



Two superb resources packed with ideas, guidelines and practical strategies to set you on the path to sustainability.

Request yours today!

E-mail Jonathon at:
info@businessgrow.net

Resources

URBAN FARMING TEACHER / PARENT PACKS

Teacher Pack Lesson 1

How to transplant seedlings

Introduction

This lesson shows students one of the basic skills of gardening: how to transplant seedlings.

Using the techniques learned, students will be able to transplant their own garden and grow their own food. This lesson also includes a sustainability objective and a 21st-century skill objective.

This lesson has been designed for elementary school students but can easily be adapted for other students and adults.



Lesson preparation
Teacher Pack lesson 1 shows students how to transplant seedlings. This lesson will be used as the first lesson in the series. For more information, see the introduction.

If you plan to have all students transplant seedlings, please be prepared to have a backup plan. Consider what you will do if the weather is not ideal on the day of the lesson. For example, you could have a backup plan to have students observe the plants in the garden.

It is recommended that teachers do at least two practice transplanting of the lesson in a container to observe where their up and production equipment.



Lesson contents
• Lesson preparation
• Lesson preparation

Documents required
• How to transplant seedlings (21st-century skill)
• Essential vocabulary (21st-century skill)

10 clearly written guides outlining smart ideas that enable even inexperienced gardeners to grow food sustainably, boost self-sufficiency, teach others, and help the planet.

1. How to grow vegetables from seeds
2. How to transplant seedlings
3. How to build a plastic bottle fence garden
4. How to grow food on walls (vertical gardening)
5. Balcony gardening
6. How to collect rainwater
7. Eco-friendly ways to start seeds
8. How to collect and recycle water and food, and make compost
9. Recycling everyday objects into planters
10. How to create a 1-square meter garden.

Did you know it is possible to grow hundreds of lettuces and large amounts of other healthy, great-tasting vegetables and herbs on one sunlit wall? Find out this and more in pack 4 (see right)!

> [Brochure](#) > [Sample](#)



Food Havens

Let's turn the city

green!

> [More info](#)

BEGINNERS FOOD GROWING PACK



FOR BEGINNER GARDENERS

– Contains a comprehensive 23-page beginners guide to growing fantastic food in the city, practical food growing guides, key planting information, and loads of useful tips – in fact, everything you need to know to start growing fresh, healthy, great-tasting, no-spray food in the city!

> [Brochure](#)

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Sustainability In The City



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