

# GROWING RESISTANCE

## Issue # 1

: A periodical of guerrilla gardening and urban farming out of the nova farm commune Seattle, WA



~ Featuring ~

DIY compost!

Poetry!

Original artwork! And Much More...

# Introduction

## Why urban farming? Why guerilla gardening?

**The answers to these questions should be obvious. Right now, we farm because it is enjoyable and practical; in the future it will be necessary. If we wish to avoid the collapse of civilization, or when civilization does in fact collapse, only recently have people moved away from growing or gathering their own sustenance and medicine. With the expansion of the "free" market, there has been the expansion of cities and slums around the world. We find ourselves surrounded by concrete metal fences, steel buildings, parking lots, and big box stores; capital we must destroy, capital we must replace with free sustenance! In this zine, we will share what our strategies for creating and growing urban farms are, what we have been doing, and hopefully encourage you to cultivate, or at least throw some seeds to the wind. Do not hesitate to sow seeds on a piece of land that you do not "own" if you are making use of a piece of land it is more yours than that of the lawful owners, take back land to sustain yourself while depriving capital of a market.**

### The Nova Farm and the Horace Mann building.

**In 2008, the Seattle school district proposed the closing of several schools and buildings, one of which was the Horace Mann**

**building (see photo). The Horace Mann building housed the Nova alternative project and their student run garden**

**aka the “nova farm”. The farm is a sprawling expanse about the size of a small city lot consisting of a handful of fruit trees (Asian pear, pears, apples, and a huge cherry tree) dark, loamy, rich, topsoil, a solar greenhouse, and numerous garden plots (see map).**



**In early 2009, the school board voted in favor of the school closures. After the vote, everyone was passive, accepting the closures without resistance after the final vote. And especially at the nova project, a school described by parents teachers, students, and alum as a Strong community; not as strong as five school board votes. So nova went on with the plan. It is truly Orwellian**

**this school founded on the principles of social justice, put up no organized resistance of any kind to the closing of their home, and the gentrification of a neighborhood.**



**With land perfect for trees, crops, fruit, herbs, and medicine, for the people the nova grounds are ripe for revolution! Ripe for resistance! Get involved! Contact us at [novafarm.rcg@gmail.com](mailto:novafarm.rcg@gmail.com) [Novarcg.wordpress.com](http://Novarcg.wordpress.com) **ALL POWER TO THE COMMUNES!****

**Photos left: nova building right the garden and flower sculpture**

# What we have been doing

**At the Nova Farm we have been doing Wintertime projects such as our leaf mold compost bin, (see second to last page) it is a few wood pallets pushed together and filled with leaves. Slowly over the course of one to two years fungi, bacteria, insects, and worms will decompose the leaves until it is perfect compost. Another one of our projects has been planting native trees and shrubs in areas where we are not growing crops; they will greatly improve the desirability of the farm to living things. They will also bring moisture into the air and act as carbon sinks, greatly improving the ecosystem, and act as a pioneer bringing in more life as they grow. Finally, among many other amazing things we are developing landraces, breeds of plants specific to the nova farm. When plants breed in one area they develop area specific traits, we await the future.**

## **Garden spots in the central area and capitol hill**

- **The pollinator pathway: This is a parking strip on Columbia St. south of 26<sup>th</sup> street planted there are plants that provide nectar for pollinators, eventually it will go all the way from Seattle university to Norah's woods.**
- **Norah's woods this is a small native plant forest at 29<sup>th</sup> and Columbia. It is a great place to learn how to identify native plants.**
- **13<sup>th</sup> Ave. & Harrison St. there is a really cool "hidden garden" here next to an apartment.**
- **P-patches, there are probably 10 in the central district, and capitol hill alone.**

# Abandoned sculptures

*Half moon pennies  
Rust buttoned sunflower shade  
Grey age yawning  
Across memories scattered  
Golden in the grave*

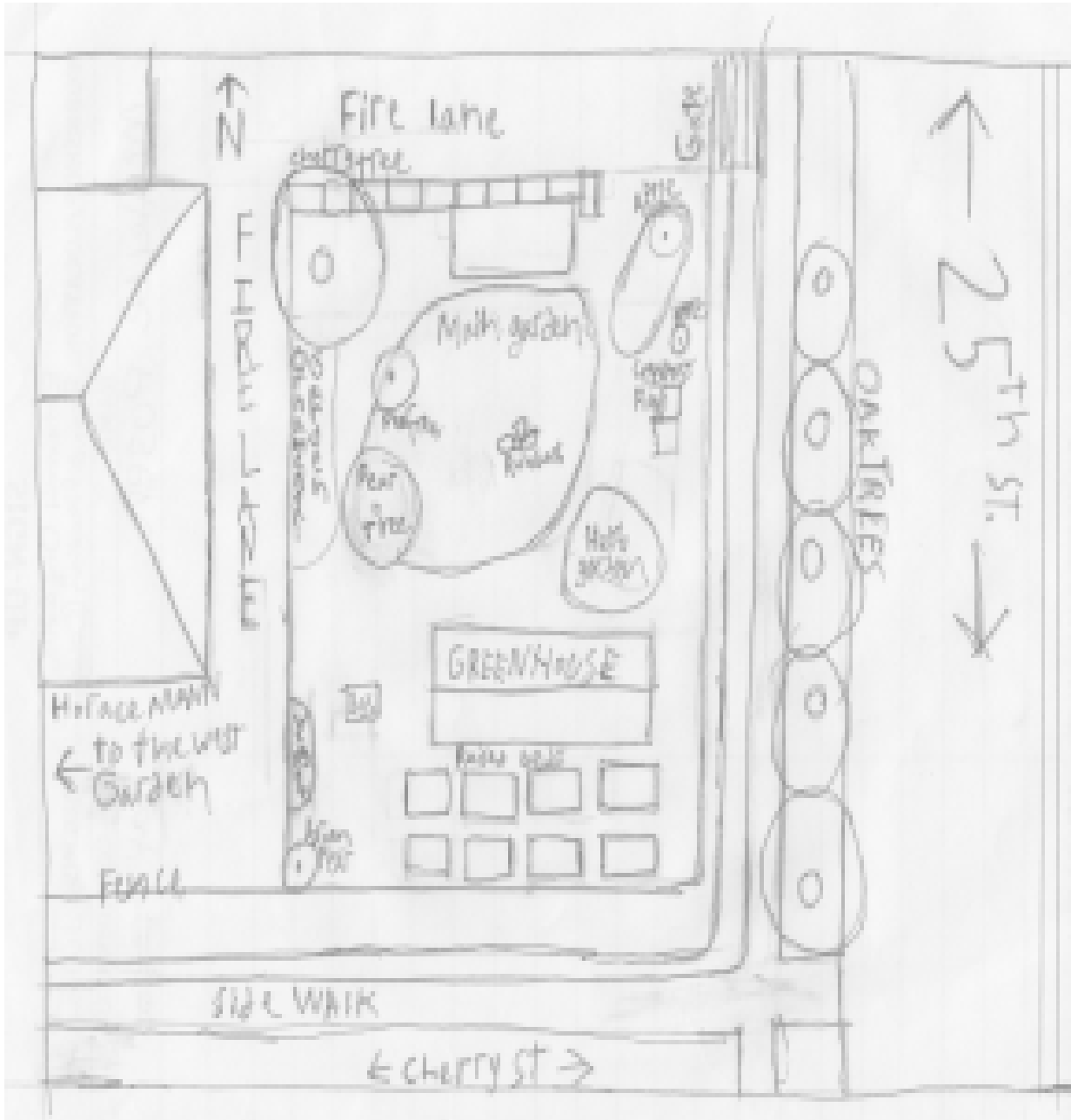
*Mild winter sun  
Popcorn bushes  
Next to scabbed rose thumbs  
And a young pear tree*

*These pathways retain  
The scents of their scattered poetry and  
The seeds of coming spring  
Blossoms hiding under the wry smile of humility  
At their desertion*

*Grass blades wear  
Blunted converse stitching scars  
And the indents of sun tanned toes  
Stretching out from the pressure  
The lost flannel sheet comfort*

*Of mid afternoon  
Raggedy lollygaggin'  
Teeth chattering  
Like piranha shadow puppets  
Drowning on top of the ice*

# Farm



Left page: map of the nova farm. Right top map of the Horace Mann building and grounds, lower right map of surrounding area.



# Ingredients for a successful guerilla garden



**What does your guerilla garden need to thrive? Plants need few things, but few as they may be they are each very important. Plants need sunlight, water, soil, nutrients, air, and all to varying levels depending on the plant's preference of habitat. Keep this in mind when deciding the placement of your garden. Decide where you are going to grow, make observations about the spot. Use your observations as a guide to what you are going to grow. You do not have to be limited in what you can grow by the conditions of your spot. Make sure you amend the soil with mulch/organic matter, or compost. This will help retain water, and increase nutrients. How will you supply water? Think about setting up a rain barrel attached to a downspout, growing near water that you can access (hose, river, pond, etc.) Alternatively, grow things that develop strong root systems during Springtime.**

**You just read all of this information and you are wondering, What do I do? A fun thing to do is to look at what other people are doing, see their gardens for ideas on the internet in books, even visit the nova farm; we'd love to show you around, share ideas, food, and love.**

# Composting

**Composting is one of the most important practice of any self-sustaining farm, garden, or piece of land. It cycles nutrients, helps plants take in nutrients, and increases activity in the soil; fungi, bacterium, micro-organisms, and insects. There are many ways to make compost, but the preferred and fastest way to make rich soil is hot composting, I will also cover the making of leaf mold (a humus soil made solely from decomposed leaves). There are a few things you should remember when hot composting pile size to get good hot compost at about 140 Fahrenheit you need a good size pile, one cubic yard at the least (about the same volume as a washing machine) to get piles hot, they need a low carbon to nitrogen ratio. Nitrogen decomposes readily,**

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**Table 3.** Summary of common raw materials that can be used for on-farm composting (from: On-farm Composting Handbook, p. 16.)

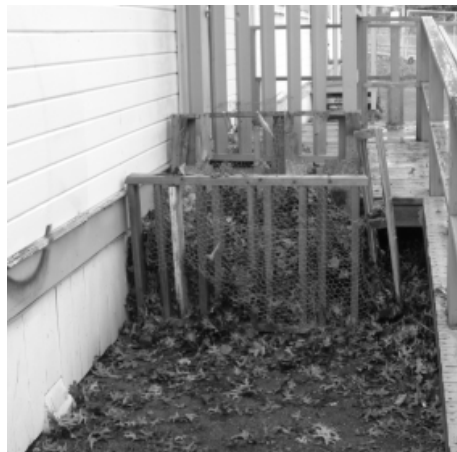
<u>Material</u>	<u>C:N</u>
Bark (hardwood)	110-435
Corrugated cardboard	560
Cattle manure	11-30
Corn stalks	60-75
Cranberry (leaves and stems)	35-60
Cranberry presscake	30-40
Finished compost	25-30
Fish processing wastes	2.5-5
Fruit wastes	20-50
Grass clippings	9-25
Hay	15-32
Horse manure	22-30
Leaves	40-80
Newspaper	400-850
Paper mill sludge	54
Poultry manure	7-10
Sawdust and shavings	200-750
Seaweed, other aquatic plants	5-27
Straw	50-150
Swine manure	9-19
Vegetable wastes	11-13
Wood chips (hardwood)	450-820

**heating up the pile, and breaking down carbon. Oxygen and air flow: this cant be stated enough; piles need turning once a week at least to increase the rate of decomposition. Turning compost is almost like using a bellow to blow air into a fire. Both fires and compost piles produce co2 and solids (compost, ash). Moisture: make sure the compost stays moist, and does not dry out, it should stay damp, wet to the touch, but not sopping, if the compost were to dry microorganisms would not be happy. Lastly, but the very most important piece that the fate of the entire compost depends on, materials: for compost**

**pile you should use a variety of materials for the best mix of nutrients. You should have a good amount of high nitrogen materials (urine, manure, vegetable scraps) to your carbon materials (leaves, straw, wood chips) the higher the carbon nitrogen ratio the slower it will decompose, also chopping materials faster will increase the speed at which compost is made. To get started: gather materials. Most coffee shops will give you used grounds. Rake leaves in the fall and store them for year round use, gather weeds, plant trimmings, manure, and any other materials you please. Now mix it all together, make sure its moist, and just to make sure it works add a handful of finished compost, and urine, or blood, turn once a week and you'll see great compost in less than 2 months.**

## Making Leaf mold

**What is leaf mold? Leaf mold is the result of letting leaves sit for over a year, and decompose, it is a great soil amendment increasing water retention and in general improving the soil structure. What to do? First, gather leaves. You should use oak, maple, or birch because these are some of the highest in nutrients. Second, put them in a pile somewhere that won't get too dry. At the nova farm we put our leaves in between 2 wood pallets covered with chicken wire an old wood bike rack (also covered with chicken wire) and a building (not covered with chicken wire)**



**ALL POWER TO THE COMPOST!**

# Further Reading

- Food not lawns by H.C Flores: **This is a great guide to permaculture, urban farming, ecological living, and radical organizing it is *the* book to read no-matter your knowledge on the subject .**
  - Radical Mycology by the SLF: **this zine will teach you everything you wanted to know about fungi, and their many uses. It can be found at [www.zinelibrary.info](http://www.zinelibrary.info) among other places .**
  - Seattle Tilth Guide: **If you live in the Pacific Northwest this is a great guide to growing food, and talks about place specific phenomenon that gardeners interact with .**
  - The Botany of Desire by Michael Pollan: **don't let the fact that it's a new York times best seller drive you away from picking it up, in the book Pollan explores the history of human and plant interaction and our desires, and how that influenced plants.**
  - Biopiracy by Vandana Shiva: **A documentation of the crimes western agribusiness commits, to expropriate capital from the poor.**
  - The Permaculture garden by graham bell: **has lots of great information, and ideas for inspiration.**
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# Get involved!

- **Join us! –farmers, artists, radicals, and workers (of any of experience or skill level) are needed to grow food, live ecologically together, and act radically and locally with the global in mind.**
- **Donate! –Donations of money, gardening supplies, woodchips, mushroom spawn, rain barrels, large sized pots, seeds, tools, etc. and most importantly your labour –you do not have to be apart of the commune to help us work, just join us on a work day or if you see us working, contact us for dates of work party's.**
- **Get creative! Yeah, this one pretty much explains itself. Creativity is the solution to many challenges.**
- **Spread the word! Let people know what is happening. If they seek further info give them this zine and our info.**

Nova farm 2410 e. cherry st. Seattle WA.

Contact: [novafarm.rcg@gmail.com](mailto:novafarm.rcg@gmail.com)

Online: [novafarmrcg.wordpress.com](http://novafarmrcg.wordpress.com)

