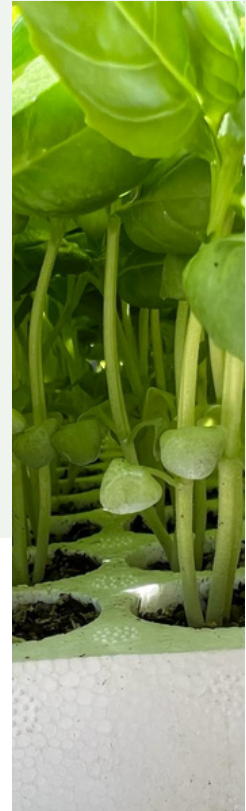
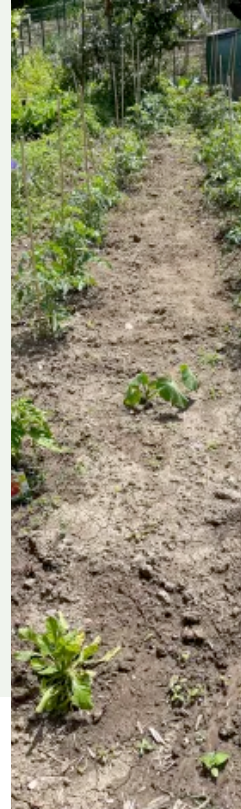
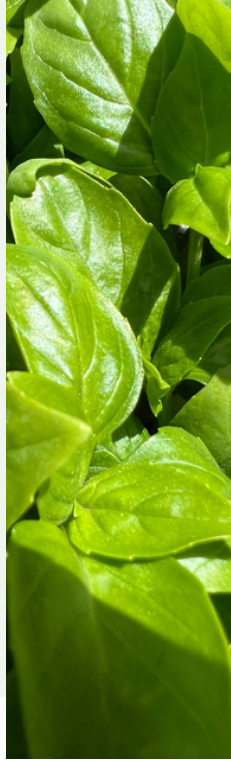




GROW your own tree

2nd newsletter | 2024



Embracing self-subsistence

In the heart of modern Europe, a resurgence of a time-honored practice is taking root – self-sustenance agriculture. This movement marks a return to the basics, where individuals and communities cultivate their own food, connecting deeply with the land making this practice increasingly popular. It's more than just planting seeds; it's about planting hope for a sustainable, self-sufficient future. By nurturing our own gardens and orchards, we're not just growing food; we're growing a sense of independence and resilience.

in this number..

- Embracing self-subsistence
- Navigating Self-Subsistence Agriculture in Europe

stories

- Each fruit that grows feels like a personal achievement, a testament to patience and care..
- Everything I need is right here
- As my small farm began to take shape, I expanded my horizons.
- My garden is more than just a source of ingredients. It's a canvas where I paint with flavors.

Navigating

Self-Subsistence Agriculture in Europe

(da Lončar S., Perdih F., Rotar I. 365 days of fresh vegetables from the home garden, 2017, pp. 9-17)

Despite its many virtues, self-sustenance agriculture in Europe faces its own set of challenges. Adapting to varied and changing climates, particularly in the face of global warming, poses a significant hurdle. European farmers and gardeners must also navigate the complexities of soil health, water availability, and sustainable pest control. Additionally, balancing modern life's demands with the time and effort required for successful cultivation can be daunting. These challenges require innovative solutions, community support, and a willingness to learn and adapt, ensuring the flourishing of self-sustenance agriculture across Europe.

The Bountiful Benefits of Self-Cultivating

Embarking on the journey of self-cultivation brings a plethora of benefits. Not only does it provide fresh, organic produce right at your doorstep, but it also enhances mental and physical well-being. Gardening is a therapeutic activity, reducing stress and promoting a sense of accomplishment. It fosters a deeper connection with nature, enhancing environmental awareness and responsibility. Furthermore, self-cultivation contributes to local biodiversity and helps reduce carbon footprints. This practice isn't just about growing food; it's about growing healthier lifestyles and communities.

The Educational Value

One of the most enriching aspects of self-sustenance agriculture is its educational value. It offers a hands-on learning experience, teaching valuable skills such as planning, patience, and perseverance. For children and adults alike, it's a wonderful

way to understand the origins of food, the rhythm of the seasons, and the intricate ecosystems of nature. Schools and communities across Europe are integrating gardening projects into their curricula, fostering a new generation of environmentally conscious individuals. This education extends beyond the garden, encouraging a lifestyle that values sustainability, healthy eating, and respect for nature.

Collective Farming Initiatives

Self-sustenance agriculture has the unique power to build community bonds. Across European countries, community gardens and collective farming initiatives are sprouting up, bringing people together for a common cause. These spaces become more than just places to grow food; they are hubs of social interaction, cultural exchange, and mutual support. They provide opportunities for sharing knowledge, tools, and harvests, creating a sense of unity and cooperation. This community-driven approach not only enhances food security but also weaves a stronger social fabric in our neighborhoods.

The Role of Technology

In an age where technology touches almost every aspect of our lives, it also plays a crucial role in the success of self-sustenance agriculture. From smartphone apps that track planting seasons and water schedules to advanced composting techniques and eco-friendly pest control, technology is making gardening more accessible and efficient. Innovations in vertical farming and hydroponics are opening new possibilities for urban gardeners, making the most of limited spaces. By embracing these technological advances, European self-sustenance farmers are finding new ways to enhance productivity while staying true to sustainable principles.

Navigating Self-Subsistence Agriculture in Europe

The Economic Impact

It's important to consider the economic implications of self-subsistence agriculture. For many, growing their own food can lead to significant savings on grocery bills. It also stimulates local economies - when gardeners need supplies or services, they often turn to local businesses. Moreover, surplus produce can be sold or bartered within the community, fostering a local, circular economy. This financial aspect, while often secondary to the environmental and health benefits, plays a crucial role in the viability and appeal of self-subsistence agriculture.

Cultivating Heritage and Preserving Biodiversity

A significant yet often overlooked aspect of self-subsistence agriculture is its role in preserving heritage and biodiversity. Traditional varieties of fruits, vegetables, and herbs, some of which have been passed down through generations, are being cultivated in these personal gardens.

This practice helps in maintaining a diverse genetic pool, crucial for the resilience of our ecosystems. Moreover, it allows gardeners to reconnect with their cultural heritage, growing plants that are part of their nation's history and cuisine. In this way, self-subsistence agriculture becomes a living library of biodiversity and tradition.

The Future of Self-Subsistence Agriculture in Europe

Looking forward, the future of self-subsistence agriculture in Europe is bright and full of potential. As more individuals and communities embrace this sustainable lifestyle, we will see a significant shift in how we interact with our environment. The potential for innovation in sustainable farming techniques and community-supported agriculture models is immense. With continued support and investment, self-subsistence agriculture can become a cornerstone of a greener, healthier Europe.

The **GROW your own tree** project brings together volunteers who are actively working to preserve the environment and use natural resources sustainably. We are trying to spread awareness of self-sufficiency as a lifestyle that connects us to creation and brings us back to nature.

We recognize that food is not just a product we buy in a store, but that each plant has a story to tell and that each food can contribute to our nutritional, physical, and mental well-being. We believe that a self-sustainable lifestyle allows us to be more independent, to have better control over the quality of our food, to lower costs, and to reduce our carbon footprint.



Each fruit that grows feels like a personal achievement, a testament to patience and care..

"I spent many years in a bustling city, working day in and day out. When retirement came, I knew I wanted to do something that connected me with nature, something peaceful yet fulfilling. That's when the idea of an orchard came to me, a dream I had harbored since my youth.

I found a piece of land that was just right - not too big, but ample enough for a variety of fruit trees. I began with the classics: apple, pear, and peach trees. Planting those first trees was a feeling I'll never forget. It was like planting my hopes and dreams into the earth.

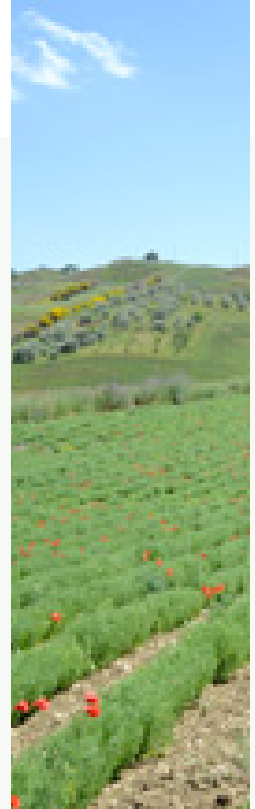
The orchard became a place where I could put my energy and watch it blossom. I learned everything from scratch - how to care for the trees, prune them, protect them from pests, and of course, to harvest.

The rhythm of life in the orchard was soothing and invigorating at the same time. Each season brought its own charm and challenges. Spring with its beautiful blossoms, summer with the promise of fruit, autumn with its bountiful harvest, and winter with its rest and preparation for the cycle to begin a new. One of the most unexpected joys of my orchard has been

sharing its bounty. I love seeing the joy on friends' and family's faces when they bite into a piece of fruit straight from a tree, its freshness incomparable to anything bought from a store.

Of course, managing an orchard isn't always a walk in the park. But I find it deeply rewarding. Each fruit that grows feels like a personal achievement, a testament to patience and care. The orchard is a place where I can reflect, enjoy the fruits of my labor, and feel at peace. As I walk among the trees, pruning shears in hand, I often think about how this orchard is a reflection of my journey - growing, evolving, and bearing fruit in unexpected ways. It's my legacy, a labor of love that I hope will continue to flourish for many years to come."

Amedeo



Everything I need is right here.

"Every day in my garden is a new adventure. I start with planning, which is more than just deciding what to plant. It's about understanding the rhythm of nature, the cycles of the seasons. Then comes the planting - there's something magical about burying a seed in the earth and imagining what it will become.

Watering, weeding, caring for the plants - these tasks might sound tedious, but they're anything but. They're moments of peace, where I'm lost in the simplicity of the task, my mind clear and focused. It's therapeutic, you know?

Watching the plants grow is a joy like no other. Seeing the first sprouts, the first flowers, then the fruits - it's a journey. And when I finally get to taste what I've grown, it's not just about the flavor. It's about the satisfaction of knowing I nurtured it from a seed.

The best part? The luxury of having fresh produce right at my fingertips. Want a basil leaf for my pasta? It's just a few steps away. There's no need to hop in the car and drive to the store. Everything I need is right here in my little piece of paradise".

Fabio

As my small farm began to take shape, I expanded my horizons.

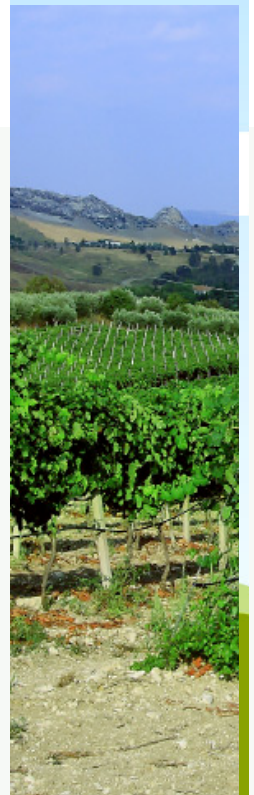
"I had always been fascinated by the idea of growing my own food and being in tune with the rhythms of nature. So, one day, I decided to take the plunge and turn that dream into reality.

At first, it was just a few rows of vegetables – tomatoes, zucchini, and peppers. I remember the thrill of planting those first seeds, the anticipation of what they would become. It wasn't just about growing food; it was about growing a new way of life.

As my small farm began to take shape, I expanded my horizons. I learned about crop rotation, soil health, and sustainable farming practices. Every step was a lesson, every challenge a teacher.

In the end, what started as a small vegetable patch has grown into something much bigger – a way of life that connects me to the land, the community, and a deeper part of myself. And every day, as I walk through my farm, I am reminded of the beauty and bounty of nature and the incredible journey it has taken me on."

Rosanna

**My garden is more than just a source of ingredients. It's a canvas where I paint with flavors.**

"My journey began with herbs. Basil, rosemary, thyme, and oregano – the staples of Italian cooking. There's nothing like the aroma of fresh herbs in the kitchen. Then I expanded to tomatoes, garlic, peppers, and more. The process of growing these essentials was not just about having them on hand but about connecting with the very essence of what makes food so delightful.

Each day in my garden is a step closer to a culinary creation. When I'm out there, tending to the plants, I'm not just a gardener; I'm a chef in the making, this experience has transformed the way I cook and the way I see the world around me."

Rosario

GROW your own tree



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